

# Cleveland Metropark Marketing Plan

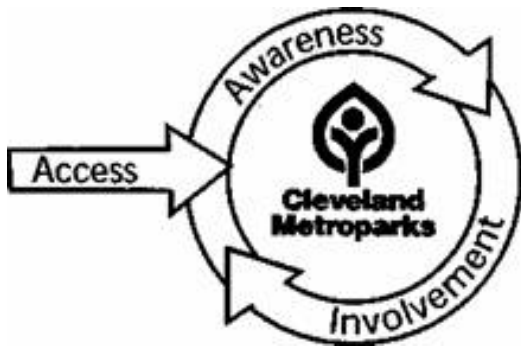


Access

# Cleveland Metroparks

## *Marketing Plan*

Access. Awareness. Involvement



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Cleveland Metroparks is the primary provider of conservation, outdoor education, and recreation services for the residents of Cuyahoga County and Hinckley Township in Medina County. In 1990, Cleveland Metroparks initiated **Metroparks 2000: Conserving Our Natural Heritage**, a 15-year master plan for the entire Park District.

Cleveland Metroparks was the vision of William A. Stinchcomb (1878-1959). As early as 1905, Stinchcomb, a Cleveland city park engineer, urged local leaders to take advantage of the exceptional character of the area's natural places by creating a park and boule-vard system that would eventually encircle Cuyahoga County. In the early years, the Park District concentrated its efforts on acquiring land before advancing property values and private development placed it beyond reach. Later, during the Depression, funds were used to provide maximum employment, and at the same time, to develop and improve the parks for public use. Subsequent initiatives of acquisition and development managed to create Cleveland Metroparks as we know it today, an open space system of nature, beauty and diversity. Built and undeveloped landscapes dedicated to conservation of open space provide outdoor recreation and education experiences for millions of annual visitors. Metroparks 2000, the Park District Master Plan, and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo Master Plan were developed in the mid 1990s to insure well-reasoned policy parameters would be in place to guide decision making in the years to come.

This Marketing Plan takes its cue from the comprehensive master plans and seeks to define the role of

marketing for Cleveland Metroparks. This plan organizes information for decision making, gathers significant policy and administrative procedures, and seeks to define the most cost-effective strategies to direct limited staff and financial resources. This is a fluid approach. The plan will be amended and augmented in the coming years with further research findings and analysis of trends. This will insure an accurate reflection of the current market conditions and Cleveland Metroparks place within it.

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## Marketing Definitions and Philosophy

### What is Marketing in Cleveland Metroparks?

The concept of marketing is not new. It has been developed and practiced by successful consumer-oriented companies for decades. Many authors suggest that marketing is the critical characteristic that separates successful organizations from unsuccessful organizations. Marketing is misunderstood by many; marketing is not simply selling. Selling may be one part of an overall marketing effort that would focus on promotion to increase participation in the organization's services. However, a marketing effort should always focus on the needs and desires of the consumer, or in this case, the citizens of the tax district. In the case of Cleveland Metroparks, the focus on the park visitor must appropriately be tempered by the mission statement and critical policy issues. Unlike traditional consumer-oriented, for-profit organizations, Cleveland Metroparks must weigh the appropriateness of a strict focus on the park visitor, with the need to fulfill a more far-reaching role as a conservation agency. Nevertheless, the marketing effort should challenge the organization to create opportunities to meet visitor's unmet and/or undermet wants. In fact, Cleveland Metroparks will embrace the concept of societal marketing as defined later in this plan. Cleveland

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Cleveland Metroparks will embrace the concept of societal marketing as defined later in this plan. Cleveland Metroparks has traditionally developed "products" internally with minimal public input, and has concentrated on simply "selling" or offering them to the park visitor. A marketing plan will help define the visitor base and formulate a consistent method to make product decisions. By being "market driven" the public will receive products they already want and will readily support. The theme of "Access, Awareness, Involvement" has been chosen for this plan. Members of the tax district will have access to the Park District's programs and physical facilities. Through a well-planned process, an awareness of offerings will be built and nurtured. Involvement in Park District programming and wide buy-in to mission will follow, leading to interest in planning new programs and

facilities. This plan will not establish policy, but will be designed as an evaluation process with a series of guidelines to be used for the development of policies and strategies for Cleveland Metroparks Board of Park Commissioners and staff to follow.

#### Marketing Defined:

Philip Kotler in Marketing Management <sup>(1)</sup> defines the marketing concept as:

*" . . . a management orientation that holds that the key task of the organization is to determine the needs and wants and values of a target market and to adapt the organization to delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than its competitors."*

Kotler defines the underlying premises of the marketing concept, including the following ideas:

1. The organization sees its mission in terms of satisfying a defined set of "wants" of a group of customers.
2. The organization recognizes that satisfying "wants" requires active market research to learn of these "wants."
3. The organization recognizes all activities that effect the customer must be placed under integrated marketing control.
4. The organization believes that doing a good job with customers generates loyalty, repeat business and favorable word of mouth; all of these things being crucial in satisfying the organization's goals.

<sup>(1)</sup> Kotler, P. (1980). *Marketing Management Analysis, Planning, and Control*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, pp. 31-33.

### organization's goals.

Using the marketing concept, the organization controls only four variables in the process. To create a successful marketing strategy, these four variables must be pursued in a way that best serves the park visitor needs. The variables are:

1. Product - Tangible good or service offered.
2. Price - What a consumer pays for the product.
3. Place - Where the product is available for purchase.

4. Promotion - How the consumer is made aware of the product.

*There are other roles for marketing in Cleveland Metroparks in meeting demand. Kotler defines eight states of demand: Negative, No, Latent, Falling, Irregular, Full, Overfull and Unwholesome.*

*Of particular note are no demand, latent demand, falling demand, irregular demand and overfull demand.*

*A **societal marketing orientation** holds that the main task of the organization is to determine the needs, wants, and interests of target markets and to adapt the organization into delivering satisfactions that preserve or enhance the consumer's and society's well-being.*

### Not-for-profit Marketing

A discussion of marketing would not be complete without an acknowledgement of the subtle differences between not-for-profit marketing and for-profit marketing. Although the basic tenets of marketing hold true, often there are shadings in the areas of emphasis and philosophy.

In the book Marketing For Nonprofit Organizations, Philip Kotler suggests that there is a difference between a sales orientation and marketing orientation. A sales orientation holds that the main task of the organization is to stimulate interest in potential customers in the organization's existing products and services. A marketing orientation holds that the main task of the organization is to determine the needs and wants of target markets and to satisfy those needs through the design, communication, pricing and delivery of appropriate and competitively-viable products and services. He further purports that there are marketing-oriented organizations that face two problems in committing themselves to satisfy customers' needs and wants. First, customers may have wants that are not proper to satisfy, either because they go against society's interests (such as destruction of open space) or against the consumers' long-term interests (such as a sedentary lifestyle). Second, customers may have needs which they do not recognize (such as a need for a clean environment) that a non-profit organization may want to press on the consumer for their good, even though it may be costly to do. A growing number of marketeers see their responsibility to take four factors into account in their marketing decision making: con-

<sup>(2)</sup>Kotler, P. (1982). *Marketing For Non-Profit Organizations*. Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice-Hall, p. 23.

of marketeers see their responsibility to take four factors into account in their marketing decision making: consumer needs, consumer wants, consumer interests, and society's interests. This orientation can be called a societal marketing orientation.<sup>(2)</sup>

Cleveland Metroparks will assume a societal marketing orientation. This does not mean the mission of conservation, outdoor education and recreation will be ignored, simply marketed by using a societal marketing orientation.

## Demand and Marketing

The concept of marketing arises when an organization forms an idea of a *desired level of transactions* that it wants with a target market. At any point in time, the *actual demand level* may be below, equal to, or above the *desired demand level*. *Marketing management's task is to influence the level, timing, and character of demand in a way that will help the organization achieve its objectives.*<sup>(3)</sup>

There are other roles for marketing in Cleveland Metroparks in meeting demand. Kotler defines eight states of demand: Negative, No, Latent, Falling, Irregular, Full, Overfull and Unwholesome. Of particular note are no demand, latent demand, falling demand, irregular demand and overfull demand:

- *No demand*. Target consumers may be uninterested or indifferent to the product. Thus a group of individuals may not be interested in learning to be stewards of the environment, but may be interested in the thrill of rock climbing. The marketing task is to find ways to connect the benefits of the product with the person's natural needs and interests. An example might be creating an exciting program that includes stressing the importance of preserving precious resources (i.e. Institute of the Great Outdoors, the Zoo's Safari camp).

- *Latent demand*. A substantial number of consumers may share a strong desire for something that cannot be satisfied by any existing product or service. The marketing task is to measure the size of the potential market and develop effective goods and services that would satisfy the demand. Cleveland Metroparks Walking Club tapped a largely female audience that desired a safe way to walk for fitness in the Park District. Cleveland Metroparks Zoo has attracted record crowds to a Halloween promotion, — stressing a safe environment.

- *Falling demand*. Every organization, sooner or later, faces falling demand for one or more of its products. Cleveland Metroparks has seen a decline in the number of horses using bridle trails. The marketer must analyze

<sup>(3)</sup> Kotler, P. (1982). *Marketing For Non-Profit Organizations*. Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice-Hall, p. 23

Cleveland Metroparks has seen a decline in the number of horses using bridle trails. The marketer must analyze the causes of market decline and determine whether demand can be re-stimulated through finding new target markets, changing the product's features, or developing more effective communications. The marketing task is to reverse the declining demand through creative re-marketing of the product.

- *Irregular demand.* Cleveland Metroparks faces demands which vary on a seasonal, daily, or even hourly basis, causing problems of idle capacity or overworked capacity. Cleveland Metroparks might be under-visited during weekdays and overcrowded during weekends. Golf courses might be overbooked in the afternoon and underbooked in the morning. The marketing task is to find ways to alter the time pattern of demand through flexible pricing, promotion, and other incentives.

- *Overfull demand.* Some organizations face a demand level which is higher than they can or want to handle. The Institute of the Great Outdoors (IGO), Zoo Education, Naturetracks or other programs fill quickly, disappointing many individuals. Sensitive or unique areas in the Park District could be disrupted or destroyed by overuse. The RainForest attracted such crowds that visitors had to wait hours to be admitted. The marketing task, called *demarketing*, requires finding ways to reduce the demand temporarily or permanently. General demarketing seeks to discourage overall demand and consists of such steps as raising prices and reducing promotion and service. Selective demarketing consists of trying to reduce the demand coming from those parts of the market which are less profitable or less in need of the service. Demarketing does not aim to destroy demand, but only reduce its level. <sup>(4)</sup>

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<sup>(4)</sup> Kotler, P. (1982). *Marketing For Non-Profit Organizations*. Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice-Hall, pp. 10-11

### Defining Cleveland Metroparks PRODUCT

Broadly, Cleveland Metroparks product is defined in the Park District's mission and critical values. The mission and values are included in this document beginning on page 9.

The product/service then, could include any aspect of the Park District which has public contact or impact. For purposes of this plan, the product includes any combination of Park District events, facilities, services, goods and programs which facilitate or enable a visitor to experience "outdoor education, zoological and recreational opportunities." The product thus defined, then presents the challenge, "what is the best way to get quality products and service to the park visitor." The product in Park



the challenge, "what is the best way to get quality products and service to the park visitor." The product in Park District terms is usually delivered via one, or a combination of the following:

- (1) providing a facility, event or tangible goods or service,

- (2) defining self-directed, park visitor activities, or
- (3) developing leader-led activities.

### Setting The PRICE

Cleveland Metroparks has historically charged for a number of its products and services, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, golf courses and the Chalet are a few examples. The development of fees and charges is guided by a Park District policy that considers the relative merit of each program or facility. Those programs or facilities that are offered for the "public good" should be substantially subsidized, while those that are primarily of value to a single individual group or for the "private good" should be self-sustaining. Products that have elements of both private and public good may be partially subsidized. Cleveland Metroparks Fee and Service Policy is included beginning on page 65 and follows these principles.

### Finding The PLACE

- 6 Metroparks 2000, the Park District's Master Plan process, has inventoried current Cleveland Metroparks sites like greenspaces, wildlands and facilities. Special effort must be made to locate special events or new facilities in under-utilized areas or areas near the underserved. Additional effort must be taken to determine new venues where park visitors can be served or cultivated. Traveling exhibits such as NatureTracks and Ryan's Roving Rainforest mobile education unit, the Speakers Bureau and classroom programs all bring Cleveland Metroparks to the visitor. Media coverage of events, facilities, etc. should not be ignored as a "place." Many unable to visit the Park District experience the beauty and educational opportunities through print and electronic coverage.

### Promoting THE PRODUCT

Recognizing the limited advertising funds available to Cleveland Metroparks, much of the public's awareness of the Park District will be spurred by press releases, special events, sponsorships, pilot programs, trade and/or consumer programs. A further discussion of promotional targets and strategies is listed on page 55. As



or consumer programs. A further discussion of promotional targets and strategies is listed on page 55. As indicated earlier, promotion at face value may only seem

useful to sustain or create high use. Promotion also can serve to level or smooth demand or target non-users. Promotion is the key to gaining access, building awareness and involvement in audiences.

## Mission Statement, Policies, & Critical Issues

Cleveland Metroparks is the primary provider of conservation, outdoor education, and recreation services for the residents of Cuyahoga County and Hinckley Township in Medina County. Cleveland Metroparks will deliver these services through a "system" of park reservations, parkways, "greenway corridor partnerships," and alliances with other providers - federal, state and local governments, and nonprofit service institutions.

**Mission Statement:** *Cleveland Metroparks will conserve significant natural resources and enhance people's lives by providing safe, high-quality outdoor education, recreation, and zoological opportunities. Further, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is committed to improving the future for wildlife.*

In 1990, Cleveland Metroparks initiated **Metroparks 2000: Conserving Our Natural Heritage**, a fifteen-year master plan for the entire Park District. To provide strategic direction for the planning process, Cleveland Metroparks mission was refined and policy parameters were developed to further clarify the mission. Lastly, critical issues were defined to provide specific direction in fulfilling Cleveland Metroparks mission.

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**Metroparks 2000** recommendations were a result of "filtering" each critical issue through the criteria of conservation, education and recreation, which represents the framework of the mission. For conservation, protection of existing resources and open spaces is stressed. For education, leadership will be a priority. For recreation, defining appropriate activities and the rehabilitation of existing facilities is emphasized. The recommendations were made within the framework of an agency intent on growth and improvement. Cleveland Metroparks is committed to openly managing its affairs, and providing opportunities for public comment, scrutiny and criticism.

Policy parameters were developed to serve as "filters," providing guidance in decision-making. These are:

**Conservation Policy:** Conservation of natural resources is a primary responsibility of Cleveland Metroparks.

**Education Policy:** Cleveland Metroparks will foster awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the

importance of natural resources that we may all become better stewards of our environment.

**Recreation Policy:** Cleveland Metroparks will provide recreation opportunities which are compatible with and support the goals of conservation and education.

Public input helped to shape the Park District mission and policy parameters. Again, below is a listing of the five critical issues that provided a strategic element to the Master Plan. While the conservation, education, and recreation policy parameters remain constant, the critical issues represent current concerns that need to be addressed for Cleveland Metroparks to effectively carry out its mission in the future. While other concerns and issues face the Park District, these five have community-wide significance.

### ***Critical Issue I: Stewardship of the Natural Environment and Public Use of Parks***

10 Cleveland Metroparks is mandated, under Ohio law, to conserve Northeast Ohio's natural resources. Conservation of these resources and their careful public use and enjoyment will ensure the well-being of present and future generations.

### ***Critical Issue II: Quality of Service and Condition of Park District Facilities***

During Cleveland Metroparks 80-year history, Northeast Ohio has experienced enormous social and demographic changes. A changing society has resulted in changing outdoor recreation preferences and needs. Programs and facilities which address these needs must be available.

### ***Critical Issue III: Regional Leadership in Acknowledging Environmental Education***

While environmental concern has increased in the last few decades, the public's commitment regarding environmental protection has been mixed. There is a need for our society to become more environmentally aware and adopt an ecologically responsible lifestyle.



***Critical Issue IV: Conservation of Regional Space***

Urbanization and development of historically rural landscapes is occurring at an alarming rate. A comprehensive plan to identify, protect, and enhance the open spaces of existing reservations and significant regional natural resources is needed now.

***Critical Issue V: Public Support and Financial Management***

The cost of maintaining quality Park District service and meeting stewardship commitments is significant. To assure public confidence and financial support, responsible management is essential. Disclosure of all expenditures, the balance of tax versus non-tax revenues, and implementation of a plan that demonstrates long-term financial stability will help to assure this support.

*The LWCF was established to provide federal funds for land acquisition in national parks, forests, recreation areas, and wildlife preserves and to match grants at the state and local level for the planning, acquisition, and development of recreation areas and the protection of open space.*

*Today, Americans no longer consider recreation a weekend luxury but a necessity for physical, emotional, and mental well-being. The President's Commission found that 89 percent of Americans go outdoors to recreate, and that they do so for fitness and health reasons, to be with other people, to experience excitement, to enjoy nature, and to escape.*

## Needs Analysis

To make the best decisions, Cleveland Metroparks examined societal and recreation trends, demographic changes in Northeast Ohio, and people's use and non-use of the Park District. Information was analyzed to provide insight into the recreational needs of visitors and would-be visitors. These included the following:

- Trends
- Demographics
- Public Meetings
- Regional Telephone Survey
- Visitor's Survey

### Trends

In 1962 the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC) conducted a three-year study of recreation trends in America. ORRRC concluded that Americans were rapidly outgrowing existing outdoor resources due to an enlarging population, increasing leisure time, greater mobility, and growing affluence.

The 1962 ORRRC report brought national attention to recreation issues and set the stage for further action, such as the creation of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in 1963. The LWCF was established to provide federal funds for land acquisition in national parks, forests, recreation areas, and wildlife preserves and to match grants at the state and local level for the planning, acquisition, and development of recreation areas and the protection of open space. Since its inception, the LWCF has added nearly \$6 billion worth of public recreation lands and facilities to local, state, and federal holdings which include protected wilderness areas, hiking trails, wild and scenic rivers, and ocean front.

Twenty years later a committee of experts convened and found that outdoor recreation had become more

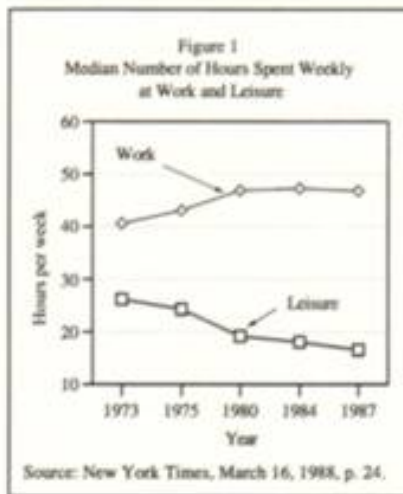
important to Americans, but that across-the-board government cutbacks had endangered the future of the LWCF, curtailed the development of national parks, and lowered the quality of maintenance at state and local parks. These disturbing conclusions led to the formation in 1985 of the *President's Commission on Americans Outdoors* - a federal commission responsible for periodically reviewing the condition of America's outdoor resources.

The 1985 President's Commission, headed by Governor Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, discovered that significant changes had occurred in the nation's outdoor recreation habits since the 1960s. For example, the Commission found public demand for recreation had grown dramatically and participation in some activities had even exceeded levels projected for the year 2000 by the 1970s. Parks and natural areas in urban areas were discovered to be most people's only contact with the outdoors and even this limited exposure was found to be inaccessible to the central city poor, the elderly, and the handicapped.

14 Contemporary societal and recreation trends are likely to impact people's use of Cleveland Metroparks in the future. Given the multitude of determinants of leisure behavior, how trends will impact Cleveland Metroparks is impossible to determine. Thought and imagination is needed to address the following trends and how they will affect Cleveland Metroparks:

- The Erosion of Free Time
- Changing Role of Women
- Increased Concern for the Environment
- Americans Suffer from Time Famine
- Fitness Boom
- Changes in Technology
- Visitation to Parks Close to Home Has Increased
- American Society is Getting Older
- Outdoor Recreation Has Multiple Meanings





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### **The Erosion of Free Time**

Americans are unlikely to experience massive new gains in free time as they did with the introduction of the 40-hour work week. In fact, there is some evidence that Americans may actually be working more and spending less time in leisure activities (Figure 1).

According to the 1987 *Report Of the President's Commission*, leisure time has become scarce for many adult Americans. The Commission estimated the median leisure time decreased from 24.3 hours per week in 1975 to 18.1 hours per week in 1984. By 1986 it was reported that men had only 20.3 hours per week available for leisure and women had 15.6 hours of available leisure time.

The President's Commission attributed a decline in leisure time to several factors. As the national economy continues to move toward services and information, there are more salaried employees who must work longer hours than most hourly wage earners. In fact, a recent Harris Poll concluded that the median workweek had risen from 43.1 hours in 1975 to 47.3 hours in 1984. Many adults are also going to school part-time in addition to working regular hours as higher education is becoming increasingly necessary for job advancement. This trend is also explained, in part, by a growing number of women who are working outside the home. Among males working full-time, there has been little change over the last few decades in time devoted to work and leisure.

However, significant discrepancies appeared when leisure time trends were compared across sources. According to *Leisure Watch* (summer 1990) Americans have more leisure time today than ever before. Men have 40 hours per week of free time and women have 39 hours per week. This increase in free time is apparently due to a shorter workweek, more holidays, the trend toward having fewer children and getting married later in life, and technological advances that quicken the pace of housework. Americans are also retiring earlier. It is estimated that over 75 percent of Americans retire before they reach 65. Most gains in free time occurred between 1965 and 1975 and have remained stable since then. Leisure time is defined here to mean the time spent outside of work, commuting, household chores and responsibilities, sleeping, eating, and personal care activities.



Perhaps it is safer to say that total leisure time in America varies with the life cycle stages of the baby boomers. For example, those now aged 36-50 have less free time than other age groups. The lowest amount of free time was found to exist especially among parents of preschoolers. However, those aged 51-64 have gained the most free time in recent years and the baby boomers can expect to reach this stage within the next two decades. Therefore, although a large segment of the American population is now busy with work and family, the trend will soon move towards leisure.

The distribution of leisure time is changing as well. Employment patterns are changing towards more self-employment and more flexible work schedules. In 1984, 1 in 11 Americans were self-employed which represents a 44 percent increase since 1970. In addition, 12 percent of all full-time employees were on flexible work schedules in the early 1980s up from less than 5 percent in 1974. This trend toward nontraditional employment patterns suggests that outdoor recreation activities should also be programmed during non-peak periods to accommodate those who may not work the regular nine to five workday.

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Finally, the significance of leisure time is also in the process of being redefined. Americans are more educated today than before and this will trigger more intense competition for higher level jobs. The literature suggests that this will result in underemployment or over qualification that will compel people to seek personal fulfillment and a sense of identity through recreational pursuits rather than through employment.

### ***Changing Role of Women***

Recreation trends also reflect the changing role of women in American society. During the past few decades, many women have entered the work force in increasing numbers either due to choice or out of economic necessity. Presently, 60 percent of adult women work for a monetary income, including over half of women who have children. Many women are also now opting to pursue professional careers, and indeed over half the students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities are women. Research has shown that as the power and income gaps between men and women have narrowed, women have become more active in outdoor

recreation and their leisure needs have been more actively addressed. A study done in the 1980s reports that sports and fitness participation among women, especially young women, has grown dramatically over the past few years. For example, women now make up 70 percent of all new bicyclists.

Furthermore, women's increasing involvement in recreational issues is responsible, in part, for the passage of equal opportunity legislation such as Title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed in 1972, which required schools to develop sports teams for young women. Subsequently, many more women participated in recreational activities during school and in the years beyond, especially in softball, basketball, and tennis.

### ***Increased Concern for the Environment***

Americans have become increasingly concerned about environmental problems across the planet. Research has demonstrated that public support for environmental protection has begun to command the support from large majorities. Despite widespread environmental concern, the public's commitment toward protecting the environment has been more indecisive. Environmental attitudes, have had little impact in recent presidential elections, and it is questionable whether many people have adopted a more ecological lifestyle.

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### ***Americans Suffer from Time Famine***

Americans suffer from "time famine"—the feeling that one does not have enough time to do all the things that one would like to do. In a recent national survey, nearly one-third of Americans agreed with the statement, I feel that I'm constantly under stress - trying to accomplish more than I can handle. This finding is consistent with a 1985 study that reported one-third of adults aged 18 to 65 stated they always felt "rushed" to get things done.

Time famine stems largely from the simple fact that consumption takes time. Most Americans have the ability to purchase more and more consumer goods and experiment with an array of lifestyles and activities—all at relatively low costs. An abundance of options means that people have less time to spend on each activity.

Time famine also stems from the emergence of new standards of efficiency. We have come to expect speed in almost all that we do. To compensate, Americans speed-up the pace in which leisure activities are pursued. This is done by engaging in commodity-intensive behavior, engaging in activities simultaneously, pursuing activities more rapidly, using time more precisely, and becoming more self-directed in behavior.

### ***Fitness Boom***

Americans' attitudes toward recreation have changed in tandem with changes in the American way of life. Americans have become more health conscious and are embracing physical fitness and the new notions of "wellness" and "successful aging." An increasing number of Americans are defining personal success in terms of their recreational accomplishments, rather than by their careers, as the relationship between work and leisure shifts. The American population is aging and future recreational needs will reflect this change as the elderly devote more time and energy to recreation. The changing character of American households points to the degeneration of the nuclear family and the rise in the number of single parent and childless households which present new obstacles for recreation providers. The "back to the land" movement of the 1970s has been replaced in the 1990s by a rediscovery of urban living and a concern for meeting mass recreational needs within limited space. Finally, the changing role of women in American society has brought on an increase in participation by women in outdoor recreational pursuits.

Outdoor recreation activities with a fitness component have increased in popularity since the early 1960s. In a 1987 Gallup Poll, 49 percent of American adults said they participated regularly in fitness activities, compared to 24 percent in 1961 (*Leisure Watch*, 1990). *The Report of the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors (1987)* indicated that 84 percent of adults said they had walked for pleasure at least once in the past year. Almost half (46 percent) said they had gone bicycling, 42 percent said they had gone running or jogging, 30 percent said they had played tennis, and 22 percent said they had gone golfing.

Today, Americans no longer consider recreation a weekend luxury but a necessity for physical, emotional,



*A study done in the 1980s reports that sports and fitness participation among women, especially young women, has grown dramatically over the past few years. For example, women now make up 70 percent of all new bicyclists.*

and mental well-being. The President's Commission found that 89 percent of Americans go outdoors to recreate, and that they do so for fitness and health reasons, to be with other people, to experience excitement, to enjoy nature, and to escape. Those who do not tend to recreate outdoors are the elderly, poor, ill, disabled, and less educated. However, this is not to say that these groups would not recreate outdoors if given the chance. For example, a 1985 Harris Poll of disabled citizens showed that life satisfaction is directly related to participation in recreation for those surveyed.

The President's Commission cited health reasons as the main motivation for adult participation in outdoor pursuits. This new concern for health and fitness was disseminated by the public health and medical communities in various reports such as The Public Health Service's 1986 report, "Annual Review of Public Health" which linked regular physical activity and the prevention of heart disease. In addition, the medical profession recently began promoting a holistic health approach to disease prevention through lifestyle changes which include frequent exercise. Although such public awareness campaigns have changed the fitness habits of many adults, the fitness boom has not appeared to affect children, teenagers, and the economically disadvantaged.

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The American fitness craze has caused a surge in the popularity of numerous fitness activities over the past 20 years. For example, jogging was not even included in the National Recreation Survey in 1960. By 1982 the survey included jogging and found that 26 percent of its respondents participated. Bicycling participation has also skyrocketed, according to the National Bicyclist Federation, which reports that there were 72 million bikers in the U.S. in 1983 and roughly 90 million bikers (more than 1 in 3 Americans) to date. Included in these figures is the emergence of mountain biking. At the birth of mountain biking in 1983 there were 200,000 mountain bikers in the U.S. and most recent user estimates are at 12 million. There has also been an increased interest in golf recently. According to the National Golf Foundation, there were 16.5 million golfers in the United States in 1983. There are now 24.7 million golfers in the U.S. and estimates project there will be 31 million golfers by 2000. Another sport that is representative of the American fitness boom is rollerblading, which has emerged over the past ten years. Rollerblade Inc., of Minneapolis,

which presently enjoys a 75 percent market share, reports that 20,000 people were in-line skating in 1984 and 500,000 people are participating to-date.

### ***Changes in Technology***

Changes in technology have made participation in outdoor recreation easier and more economical for larger groups of people. Continued technological innovations have also meant the development of new forms of outdoor recreation (in-line skating, for example). This trend will probably result in sustained, if not continued, growth in outdoor recreation.

### ***Visitation to Parks Close to Home Has Increased***

In the last 30 years, there has been a trend for people to take more trips to parks, but ones that are closer to home. These trips are generally spread out during the year (i.e., non-peak seasons), and are generally for a shorter duration of time.

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According to the National Park Service, there will be less time available for leisure in the future, particularly among the young and middle-aged, two-income families that represent the bulk of national park users. Thus, park users will tend toward day use of outdoor recreation sites and will travel shorter distances to reach such facilities than in the past. In 1960 most trips took 5 days or longer to reach outdoor recreation facilities. Between 1969 and 1983 the amount of time people were willing to drive to reach outdoor recreation facilities decreased by about 20 percent to 6 hours or less each way.

### ***American Society is Getting Older***

The percentage of older adults in the United States has increased dramatically and is expected to continue so in the decades ahead. Age has historically been one of the best predictors of outdoor recreation, with participation generally going down with age. This tendency may reflect cohort effects rather than age-group effects. If so, younger generations, having been socialized early into outdoor recreation, may continue to participate throughout their lives. Even so, the types of activities pursued are likely to change. We can probably expect higher rates in activities such as walking and golfing, and lower rates for activities such as picnicking, bicy-

cling, running, and active sports. Although recreation providers must be aware of the needs of all age groups, special attention should be paid to the recreational habits of the elderly population. In terms of sheer numbers, baby boomers will reach old age early in the 21st century and will make the elderly the second largest segment of the national population. By 2030, 20.7 percent of the nation's population will be 65 and over, up from 12.7 percent in 1990 (the under 18 group will have the largest share at 21.9 percent). Due to better health care, today's elderly will live longer, too. In fact, by 2010 about 6 percent of American women and 3 percent of American men will be 75 and over. The average life expectancy for women will reach 92 in the early 1990's.

### ***Outdoor Recreation Has Multiple Meanings***

The meaning people assign to participation in outdoor recreation is becoming increasingly complex. This stems from the fact that American society is becoming increasingly diverse. The United States is composed of distinct generations, racial and ethnic groups, and subcultures. Sex roles, family configurations, and attitudes toward work, leisure and pleasure seeking have undergone change. Given the heterogenous and changing character of American society, different groups of people have different (and sometimes conflicting) ideas as to what comprises meaningful leisure and outdoor recreation.

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### **Demographics**

For purposes of definition, Northeast Ohio is defined here as Cuyahoga County and the six adjoining counties of Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit. These seven counties comprise the Cleveland-Akron-Lorain Consolidated Statistical Area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The publication of the 1990 U.S. Census provided recent information concerning the demographic characteristics of people in Northeast Ohio. The data also provided an opportunity to examine how the population has changed since 1970 and 1980, and how it is expected to change in the next 15 to 20 years. Four major issues were identified:

- The Erosion of Cleveland Metroparks Tax Base
- Minorities Have Increased Their Share of the Population
- Size of Households and Family Configurations Have Changed
- Aging Composition of Cuyahoga County Mirrors National Trend

### ***The Erosion of Cleveland Metroparks Tax Base***

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Cuyahoga County's population was 1.4 million in 1990. While Cuyahoga County ranks 14th nationwide among counties in population, it has been losing population at a dramatic rate. Between 1980 and 1990, the population in Cuyahoga County decreased by almost 6 percent. A loss of more population is expected in the decades ahead.

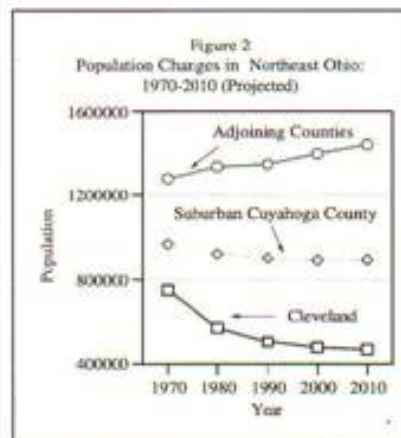
The loss of population in Cleveland during the 1980s was even more dramatic. In addition, every one of the 18 suburbs that directly border the city of Cleveland ("inner-ring suburbs") also lost population during the 1980s. Some suburbs in Cuyahoga County increased in population, although only 6 of these had 1980 populations that exceeded 10,000. These include Brecksville, Broadview Heights, North Royalton, Solon, Strongsville, and Westlake.

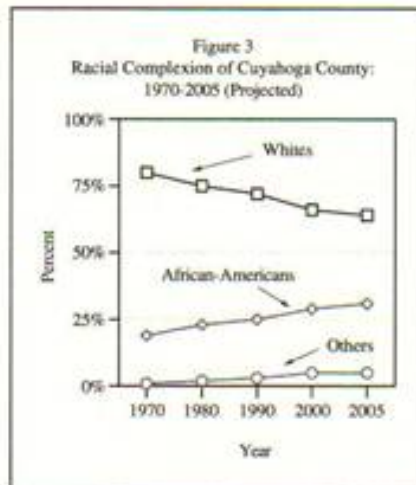
Overall, the population of Northeast Ohio was over 2.7 million in 1990. Decreases in the population of Cuyahoga County have been offset by increases in the population of adjoining counties (Figure 2). In effect, Cuyahoga County is losing population to its suburban neighbors, a trend expected to continue in the decades ahead. A majority (75 percent) of those who moved out of Cuyahoga County continue to work in Cuyahoga County. Lake County had the highest number of "immigrants" from Cuyahoga County (15,030), followed by Medina County (14,159), Lorain County (11,139), Summit County (9,963), Geauga County (7,037), and Portage County (4,459).

### ***Minorities Have Increased Their Share of the Population***

The percentage of minorities in the population of Cuyahoga County has increased steadily since 1970 and

*For purposes of definition, Northeast Ohio is defined here as Cuyahoga County and the six adjoining counties of Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit. These seven counties comprise the Cleveland-Akron-Lorain Consolidated Statistical Area, as defined by the U.S. Census*





is projected to continue to increase in the next 15 years (Figure 3). African-Americans comprise the largest group of minorities in Cuyahoga County (25 percent). Other minorities are represented in far smaller numbers. These include Hispanics (2 percent) and Asians (1 percent). By the year 2015, minorities are expected to comprise over 35% of the county's population.

### ***Poverty Rates Have Increased With a Downturn in the Local Economy***

The poverty rate in Cuyahoga County increased by 41 percent between 1980 and 1992. Today, one in every five people in Cuyahoga County live in poverty. The distribution of wealth in Cuyahoga County is one of economic extremes which is stratified geographically and racially. In 1992, the poverty rate in Cleveland was 41 percent and 45 percent in East Cleveland. Poverty rates in other suburbs were less than 6 percent. Poverty rates were higher on the east side of Cleveland (51 percent) than the west side (26 percent). In some east side neighborhoods in Cleveland, more than eight out of 10 people are poor. The poverty rate among African-Americans is four times higher than the rate for the white population. The poverty rate in households headed by a single female is eight times higher than the rate for married-couple families. According to a recent report published by the Council for Economic Opportunities in Cleveland (1992), the growth in poverty in Cuyahoga County is linked to two major, nationwide, economic recessions in the early 1980s. The report attributes local poverty rates to a 37 percent loss of all manufacturing production jobs in the Greater Cleveland area.

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### ***Size of Households and Family Configurations Have Changed***

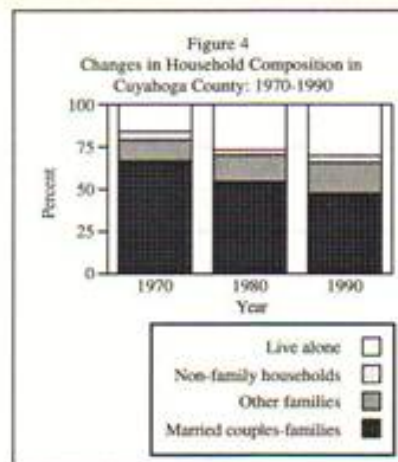
The nature of the American household has become less homogeneous over recent years. The traditional nuclear family with a father who is the breadwinner, a mother who is the homemaker, and children who live at home is quickly becoming obsolete and presently accounts for only 19 percent of American households. In fact, it is estimated that over 80 percent of the households formed between 1975 and 1990 will be non-family households.



The average household size has decreased in the region. This trend reflects a dramatic change in family configurations in the last 20 years (Figure 4). There are fewer married couples in the population in 1990 than there were in 1970 or 1980. Since 1970, the rate of married-couple families decreased by 28 percent. In contrast, the share of other-parent households (e.g., single parent households) and people living alone increased between 1970 and 1990. The most dramatic growth is for those living alone. The rate of those living alone increased by nearly 90 percent between 1970 and 1990. The American household is shrinking in size. In 1910 the average household size was 4.5 persons which has decreased to 2.7 persons today. This dramatic decline in household size may be attributed in part to the growing acceptance of unconventional living arrangements. Twenty years ago single-parent households were virtually an anomaly. By 1986, 13 percent of all American households were headed by a single parent. In fact, 46 percent of all children born in the late 1970's will live in a one-parent household sometime during their youth. Shrinking household size can also be attributed to the fact that baby boomers are having fewer children. Since 1970, there are 34 percent more married households with no children and 44 percent fewer households with more than two children.

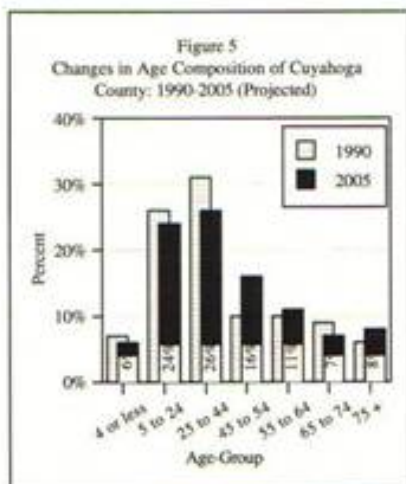
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The decreasing size of American households will affect the way recreation providers approach their task in the future. Single-parent households typically have lower incomes, less mobility, and less time for leisure than do two-parent households. Specifically, many single parents might benefit from recreational opportunities that are supervised and close to home, especially after school and during the summer months. Furthermore, outdoor recreation activities traditionally taught by fathers, such as hunting and fishing, may decline as more children live in female-headed households. At the other extreme, a household without children is likely to have more time and money for leisure pursuits than does a household with children. Adults without children can therefore be expected to recreate more than their counterparts with families and will add to an already increasing demand for recreation facilities.



### ***Aging Composition of Cuyahoga County Mirrors National Trend***

Although recreation providers must be aware of the needs of all age groups, special attention should be paid to the recreational habits of the elderly population. In terms of sheer numbers, baby boomers will reach old age early in the 21st century and will make the elderly the second largest segment of the national population. By 2030, 20.7 percent of the nation's population will be 65 and over up from 12.7 percent in 1990 (the under 18 group will have the largest share at 21.9 percent). Due to better health care, today's elderly will live longer, too. In fact, by 2010 about 6 percent of American women and 3 percent of American men will be 75 and over. The average life expectancy for women will reach 92 in the early 1990s.



This same shift has occurred in the age composition of Cuyahoga County's population since 1980; the population is getting older. This trend is expected to continue in the next 15 years (Figure 5). The largest expected increase is for those between the age of 45 and 54. The percentage of people in this age category is expected to increase by 64 percent. Those between the ages of 55 and 64 is expected to increase by 16 percent. The number of people 75-years-or-older is expected to grow by more than 30 percent.

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The elderly population can be expected to participate actively in outdoor recreation. Despite a preference for more passive and solitary pursuits with age, people tend to continue the same recreational pursuits throughout their adult life and into old age. In addition, older citizens will enjoy better retirement plans and will be better educated, more widely traveled, more politicized, and very active in the community. These factors correlate with high participation in outdoor recreation.

## Implications

Cleveland Metroparks is in a unique position to provide leadership in environmental protection and education in Northeast Ohio. Evidence from the in-park and telephone surveys suggest that people in Northeast Ohio support the Park District if it chooses to move in this leadership role.

### Limit Development

While park users in Northeast Ohio favor keeping parks natural and limiting development, they do support some of the recreational development ones that potentially have relatively low impact, such as hiking and bicycle trails.

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### Declining Populations

A decline in the population of Cuyahoga County has two important implications for Cleveland Metroparks. First, a population loss in Cuyahoga County will mean a reduction in the size of the tax district. If the population continues to grow in adjoining counties, we can expect a greater percentage of visitors to reside outside the tax district. This may have consequences or implications for the pricing and delivery of Park District services. Second, the tax base for Cleveland Metroparks will increasingly rest with minorities and those with lower incomes. These groups have traditionally not used the Park District at rates comparable to their numbers in the population. To actively serve a growing minority population and lower income, Cleveland Metroparks must be sensitive to their special needs and preferences.

### Aging Population

An aging population will have a number of implications as well. First, the kinds of activities pursued in Cleveland Metroparks is likely to change. Since partici-

pation in many outdoor recreation activities changes with age, future demand for picnicking, swimming, and active sports will undoubtedly decline, while demand for walking, golfing, and fitness/wellness activities will likely increase. Second, a greater percentage of potential visitors will find visitation more difficult. To meet the needs of this aging population, Cleveland Metroparks will need to locate, design, and market programs and facilities that are appropriate to older people's needs. Third, an older population may also provide the Park District an important source of volunteers and/or paid service help in the future.

### Styles of Recreation

Many different styles of recreation are present in Cleveland Metroparks, styles that may potentially produce conflict. Programs and facilities must be located, designed, and marketed with recognition to seek compatibility of styles of use. For example, providing trail opportunities near fishing areas may be unnecessary given anglers tendency to pursue fishing singularly.

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### Time Scarcity

Time scarcity will continue to be a limitation that plagues many people in Northeast Ohio. Cleveland Metroparks must recognize that both visitors and would-be visitors have only a limited amount of time. As people seek to deal with time scarcity, their use of the Park District is likely to be more planned and deliberate. This means that quality of experience and time efficiency will be positively valued.

### Reservation Use

The majority of users of Cleveland Metroparks visit only a few reservations close to home. Most people's use of the Park District is more local than it is regional. This may be interpreted as an indication that most people, at least in their usership patterns, do not necessarily see the Park District as a system as Park District officials do. Results from the in-park survey suggest that people's use of Cleveland Metroparks is highly influenced by the types of information they use or receive about programs and facilities. Hence, through its Department of Marketing & Visitor Services, the Park Dis-



trict does and can impact people's awareness and use of reservations in which they might not be currently familiar.

### Gender Differences

Use of Cleveland Metroparks and parks in general is more problematic for females than it is for males. As family configurations and sex roles change, factors that limit women's use of the Park District will likely intensify. To better serve the female population, the Park District must be sensitive to their unique circumstances, with emphasis on park safety, clustered resources and activities for many ages.

### Wellness

As the baby boom generation ages, there will probably be increased concern for wellness and, thus, greater demand for trails and areas for walking, hiking, bicycling, and other fitness activities.

## Listening To Visitors

### *Cleveland Metroparks Reservations*

#### ***Public Meetings***

To identify important issues and concerns of residents of Cleveland Metroparks, 14 public meetings were held in 1990. While public meetings do not measure the full extent of public sentiment, they highlight attitudes and issues of importance, and provide an opportunity for input to decision making. Meetings were attended by 572 individuals who provided nearly 800 comments focusing on concerns about park access, conservation of natural resources, outdoor education, recreational use, law enforcement, policy making, long-range planning, park operations and maintenance, and land acquisition and user conflicts. In general, comments reflect Cleveland Metroparks benefit to the community and the pressure placed on limited physical resources by over 20 million visitors annually. Recognizing that compromises must be made in balancing recreational demands in often-crowded and environmentally-sensitive areas with the obligation to be conscientious stewards was the consensus of these meetings. Most participants applauded Cleveland Metroparks stewardship efforts and opposed "overdeveloping" simply to appease the desire for recreational access.

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#### ***Telephone Survey***

A telephone survey was conducted in 1991 to determine how often people in Northeast Ohio visit parks, the factors that limit some people from using parks, what public park agencies can do to help people use parks more often, and what park agencies can do to improve the quality of services in Northeast Ohio. Over 1,000 people were surveyed. Who are the non-users of public parks in Northeast Ohio? What factors limit people's use of parks? What can Cleveland Metroparks and other agencies do that might help people use parks more often? Insight to these questions was identified in three issues:

- Three Out of Four People in Northeast Ohio Use Parks
- Factors That Limit People's Use of Public Parks
- Changes that Might Result in People Using Parks More

**Three Out of Four People in Northeast Ohio Use Parks**

About three out of four people in Northeast Ohio said they use parks. About 40 percent visit regularly. These individuals said they visited parks at least once a month. About 33 percent are infrequent users. These include those who visit parks less than once a month or once or twice a year. Only one-quarter are non-users, individuals who said they don't visit parks at all.

Regular parks users, infrequent users and non-users differ in terms of their gender, age, race, and level of income. Regular park users tend to be male, younger, white, and have higher than average levels of family income.

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**Factors That Limit People's Use of Public Parks**

Non-users and infrequent users were asked to rate whether different factors were important, somewhat important, or not important in limiting their use of public parks in Northeast Ohio (Table 1).

Time constraints and other commitments are the most important factors that limit people's use of public parks. Three out of four non-users and infrequent users said they did not use parks because they were too busy with other activities. Seven out of ten mentioned lack of time. Two-thirds said they pursue recreation elsewhere. About six out of ten said they are busy with family responsibilities.

Nearly half said that either fear of crime or lack of information prevented them from using parks more. Less than a third said they had no one to go with, parks were too crowded, they don't like outdoor recreation, or parks are too far away. An even smaller number cited poor health, park facilities and programs cost too much, public transportation is lacking, parks are over developed, or not having a way to get to parks.

**Table 1**  
Rank Order of Ten Most Important Reasons for Not Using Public Parks in Northeast Ohio

|   | <u>Percent</u> |
|---|----------------|
| •Parks too far away .....   | 29             |
| •Don't like to participate in outdoor recreation activities ....  | 29             |
| •Parks are too crowded .....                                      | 32             |
| •No one with whom to go .....                                     | 33             |
| •Lack of information about existing parks and park programs ..... | 48             |
| •Fear of crime .....  | 49             |
| •Too busy with family responsibilities .....                      | 59             |
| •Pursue recreation elsewhere .....                                | 66             |
| •Lack of time .....   | 72             |
| •Too busy with other activities .....                             | 74             |

Not all barriers to park visitation are experienced the same by different sub-populations:

- Women cited more factors for not using parks than men, including fear of crime, not having anyone to go with, lack of time, and family responsibilities.
- Young and older people experienced barriers in different ways. Barriers mentioned more by young adults include lack of time, family responsibilities, and a lack of information. Older adults, on the other hand, were more likely than their younger counterparts to cite poor health, fear of crime, a lack of public transportation, and not having anyone to go with.
- Minorities were more likely than whites to say their use of parks was limited by a lack of information, cost, and a lack of public transportation. Whites, in contrast, were more likely than minorities to say they were busy with other activities.
- A number of barriers were associated with low income, including fear of crime, poor health, no one to go with, cost, lack of public transportation, and a dislike for outdoor recreation. In contrast, some barriers were associated with a high income, including lack of time, family responsibilities, being too busy with other activities, and pursuing recreation elsewhere.

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**Table 2**

*Changes That Might Result in People Using Public Parks More*

|  | <i>Percent</i> |
|--|----------------|
| •Reduce development in parks .....   | 1              |
| •Provide public transportation to parks .....                                | 34             |
| •Reduce costs .....  | 38             |
| •Provide assistance with the care of children and other family members ..... | 39             |
| •Reduce travel time to parks .....   | 41             |
| •Reduce overcrowding in parks .....  | 42             |
| •Develop parks closer to home .....  | 52             |
| •Provide more activities .....   | 56             |
| •Provide more information about existing parks and park programs .....       | 71             |
| •Make parks safer .....  | 72             |

***Changes That Might Result in People Using Parks More***

Non-users and infrequent users were also asked whether specific changes in park operations or programming might result in their visiting parks more often. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the combined percentage of non-users and infrequent users who said a change might result in their using parks more.

More than 70 percent said they might use public parks more if they are made safer and if more information is provided about existing parks and park programs. Over half said they might use parks more if more activities are provided and if parks are developed closer to home.



About 40 percent said they might use parks more if the following changes occurred: overcrowding was reduced, travel time was reduced, and assistance was provided in the care of children and family members. Only one-third said one of the following changes might result in their using public parks more: provide public transportation, reduce development, and reduce costs associated with going to parks. Sub-populations also varied in their answers to the different items:

- Females were more likely than males to state they might use parks more if they are made safer.
- Younger people said they might use parks more if parks are developed closer to home and if travel time is reduced. They were also more likely to say they might use parks more if additional information is provided, more activities are provided, and if assistance is provided with the care of children and other family members. Older adults, on the other hand, stated they might use parks more if they are made safer and if public transportation is provided.
- African-Americans were more likely than whites to say they might use parks more if the following changes were implemented: travel time is reduced, public transportation is provided, and if more activities are provided.
- Low income earners said they might use parks more if they are developed closer to home, travel time is reduced, public transportation is provided, parks are made safer, costs are reduced, and assistance is provided with the care of children and other family members.

What groups don't use public parks in Northeast Ohio? Results from the telephone survey indicate that non-users and infrequent users are more likely to be female, older, and African-American. They also tend to have lower levels of income.

Why don't people use parks more? Lack of time, family responsibilities, and other activities are the primary reasons people mentioned. If Cleveland Metro-parks is to attract would-be visitors, these barriers must be addressed. Would-be visitors must believe that time



spent in a park or on leisure activities is beneficial and an efficient use of their time.

Addressing why people don't visit parks must also account for their particular situation. Males and females, younger and older adults, minority groups and whites, and people with varying levels of income experience barriers to park visitation in different ways. To better serve these and other groups, their unique circumstances must be considered in the future planning and marketing of park services.

### ***Visitor Survey***

A survey was conducted in the spring, summer and fall of 1991 in 12 of Cleveland Metroparks 14 reservations. Approximately 5,000 people were surveyed. The survey provided demographic information about visitors and information about their use of Park District reservations, patterns of use (e.g., activities pursued, travel time, duration of stay), attitudes toward facilities and preservation in the Park District, and satisfaction with different features of the reservation.

Questions answered from the three-season, in-park survey include: what are the typical activities visitors participate in while visiting Cleveland Metroparks? How far do visitors travel and how long do they stay? How often do people visit? How extensive is people's use of the Park District? Are people more satisfied with some features of the Park District than others, and, if so, what are they? How do visitors keep informed about Park District events? What are the demographic characteristics of Park District visitors? The following 12 issues were then identified:

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- Diversity characterizes people's use of Cleveland Metroparks
- Many visitors participate in combinations of activities
- Users visit frequently
- Visitation is brief
- Visitors live nearby
- Park visitation is social
- Visitors make use of only a few reservations

- Visitors are satisfied with Cleveland Metroparks
- Familiarity with features of the Park District varies
- Willingness to pay fees for different services
- Keeping informed about Cleveland Metroparks
- Demographic characteristics of Park District visitors

**Diversity Characterizes People’s Use of Cleveland Metroparks**

Table 3 provides a summary of activities pursued in Cleveland Metroparks. The totals correspond to the percentage of visitors who said they participated in a given activity on the day of the interview. It is evident that while many activities are pursued in Cleveland Metroparks, only a few are pursued by large numbers of visitors.

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The two most popular activities overall were relaxation and walking/hiking. Almost half said they came to relax. More than 40 percent said they came to walk or hike. Picnicking was the next most popular activity (20 percent). Picnicking was highly seasonal, however. One-quarter of summer visitors said they came to picnic, compared to only 14 percent of spring visitors and 12 percent of fall visitors.

The next most popular activity overall was solitude. Sixteen percent said they sought solitude. More than one-tenth of all visitors said they observed nature or played with children. Slightly less said they walked a dog, went fishing, drove for pleasure, visited a nature center, or spent time with loved ones. The percentage of people who said they swam was only 7 percent. During the summer, however, 14% of all visitors said they swam.

Activities with a physical fitness element were also popular. About 5 percent of all visitors said they bicycled, jogged or engaged in informal sports (like frisbee) during their visit.

The types of activities people participate in are highly related to age. Generally speaking, younger people are more likely than older people to run or jog, picnic, swim, bicycle, and play with children. In contrast, higher rates of walking or hiking and golf were reported among

**Table 3**

Table 3  
Rank Order of 16 Most Widely Pursued Activities in Cleveland Metroparks on Day of Interview

|                                       | <b>Percent</b> |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Golf .....                            | 3              |
| Informal sports (e.g., frisbee) ..... | 4              |
| Bicycling .....                       | 5              |
| Visit nature center .....             | 6              |
| Run /jog .....                        | 6              |
| Pleasure driving .....                | 6              |
| Fishing .....                         | 7              |
| Swimming .....                        | 7              |
| Spend time alone with someone special | 8              |
| Walking a dog .....                   | 9              |
| Children’s activities .....           | 12             |
| Observe nature .....                  | 12             |
| Solitude .....                        | 16             |
| Picnicking .....                      | 20             |
| Walk/hike .....                       | 44             |
| Relaxation .....                      | 49             |

**Many Visitors Participate in Combinations of Activities**

Two general patterns of visitation characterize how people use Cleveland Metroparks. Some pursue a singular style of visitation - the pursuit of one activity during a visit. This style was pursued by 37 percent of those surveyed. Others pursue a multiple style of visitation - the tendency to participate in a combination of activities. A quarter of all surveyed said they engaged in two activities, while 35 percent participated in at least three.

Those pursuing a multiple or singular style of visitation tend to be different. These differences are summarized as follows.

| <u>Characteristic</u> | <u>Singular Style</u> | <u>Multiple Style</u> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Gender                | Male                  | Female                |
| Age                   | Older                 | Younger               |
| Freq.of visitation    | Regular               | Infrequent            |
| Duration of visit     | Shorter               | Longer                |
| Travel time           | Shorter               | Longer                |
| Children in group     | None                  | One or more           |
| Season                | Fall                  | Summer                |

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**Table 4**

*Percentage of Activity Participants Who Did Not Participate in Another Activity During Their Visit*

|  | <u>Percent</u> |
|--|----------------|
| •Solitude .....                              | 4              |
| •Visit nature center .....                   | 5              |
| •Spend time alone with someone special ..... | 5              |
| •Pleasure driving .....                      | 5              |
| •Children's activities .....                 | 5              |
| •Observe nature .....                        | 7              |
| •Swimming .....                              | 7              |
| •Informal sports (e.g., frisbee) .....       | 7              |
| •Picnicking .....                            | 11             |
| •Relaxation .....                            | 12             |
| •Walking a dog .....                         | 19             |
| •Walk/hike .....                             | 24             |
| •Fishing .....                               | 34             |
| •Run/jog .....                               | 35             |
| •Bicycling .....                             | 36             |
| •Golf .....                                  | 69             |

Activities also lend themselves to one style or another. Table 4 gives the percentage of activity participants who do not engage in other activities during their visit. Activities with a low percentage indicate a multiple style of use, while a high percentage a singular style. Examples of activities pursued in combination with others include: solitude, visiting a nature center, picnicking, and relaxation. In contrast, golf, bicycling, running, and fishing are more apt to be pursued singularly.

Participation in some activities was related to participation in other activities. This tendency was reflected in one of two ways. First, participation in one activity meant a higher probability of participating in another activity:

- walking while observing nature
- picnicking with informal sports and relaxation
- visiting a nature center with walking, observing nature, and driving for pleasure
- swimming with informal sports

Second, participation in one activity meant a lower probability of participating in another activity:

- running with picnicking and children's activities
- walking with swimming and fishing
- observing nature with swimming
- bicycling with picnicking

### ***Users Visit Frequently***

Almost all visitors are not new to Cleveland Metro-parks: 85 percent of those surveyed said they had been to the reservation they were visiting at least once in the last two years. Most users of the Park District visit regularly. Almost one-half of all surveyed said they visit at least once a week. For many, park visitation is part of a daily routine. One out of four said they visit the reservation almost daily. Those who visit often are more likely to be male, older, white, and live in close proximity of the reservation. Furthermore, frequent visitors are generally not accompanied by small children.

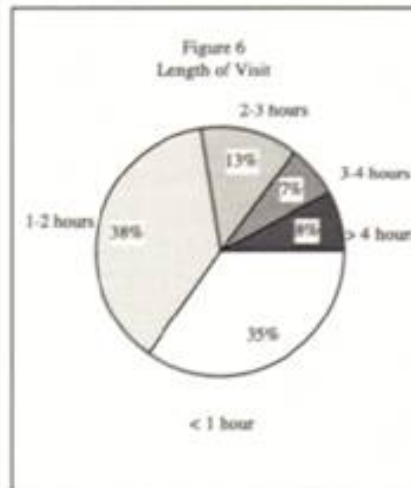
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### ***Visitation is Brief***

The vast majority of Park District users visit for only a short period of time, as indicated in Figure 6. More than 70 percent of all surveyed said that their visit would be for less than two hours. More than one-third said they would stay for less than one hour. Length of visit varied greatly by season of the year. Summer visitors spend the most time, followed by spring visitors, and finally, fall visitors.

### ***Visitors Live Nearby***

Six out of ten surveyed said they live within 15 minutes travel time of the reservation. An additional 30 percent stated that they live between 15 to 30 minutes of the reservation. Travel time was highly related to race, with African-Americans traveling further than whites. While travel time to a reservation is relatively short, Cleveland Metroparks visitors overwhelmingly arrive by car or van (92 percent). A small fraction said they arrive by foot or bicycle (7 percent). Only a quarter of one-percent said they arrive by bus.



**Park Visitation is Social**

People typically visit a Cleveland Metroparks reservation with at least one other person. Only 1 out of 10 people said they visit the reservation alone. However, Park District visitors typically come with small groups rather than large ones: 70 percent of visitors said they were accompanied by one-to-three people.

**Visitors Make Use of Only a Few Reservations**

On the average, users of Cleveland Metroparks visit about three reservations per year. Only 30 percent said they visit only one reservation. Only 25 percent said they visit four or more reservations per year. Some people visit more reservations than others. These include males, people 55 or younger, whites, those with higher-than-average levels of income and education, those who said they make use of *Naturescape* a visitor guide, and those who said they subscribe to Cleveland Metroparks monthly publication the *Emerald Necklace*.

Visitors also tend to make use of a set of reservations. Generally speaking, people visit one of four sets of reservations. These reservations are within close proximity of one another:

- Euclid Creek, North Chagrin, South Chagrin
- Bedford, Brecksville, Garfield Park
- Big Creek, Hinckley, Mill Stream Run
- Bradley Woods, Huntington, Rocky River

**Table 5**

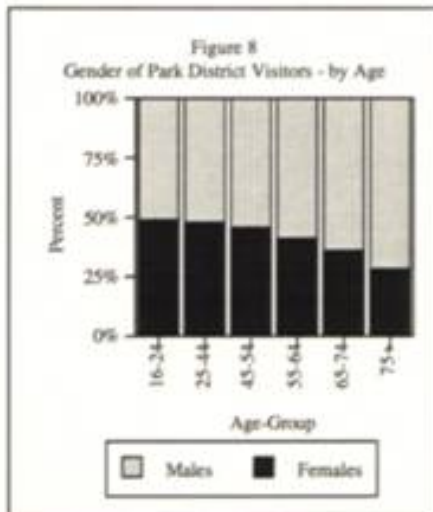
*Percent Who Rated Feature as Excellent or Good\**

|  | Percent |
|--|---------|
| Cleanliness of restrooms .....                       | 55      |
| Type of restroom available .....                     | 56      |
| Availability of restrooms .....                      | 73      |
| Visibility of rangers .....                          | 74      |
| Flow of traffic .....                                | 82      |
| Courtesy of rangers .....                            | 88      |
| Availability of nature programs .....                | 88      |
| Maintenance of facilities .....                      | 90      |
| Comfort level with number<br>of other visitors ..... | 90      |
| Feeling of personal safety .....                     | 90      |
| Availability of picnic facilities .....              | 91      |
| Cleanliness of reservation .....                     | 92*     |
| Courtesy of park employees .....                     | 95*     |
| Trails .....   | 95*     |
| Scenic beauty .....                                  | 96*     |
| Overall satisfaction .....                           | 97*     |

**Visitors Are Satisfied With Cleveland Metroparks**

Visitors were asked to rate 17 features of the reservation they were visiting as either excellent, good, fair, poor, or very poor. Table 5 provides a summary of the percentage of visitors who made ratings of excellent or good. Excluded are people who said they had no contact with a feature.

Most aspects of Cleveland Metroparks were rated favorably. Almost everybody (97 percent) said that their overall satisfaction with Park District reservations was excellent or good. In addition, more than 90 percent rated the following features as excellent or good: scenic beauty, courtesy of employees, trails, cleanliness, avail-



### Demographic Characteristics of Park District Visitors

A comparison of demographic characteristics of Park District visitors and the corresponding numbers of the population is provided in Table 6 (p. 42). Children (age 15 or less) and people between the age of 25 and 44 presently visit at slightly higher rates than their numbers in the population. Not surprisingly, these age groups tend to visit the Park District together. [About three-quarters of all children visit with people between 25 to 44 years old.] Individuals between 45 to 74 visit Cleveland Metroparks at about equal rates to their numbers in the population. Those who are 75 years or older visit at far lower rates than their numbers in the population.

Males make use of the Park District at a rate higher than females. More significantly, differences in visitation rates between the sexes increase with age. This pattern is displayed in Figure 8. Notice that sex differences in visitation rates are small among younger age groups. Yet among older cohorts, men are far more likely to visit than women. While minorities comprise 28 percent of Cuyahoga County's population, only 10 percent of all Cleveland Metroparks visitors are members of a minority group. Users of Cleveland Metroparks have higher levels of income and education than the general population. (Table 6 demographics p. 42 )

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### Is There Such a Thing as a Typical Visitor of Cleveland Metroparks?

Yes and no. The typical visitor is one who is not new to Cleveland Metroparks, lives within a short drive or travel distance of the reservation, and stays for a brief time. The typical visitor comes with a small group of people and uses the reservation to walk, relax and picnic. The typical visitor is also more likely to be male, white and possess an above-average income. Beyond these commonalities, diversity better characterizes visitors' use of the Park District. While half of all visitors said they use the Park District regularly, half said they visit less than once a month. Only three activities (walking, relaxation, and picnicking) are pursued by 20 percent or more visitors. Other activities are popular, but only among a small fraction of total visitors. Also, most visitors pursue different combinations of activities, making simple conclusions about how people use the Park District misleading.

**Table 6**  
Demographic Profile of Park District Visitors

|                                | Cuyahoga<br>County   | All<br>Visitors | Visitors Who<br>Reside Within<br>Tax District | Index* |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------|---|--------|
|                                | Percent  | Percent         | Percent                                       |        |
| <b>Gender</b>                  |  |                 |   |        |
| Male                           | 47.0   | 54.0            | 54.7  | 116    |
| Female                         | 53.0   | 46.0            | 45.3  | 85     |
| <b>Age</b>                     |  |                 |   |        |
| 15 or less                     | 21.4   | 25.2            | 25.0  | 117    |
| 16-24                          | 11.9   | 8.8             | 8.8   | 74     |
| 25-44                          | 31.3   | 36.7            | 36.2  | 116    |
| 45-54                          | 10.0   | 10.2            | 9.8   | 98     |
| 55-64                          | 9.8  | 9.4             | 9.6   | 98     |
| 65-74                          | 9.2  | 8.1             | 8.7   | 95     |
| 75 or older                    | 6.4  | 1.6             | 1.9   | 30     |
| <b>Race</b>                    |  |                 |   |        |
| Blacks                         | 24.8   | 9.8             | 10.9  | 44     |
| Whites                         | 72.6   | 88.7            | 87.5  | 121    |
| Others                         | 2.6  | 1.5             | 1.6   | 62     |
| <b>42</b>                      | <b>Level of Education (For Those 25 Years of Age or Older)</b> |                 |   |        |
| No high school diploma         |  | 26.0            | 6.0   | 6.3 24 |
| High school graduate           | 53.8   | 57.6            | 56.9  | 106    |
| College graduate               | 12.8   | 26.5            | 26.6  | 208    |
| Graduate/professional degree   | 7.4  | 9.7             | 10.2  | 138    |
| <b>Yearly Household Income</b> |  |                 |   |        |
| Less than \$10,000             | 18.0   | 7.3             | 8.0   | 44     |
| \$10,000-\$24,999              | 26.1   | 26.2            | 26.3  | 101    |
| \$25,000-\$34,999              | 15.7   | 20.5            | 20.8  | 132    |
| \$35,000-\$49,999              | 17.6   | 22.1            | 21.8  | 124    |
| \$50,000-\$74,999              | 14.1   | 16.5            | 15.6  | 111    |
| \$75,000 or higher             | 8.5  | 7.4             | 7.5   | 88     |

\* Index scores are computed by dividing percentage of Park district visitors (residing in Cleveland Metroparks tax district) within a demographic group by the corresponding percentage for Cuyahoga County, and then multiplying that number by 100. An index score close to 100 indicates that a demographic group visits Cleveland Metroparks at a rate equal to their numbers in the population. A high index score indicates that a demographic group visits Cleveland Metroparks at a rate higher than their numbers in the population. A low index score suggests that a demographic group visits Cleveland Metroparks at a rate lower than their numbers in the population.



### ***Attitudes Toward Development and Preservation in Parks***

In both the in-park surveys and the telephone survey, visitors to Cleveland Metroparks and visitors to parks in Northeast Ohio were asked a number of questions about how they felt about development and preservation in public parks. Findings from these questions are presented in this section.

Respondents to the in-park surveys were asked two questions concerning recreational development in the reservation they were visiting the day of the interview. The first question had respondents choose between more recreational development (such as roads, trails and picnic areas) or more natural areas (such as meadows and woods). The second question had respondents choose between more access for vehicular traffic or limiting vehicular traffic. For both questions, respondents were given the option of maintaining current patterns of preservation/development and vehicular traffic.

Nearly seven-tenths of all respondents said there is a good balance between recreational development and natural areas. Those supporting more recreational development and more natural areas are about evenly split. Eighty percent of visitors said current traffic patterns should remain the same. Slightly more people favored limiting traffic (12 percent) than those who favored providing more traffic access (8 percent).

Those regular park users (people who said they visit parks at least once a month) from the telephone survey were asked whether they felt there was anything public park agencies in Northeast Ohio could do to improve park service. These questions dealt with issues pertaining to recreation development and preservation. The percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each item is provided in Table 7.

Park users, for the most part, are in favor of keeping parks natural and free of development. Eight out of ten respondents supported limiting development in parks. Three-quarters supported the idea that parks should be returned to their natural state. Three-quarters of all park users agreed or strongly agreed that new parks lands should be acquired, and 80 percent supported linking parks through greenbelts and parkways.

**Table 7**

*Percentage Who Agreed or Strongly Agreed With Ways to Improve Parks in Northeast Ohio*

|   | <i>Percent</i> |
|---|----------------|
| Increase the sale of food and other concessions in parks .....                | 22             |
| Provide more golf courses .....   | 25             |
| Build new swimming pools .....  | 39             |
| Provide more opportunities for snowmobiling in parks .....                    | 39             |
| Increase number of ball fields .....  | 49             |
| Increase number of picnic facilities in parks .....                           | 72             |
| Increase number of cross country ski trails in parks .....                    | 70             |
| Acquire new park lands .....  | 75             |
| Allow park land to return to natural state .....                              | 75             |
| Increase number of swimming beaches on Lake Erie .....                        | 78             |
| Improve boating accessibility to Lake Erie .....                              | 79             |
| Provide more programmed activities (e.g., races and festivals) in parks ..... | 80             |
| Increase efforts to link park lands through greenbelts and parkways .....     | 80             |
| Limit development in parks .....  | 80             |
| Increase number of bike trails .....  | 81             |
| Increase number of hiking trails .....  | 83             |

While park users favor keeping parks natural, they do believe that some kinds of recreational development are acceptable. Eight out of ten supported increasing the number of hiking trails or increasing bicycle trails. Eight out of ten agreed that there should be more programming in parks. A large percentage of park users also supported improving boating access to Lake Erie (79 percent), increasing the number of swimming beaches on Lake Erie (78 percent), increasing the number of cross-country ski trails in parks (71 percent), and increasing the number of picnic facilities in parks (70 percent).

Fewer people supported increasing the number of ball fields in parks (49 percent), increasing the number of swimming pools in parks (39 percent), providing more opportunities for snowmobiling in parks (39 percent), providing more golf courses in parks (25 percent), and increasing the sale of foods and other concessions in parks (22 percent).

Sub-populations varied in their support to some of the above items. Females were more likely than males to favor increasing hiking trails and increasing the amount of programming in parks. Younger park users were more likely than their older counterparts to favor more programming in parks. African-Americans were more likely than whites to support more programming in parks and increasing the number of swimming beaches on Lake Erie.

## Listening To Visitors

### *Cleveland Metroparks Zoo*

#### ***Description***

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is open year-round, attracting over one million visitors per year from all over the world. The Zoo displays hundreds of species of wildlife, provides a variety of educational programs both for children and adults, and has an active animal conservation program. In 1993, the Zoo opened The RainForest, a major exhibit building, physically separate from the main Zoo exhibits. The naturalistic exhibits inside The RainForest focus on rain forest animals and the ecology of these disappearing ecosystems. Zoo guests pay an admission fee to visit the Zoo and an additional fee for The RainForest. On Monday mornings, residents of Cleveland Metroparks tax district are admitted free to the Zoo and pay a nominal fee for The RainForest admission. These free days provide opportunities for local residents, who cannot afford the admission fee, to visit the Zoo. Zoo guests are provided a map of the area and have access to exhibits, food concessions, gift shops, and a tram which provides transportation between points of interest.

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The mission of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is to improve the future for wildlife by exhibiting animals and plants and providing education and conservation programs that encourage respect and stewardship of the natural world and a better understanding of our place in it. The Zoo must provide educational programs that appeal to the diversity of people in the tax district while generating a majority of its operating revenues through an equitable fee structure.

#### ***Findings***

##### **Data Collection**

Every summer for the last few years, between 500 and 750 Cleveland Metroparks Zoo guests are contacted as they enter the Zoo, and asked to complete a questionnaire evaluating their visit which is mailed to them

at home. This information provides a visitor profile and an evaluation of programs and services. Response rates to the questionnaire vary between 65 and 80 percent.

## ***Profile of Visitors***

### **Demographic Characteristics of Visitors**

A summary of demographic characteristics is presented in Table 1 and discussed below. In the table, statistics describing the demographic make-up of Cuyahoga County are presented first, and then for visitors to the Zoo on Mondays, other weekdays, and weekends.

**Table 1**

Demographic Characteristics of Visitors to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo

| Demographic Characteristic     | <b>Cuyahoga County</b> | Monday Visitors | Tuesday-Friday Visitors | Saturday & Sunday Visitors |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                     |                        |                 |                         |                            |
| Male                           | <b>47%</b>             | 35%             | 36%                     | 46%                        |
| Female                         | <b>53%</b>             | 65%             | 62%                     | 54%                        |
| <b>Race</b>                    |                        |                 |                         |                            |
| African-Americans              | <b>25%</b>             | 16%             | 9%                      | 13%                        |
| White                          | <b>73%</b>             | 80%             | 90%                     | 85%                        |
| Other                          | <b>3%</b>              | 4%              | 1%                      | 2%                         |
| <b>46 Level of Education</b>   |                        |                 |                         |                            |
| No high school diploma         | <b>26%</b>             | 4%              | 6%                      | 4%                         |
| High school graduate           | <b>54%</b>             | 53%             | 54%                     | 54%                        |
| College graduate               | <b>13%</b>             | 27%             | 27%                     | 29%                        |
| Graduate/professional degree   | <b>7%</b>              | 15%             | 14%                     | 13%                        |
| <b>Yearly Household Income</b> |                        |                 |                         |                            |
| Less than \$25,000             | <b>44%</b>             | 24%             | 19%                     | 22%                        |
| \$25,000-\$34,999              | <b>16%</b>             | 21%             | 19%                     | 15%                        |
| \$35,000-\$49,999              | <b>18%</b>             | 18%             | 30%                     | 24%                        |
| \$50,000 or higher             | <b>23%</b>             | 37%             | 33%                     | 39%                        |

Totals for each category are broken down by day of week with corresponding totals for Cuyahoga County in bold type.

Adult visitors were disproportionately female (60 percent) and white (85 percent), and had higher than average levels of formal education and household income. These proportions are generally consistent with previous studies of visitors to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Demographic characteristics of visitors vary by day-of-week. For example, 20 percent of Monday visitors were either African-American or a member of another minority group, compared to only 10 percent of visitors on other weekdays. Similarly, males comprised slightly more than one-third of all weekday visitors, but nearly one-half of weekend visitors. There were only minor differences in educational backgrounds and incomes of visitors by day-of-week.

### ***Place of Residence***

Where people lived was related to what day they visited Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. More than two-thirds of Monday visitors resided within Cuyahoga County (68 percent). Nine percent of Monday visitors were from adjoining counties (Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit), 13 percent were from elsewhere in Ohio, and 10 percent were from out-of-state. Visitation on other weekdays, and on weekends was more evenly divided among geographic locations. About one-third of all visitors from Tuesday through Sunday were residents of Cuyahoga County, about three-tenths were from adjoining counties, and roughly one-fifth were either from other parts of Ohio or out-of-state.

### **Age Distribution**

Data presented in Table 2, indicates that a disproportionately large number of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo visitors are children. Individuals 45 years of age or older visit at lower rates than other age groups. These findings are consistent with previous studies of visitors to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. It is interesting to note that the age distribution of Zoo visitors is different for different days of the week. Children less than 12 years of age made up 43 percent of all Monday visitors, but only 29 percent of visitors on other weekdays, and 25 percent of weekend visitors. In contrast, for ages 18 to 24, 6 percent of Monday visitors and 7 percent of other weekday visitors were between these ages, but 17 percent of weekend visitors were in this age group, almost twice the percentage in Cuyahoga County.

**Table 2**  
**Age distribution of visitors to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo**

| <b>Age Group</b> | <b>Cuyahoga County</b> | <b>Monday Visitors</b> | <b>Tuesday-Friday Visitors</b> | <b>Saturday &amp; Sunday Visitors</b> |
|------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 4 or younger     | <b>7%</b>              | 17%                    | 13%                            | 12%                                   |
| 5 to 11          | <b>9%</b>              | 26%                    | 16%                            | 13%                                   |
| 12 to 17         | <b>7%</b>              | 8%                     | 8%                             | 7%                                    |
| 18 to 24         | <b>9%</b>              | 6%                     | 7%                             | 17%                                   |
| 25 to 44         | <b>31%</b>             | 27%                    | 30%                            | 30%                                   |
| 45 to 54         | <b>10%</b>             | 6%                     | 7%                             | 10%                                   |
| 55 to 64         | <b>10%</b>             | 6%                     | 9%                             | 8%                                    |
| 65 to 74         | <b>9%</b>              | 3%                     | 9%                             | 3%                                    |
| 75 or older      | <b>6%</b>              | 1%                     | 1%                             | 1%                                    |

Bold figures indicate the percentages of age groups found in Cuyahoga County (1990 US Census).

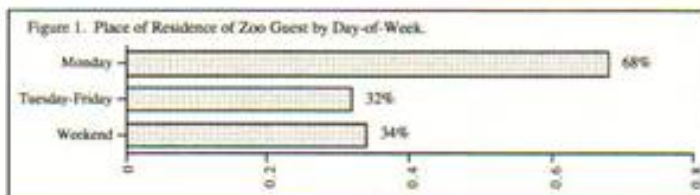
## Monday Visitors and Income Level

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo offers free admission until noon to residents of Cuyahoga County and Hinckley Township in Medina County on Mondays. This fee structure provides opportunities for lower income residents of Cuyahoga County to use the facilities. The percentages of Cuyahoga County visitors in each income bracket, by day of visitation, (Monday versus Tuesday through Sunday) are presented in Table 3. The distribution of percentages suggests that lower income individuals are more likely to visit the Zoo on Mondays, although higher income groups are just as likely to visit on Monday as on days when an entrance fee is charged. The Maentel-Haenszel Chi-Square (3.61, df=1) distribution is barely significant ( $p < .057$ ).

## Place of Residence by Day-of-Week

Place of permanent residence cross-tabulated by day of week suggests heavy usage by Cuyahoga County residents on Monday, with low use by visitors from other areas. There is no admittance charge on Mondays until noon [on non-holidays] for residents of the tax district. Proportions of visitors from Cuyahoga County fell to 31.5 percent for weekdays and 33.8 percent on weekends (Figure 1).

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## Zoo-only Versus Zoo and The RainForest Visitors

Exploratory analysis was conducted to see if there were differences between visitors who only visited the Zoo and those who paid an extra fee to also visit The RainForest. Some significant differences were identified (page 49). For first-time visitors, 93 percent visited both the Zoo and The RainForest, while 66 percent of return visitors visited both (pages 49 and 47). Those returning to the Zoo after visiting less than six months before this visit, were far less likely to visit The RainForest (36 percent), while over three-fourths of visitors that had been away more than two years visited both the Zoo and The RainForest.

**Table 3**

Distribution of Cuyahoga County visitors by income and day of visit

| Income Level     | Monday | Tuesday-Sunday |
|------------------|--------|----------------|
| <\$10K           | 72.2%  | 27.8%          |
| \$10K to \$14.9K | 69.2%  | 30.8%          |
| \$15K to \$24.9K | 55.0%  | 45.0%          |
| \$25K to \$34.9K | 47.1%  | 52.9%          |
| \$35K to \$49.9K | 44.1%  | 55.9%          |
| \$50K to \$74.9K | 46.9%  | 53.1%          |
| >\$74.9K         | 52.6%  | 47.4%          |

Maentel-Haenszel Chi-Square (3.61, df=1,  $p < .057$ )

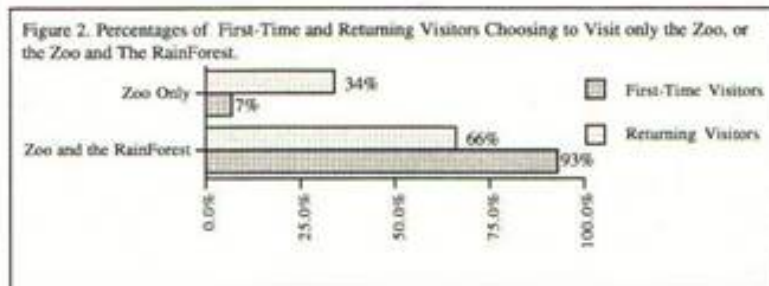
**Table 4**  
Differences between Zoo-only and Zoo and The RainForest Visitors

| Variable                              | Visited Zoo only | Visited Zoo & The RainForest |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>First-time vs. Repeat Visitors</b> |                  |                              |
| First-time visitors                   | 7 %              | 93%                          |
| Returning visitors                    | 34%              | 66%                          |
| <b>Time of Last Visit</b>             |                  |                              |
| Visited <6 months ago                 | 54%              | 36%                          |
| Visited >2 years ago                  | 22%              | 78%                          |
| <b>Day of the Week</b>                |                  |                              |
| Monday visitor                        | 51%              | 49%                          |
| Tuesday-Friday                        | 19%              | 81%                          |
| Weekend                               | 23%              | 77%                          |
| <b>Demographics</b>                   |                  |                              |
| Male                                  | 19%              | 81%                          |
| Female                                | 32%              | 68%                          |
| Average Age                           | 38-yrs-old       | 41-yrs-old                   |
| <b>Spending</b>                       |                  |                              |
| \$ Spent in gift shop                 | \$11.09          | \$15.30                      |
| \$ Spent on food                      | \$11.32          | \$14.30                      |

Two demographic differences were identified. Eighty-one percent of males and 68 percent of females visited both areas. Visitors to both the Zoo and The Rainforest tended to be older than Zoo-only visitors. There was no significant difference by race or income.

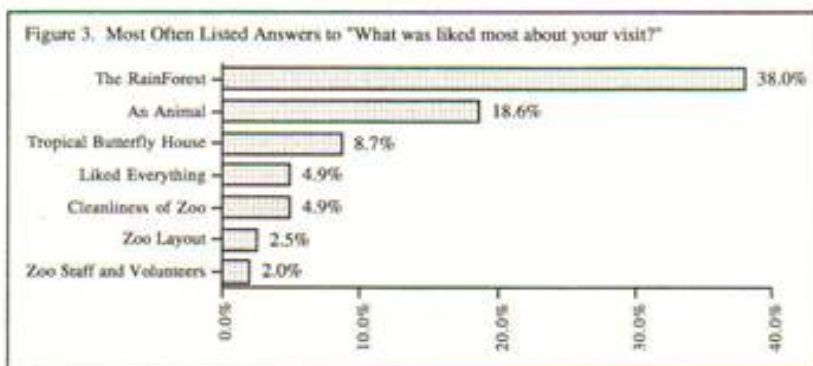
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Finally, spending in the gift shops and on food was greater for those who visited both the Zoo and The RainForest. These spending differences may be due to having contact with the additional food service area and gift shop inside The RainForest, a tendency to spend more money during leisure outings in general, or greater interest in the Zoo. Particularly regarding spending on food, the longer visitation time required to see both may contribute to more spending.



## What was Most and Least Liked About the Zoo?

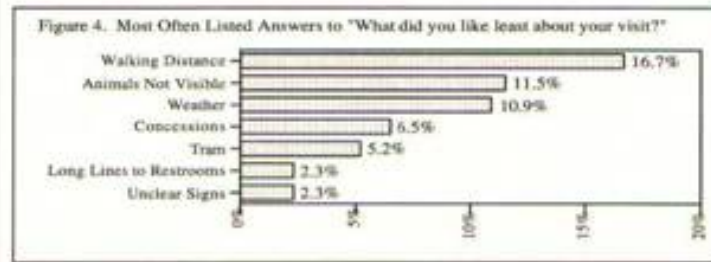
Respondents were asked to list something they liked best about their visit. This information provides additional perspectives on how people view Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Answers were categorized by general topic, and the most frequently listed topics are reported in Figure 3. The most frequently-listed item was The RainForest, listed by 38 percent of all visitors. The second most common listing was a favorite animal at 18.6 percent. The Tropical Butterfly House was third with 8.7 percent, and "liked everything" (4.9 percent) and "cleanliness" (4.9 percent) tied for fourth ranking. The layout of the Zoo (2.5 percent) and Zoo staff and volunteers (2.0) were listed fifth and sixth. Other comments dealt with quality care of animals, the Primate, Cat and Aquatics Building, the ease of viewing animals, and landscaping and gardens, all of which were listed by at least one percent of respondents.



The least preferred feature was headed up by walking distance (16.7 percent), animals not visible (11.5 percent), weather (10.9 percent), concessions (6.5 percent) and the tram (5.2 percent). Walking distance and satisfaction with the tram are probably related. Comments about walking distance made frequent reference to walking up the hill to the Primate, Cat and Aquatics Building, while those dealing with the tram referred to long waits, not enough stops, and no seats available because of crowding. Comments about concessions dealt with high prices, quality and choice of foods, long waits in line and not enough places to sit and eat. Other categories that were mentioned by at least one percent of respondents included: The RainForest (1.8 percent), long lines to the restrooms (2.3 percent), unclear signs (2.3 percent), visitor misbehavior



(1.6 percent), Tropical Butterfly House (too humid) (1.0 percent), parking (1.0 percent), too early a closing time (1.3 percent), and maps (1 percent). See Figure 4 below.

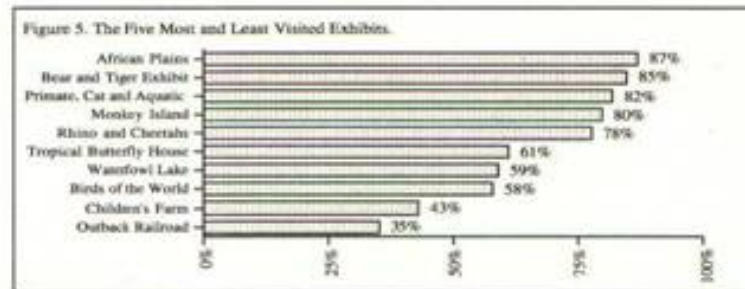


### Animal Exhibits Visited

There are distinct exhibit visitation patterns at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Respondents were shown a list of 16 major exhibits located throughout the Zoo and then asked to mark which exhibits they visited during the day. A ranking of most-visited exhibits and a statistical clustering routine of the exhibits visited, tentatively suggests that both the relative attractiveness of animals, and the physical layout of the Zoo, contribute to whether a person visits an exhibit.

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Of the exhibits visited, the most-frequently visited exhibit was the African Plains, which includes rhinos, elephants, and giraffes (87 percent), followed by the Bear and Tiger Exhibit (85 percent), Primate, Cat and Aquatics Building (including gorillas and other primates) (82 percent), Monkey Island (80 percent) and the Rhino and Cheetah Exhibit (78 percent). All of these exhibits feature large mammals or primates (Figure 5).



The least visited exhibits were the Outback Railroad (35 percent), Children's Farm (43 percent), Birds of the World, (58 percent) Waterfowl Lake (59 percent) and the Tropical Butterfly House (61 percent). The exhibits are characterized by being primarily non-mammalian animals, mostly birds and invertebrates. These rankings tenuously support what has been found in numerous research projects on attitudes and preferences towards animals: individuals tend to prefer large, novel, charismatic mammals, and animals such as primates that are similar enough to humans that they are easily personified.

### ***Implications***

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo is a well respected institution both in Cleveland and throughout the United States. Findings from visitor studies suggest that:

- demographic characteristics of visitors vary by day of week,
- fee structures provide opportunities for low income individuals to benefit from the Zoo,
- 52 • The RainForest visitation is somewhat dependent on attracting back visitors who have not been to the Zoo in over a year, and new visitors, and
- visitors prefer larger mammals and primates.

### ***Demographic Characteristics***

Variables such as age, sex, ethnicity, family role, and other demographic characteristics all play an indirect role in when and why people visit the Zoo. By understanding social forces (outside the control of the Zoo) that shape people's lives, the Zoo can use the 4Ps of marketing to develop programs, designate hours of operation, offer special services and special events to provide as many opportunities as possible for everyone, no matter what their circumstance, to enjoy and benefit from the Zoo.

### ***Age Profile***

Zoo visitors are often parents with children. Starting at age 45, there is a decline in the number of people visiting the Zoo. By the time people are in their forties,

most children are grown and have left home. To the extent that the Zoo is viewed as an attraction primarily for children, then empty nesters are less likely to attend.

While the Zoo is providing educational opportunities for parents and children, with content aimed at children, offering adult programs should slowly shift perception that the Zoo is for children. High visibility, adult-only programs should be provided throughout the year. This may include educational programs, social events, and opportunities for volunteer work.

### ***Income Profile***

A seven dollar admission fee makes it financially difficult for a low-income family to visit the Zoo. As a tax-supported government agency, the Zoo has an ethical responsibility to provide its services to anyone in the Tax District who is motivated to benefit from those services. Offering discounts, free admission to the Zoo at certain periods, scholarships to summer camps, and school field trips (and transportation) create realistic avenues for those in low-income brackets to benefit from the Zoo. Providing services to schools virtually guarantees that a cross section of Cuyahoga County children will be exposed to the Zoo.

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### ***Ethnicity***

Ethnic minorities are, to some extent, under-represented as visitors to the Zoo. Strong ethnic identity may mean different tastes in leisure and educational activities and the use of communication networks that are less likely to include mainstream media where information about the Zoo is regularly found. Offering different types of programs and communicating through unorthodox channels may be a necessary part of a marketing strategy.

### ***The RainForest***

Like most new attraction, The RainForest was extremely successful based on attendance. The second year there was a decline in attendance, although visitation rates are still very impressive. Data suggests that frequent visitors to the Zoo, along with Monday visitors, tend not to visit The Rainforest. In contrast, almost all first-time visitors and two-thirds of repeat visitors pay the extra

fee to visit the facility. Promotions that bring new and infrequent visitors to the Zoo are likely to result in more visits to The RainForest. A better understanding of who the frequent visitor is will provide ideas for special programs and events that might entice frequent visitors back to The RainForest. Likewise special events or programs at The RainForest on Mondays might encourage visitors to go ahead and visit The RainForest.

### ***Preferred Animals***

Consistent with many other studies, exhibits of large, novel animals and primates which are easily personified, are more likely to be visited. Birds and invertebrates are less frequently visited although these exhibits are centrally located. In promotions of the Zoo using visual media, large mammals should be emphasized since they have the most pull for visitors. Since other less-visually striking or behaviorally-interesting animals are ecologically important, efforts will be made to also interest visitors in these animals based on the Zoo's mission. Whether mixing charismatic animal exhibits with less-visually striking animals is an appropriate technique is unknown. Focusing attention on less popular animals, through docent demonstrations or use of supporting still, video, and interactive exhibits, may be an effective method of broadening the attention of some visitors.

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### ***Conclusion***

Information received from visitors helps to confirm Zoo staff perceptions of the satisfaction, motivations, and mentalities of their guests and uncover new relationships. Both demographic and psychographic data, and how these visitor differences are distributed in terms of use patterns and preferences has, and will continue to help, in refining the many facets of the operation of the Zoo. Research is most useful when it is designed to address concerns of Zoo staff and provides information that addresses the 4Ps of marketing.

## Strategies

Cleveland Metroparks should seek to serve the tax district as equitably as possible. Though all property owners in Cuyahoga County are stakeholders in the Park District, not all share equally in benefits. Though the variance in use may be attributed to many factors, including interest, health and time, it is clear that certain groups are more or less likely to use Cleveland Metroparks than others. Because the resources available for Cleveland Metroparks are limited, special effort will be focused on lower use groups. Traditionally successful efforts (i.e., newspapers, radio, etc.) will be continued as needed to maintain high use groups.

Through the in-park and telephone surveys conducted in 1991, Cleveland Metroparks learned more about its visitors. The survey found that about 27 percent of those surveyed considered themselves nonusers; about 33 percent called themselves infrequent users; and, 40 percent regular users. In addition, the following differences between the population of the tax district and visitors were discovered:

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- Females use parks less than males
- Non-users are older than both infrequent and regular users
- African Americans are far more likely than whites to be non-users or infrequent users of public parks
- Non-users and infrequent users tend to be of lower income

In addition, surveys of Cleveland Metroparks Zoo visitors have been conducted during the summers for the last few years. The Zoo is a regional attraction drawing people from all over the eastern United States, plus international visitors. Cleveland Metroparks Zoo charges an admittance fee for the Zoo and an additional fee for visiting The RainForest. Mondays, residents of the tax

district may enter the Zoo free. (Significantly the Monday fee structure has contributed to use of the Zoo by low-income residents.) Findings include:

- About 60 percent of adult visitors to the Zoo are female, often accompanied by children.
- Under-represented demographic groups include males, minorities, and the elderly.
- An otherwise under-represented group of young adults (18-24) visit with their peers at a proportion higher than present in the population of Cuyahoga County, but only on weekends.
- A major barrier to enjoying the Zoo, at least on hot days, was the walking distance.

### Designing Special Events as "Sampling" Opportunities for the Underserved

Ideas for special events come from many sources. Maybe it's a popular event at another agency, or an outgrowth of an existing, local program. Cleveland Metroparks is committed to designing special events to attract non-traditional audiences, or visitors that have limited experience with the breadth of services the Park District has to offer. Just as product suppliers cut through the clutter in a neighborhood grocery store by offering appetizing samples of their wares, Cleveland Metroparks can attract new visitors and broaden the experience of existing visitors through special events.

Special events play a significant role in the awareness of parks and related services. Since research projects strongly suggest that many people are unaware of parks even when the park is nearby, special events play a significant role towards creating awareness. Spotts, D.M. & Stynes, D.J. (1985), Hartmann, L.A., & Cordell, H.K. (1988)<sup>1</sup>

There can be no involvement with parks without awareness. But awareness is not enough. Both conceptually and in practice, there needs to be a link between efforts to raise awareness and the long, divergent path culminating in involvement. Awareness seems to be a starting point, and involvement an ending point. Both are critical and must be linked. Marketing can play a significant role at each stage. Existing examples include

<sup>1</sup>*Measuring the public's familiarity with recreation areas. Journal of Leisure Research, 17 (4), 253-265. An overview of the relationship between social and demographic factors and outdoor recreation participation. In A.E. Watson & C. McDonald (Ed.), Outdoor Recreation Benchmark 1988; Proceedings of the National Outdoor Recreation Forum, (pp. 255-274). Tampa Florida: Southeastern Forest Experiment Station*

the montly *Emerald Necklace* newsletter, media tie-ins to events and couponing. New avenues must be continually sought.

Special events are seen as a vehicle to impact these infrequent and non-users. It is believed that carefully-designed, well-promoted events would attract these important constituents, by assuring them that their time would be well-used and well-defined by creating an attraction not typically available in the Park District, at a given time and place. By placing attractions that are valued by these underserved groups in underused areas or new facilities, the Park District created an opportunity to "sample" the products available in Cleveland Metro-parks. Just like Oscar Mayer wants you to taste their new hot dog in the grocery store in the hopes you will become a regular consumer, the Park District can make opportunities available to build repeat visits.



### Imaging Versus Special Event Advertising

How will these target audiences learn about Cleveland Metroparks events? The answer is through effective advertising initiatives.

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Profit-making organizations and non-profits alike struggle with the tug-of-war between advertising and promotion that bolsters or creates an image, and efforts that "call to action." Imaging efforts create a mood, express an attitude, or "position" the organization in a variety of ways, maybe as an industry leader, a friendly or exotic place. This sort of advertising is most effective with organizations recovering from negative situations — scandal, poor performance, unpopular policies, etc. It is important in imaging campaigns to have a simple, core message that is often repeated in the same manner. The message can be broadcast in a variety of mediums (print, radio, television, outdoor, etc.), but it must have a very similar look, sound, and texture. This similarity can be created by using the same music or natural sounds, colors, people, themes, and probably most common — slogan or phrase.

Special event advertising follows a different path. This advertising and promotion must clearly convey an urgent call to action. These efforts must define an opportunity and convey a pressing need to possess, attend or experience. The advertising and promotion created for this

purpose tends to be more utilitarian, have more information and have less of a theme as a central feature. It might have a relatively short shelf life and not have the timelessness that an imaging campaign might have. There is less emphasis on subtlety and individual beauty than on getting a strong, attractive message across that cannot be ignored. The call to action must include critical information (time, date, place for events), so by definition tends to be constrained by "must have" text and visuals. Cleveland Metroparks is committed to investing the majority of its available advertising resources to special event advertising.

### Attracting Sponsors through Branding

58 Branded sponsors are those companies/product suppliers that have been granted exclusive opportunities to sell their products exclusively in a particular category. In exchange for these exclusive rights, the companies offer cash, discounted product prices, and marketing initiatives. All dollars collected through this effort are placed in a separate fund earmarked for advertising. Through this effort nearly \$600,000 has been committed over a five-year span from eight different consumer companies. From bottled water to soft drinks, candy to ice cream, these sponsors use Cleveland Metroparks as a new consumer conduit; a new place to sell their product. That's a very valuable commodity. Perhaps even more importantly, these manufacturers give Cleveland Metroparks access to low- or no-cost, valuable and effective marketing opportunities. For example, on-package coupons, point-of-purchase displays, delivery truck panels, billboards, coupon distribution, and other non-traditional marketing venues.

### Evaluation, How and Why?

Cleveland Metroparks will evaluate events, facilities, programs and other functions to ensure the best possible products are delivered. Events can be evaluated many ways, from simple attendance counts to intricate surveys and focus groups. Cleveland Metroparks has chosen a consistent method of surveying that includes gathering demographic and motivational information and measuring satisfaction and perceived importance. Gathering data insures ongoing feedback from constituents and a constant source of information to help create new and improved programs. Evaluations can be time consuming



and costly, but without evaluations, efforts cannot be checked for effectiveness or importance. Cleveland Metroparks considers evaluations a valuable investment and insurance against larger losses in time and resources invested in ineffective events. Evaluation alone cannot completely assess the effectiveness of marketing efforts, Cleveland Metroparks facilities, programs and other functions. Evaluation should complement the professional judgement of staff and the Board of Park Commissioners.



## Definitions and Guidelines

**Inkind** - Goods or services that are given by an organization in lieu of cash for sponsorship or other exchange of Cleveland Metroparks goods or services. Guidelines for trades of service or goods is listed in Appendix B.

**Sponsorship** - An opportunity for organizations to enter into a mutually beneficial marketing partnership with Cleveland Metroparks. An organization will exchange something of value for the opportunity linking their name with Cleveland Metroparks. In addition, admission tickets, group events, personalized or specialized tours/walks/lectures, facility/space use, etc. might be offered. Estimates of sponsorship values are determined by calculating the actual or market value of items received, including costs incurred for advertising schedules; organizing, securing, promoting and implementing concerts, lectures, instructors, give-aways or premiums, etc. Market value, advertising value and consumer tie-ins can also effect the ultimate sponsorship price determined. Inkind gifts will be exchanged at a three-to-one ratio compared to cash purchases of sponsorship. For example, The Zoo Summer Concert Series Sponsorship is calculated at \$10,000. A radio station could secure the sponsorship for \$5,000 cash plus \$15,000 inkind advertising time.

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**Sponsorship Exclusions** - Cleveland Metroparks will carefully review sponsors to insure that their programs support the mission of Cleveland Metroparks.

**Special Events** - Because of its natural beauty and unique venues, Cleveland Metroparks is a popular site for many types of events. Non-profit and profit groups organizing special events will be encouraged to consider Cleveland Metroparks as a special event site if the event is compatible with Cleveland Metroparks mission statement. Special events which unduly disturb plant or wildlife, cause excessive noise or uncontrolled litter will not be permitted. Events that offer participants a positive opportunity for an enhanced or first-time trial experience

rience of Cleveland Metroparks will be encouraged. All organizers must obtain a permit, present proof of insurance, and pay any fees or charges associated with the facility or area.

**Couponing** - Coupon distribution opportunities may be offered alone or as part of a sponsorship or branding opportunity. The amount of the discount will determine the face value of the coupon. Total value of the opportunity will be calculated by multiplying the face value times 1 percent of the number of coupons printed and distributed. For example, if The Plain Dealer were to create a winter promotion involving the Chalet and they distribute 500,000 \$1.00-off coupons. The promotion value is \$5,000 (500,000 x \$1.00 = 500,000 x 1 percent = \$5,000). In this example The Plain Dealer can make an in-kind donation of \$15,000 in in-kind advertising space (3 to 1 ratio) rather than paying cash.

62 Cleveland Metroparks will pro-actively and re-actively seek, develop and test pilot programs and materials with marketing implications. Specifically, those that offer an opportunity for individuals to experience "outdoor educational, zoological and recreational opportunities" on a first-time basis or in a unique way. All programs must demonstrate a reasonable "break-even" financial posture.

Cleveland Metroparks will not participate in trade or consumer shows unless materials built or assembled for exhibit can subsequently be reused at a Park District facility or location. Personnel cost must be kept to a minimum by using volunteers or limited regular staff time. All decisions regarding trade or consumer shows will be made by the Director of Marketing & Visitor Services.

Cleveland Metroparks will maintain and augment a Speakers Bureau and keep current audio-visual aids and materials for quality presentations. Cleveland Metroparks is committed to conserving its natural heritage and offering quality experiences.

**Printed Materials** - All printed materials produced by Cleveland Metroparks are an opportunity to promote a consistent and recognizable message to the public. For some, printed materials might represent their most-frequent contact with the Park District. All printed materials should reflect the following:

- A unified, consistent image of the Park District,

including attention to style.

- Support and amplification of the Park District Mission.
- Feature a prominent and correctly-used Cleveland Metroparks logo.
- Exemplify environmental stewardship by using recycled materials, soy ink or other environmentally-friendly materials or processes.

**Electronic Materials** - Video or audio productions will be consistent with Park District image and style guidelines, and will be developed to ensure a consistent message is being delivered to audiences. Videos will be produced on single-subject themes, enabling them to be used as a series for customized presentations to groups.

**Advertising versus Promotion** - Cleveland Metroparks will use both advertising and promotion to reach audiences. With advertising, the reach, frequency, content and style of the message can be assured, though it requires a fee. Promotional efforts cost little or nothing, but cannot be controlled in any areas associated with advertising. Press Releases are, and will continue to be, the most consistent avenue for promotion. Press Releases and media contacts will be pursued vigorously.

## **Appendix A**

### ***Administrative Policy, Services & Fees***

Marketing Department  
4101 Fulton Parkway  
Cleveland, Ohio 44144

#### ***Forward***

Cleveland Metroparks serves a varied public: urban and rural; multiple ethnic and racial groups; citizens with widely-divergent income levels and standards of living; an array of recreational and aesthetic special interests; citizens whose physical and mental agility hardly recognize any bounds—and others who experience their lives confronted by handicaps over which they have little or no control. Cleveland Metroparks Service and Fee Policy and its program activities are guided by the awareness of the existence of these human differences.

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#### ***Purpose of the Policy***

Cleveland Metroparks has historically charged a fee for those services or activities that are considered “special” or “beyond the scope of general service” to the taxpayer. These fees make it possible for the Park District to provide programs and facilities which otherwise would be difficult to fund with tax revenues alone. Examples of such charges include golf fees, material fees for Outdoor Education programs and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo admission fees. This policy seeks to establish the philosophical, financial and ethical considerations necessary to provide guidance to Cleveland Metroparks Board of Commissioners and staff in the determination of appropriate fees.

#### ***The Role of Fees***

Contemporary “user group” information and research collected from park, recreation and open space agencies show that recognizable trends have developed

with leisure users. In the text, User Pays for Recreation Resources,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robert Aukerman offers the following synopsis and interpretation of research/trends in "user pays" systems:

#### Fees versus Taxes:

*User fees should not take the place of taxes but supplement taxes.* Taxation is an appropriate method for park agencies and park users to generate revenue. Taxes provide an avenue for non-users to "pay their fair share" since they, as well as the users, benefit from community outdoor and recreation resources.

#### Double Taxation:

*User fees are being widely utilized today to pay for facilities, services and programs which are not sufficiently covered by tax dollars.* Without user fees, many programs, facilities and services would not exist or, conversely, more taxes would be required. This is not double taxation.

#### Equity and Discrimination:

66 • *Fees are more equitable than taxes; i.e., those who choose to utilize a specific facility, program or service, pay a fee to offset the direct costs associated with providing the facility, program or service.*

• *Fees give citizens a choice of paying for what they want.* Taxes require everyone to pay, whether or not they choose to use a facility or attend a program. While it may be equitable that all taxpayers help acquire park land and public park facilities, those who choose to use specific facilities and programs should help maintain those facilities and programs.

• *Fees represent an equitable method to obtain revenue from non-residents and tourists to help support the facilities and programs they choose to use.*

• *Reasonable user fees are seldom a barrier to participation.* Personal choices are continually being made by individuals and groups on what recreation activities they want ... movies, a beer at the local pub, a ball game or a reservation/Zoo visit. The real limitations are more often than not the cost of equipment, interest, transportation, and/or time. For those individuals where a fee is a barrier, scholarships, work programs, reduced rates and other non-judgmental initiatives exist so as to guarantee public access. Public fees, when properly administered,

<sup>1</sup> Aukerman, Robert, User Pays for Recreation Resources, (Colorado State University, Research Services, 1987)

should never discriminate against the poor, seniors or any individual or group.

User Acceptance and "Willingness to Pay":

*Studies reveal that most park users actually support the concept of charging reasonable fees which help recover park and recreation program costs. Users are willing to pay, and pay considerably more than they are currently paying, for golf, recreational facilities and programs. Studies indicate that users who live closest to a recreation area are more likely to be opposed to fees, believing they should have direct access to "their" park facilities. However, citizens who have experienced user fees often indicate that they prefer fees rather than other methods of paying, such as taxes. Greatest resistance to user fees predictably comes from fees which (1) are being set for the first time, and (2) drastic increases in fees. Generally, incremental and gradual fee increases over time are preferred to substantial, one-time fee increases. People understand and accept cost-of-living increases or increases based on improved or expanded facilities, services or program costs. An increase in fees, or introduction of new fees, should be directly related to the costs of providing enhanced facilities, programs and services. Fees collected should be designated and spent for those facilities and programs where the fee is collected. Finally, users must be involved in the fee setting and financial decisions of park and recreation facilities/program management. After all, the public agency is the steward of community resources, and citizens must direct input toward the financial choices related to park, recreation and open space opportunities.*

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Facility and Program Visitation: *Most agencies report no loss in visitation with user fees; on the contrary, often increases occur as a result of improved facility/program quality and services. Usually, where loss of visitation occurs, it is associated with large fee increases or introduction of fees for the first time. In most cases, reduced visitation is only temporary — one to two years. Loss of visitation is most likely to occur where there are direct substitutes, like two equal and adjacent beaches; and time and travel distance may be much more a limitation to use than fees.*

Creativity and Self-sufficiency: *Generating a portion of one's own funds provides a degree of self sufficiency, creativity, pride and responsibility. Fundamentally, taxpayers*

should expect public officials to provide efficient, cost-effective programs utilizing all appropriate funding sources, including appropriate user fees. Raising revenues from user fees is usually seen as responsible fiscal management.

Agency Accountability: *When a user pays, they expect quality service and facilities.* They expect, and should demand, courtesy, accountability, and quality. When new fees are introduced, their expectation of quality service increases. Such expectations may, at times, seem difficult to work with, but user commitment and expectations can ultimately strengthen support for the agency.

In short, research and surveys support the fact that those agencies applying fair "user pays" philosophies have concluded that such policies yield substantial benefits, far outweighing drawbacks. The drawbacks generally lie in a lack of understanding of how to properly implement user fee systems. There are few substantiated arguments against properly implemented user fee systems; the arguments against fees are basically ones of sentiment, tradition, special interest group selfishness, and lack of knowledge/experience.

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Fees are an opportunity to supplement tax funds, generate revenues essential to providing increased/improved services, meet public demand for stabilizing taxes, and reduce discrimination. Fees and charges are an effective and justifiable manner of providing fiscal resources to continue and/or expand leisure opportunities.

### ***Who Benefits? - Who Pays?***

The metropolitan area has changed since 1917 when Cleveland Metroparks was created. Throughout the history of the Park District, facilities, programs and services have been added. Today, the demand for increased quantity and quality of these services has outstripped the amount of tax dollars available. Fees and charges have, in the past, been selectively utilized by Cleveland Metroparks for equipment rental, admission, and program material costs. *Therefore, for Cleveland Metroparks, the issue is not one of deciding whether or not to charge, but rather to develop a comprehensive Park District policy pertaining to services, fees and charges.* All of Cleveland Metroparks facilities, programs and services cannot be provided for everyone, all the time, with everything! Adopting a philosophy and policy that acknowledges



these limitations provides a basis for "sorting out" costs and benefits derived from various programs, and provides a rationale for who should pay.

Three general categories or "types" of programs and facilities may be identified:

- public service,
- merit service
- specialized service.

Each category has features that distinguish it from another, as described below and as paraphrased from J. Robert Rossman - Recreation Programming.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Rossman, Robert J., *Recreation Programming*. (Sagamore Publishing, 1989)

### **Public Service**

Basic programs/facilities supported totally by tax dollars and available to users free of charge.

Theoretically, these programs are available to all, but operationally it is not possible to provide identical programs/facilities equally available because of location, natural resources, time, etc. Public programs are of benefit to all even though not all will actually use the programs/facility. Since the public at large derives benefit from these programs/facilities, their cost should be paid through public financing, i.e. taxes. It is the goal of Cleveland Metroparks to use public dollars to provide a "core" of program/facilities for all citizens. Examples of these types of programs/facilities include most outdoor education programs promoted in the *Emerald Necklace*, use of trails, first-come, first-serve picnicking, etc. Public programs usually do not require non-staff supervision or leadership, the use of specialized equipment, or uniquely-designed/maintained facilities. 69

### **Merit Service**

Programs/facilities are partly subsidized by tax dollars, but also have user fees attached to help recover a portion of their costs.

Benefits derived from merit programs/facilities can be attributed to both the public interest as well as personal, individual benefit. Merit programs/facilities usually need non-staff supervision, specialized equipment, and/or materials. Merit programs/facilities should be jointly

financed through both individual and public funds. Examples of these types of service might be special park user permits, shelter reservations, specialized Outdoor Education/recreation programming, IGO Programs, Zoo admission, etc.

### ***Specialized Service***

Programs/facilities are paid for entirely by the participants.

Benefit is received from personal programs/facilities by the individuals using the program/facility, as opposed to the general public. Examples of these types of programs/facilities include the Chalet, Ledge Pool, golf courses, golf clinics, etc.

Whenever an area is used for a special purpose that precludes other uses (i.e., golf course, swimming beach, boating, camping area) and generates additional operational costs, those persons using this area should contribute toward those costs.

Who Benefits?- Who Pays?

Public Service

Merit Service

Specialized Service

**Who Benefits?**

Entire community is benefitted either physically, socially, economically, and/or culturally.

Individual who participates is primarily benefitted however, all community residents benefit, at least secondarily, in terms of physical, social, economic, educational or cultural influence.

Individual participant dominant beneficiary. Community benefit is incidental to personal/individual benefit.

**Who Pays?**

All citizens through taxes.

Partial user fees, with public subsidy

Individual user fees pay full/all costs.

**Cleveland Metroparks (facility/ program examples)**

- Most outdoor education programs (i.e. nature walks, Breakfast in the Park, etc.)
- Use the trails
- First-come, first-serve picnicking, tables, shelters, grills
- Standard brochures
- Telephone and in-person information and referral
- Monthly newsletter
- Speakers Bureau
- Some festivals and large-group activities
- Education or informational exhibits
- Travelogs

- Reserved group areas
- Specialized outdoor research programming like the Zoo Adventure series, special lectures & IGO programming, Cleveland Metroparks Walking Club
- Zoo admission
- Permits for special events, rock climbing, etc.

- Golf course activities including clinics/lessons
- The Chalet fees, rentals, etc.
- Ledge Pool fees
- Rental of Zoo facilities

## AUTHORITY

The authority to establish appropriate fees, on an annual basis, rests with Cleveland Metroparks Board of Park Commissioners. The staff of Cleveland Metroparks will develop and recommend fees for all appropriate uses of its facilities, programs and admissions. The fees will be reviewed/evaluated annually by the staff and will be presented, justified and approved by the Board of Park Commissioners with the adoption of the annual budget.

### Cleveland Metroparks Fee Principles and Guidelines

1. To the extent it is reasonable and practical, users of Cleveland Metroparks "merit" and "specialized" facilities, programs and service should pay appropriate fees and charges to relieve the property tax responsibility on Park District residents, according to the following guidelines:

#### Merit Fee

- Low Fee - fee set to recover 50 percent (generally) of direct costs of producing the service/program or facility portion. Direct costs are the costs of instructor/staff leader, materials and supplies, equipment rental, promotion and advertising, etc. Direct costs shall be determined by using a project budget, to be calculated by the project administrator, instructor, or leader, dividing total estimated costs by total estimated participants, multiplied by 50 percent.
- Medium Fee - fee set to recover 100 percent (generally) of direct costs of producing the service/program or facility operation, the "break-even" point. Direct costs shall be determined by using a project budget, to be calculated by the project administrator, instructor, or leader, dividing total estimated direct costs by total estimated participants, multiplied by 100 percent.

In both of these levels of Merit Fees, Cleveland Metroparks will assume the indirect costs of these programs. Indirect costs could include the cost of an executive or departmental director, facility, general capital or rehabilitation expense, etc.

- Specialized Fee - Fee set to reflect the "going rate" or market rate, fee reflects comparative price of similar services, public and/or private. Eventually, specialized programs will have minimal or no indirect or direct operating subsidy by Cleveland Metroparks. Currently, specialized fees will be driven by the market and will attempt to recover 100 percent of direct costs.

2. Members of the Tax District will receive a fee waiver or discount on Merit service where practical or appropriate. Residents of the Tax District will be offered exclusive, early registration for programs where practical.

3. Cleveland Metroparks should adopt a system of accounting which will accommodate accurate, separate fiscal accounting for "Specialized" programs/facilities. This system will provide the data necessary to implement a procedure for developing appropriate fees for programs/facilities and services based on actual unit costs.

4. It is necessary that Cleveland Metroparks develop and operate a variety of program services and facilities to meet the citizens' diverse public recreational needs. A "needs assessment" is included in the comprehensive master planning process of the Park District. However, some facilities may be appropriately operated by concessionaires, some by non-profit organizations, some by "service" clubs, and some by Cleveland Metroparks. The following guidelines help identify alternative service/facility arrangements:

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#### Public Programs/Facilities/Services

Examples: Buckeye Trail Association, Cleveland Hiking Club, Cuyahoga Astronomical Association, Cleveland Natural Science Club, Frostville Museum, Worden Heritage Homestead, Squire Rich Museum and Lake Erie Nature & Science Center

#### Merit Programs/Facilities/Services

Examples: Huntington Playhouse, Baycrafters and Schuele Planetarium

### "Specialized" Programs/Facilities/Services

Examples: Stable operations, concession stands in many reservations, golf courses and at Cleveland Metro-parks Zoo, cross-country ski concession

5. The physical and aesthetic integrity of the park lands and resources are of paramount importance, and their conservation is the primary reason for the existence of Cleveland Metroparks. Some facilities and services, if used indiscriminately and without control, can be destroyed if not properly managed with "controlled" visitation.

6. It is desirable, where practical, to establish the principle that revenues generated at a specific facility or program are accounted for with that facility or program. The accounting system should accommodate this policy.

7. Insensitive imposition of fees as a condition of participation in Cleveland Metroparks facilities, programs and services could deter utilization by some groups. Provisions for exemption or relief from the fee should be made available to disadvantaged groups and organizations which use facilities where fees and charges are otherwise required.

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Waiver of Fee Policy: The Park District authorizes the waiver of fees for certain governmental and non-profit uses as follows:

a. Low-income, disadvantaged, handicapped and elderly groups located within the Park District may, on request, be granted free use of Park District-operated facilities. Individuals referred from government or non-profit agencies, able to qualify candidates and verify their status, will be eligible for fee waivers. A scholarship pool will be created by Cleveland Metroparks to defray the cost of these individuals or groups. The scholarship will be funded by a portion of program receipts and/or other fundraising efforts.

b. All public and private schools and institutions of higher education located in the Tax District receive interpretive services without charge and reduced fees during "non-prime time" facility usage.

c. Public park and recreation agencies, or public agencies as authorized in writing by the executive director, who share compatible purposes with Cleveland Metroparks, may be subject to fee waiver.

8. Discount coupons or courtesy cards which represent a fee discount or fee waiver respectively, can be offered for promotional, public relations, sponsorship or advertising opportunities. Printing and distribution of these coupons will be done in accordance with accounting procedures.

9. Employees are entitled to discounts and waivers of fees as described in the Employee Handbook.

10. Classification of Fees and Charges: The following classification system for Park District fees and charges will be used to categorize revenue earned at Park District facilities:

**Revenue Category Examples**

|                      |  |    |
|----------------------|--|----|
| Admission fees       | The Chalet, Ledge Pool, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, golf course greens fees  |    |
| Rental fees          | The Chalet, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo facilities, nature centers, reserved group picnic areas   |    |
| Sales revenue        | Items at golf courses, nature centers, the Chalet, etc., including concessions   | 75 |
| Permit fees          | Special events, weddings, rock climbing, photographic use, polo field usage, ball diamonds; in short, a permit, reservation or FYI issued by Cleveland Metroparks Visitor Services Division, which is not listed in another category |    |
| Special service fees | Clean-up/set-up charges, Cleveland Metroparks Ranger Department - use of off-duty rangers and outdoor education and Zoo education program fees   |    |

## Appendix B.

### *Discount Coupons and Tickets, Free Passes and Promotional Giveaways*

The intent of discount coupons and tickets, free passes and promotional giveaways (in the form of discount coupons or tickets, free passes, merchandise or services) is to enhance Cleveland Metroparks revenue and/or build goodwill. The following is a guideline for determining the promotional value/financial impact to the Park District and, as with any asset, establishing control. Outside agencies which utilize Cleveland Metroparks as part of a coupon or promotion which they develop will adhere to Park District guidelines.

#### *Limits/guidelines*

- Discount tickets and coupons, free passes, merchandise or services which are given away or traded will be valued at the highest rate (i.e., adult, prime time, holiday, retail price, etc.).
- Non-profit organizations may be provided a maximum of \$150 value of tickets for each request or event, up to a limit of two requests or events per year (\$300 maximum total). Special consideration will be given to the Cleveland Zoological Society and Cleveland Metroparks affiliates, which may be provided \$150 value per event up to ten events (\$1,500 maximum total).
- Discount coupons or tickets, free passes, merchandise or services may be traded with any for-profit or non-profit group/company/organization. The value of goods traded by Cleveland Metroparks must be equal to or less than the value of goods received.
- Special opportunities exist for cash sponsorship offers or seasonal sponsors. The *maximum* value to the recipient of discount coupons or tickets, free passes, merchandise or services given by Cleveland Metroparks may exceed

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the cash offer, but *realistic* liability (see Financial Impact Statement) to the Park District shall be equal to or less than the value of goods received.

### ***Design and Control***

- After the initial concept of a discount coupon or ticket, free pass or promotional giveaway is developed, a Financial Impact Statement must be submitted to the treasurer. Procedural controls and reporting will be established by the treasurer's department. A prototype of the item shall be designed, in cooperation with Cleveland Metroparks graphics division, and the following guidelines.
- Free passes: Shall utilize three separate colors in the printing process, and shall be sequentially numbered (e.g., green paper with black print, numbered in red). Free pass numbers shall be recorded and verified by the producer, whether Cleveland Metroparks graphics division or an outside printer. All passes shall have a date of expiration or a date inserted at time of initial distribution by the controlling division manager. The expiration date shall not extend more than one year past date of distribution.
- Coupons: A complete description of the item to be produced and its maximum financial impact shall be submitted to the treasurer, as outlined in the Financial Impact Statement section following. Coupons must have a printed validation date, and a maximum of one year is allowed.

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### ***Staff Notification***

Prior to the issuance of discount tickets, coupons and free passes, the *division manager initiating the promotion* shall notify the *division manager responsible for the redemption of the same*.

### ***Security***

- Free passes: Because of their dollar value, free passes shall be secured in a locked area, preferably a vault if available. When distributed, efforts shall be made to ensure security of the passes. Pass numbers distributed shall be recorded by the controlling division manager (Chalet facilities manager, Cleveland Metroparks Zoo marketing manager, golf clubhouse pro/manager, etc.). When passes being distributed have a value greater than \$150, a signed receipt shall be obtained by the controlling division manager. This individual is responsible for maintaining a log of the number of free passes issued, to whom and the date issued. Logs of free pass distribution shall be maintained for two years after audit (generally a four-year cycle).

- Promotional giveaway merchandise/services: Must be reported to the treasurer prior to event and upon completion of event.
- Spot audits on free passes, coupons redeemed and giveaways will be conducted internally by the treasurer's staff and externally by the state auditors.

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### ***Financial Impact Statements***

**Initial estimate:** A financial impact statement shall be developed for discount coupons and tickets, free passes and promotional giveaways (Attachment A). The maximum revenue to be obtained and the maximum dollar value of the discount or merchandise/service will be multiplied by the total to be distributed to determine the maximum revenue and/or liability.

In addition, an estimate of the realistic revenue and/or liability should be included. This statement shall also indicate whether or not the item's redemption amount was factored into revenue projections for the current year. The financial impact statement shall be submitted to the treasurer for approval, as should the prototype, when developed. Financial impact statements will be maintained by the treasurer for audit verification.

- **End-of-promotion tabulations:** Tabulations for redeemed coupons shall be completed within two weeks following the date of expiration, with copies to the treasurer and director of

marketing and visitor services. These reports will be generated from the POS systems for golf (by golf administration) and EarthWords; Ticketmaster qualifiers for the Zoo; and manual logs for the Chalet and Ledge Pool.

- Coupons/discount tickets and free passes: The controlling division manager shall tabulate the total redemption of free passes and coupons/discount tickets to determine success of promotions, verify that coupons/discount tickets or free passes were not replicated in any way, and, if a promotion extends beyond the current year, determine the potential financial impact for the forthcoming year.
- Promotional giveaways (merchandise/services): The controlling division manager shall submit, to the treasurer and director of marketing and visitor services, a tabulation of the actual quantity and value of the giveaways (cash register receipt or inventory transfer-out where applicable and/or verification by organization receiving the goods/services) and shall verify that promotional giveaways did not exceed the authorized amount.



# ATTACHMENT A

## Financial Impact Statement

**Office of the Treasurer**  
 4101 Fulton Parkway  
 Cleveland, Ohio 44144  
 (216) 351-6300  
 FAX (216) 351-2584

Promotion name (company, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of promotion:  Trade  Giveaway  Other      Promotion date(s): \_\_\_\_\_

If trade or other, briefly describe cash or services and dollar value to be received by Park District (provide copy of executed letter of understanding to treasurer).

Promotion will involve:  Discount coupon or ticket  Free pass  Merchandise  Services  Other  
 If other, describe:

### Discount Coupon/Ticket or Free Pass

Number to be printed: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount of discount per coupon: \_\_\_\_\_

Maximum potential revenue intake: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Maximum potential value of discount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Realistic revenue (estimate): \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Realistic liability (estimate): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Factored into revenue projections for current year?  Yes  No

List individual(s) or organization(s) distributing the above:

### Merchandise

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Most recent cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Current retail: \_\_\_\_\_ Quant. \_\_\_\_\_ Total value: \_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Most recent cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Current retail: \_\_\_\_\_ Quant. \_\_\_\_\_ Total value: \_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Most recent cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Current retail: \_\_\_\_\_ Quant. \_\_\_\_\_ Total value: \_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Most recent cost: \_\_\_\_\_ Current retail: \_\_\_\_\_ Quant. \_\_\_\_\_ Total value: \_\_\_\_\_

(use additional forms, if necessary)

### Services

Description of services and total estimated cost to Cleveland Metroparks:

Controlling manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer's approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Before promotion: All copies to treasurer; yellow/pink/goldenrod copies returned to originator.*

*After promotion: yellow copy-treasurer with tabulation; pink copy-dept. director with tabulation; goldenrod-originator.*



## Service and Fees Special Event Permit

Department of  
Marketing & Visitor Services  
4101 Fulton Parkway  
Cleveland, Ohio 44144  
(216) 351-6300  
FAX (216) 351-2584

EVENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### A. Cost of Division staff:

List of individuals who are directly responsible for the implementation of program/facility/service:

List an approximate salary and fringe costs:

Estimate % of time the person works on this program/facility/service and multiply:

|          |                       |                        |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ |                        |
| 2. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ |                        |
| 3. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ |                        |
| 4. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ | <b>A. Total:</b> _____ |

### B. Materials/supplies (include printed worksheet or books, premiums, etc.):

Items: Each Quantity:

|          |                       |                        |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ |                        |
| 2. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ |                        |
| 3. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ |                        |
| 4. _____ | _____ x _____ = _____ | <b>B. Total:</b> _____ |

### C. Equipment Rental:

Items: Cost:

|          |       |                       |
|----------|-------|-----------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |                       |
| 2. _____ | _____ |                       |
| 3. _____ | _____ |                       |
| 4. _____ | _____ | <b>C. Total</b> _____ |

### D. Promotion (include catalogs, flyers, postage, advertisements, etc.):

Items: Cost:

|          |       |                       |
|----------|-------|-----------------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |                       |
| 2. _____ | _____ |                       |
| 3. _____ | _____ |                       |
| 4. _____ | _____ | <b>D. Total</b> _____ |

**Grand Total (A, B, C & D)** \_\_\_\_\_

**FEE =** \_\_\_\_\_

