Strategies and Recommendations to Provide Equitable Facilities and Programs

- **Address park(s) history.** Historically, institutions in this country served a largely able-bodied, white male audience. Improved understanding of Des Moines Park System's history/cultural origins and working to identify specific strategies to address those challenges-of-origin must continue. Recognizing the bias buried in a park’s specific history is step one.
- **Baseline measure/level-of-service standards.** Establish a measurement system as a baseline to understanding current equity of system and identifying means for improvements. Identify service gaps and secure additional and/or expanded park facilities, programs and natural-areas facilities to meet future growth needs. Achieve equity of access.
- **Partner for equity—internally and externally.** Tap city and community resources to help understand diverse cultural needs and connections. Continue school partnership as key strategy for advancing equity of program and facilities; continue to employ models similar to the expansion of the recreational basketball program. At the same time, continue and enhance internal partnerships (e.g., with Des Moines Civil Rights Commission, Des Moines Police Department) and pro-actively continue the parks-and-equality conversation, as started with this planning process and the Racial Equity Institute workshop that was held as part of this planning process as part of the LiveDSM planning process.
- **Incorporate the discussion of equity into broader discussions of budget resources.** Broaden the discussion on resource allocation to address who benefits for the resources, recognizing the importance of establishing who pays for them.
- **Communication and public awareness.** Consistently use inclusive messaging and proactively build the case that equity does not mean equal (also see ADA, below).
- **Finalize implementation of ADA transition plan.** Continue to address ADA issues as a priority for neighborhood parks and programs.
- **Improve listening and engagement methodologies.** This will ensure the most meaningful participation by all.
- **Identify means for continual update/ improvement.** Recognize shifting needs of transitioning neighborhoods.
- **Adopt policies to aid in promoting equity.**

To learn more about how Des Moines Parks and Recreation works to provide equitable facilities and programs see the department’s comprehensive plan, LiveDSM.