



City of Portsmouth

# Recreational Needs Study

Community Workshop #2 – November 16, 2022



# WELCOME!

**Placework**  
ARCHITECTURE • PLANNING

FITNESS • ENRICHMENT • ARTS • ATHLETICS  
**PORTSMOUTH**  
RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Horsley Witten Group  
*Sustainable Environmental Solutions*



# AGENDA

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS +  
PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**GALLERY BOARDS/PRIORITIZATION +  
VISION STATEMENT**

# Summary of Data Collection, Community Engagement and Analyses

## Data Sources and Community Outreach

- Online Community Survey
  - Athletic Facility Users Survey
  - Public Workshop #1
  - Inventory Spreadsheet
  - Age Friendly Portsmouth
  - Field Use Analysis (not complete)
  - Comparisons between National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and Portsmouth
  - Existing/Future Municipal Plans
  - Coordination Interviews/Meetings
- 

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Information/  
Communication/  
Protocols

Maintenance/  
Stewardship

Programming

Connectivity/  
Mobility

Facilities

Amenities

## Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Information/  
Communication/  
Protocols

### **Increase Communications + Create Communications Plan**

- Establish annual ‘meet and greet’ for sports league/organization administrators, coaches and support staff with School District Facilities Director, Parks and Greenery Department and Recreation Director.
- Establish quarterly (by season) coordination meetings with sports league/organization administrators, coaches and support staff with School District Facilities Director, Parks and Greenery Department and Recreation Director.
- Formalize protocols for field use, particularly after rain/weather events.
- Ensure that information is made available both in print and online.
- Promote the City’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

## Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Programming

### Expand Program Offerings + Expand Hours of Operation

- Public outreach repetitive themes/priorities:
  - Free play options
  - Programming for preschoolers/adults/people with disabilities
  - Coordination with Portsmouth Housing Authority (scholarships)
  - Extend weekend hours for working families (indoor facilities)
  - Establish training opportunities for volunteer coaches
  - Martial arts programming for adults/empty-nesters
  - Winter sports offerings
  - Affordable swim lessons
  - Pickleball lessons/leagues

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Facilities

## Comparing Portsmouth to National Trends

- How is Portsmouth doing compared to other communities? The following figures are for **benchmarking** purposes
- **This is only one part of the picture!** Final Recommendations for Portsmouth will come from a combination of sources including both benchmarking data and community input, City financial and planning vision, etc.
- **The Data**
  - NRPA: National Recreation And Park Association [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org)
    - 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review
  - We compared with national data for communities under 20,000 residents
  - We looked at benchmarks for both **Indoor and Outdoor Facilities**

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Facilities  
(Outdoor)

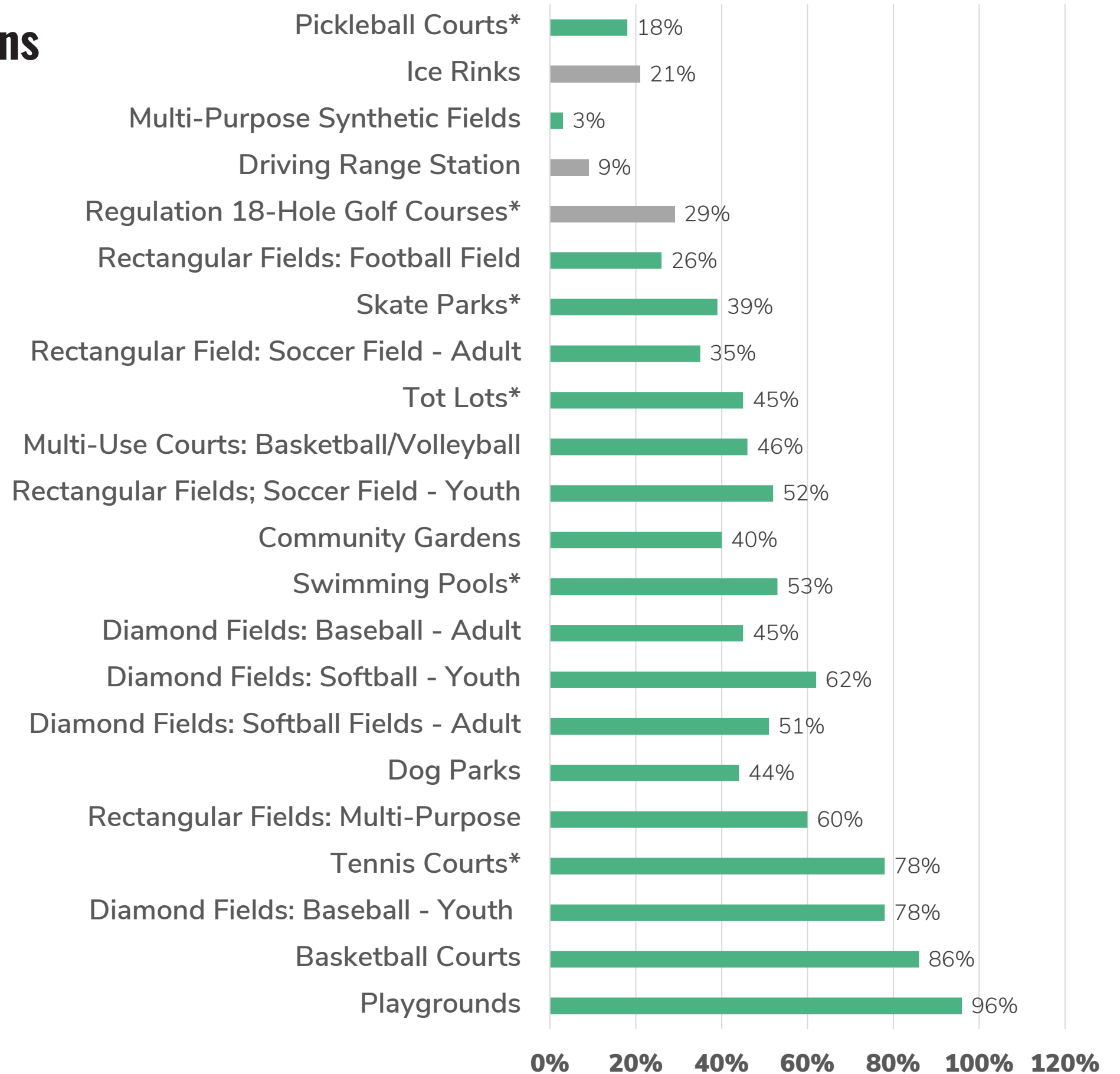
## Outdoor Facilities by Type: National Prevalence

How many communities our size reported having these types of facilities?

 = not offered in Portsmouth

Portsmouth Take-Aways:

- Portsmouth’s diversity of outdoor facility types are in line with national trends
- The quantity of outdoor facilities (fields, etc.) can be further studied using national benchmarks



Source: 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review  
\* - Data for <20,000 unavailable; national data used



# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

## Facilities (Outdoor)

### Potential Growth:

- Adult Softball Fields: 3
- Youth Softball Fields: 1
- Adult Baseball Fields: 2
- Youth Soccer Fields: 3
- Adult Soccer Fields: 1
- Football Fields: 1
- Skate Park
- Golf Course
- Driving Range
- Community Garden
- Ice Rink

| Type of Facility                         | Median Number of Residents per Facility |                  | Number of Facilities          |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | Prevalence in Communities <20,000 |
|--|---|------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|  | Population of Jurisdiction <sup>1</sup> |                  | Baseline                      | 2022 Inventory           | Population 2022: 22,192          | Population 2032: 23,284            |                                  |                                   |
|  | Less than 20,000                        | 20,000 to 49,999 | Less than 20,000 <sup>2</sup> | Portsmouth 2022 Existing | Portsmouth 2022 Additional Needs | Portsmouth 2032 Needs <sup>2</sup> | Portsmouth 2032 Additional Needs |                                   |
| Playgrounds                              | 1,986                                   | 3,111            | 11                            | 14                       | 0                                | 12                                 | 0                                | 96%                               |
| Basketball Courts - Indoor <sup>3</sup>  | 3,750                                   | 6,839            | 6                             | 7                        | 0                                | 6                                  | 0                                | 86%                               |
| Diamond Fields: Baseball - Youth         | 3,107                                   | 4,858            | 7                             | 8                        | 0                                | 7                                  | 0                                | 78%                               |
| Tennis Courts                            | 2,723                                   | 5,000            | 8                             | 10                       | 0                                | 9                                  | 0                                | 78%                               |
| Rectangular Fields: Multi-Purpose        | 4,362                                   | 7,674            | 5                             | 5                        | 0                                | 5                                  | 0                                | 60%                               |
| Dog Parks                                | 11,100                                  | 28,000           | 2                             | 3                        | 0                                | 2                                  | 0                                | 44%                               |
| Diamond Fields: Softball Fields - Adult  | 5,667                                   | 11,232           | 4                             | 1                        | 3                                | 4                                  | 3                                | 51%                               |
| Diamond Fields: Softball - Youth         | 5,339                                   | 8,509            | 4                             | 3                        | 1                                | 4                                  | 1                                | 62%                               |
| Diamond Fields: Baseball - Adult         | 7,954                                   | 19,000           | 3                             | 1                        | 2                                | 3                                  | 2                                | 45%                               |
| Swimming Pools                           | 8,637                                   | 26,281           |                               |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | 53%                               |
| Community Gardens                        | 8,773                                   | 24,500           |                               |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | 40%                               |
| Rectangular Fields; Soccer Field - Youth | 3,504                                   | 5,011            | 6                             | 3                        | 3                                | 7                                  | 4                                | 52%                               |
| Multi-Use Courts: Basketball/Volleyball  | 5,400                                   | 14,807           | 4                             | 11                       | 0                                | 4                                  | 0                                | 46%                               |
| Tot Lots                                 | 6,642                                   | 10,756           | 3                             | 0                        | 0                                | 4                                  | 0                                | 45%                               |
| Rectangular Field: Soccer Field - Adult  | 8,017                                   | 10,547           | 3                             | 2                        | 1                                | 3                                  | 1                                | 35%                               |
| Skate Parks                              | 11,100                                  | 32,335           |                               |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | 39%                               |
| Rectangular Fields: Football Field       | 8,004                                   | 19,351           | 3                             | 2                        | 1                                | 3                                  | 1                                | 26%                               |
| Regulation 18-Hole Golf Courses          | 9,183                                   | 33,800           |                               |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | 29%                               |
| Driving Range Station                    | 5,055                                   | 23,238           |                               |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | 9%                                |
| Multi-Purpose Synthetic Fields           | 12,962                                  | 24,665           | 2                             | 2                        | 0                                | 2                                  | 0                                | 3%                                |
| Ice Rinks                                | 7,997                                   | 3,123            |                               |                          |                                  |                                    |                                  | 21%                               |
| Pickleball Courts                        | 3,446                                   | 8,143            | 6                             | 9                        | 0                                | 7                                  | 0                                | 18%                               |

Number of Facilities calculations performed for fields, courts, parks /playgrounds only.

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

## Facilities (Outdoor)

### Stakeholder Feedback:

- Athletic Facility Users Survey:
  - Demand for additional fields
- Public outreach repetitive theme/ priority:
  - Artificial turf fields needed
- Support the City's Open Space Plan/Master Plan recommendations.
- Coordination Interviews/Meetings:
  - Additional fields/capacity to 'rest' fields
- Field Use Analysis
  - Many fields over-utilized

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Facilities  
(Indoor)

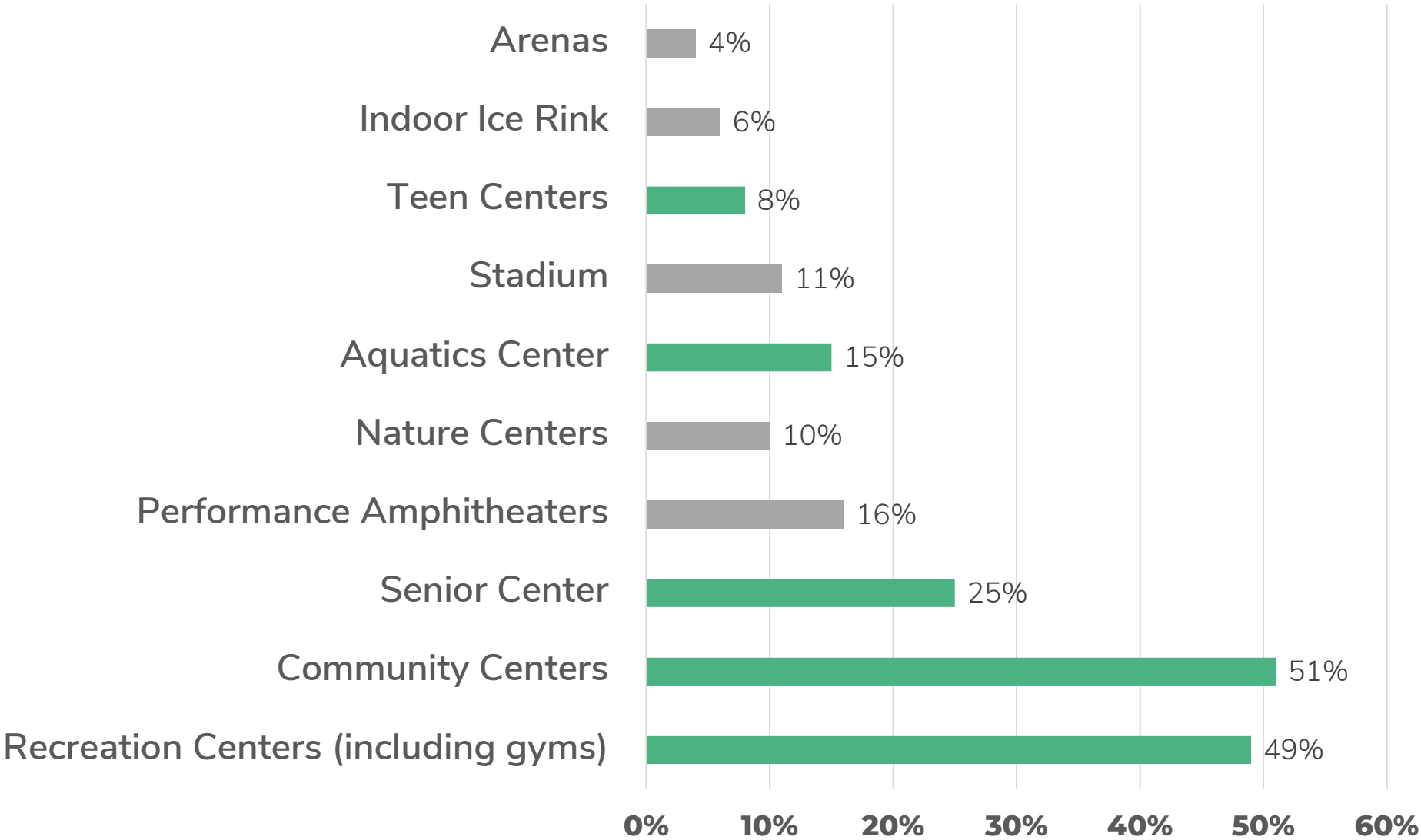
### Portsmouth Take-Aways:

- Portsmouth has many facilities that most other communities of our size do not have
- Comparing quantities of indoor facilities is less important than whether they exist in Portsmouth or not

## Indoor Facilities by Type: National Prevalence

How many communities of our size reported having these types of facilities?

■ = not offered in Portsmouth



Source: 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review  
\* - Data for <20,000 unavailable; national data used

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

## Facilities (Indoor)

### Portsmouth Take-Aways:

- Municipalities larger than Portsmouth (20,000-49,999) are a helpful benchmark to help determine need for new facilities
- Whether to add indoor facilities will be largely determined by Stakeholder Input rather than national benchmarks

| Type of Facility                    | Prevalence in Communities <20,000 | Median Number of Residents per Facility |                  |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|
|                                     |                                   | Population of Jurisdiction <sup>1</sup> |                  |
|                                     |                                   | Less than 20,000                        | 20,000 to 49,999 |
| Recreation Centers (including gyms) | 49%                               | 9,126                                   | 24,601           |
| Community Centers                   | 51%                               | 8,504                                   | 26,668           |
| Senior Center                       | 25%                               | 12,935                                  | 32,075           |
| Performance Amphitheaters           | 16%                               | 9,291                                   | 30,745           |
| Nature Centers                      | 10%                               | 11,821                                  | 30,912           |
| Aquatics Center                     | 15%                               | 11,375                                  | 31,230           |
| Stadium                             | 11%                               | 9,126                                   | 27,891           |
| Teen Centers                        | 8%                                | 14,426                                  | 29,406           |
| Indoor Ice Rink                     | 6%                                | 8,002                                   | 24,904           |
| Arenas                              | 4%                                | 6,137                                   | 24,413           |

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

## Facilities (Indoor)

### Stakeholder Feedback:

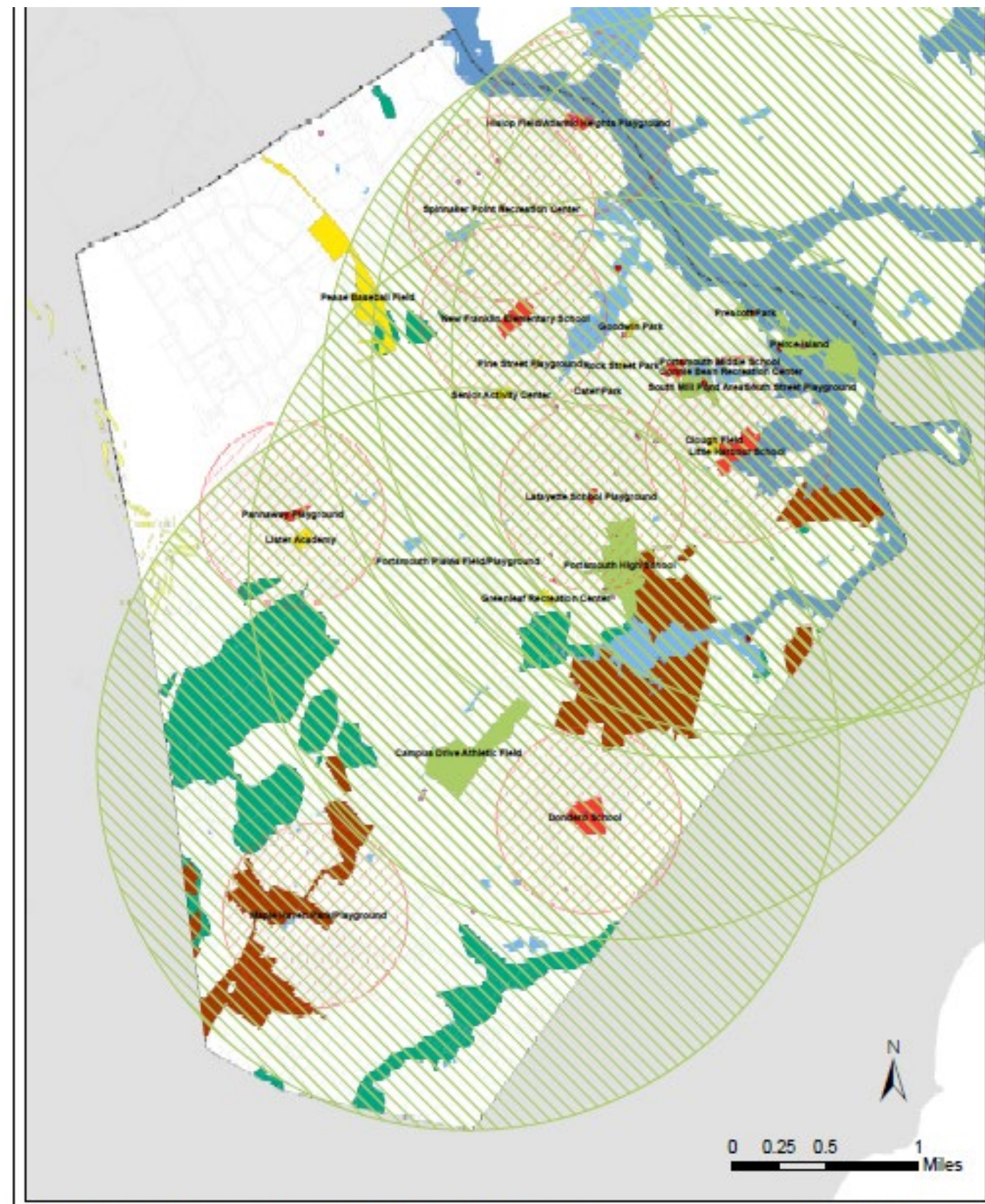
- Athletic Facility Users Survey: Demand for indoor facility access
- Public outreach repetitive themes/priorities:
  - Ice rink/arena
  - Multi-purpose indoor sports complex
  - Indoor access for toddlers
  - Teen Center
  - Indoor courts/ recreation space
- NRPA Standards:
  - Community Center
  - Senior Center
  - Performance/Amphitheater

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Level Of Service Analysis

Portsmouth is equitably served by recreational amenities/facilities

- Utilize Level of Service Analysis performed in this study as a planning tool to inform future improvements/investments.
  - Siting/Investments



This document is for City of Portsmouth planning purposes only and is not suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. Data Source: City of Portsmouth, NH GRANIT

| Legend                        |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>City Sites</b>             | <b>Other Sites/Features</b>    |
| Neighborhood Park             | Local/State Conservation Areas |
| Community Park                | Golf Courses                   |
| All Other Sites               | Estuaries                      |
| <b>Pedestrian/Bike Radius</b> | Swamp/Marsh                    |
| 1/2 Mile (Neighborhood Park)  | Lakes/Ponds                    |
| 2 Miles (Community Park)      | Shoreline Access Points        |

Horsley Witten Group  
Sustainable Environmental Solutions  
10000 River St., Suite 200, Portsmouth, NH 03801  
Placework  
Level of Service Analysis  
Portsmouth, New Hampshire  
Date: 11/8/2022

# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

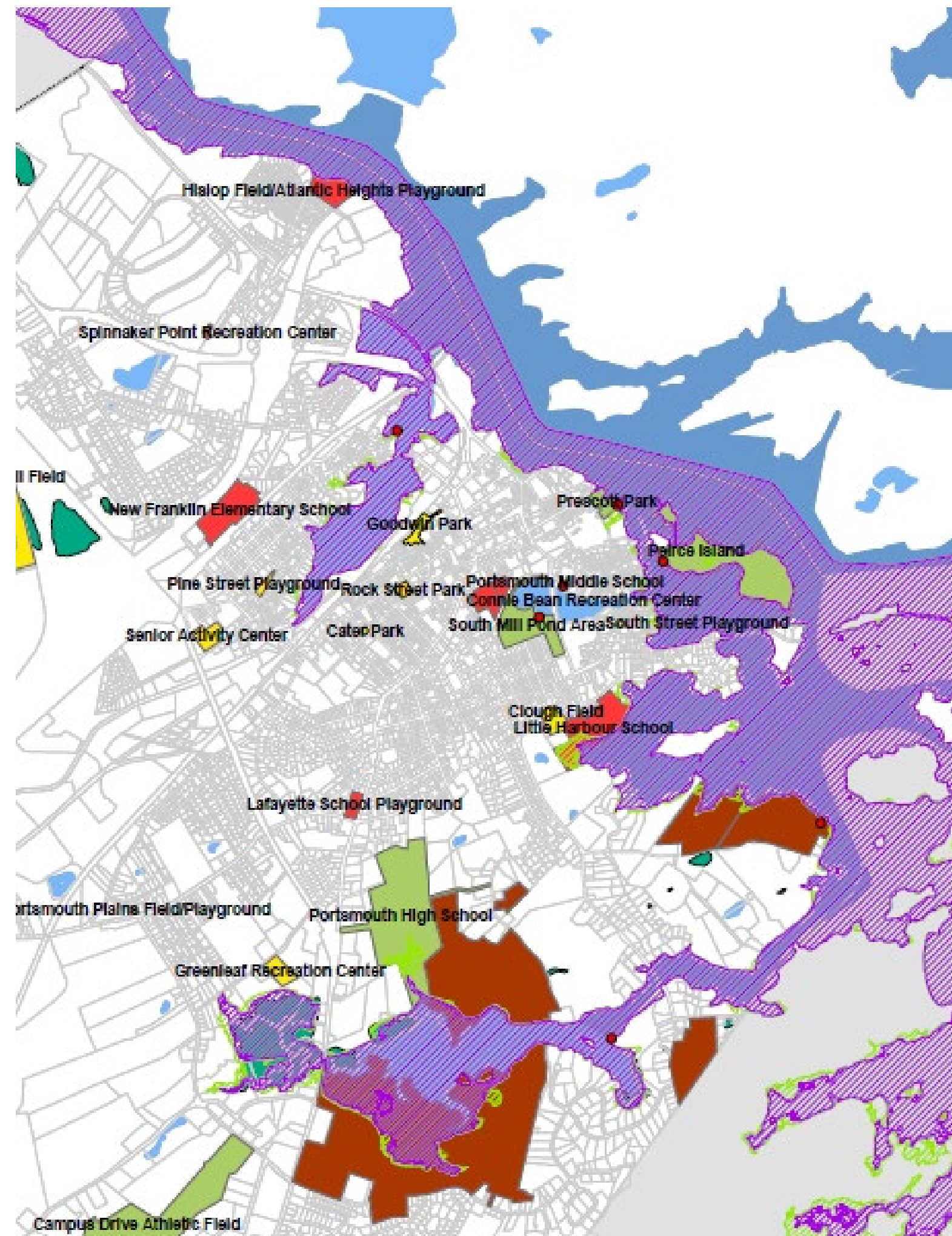
## Climate Change Analysis

### 1' Sea Level Rise

#### Vulnerable Recreation Sites:

- PHS
- Little Harbour School
- Peirce Island
- Prescott Park
- Hislop Field/Atlantic Heights Playground

- Utilize Climate Change Analysis performed in this study as a planning tool to inform future improvements/investments.
  - Siting/Investments



# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations



## Amenities

### Enhance/Upgrade Existing Sites

- Public outreach repetitive themes/priorities:
  - Comfort Stations/Restrooms
  - Lighting to expand use
  - ADA-accessibility
  - Upgrade/Update playground equipment
  - Picnic Areas
  - Parking
  - Seating (bleachers/benches)
- Coordination Interviews/Meetings:
  - Fencing around fields/playground sites



# Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Maintenance/  
Stewardship

## Maintenance Plan + Partnerships

- Public outreach repetitive theme/priority:
  - Maintenance/operations of fields could be improved
- Coordination Interviews/Meetings: Additional personnel needed
  - Additional personnel needed/welcomed
- Establish Memorandums of Agreement with sports leagues/organizations regarding their maintenance and stewardship responsibilities, based on best practices and mutual agreement. Renew/update these MOAs seasonally/annually.
- Support the City's Master Plan recommendation.
- Identify/Encourage efficiencies for 'equipment crossover' between the City and School District.

## Preliminary Findings/Recommendations

Connectivity/  
Mobility

### Biking/Walking Trails + Access

- Public outreach repetitive themes/priorities:
  - Walking/biking trails (Walk Audit)
  - Improve rail/bike trail (Bike Audit)
  - Mountain bike trails
  - Revisit Middle Street bike lane removal
  - ADA-accessible improvements throughout City
  - Connectivity to sites (sidewalks)
- Support the City's Open Space Plan recommendations (various trails/segments).
- Support the City's Master Plan recommendations.

# WHAT'S NEXT

**GALLERY+ VISION BOARDS**



# Gallery Boards

## Amenities



City of Portsmouth  
Recreational Needs Study  
Public Workshop #2

### Overarching Goal:

Enhance, upgrade and develop new amenities at existing sites to improve the user's experience.

### What should the City focus on first?

Place a dot next to your top two priorities.

|                                     |
|-------------------------------------|
| Comfort Stations/Restrooms          |
| Fencing (playgrounds/ballfields)    |
| Lighting to expand use              |
| Upgrade/Update playground equipment |
| Picnic areas                        |
| Parking                             |
| Noise abatement                     |
| Warm-up areas/space                 |
| Seating (Bleachers/Benches)         |
| Backstops/Dugouts/Scoreboards       |



## Information/ Communication/ Protocols



City of Portsmouth  
Recreational Needs Study  
Public Workshop #2

### Overarching Goal:

Increase communications, formalize communications planning and promote the City's goal of equity and inclusion.

### Preliminary Recommendations:

1. Establish annual 'meet and greet' for sports league/organization administrators, coach and support staff with School District Facilities Director, Parks and Greenery Department and Recreation Director.
2. Establish quarterly (by Season) coordination meetings with sports league/organization Administrators, coaches and support staff with School District Facilities Director, Parks And Greenery Dept. and Recreation Director.
3. Formalize protocols for field use, particularly after rain/weather events.
4. Ensure that information is made available both in print and online.

### What could be improved? What's Missing?



## Connectivity/ Mobility



City of Portsmouth  
Recreational Needs Study  
Public Workshop #2

### Overarching Goal:

Enhance walkability, bikeability and universal access throughout the community.

### What should the City focus on first? Place a dot next to your top two priorities.

|  |
|--|
| Sidewalks                                  |
| ADA-accessibility/Universal access         |
| Walking trails/paths                       |
| Biking/Mountain biking trails/paths        |
| Reconsider removal of Middle St. bike lane |

### Preliminary Recommendations:

1. Support the City's Master Plan recommendations.
  - Work with state/regional partners to convert the former Hampton Branch to the off-road route of the NH Seacoast Greenway.
  - Identify/implement off-road multi-use paths along North Mill Pond and other transportation/utility corridors.
  - Create a passive recreation program focused on expansion/maintenance of recreational trails.
2. Support the City's Open Space Plan recommendations. for trail connections.
  - Land between Gosling Meadows neighborhood and Durgin Lane.
  - Along the river, through parcels to Porpoise Way/Portsmouth Blvd./Dunlin Way.
  - Portsmouth Blvd./Dunlin Way to the river.

### What could be improved? What's Missing?



# Vision Board



City of Portsmouth  
**Recreational Needs Study**  
Public Workshop #2

Information/  
Communication/  
Protocols

Programming

Facilities

Amenities

## Vision.....

Help us craft the vision for the 2023 Recreational Needs Analysis.

Give us suggestions on a full vision statement or just a word or two that is reflective of the core values that should be included in the vision statement.

Wellness

Communication

Community

The vision of the Portsmouth Recreational Needs Analysis is to foster a healthy, active and engaged community.

Multi-Generational

Inclusive

Active

Connectivity/  
Mobility

Maintenance/  
Stewardship

Policies



# SCHEDULE

## **GALLERY + VISION BOARDS**

**- Available at Community Campus through November 23, 2022**

## **DATA COLLECTION/ANALYSIS PHASE**

**- Complete by December 2022**

# Find Us Online!

# Provide Your Input and Stay Updated

# Project Webpage Email List

City of PORTSMOUTH NH A Δ A

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) |  [Search](#)

[Programs](#) [Rec Centers](#) [Holiday Schedule](#) [Skatepark](#) [Recreational Needs Study](#) [Contact](#)

City of Portsmouth > Recreation Department > Recreational Needs Study Update

## RECREATIONAL NEEDS STUDY UPDATE



### RECREATIONAL NEEDS SURVEY NOW ONLINE!

The City of Portsmouth and the Recreation Department/Board are currently working on a study to determine the types of community services, sports and facilities the City needs to meet the demands of residents today and into the future. **Complete the survey** and become part of the plan!

### Background

The City of Portsmouth has launched a Comprehensive Recreational Needs Study project to update the City's **2010 Recreational Needs Study** (last revised in 2016). The project team includes the Recreation Director, DPW Director, Steering Committee, **Recreation Board** and consultants **Placework-Horsley Witten Group**.

To update the Recreational Needs Study, the team seeks to understand how residents utilize the City's recreational facilities and programs, assess whether existing recreational facilities and programs are meeting the needs of the community and project trends in future recreational amenities, in order to define a comprehensive plan for the future of recreation in Portsmouth.

The scope of the project includes:

- Data Collection and Analysis, including a review of the inventory of existing

### RECREATION BOARD

City Manager Karen Conard, Ex-Officio

Rich Blalock, Council Liaison

Brian French, School Board Liaison

Carl Diemer, Chairperson

Lauren Krans

Robert Bogardus

Jacqueline Cali-Pitts

Richard Duddy

Kathryn Lynch

Kory Sirmaian


### PROJECT TEAM

#### **City of Portsmouth**

Todd Henley, Recreation Director

Peter Rice, Director of Public

<https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/recreation/recreational-needs-study-update>



**Questions?**





**THANK YOU!**

**Placework**  
ARCHITECTURE • PLANNING

FITNESS • ENRICHMENT • ARTS • ATHLETICS  
**PORTSMOUTH**  
RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Horsley Witten Group  
*Sustainable Environmental Solutions*

