

Social Equity and Garden Access

Botanic Garden Task Force Public Meeting

May 14, 2018

Social Equity

National Academy of Public Administration

- “The fair, just and equitable management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract; the fair, just and equitable distribution of public services and implementation of public policy; and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy.”
- The third pillar of public administration.

Local Government's Balancing Act for Social Equity

- Allocation of capital improvements (streets, streetlights, parks, etc.)
- Rate setting (water, taxes, swim lessons, sports teams)
- Operational efficiencies to minimize tax rates
- Operational efficiencies to allow funding for necessary functions such as transit or affordable housing

Current Choices Across Park System

	Botanic Garden	Parks	Trails	Nature Center	Golf Courses	Community Centers
# of Properties	1	277	44 miles	1	4	21
# Maintenance Employees/Acre	.35 FTE/Acre (109 Acres)*1	.005 FTE/Acre (11,000 Acres)*2	.05 FTE/Mile	.001 FTE/Acre (3,621 Acres)	.04 FTE/Acre	NA
# Maintenance Employees/Facility	38	62	2	4	23	9
Fees?		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

**1: Equals one staff member per 3 acres. National recommendation is one qualified gardener per 2 acres.*

**2: 82% of park inventory mowed by contract. Staff supplies all other maintenance support.*

What Impact does General Admission Have?

- Colleen Dilenschneider, a nonprofit researcher, analyzed data to determine if free admission helps to engage underserved audiences and attract new visitors:
 - **There isn't evidence that free admission generally cultivates increased visitation from new audiences.**
 - **Moreover, focusing on free general admission may be distracting organizations from cultivating more effective engagement strategies and programs for reaching new audiences.**
- "...some would argue that a general admission fee actually improves access if receipts are used to keep the museum open longer hours, improve outreach efforts, or add educational interpretation that makes the material more accessible. (Bailey and Falconer, 1998)

Choices

1. Continue **public support** only
2. Preserve access to a **free portion** of the Garden as free
3. Preserve **access to the entire Garden** through free days or other strategies
 - Use some generated funds to focus on engaging new visitors, including underserved populations (education, volunteer, specific programs)
 - Baseball team managements are perhaps the best known for their efforts to encourage certain types of group visitation through "family day", "boy scout day" and other specials, such as "father-daughter" and "birthday" ticket price or "free bat" specials... (*Millett, 2015*)

Potential
areas for
consideration
for free
Garden
access

- #1 – Grove
- #2 – Woods
- #2A – TGC
- #3 – Trinity

