

2019 FOLLOW-UP

No improvement on City Recreation scholarship policies, funding, and communication

While the Bureau of Parks & Recreation agreed with the original audit recommendations, it has not implemented them. Since the audit was released, the Bureau has changed directors and discovered a structural budget gap that may lead to significant reductions in recreation programs.

These challenges will exacerbate the tension between access and cost recovery and underscore the need for a clear policy and budget for scholarships. We will follow up with the Bureau again in a year to gauge progress.



The Bureau of Parks & Recreation provides financial assistance to those eligible to help make recreation accessible to all Portlanders. Our 2018 audit found the City had contradictory goals to increase access to recreation services while also increasing fee revenues from recreation centers. This revenue pressure caused inequitable access to scholarships. Improved policies, dedicated funding, and better communication would help address the conflict and improve access to services for those eligible.



2018 Recommendations	2019 Status Update
Clarify and update the Bureau's scholarships policy and implement it consistently across the centers. This update should include a Council work session with the Council's direction on whether scholarships would cover a priorities list of services or whether services should be more flexible and at the discretion of the customer.	The Bureau's proposed policy revision had not been implemented.
Budget for scholarships and establish funding sources.	The Bureau had not moved forward because of budget constraints.
Report to the Council periodically on the cost and performance of the scholarship program.	The Bureau had not implemented this because of budget constraints.
Develop a strategic outreach plan for scholarship information that overcomes language and other barriers and is consistent with the budget and revised scholarship policies.	The Bureau had not implemented this because of budget constraints.

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