



## BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

### METHODOLOGY

PROS Consulting and Deerfield Township Parks & Recreation identified operating metrics to benchmark against comparable parks and recreation agencies. The goal of the analysis is to evaluate how Deerfield Township is positioned among peer agencies as it applies to efficiency and effectiveness practices.

The benchmark assessment is organized into specific categories based on peer agency responses to targeted questions that lend an encompassing view of each system’s operation. The information sought was a combination of operating metrics that factor budgets, staffing levels, and inventories. In addition, portions of the benchmark comparison are fortified by national data from similar-sized municipalities (serving 20K-50K residents) based on the National Parks and Recreation Association’s (NRPA) Park Metrics database and/or recommended best practice standards.

Information used in this analysis was obtained directly from each participating benchmark agency. Due to differences in how each system collects, maintains, and reports data, variances may exist. These variations can impact the per capita and percentage allocations, and the overall comparison must be viewed with this in mind. The benchmark data collection for all systems was complete as of October 2018. In some instances, the information was not tracked or not available, and it is possible that information may have changed since the original collection date.

The table below lists each benchmark agency in the study, arranged by population size, and reveals key characteristics of each jurisdiction. The overview also indicates which agencies have achieved CAPRA accreditation or were selected as a Gold Medal finalist through the NRPA, along with the year of origination. All of the benchmark agencies selected are local peers from the state of Ohio, including one Gold Medal Finalist (Centerville-Washington) and one CAPRA agency (Fairfield). Deerfield Township ranks below the benchmark median for population size (39,312) and has the smallest service area (16.8 sq mi), which also makes Deerfield the most densely populated service area (2,340 pop/sq mi) in the study.

Agency	State	Population	Jurisdiction Size (Sq. Mi.)	Population per Sq. Mi.	NRPA Gold Medal Winner (Year)	CAPRA Accredited (Year)
Centerville - Washington Twp	OH	58,500	31.20	1,875	Finalist (2018)	No
Anderson	OH	43,550	31.20	1,396	No	No
Fairfield	OH	42,647	21.10	2,021	No	Yes (2014)
Deerfield Twp	OH	39,312	16.80	2,340	No	No
Orange Twp	OH	26,000	22.80	1,140	No	No

## BENCHMARK COMPARISON

## PARK ACREAGE

The following table provides a general overview of each system's park acreage. Deerfield Township represents the benchmark median for total park sites (10) and total acres owned or managed (469). Assessing the level of service for park acres, Deerfield Township represents the median of the study with 11.92 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is above the national median for similar-sized agencies of 9.6 acres per 1,000 residents.

Agency	Population	Total Park Sites	Total Acres Owned or Managed	Total Acres per 1,000 Residents
Fairfield	42,647	35	812	19.04
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	50	1,050	17.95
Deerfield Twp	39,312	10	469	11.92
Anderson	43,550	8	411	9.43
Orange Twp	26,000	8	112	4.31
<i>NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20K-50K Residents = 9.6 Acres per 1,000 Residents</i>				

## BALLFIELDS

In addition to the overall park acreage, Deerfield was particularly interested in understanding each system's inventory of ballfields. As seen below, the total ballfield acreage managed was then compared to the total acreage of the system, as well as the population served. Deerfield has the lowest percentage of ballfield acres (2%) among peer agencies, as well as a significantly lower service level for ballfield acreage (.029 ballfield acres per 1,000 residents).

Agency	Population	Total Acres Owned or Managed	Acres of Ballfields Managed	Ballfields Acres as % of Total	Ballfield Acres per 1,000 Residents
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	1,050	100	10%	1.71
Anderson	43,550	411	46	11%	1.04
Orange Twp	26,000	112	24	21%	0.90
Deerfield Twp	39,312	469	11	2%	0.29

*Note: Fairfield does not maintain ballfields or manage youth sports programs.*



**FTE'S PER 10,000 RESIDENTS**

This section compares levels of staffing for each system by comparing full-time equivalents (FTEs) to total population. Total FTEs per 10,000 residents is a key performance metric that assesses how well each agency is equipped, in terms of human resources, to serve its jurisdiction. Among peer agencies, Deerfield Township ranks below the median in staffing relative to the population served, with only 2.1 FTEs per 10,000 residents. Deerfield Townships current staffing level is only 25% of the national median for similar-sized agencies (8.9 FTEs per 10,000).

Agency	Population	Total FTEs	FTEs per 10,000 Residents
Fairfield	42,647	55.0	12.9
Anderson	43,550	33.1	7.6
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	36.6	6.3
<b>Deerfield Twp</b>	<b>39,312</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>2.1</b>
Orange Twp	26,000	3.2	1.2
<i>NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20K-50K Residents = 8.9 FTEs per 10,000 Residents</i>			

**OPERATING BUDGET**

Benchmark agencies reported a wide range of annual operating expenditures, from nearly \$6 million (Centerville-Washington) to \$758 thousand (Orange Twp), with Deerfield Township falling just below the benchmark median at a \$1.2 million. Dividing the annual operational budget by each service area's population allows for a comparison of how much each agency is spending on a per resident basis. Deerfield Township ranks well below the benchmark median for peer agencies, as the department spends \$30.52 per resident. This is also significantly lower than the national median for similar agencies, which is \$87 of operational expense per resident. While a lower expense per resident can suggest efficiencies in operation, it can also signal limited program offerings, lower maintenance standards, and/or limited staffing levels.

Agency	Population	Total Operating Expense	Operating Expense per Resident
Fairfield	42,647	\$ 4,527,393	\$ 106.16
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	\$ 5,931,683	\$ 101.40
Anderson	43,550	\$ 3,563,036	\$ 81.81
<b>Deerfield Twp</b>	<b>39,312</b>	<b>\$ 1,199,619</b>	<b>\$ 30.52</b>
Orange Twp	26,000	\$ 758,456	\$ 29.17
<i>NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20K-50K Residents = \$86.60 Operating Expense per Resident</i>			

### CONTRACT MAINTENANCE AND PERSONNEL

Further dissecting the operational budget for each agency, the benchmark study also reveals what percentage of the total budget is attributed to contracted maintenance and personnel. With 5% of its operations dedicated to contracted maintenance, Deerfield Township has one of the highest rates of contract maintenance spending among its peers. The Department is doing a good job of allocating resources to personnel, as 55% of the budget going towards personnel represents the benchmark median and is inline with the national best practice (54.8%).

Agency	Total Operating Budget	Contracted Maint Services as % of Budget	Personnel as % of Budget
Fairfield	\$ 4,527,393	2%	61%
Anderson	\$ 3,563,036	n/a	55%
Deerfield Twp	\$ 1,199,619	5%	55%
Centerville - Washington Twp	\$ 5,931,683	1%	37%
Orange Twp	\$ 758,456	8%	n/a
<i>NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20K-50K Residents = Personnel is 54.8% of Operating Budget</i>			

### NON-TAX REVENUES

The table below describes the annual earned income (non-tax revenue) for each agency, then compares total revenues to the population of each service area as a key performance indicator. Deerfield Township ranks last among peer agencies by a significant margin for total non-tax revenue (\$79,559) and revenue per resident (\$2.02). Deerfield Township's revenue per resident is less than 10% of the national median level (\$24 per resident) for similar-sized communities.

Agency	Population	Total Non-Tax Revenue	Revenue per Resident
Fairfield	42,647	\$ 2,161,815	\$ 50.69
Anderson	43,550	\$ 1,466,580	\$ 33.68
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	\$ 1,847,370	\$ 31.58
Orange Twp	26,000	\$ 371,226	\$ 14.28
Deerfield Twp	39,312	\$ 79,559	\$ 2.02
<i>NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20K-50K Residents = \$24.36 Revenue per Resident</i>			

**OPERATIONAL COST RECOVERY**

Operational cost recovery is a key performance indicator, arrived at by dividing total non-tax revenue by total operating expense, which measures how well each Department’s revenue generation covers the total cost of operations. In general, benchmark agencies are performing efficiently, as every peer agency is recovering more than the national median for similar-sized agencies. The current 7% cost recovery for Deerfield Township is significantly lower than the benchmark median (41%) and the national median similar agencies (30%).

Agency	Total Non-Tax Revenue	Total Operating Expense	Operational Cost Recovery
Orange Twp	\$ 371,226	\$ 758,456	49%
Fairfield	\$ 2,161,815	\$ 4,527,393	48%
Anderson	\$ 1,466,580	\$ 3,563,036	41%
Centerville - Washington Twp	\$ 1,847,370	\$ 5,931,683	31%
<b>Deerfield Twp</b>	<b>\$ 79,559</b>	<b>\$ 1,199,619</b>	<b>7%</b>
<i>NRPA Median for Agencies Serving 20K-50K Residents = 30% Cost Recovery</i>			

**PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

This portion assesses program participation for each agency by comparing total program participations (i.e. registrations) to the population of each service area to determine the average participation rate per resident. Program activity is measured in *participations* (versus *participants*), which accounts for each time a resident participates in a program and allows for multiple participations per resident. Based on a limited response, Deerfield represents the benchmark median with 0.34 participations per resident. In other words, on average, approximately one out of every three Township residents participates in a program offering.

Agency	Population	Total Program Participations	Participations per Resident
Anderson	43,550	17,429	0.40
<b>Deerfield Twp</b>	<b>39,312</b>	<b>13,203</b>	<b>0.34</b>
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	10,650	0.18

Note: Orange Twp does not operate recreation programs. Fairfield participation figures were not available at time of study.

**BALLFIELD PARTICIPATION**

As a key point of interest, ballfield participation was assessed for each agency by comparing participations specific to ballfields to the total ballfield acres available. In effect, this expresses how many ballfield participations are supported by each acre of ballfield in the system. The table below also serves as a reminder of the amount of ballfield acres available per 1,000 residents. Although Deerfield has the lowest service level for ballfield acres (0.29 acres per 1,000), it does have the highest number of total ballfield participants (49,152) and a significantly higher rate of use per acre (4,381 participants per ballfield acre). This elevated participation rate for ballfields paired with a low service level for ballfield acres may indicate that ballfields could be overused based on supply and demand.

Agency	Acres of Ballfields Managed	Ballfield Acres per 1,000 Residents	Total Ballfield Participants Annually	Participants per Ballfield Acre
Deerfield Twp	11	0.29	49,152	4,381
Anderson	46	1.04	23,121	508
Centerville - Washington Twp	100	1.71	5,050	51
Orange Twp	24	0.90	-	-

*Note: Fairfield does not maintain ballfields or manage youth sports programs. Orange Twp does not manage youth sports programs.*

**INDOOR RECREATION SPACE**

Assessing the available indoor recreation facility space among benchmark agencies, all reporting agencies provide some level of service, except for Deerfield Township. By dividing the existing square footage by the total population, the amount of indoor space available per resident can be determined. Only Fairfield offers a best practice level of indoor space with 1.86 sq ft of space per resident. Based on the current population, Deerfield Township would require around 59K-79K sq ft of indoor space to achieve national best practice level.

Agency	Population	Total Sq. Ft. Indoor Rec Facilities	Sq. Ft. per Resident
Fairfield	42,647	79,500	1.86
Anderson	43,550	46,000	1.06
Centerville - Washington Twp	58,500	20,000	0.34
Deerfield Twp	39,312	-	-
<i>National Best Practice = 1.5-2.0 Square Feet of Indoor Space per Resident</i>			

*Note: Orange Twp indoor recreation square footage was not available at time of study.*

**SUMMARY OF BENCHMARK FINDINGS**

The benchmark assessment provides some key insights as to how Deerfield Township's parks and recreation system compares to its peers and to the national averages. Areas of strength for Department include a strong overall level of service for park acreage, good budget allocation for personnel, and higher participation levels for programs and ballfield use. Areas for improvement that were identified in the study include: limited budget and staffing levels, low per capita spending and revenue generation,



minimal cost recovery level, potential overuse of ballfield facilities, and a lack of available indoor recreation space.

Although the Department trails behind the benchmark and national levels for many categories, this can be largely explained by the relatively blank slate of the agency today. In other words, the deficiencies identified in this study should be viewed less as weaknesses, and more as opportunities for the Department to pursue in the near future. Establishing a general philosophy and overall strategic direction for the Department will help prioritize areas of improvement to address, in which key performance indicators can be identified to track over time.