



Letter of Transmittal

March 12, 2007

The Honorable Edward F. Seidel, Jr., President
Upper Arlington City Council
Municipal Services Center
3600 Tremont Road
Upper Arlington, OH 43221

Dear President Seidel:

On behalf of the *Upper Arlington Parks & Recreation Advisory Board* and the *Focus on the Future Task Force*, it is with great pleasure that we transmit to you and the entire City Council our final report presenting a strategic plan to direct the Parks & Recreation Department for the next decade. This plan satisfies the request Council made to the Advisory Board in autumn 2005 to update the department's 1990 plan. In accepting the request, the board designed a process in early 2006, and, with Council agreement, began work on it with the aggressive goal of delivering the final product by year's end.

We predicated the plan on several key assumptions: that volunteers from the community would prepare the plan, resulting in the creation of the Focus on the Future Task Force; that the plan would be fact-based, reflecting a sound understanding of the existing department and municipal contexts; that it would be derived from as much public input as could be obtained; and that it would be action-oriented, balancing the recommendation of specific actions with the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances in future years.

We are encouraged by the support the City Council has already shown our work when it allocated \$100,000 to projects resulting from our findings. While it is beyond the scope of this report to specify how these funds should be used, the interim work plan, developed by staff and the Advisory Board in the spring, will detail these projects.

The 19 volunteer members of the Task Force have devoted countless hours to this effort and earned the City's gratitude. Through this work we have gained a deep appreciation of our wonderful Parks & Recreation Department, its highly skilled and enthusiastic staff, and the extraordinarily wide range of quality facilities and programs it administers. We appreciate the support and cooperation throughout the development of this plan from City staff at all levels. The community is very proud of the department and rightly so.

We love our parks and recreation programs, which are an integral part of daily life for most residents. Hence, we recommend a short list of immediate actions, including certain changes in governing policies and practices, together with a more comprehensive list of goals and objectives, rather than a major overhaul. The department's future is bright, indeed. With continued support from Council and the community, and with guidance from this plan, we believe the positive effect of our parks and recreation facilities and programs will continue to positively affect our quality of life here in Upper Arlington.

Sincerely,

Focus on the Future Task Force

John W. Simpson, Chair PRAB
Georgia Bruce – Senior Center
Pat Casto
Kate Diday
Meg Graves
Mary Hoyt – Northam Tennis Advisory Committee
Jim Jennings
Tim King – At Large PRAB
Donald B. Leach Jr. – City Council
Maureen Lorenz, Vice Chair PRAB

Debra Marsh – City Tree Commission
Nikki McNary
Joy Peterson – Youth and Family Council
Timothy S. Rankin – City Council
George Rooney
Amy Sharpe
Duncan Snyder – Cultural Arts Commission
Wade Steen – City Council
David Thompson