

LowellSTAT Report

May 2013

Subject: Recreation Summer Programs



Summer Programming: As the weather heats up and children begin dreaming of summer vacation, the City of Lowell is preparing for the second year of expanded programming in the Recreation Division of the Parks Department. Last summer, approximately **1,100** participants from Lowell took part in activities sponsored by the city ranging from new programs like yoga and breakdancing to old favorites such as soccer and volleyball. In calendar year 2012, there were a total of **2,285** hours of programming offered by the recreation division. Most importantly, unlike many other Cities in Massachusetts, Lowell offers all of its programs for free. The expanded programming has also required an increase in summer seasonal staff which, in many cases, is a teen or young adult's first working experience.

In the summer of 2012, **115** summer recreation staff positions were filled. As can be seen in **Figure 1**, the 2007-2009 financial crisis had a drastic impact on the city's ability to provide many non-essential services. However, thanks to the improved financial position of the city, these services are able to be funded above the level they were before the recession. As a continuing priority of the city administration, this summer a comparable, if not larger,

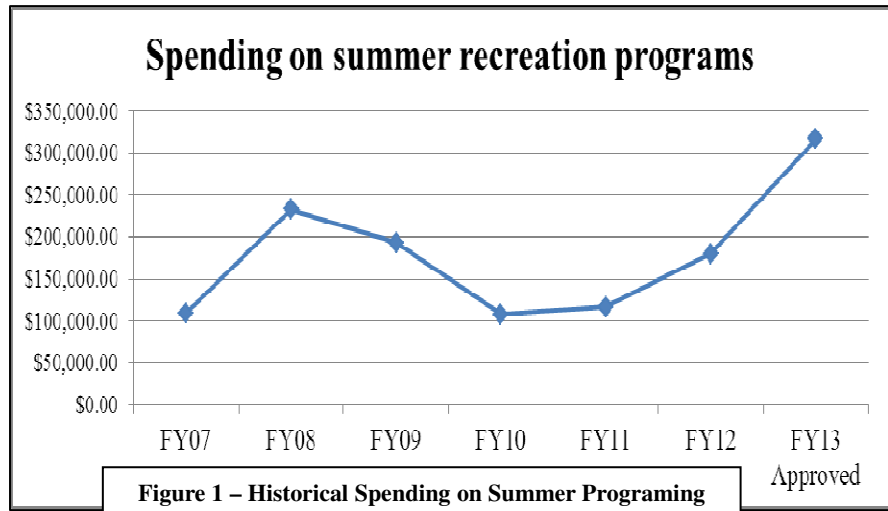


Figure 1 – Historical Spending on Summer Programing

number of positions will be staffed to continue the growth in programming opportunities for Lowell's youth. More information about programs and available seasonal positions can be found on the city's website at: <http://www.lowellma.gov/depts/parks-recreation/recreation-division>. Priority is given to Lowell residents for both seasonal jobs and program participation.

Lowell's Youth: According to the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly a quarter of Lowell's population (**23.7%**) in

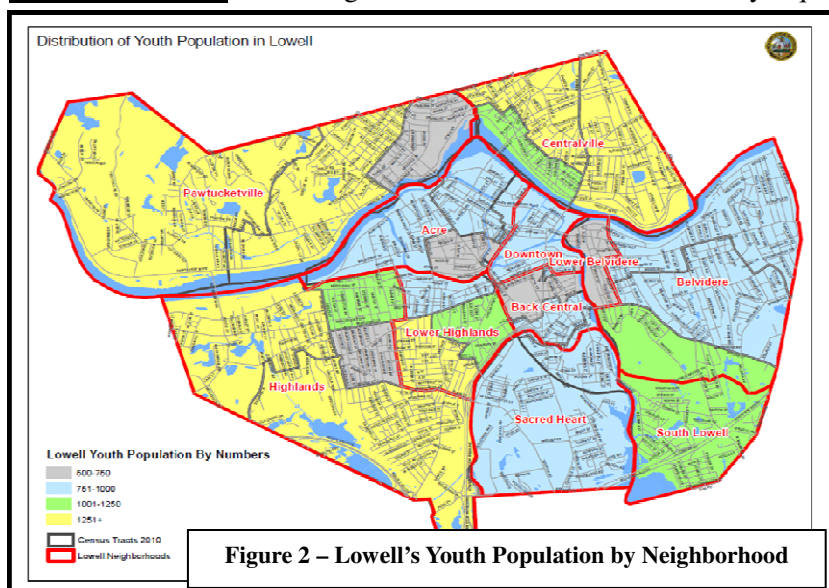


Figure 2 – Lowell's Youth Population by Neighborhood

2010 was under the age of 18. This is slightly above the 2010 percentage for Massachusetts (**21%**). A large porportion of the city's youth are concentrated around the city perimeter. As can be seen in the map in **Figure 2**, (in yellow) the Pawtucketville, Highlands, and Centralville neighborhoods. The areas closer to the city center, such as the Acre, and Downtown, have a much lower density (represented by the grey and blue colors). This data is being used by the Recreation Divison and city administration in locating seasonal recreation activities, so as to reduce travel time by parents and locate seasonal staff in the neighborhoods

where they live to help facilitate a sense of community. (Source: 2010 US Census)