

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: RIGHT TO THE ACTIVE CITY:
PUBLIC RECREATION AND URBAN
GOVERNANCE IN BALTIMORE

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Since the inception of the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) in 1940, public recreation in Baltimore has continued to be restructured in relation to changing modes of urban governance, in particular in regards to the city's network of recreation centers. More recently, the reorganization of recreation resulted in the 2011 Mayor's Recreation Center Task Force plan, which proposed the further reformation of the department and changes to the provision and distribution of recreation centers and recreational services. This dissertation – entitled *Right to the Active City: Public Recreation and Urban Governance in Baltimore* – draws from a diverse and reflexive theoretical and methodological approach in exploring the historical and contemporary forms, practices and experiences of public recreation in Baltimore, specifically focusing on the city's recreation centers as social and spatial manifestations of the processes of urban governance.

In seeking to engage and analyze the individuals, institutions, spaces and practices of urban public recreation, the primary goals of this research are: 1) to examine the intersection of historical and current formations of recreation policy and broader processes of urban governance, including the implications of these changing arrangements for the localized experiences of public recreation; 2) to analyze the spaces of public recreation, in particular the changing forms and practices of planning and design that is embedded within a shift between different 'recreation center' models; 3) to draw out and describe the often complex and contradictory inter-relationships between the City government, BCRP, community and non-profit groups and city residents, focusing on the associations that actively construct and constitute an emergent form of public recreation; and 4) to provide a nuanced research approach that both contributes to relevant scholarly fields, including public health, kinesiology, sociology, urban studies and physical cultural studies, and simultaneously seeks to promote the co-production of research that can be engaged by and with those involved in the processes of public recreation. In short, this research attempts to better grasp the lived experiences of the active urban body and urban physical cultures, through an analysis of the planning and provision of recreational sites, services and opportunities in a specific postindustrial metropolis.

RIGHT TO THE ACTIVE CITY:
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By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2014

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Acknowledgements

Love to all of my family – especially my Mom, Dad and the two bestest sisters ever – and to all of the crutches, confidants and comrades that kept the momentum for this project going and helped me to see it through. Special appreciation goes to all past and present graduate students within the Physical Cultural Studies program, in particular those that have indulged my interests and provided invaluable wisdom in both academia and life.

Also, many thanks to the many faculty at the University of Maryland that have guided and motivated my work, especially my advisor, Dr. David Andrews, as well as my committee members, including Dr. Jeff Lucas, Dr. George Ritzer, Dr. Shannon Jette, Dr. Michael Friedman and Dr. Steve Roth – I’m grateful to each for helping to shape the direction and completion of this dissertation.

Finally, all of my love and appreciation to my everything, Kendall – without your support and inspiration, this would never have been possible. I love you.

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Introduction

In 1940, the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) was founded as the city's first municipally-operated recreation agency. Until this point, recreation spaces and services had been provided primarily through community groups large and small, many based on the physical and social virtues of recreation and physical activity as expressed by social reformers of the early 20th century (Kessler, 1989). However, and as Jordan (1993) explains, the relative economic, political, and cultural value of public recreation in Baltimore has continued to shift ever since, as the policies, services and overall experiences of public recreation have shaped and been shaped by the changing conditions and realities of the city.

That is, the provision of recreational opportunities in Baltimore has continually been reorganized in line with changing dynamics of the city and the different formations of urban governance that have characterized many American cities. It is these historical and emergent changes to recreation which frame the focus of this project, as this analysis recognizes and focuses on the ways in which recreation is embedded within the broader historical processes that have had particular impacts on Baltimore and its citizens, including deindustrialization, suburbanization, economic and social (re)development, and entrenched spatial divisions based in race and class (Andrews, Silk, & Pitter, 2008; Durr 2003, Fee et. al 1991, Harvey 2001, McDougall 1993, Orser 1994, Pietila 2010). This project therefore contributes to the critical examination of the forces and forms that have both historically and currently constituted elements of the dynamic and changing 'urban experiences' (Harvey, 1989a) of Baltimore as a particular temporal, spatial and sociocultural milieu, with

specific attention to the intersections of urban governance and the development and implementation of recreational sites and services.

Further, this research engages the distribution and provision of recreation within the context of an increased scholarly focus on the persistence of urban health disparities, and while other scholars have quantitatively explored the relationships between modes of governance and issues of urban development, health, recreation and physical activity, there remains a need for research that qualitatively assesses the relationships between institutions, policies and populations. To that end, and within the framework of the praxis-oriented physical cultural studies research paradigm described below, this project aims to engage with the governance of public recreation in Baltimore through a utilization of multiple qualitative methods, and by placing different theoretical frameworks in productive dialogue. This mixed-methodological approach and critical theoretical engagement provides the fluidity and flexibility needed to examine how urban public recreation has and does exist through the development and implementation of specific policies, spaces and practices. In short, this project serves as an examination of the social and spatial transformations of Baltimore's recreation centers, through the engagement with and analysis of the (re)construction of the "active city" as constituted in, and through, the particular conjunctures of public recreation and different formations of urban governance.

The initial establishment of BCRP as the city's public recreation department was a response to the need for publicly-owned and operated sites of physical activity, civic engagement, amusement and leisure (Kessler, 1989). In brief, while the department grew slowly from meager beginnings as the city's population increased

during and after World War II in the postwar period, it was within the context of modern urban planning and the federal urban renewal programs of the 1960s and 1970s that public recreation in Baltimore became a political and operational priority. During this period the expansion of recreation was evidenced through increased staffing, programming and facilities, in part due to increased federal and state funding, which reflected an emphasis on recreation in urban centers (Jordan, 1993, p. 203). This era, however, would also represent the relative high point for recreation as an aspect of the city's governance, as from this point and into the current moment – and entrenched within an urban landscape being transformed through suburbanization, deindustrialization, and enduring social divisions – BCRP facilities and programs have largely decreased in relation to a lack of funding and support. As many of the last sources of federal and local funding were being depleted in the early 1980s, and as Baltimore transitioned to the deindustrialized urban center that it exists as today, the department controlled of over 120 recreation facilities, as well as the city's Memorial Stadium, the City Zoo, and the system of public golf courses. Today, BCRP operates approximately 55 recreation facilities and none of these other sites, all of which have been privatized, consolidated or, in the case of Memorial Stadium, demolished. This quantitative and qualitative shift in the nature of urban public recreation serves to evince the continual changes to BCRP policy and planning, and the resultant rearrangement of the provision and distribution of recreation.

Therefore, and along with an examination of the specific policies and plans that have shaped Baltimore's recreation centers over previous formations of urban governance, another aim of this project is to explore this restructuring of recreation in

relation to the 2011 Mayor's Recreation Center Task Force Plan, which called for the reordering of recreational services through both the construction of new 'community centers', the renovation of some existing centers, and the privatization or possible closing of other centers (Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks, 2011). As expressed by Jordan (1993), public recreation in Baltimore continues to be marked by both the challenges of moving forward, as well as the unique and complicated histories of the department and the city. Therefore **the primary and overall aim of this dissertation is to examine and engage the development of urban recreational governance, by interpreting and analyzing the ways in which Baltimore's public recreation policy and planning have been and continue to be re-structured, and the implications of these restructurings for the urban experiences of policymakers, planners and city residents.**

My own introduction to the city's recreation centers arose from the convergence of several factors. My initial interest in Baltimore as a particular postindustrial city stems from my larger focus on urban theory and urban physical cultures, and this interest crystallized in the form of a short-lived research project undertaken for a course in my first year of the PCS doctoral program. The specific focus of this project was on the city's Hampden neighborhood, examining the tensions between the historically working-class identity of the area and the recent commercial and residential investment that is actively changing the dynamics of the Hampden community. However, an enduring aspect of this research proved to be the discussions between and with my informants about the presence of the local public recreation center in their lives growing up, and the social and spatial importance of

this center within this and other communities in Baltimore. With my attention drawn to the city's recreation centers, the prospect of a meaningful dissertation project emerged through both historical and archival research, as well as contacts within current recreation planning and programming. Thus on the one hand, this project has involved locating and analyzing over 70 years of documentation including departmental reports, plans, and proceedings, as well as media reports and other related materials – this research is the primary focus of the first and second chapters of this project, as each examines the historical development of recreation in the city.

However, and specifically in the third and fourth chapters, this project also undertakes an examination of the contemporaneous and ongoing transformation of Baltimore's recreation centers, through the use of qualitative methods and a corresponding engagement with the actors and practices that are involved in the re-organizing of recreation. As this project attempts to analyze the ways in which public recreation policies and spaces are developed and implemented, it also serves to recognize 'public recreation' as not only a city agency or singular aspect of a particular municipal government, but also as a social knowledge and practice. In short, this means that public recreation in Baltimore has been and is constituted in and through multiple urban 'assemblages', or as Ong (2006) states, the "material, collective and discursive relationships" that constitute urban experience (p. 7).

Accordingly, **the aim of this project is to describe the complex inter-relationships between policy, planning and practices in the context of the past, present and future(s) of public recreation in Baltimore.** Following Marcus and Saka (2006), this project incorporates the notion of assemblage to provide a "double emphasis" on

both the historical processes intertwined with and within modes of urban governance, as well as the “always-emergent conditions of the present” which underscores the status of public recreation as in the making. Further, and as discussed below, this engaged theoretical diversity and rigorous methodological flexibility provides the necessary reflexivity demanded within the physical cultural studies research paradigm. The theories and methodological approaches utilized in this research are therefore focused on the specific context of recreation within a particular urban center, while acknowledging that the changes to, and dynamics of, recreational opportunity in Baltimore are both uniquely inter-connected with the conditions and experiences of the city’s historical development, as well as reflective of larger trends and directions in recreational governance within other American cities. While the implementation of recreation policy and planning at the national level is not engaged directly within this research, this project nevertheless suggests particular frames for understanding recreation sites and services outside of Baltimore’s specific context.

Thus in general my aim is to provide an analysis of public recreation and urban governance that underscores the significance and importance of this research for physical cultural studies, kinesiology, and public health, as well as urban sociology and urban studies. While the concepts involved are further discussed in their respective chapters, the primary research questions of this project are as follows:

- How have the processes of urban development both shaped and been shaped by the administration of recreational facilities and programs in Baltimore (Chapter 1)? What have these processes meant for the provision and distribution of recreational opportunities across the city, and how do changes to the organization of recreation reflect different formations, or ‘governmentalities’, of urban governance?

- Why, when and where have particular ‘spaces’ and ‘scales’ of recreation been constructed, and how have these spaces and scales been related to the purposes and practices of urban planning and design (Chapter 2)? How have and are the physical structures of recreation imbricated within the development of Baltimore’s various and dynamic neighborhoods, and to the past, current and future planning of the city and its recreational services?
- How have the ‘discourses’ of recreation policy and planning both reflected and shaped particular formations of urban governance, specifically in regards to the neoliberal transformation of urban centers (Chapter 3)? What have and do the processes of ‘urban neoliberalization’ mean for the changing dynamics of Baltimore, and the restructuring of the city’s system of recreation centers?
- What does the more recent and ongoing reorganization of the city’s recreation centers entail for the current and future forms of recreational opportunities in Baltimore (Chapter 4)? How are these emergent ‘assemblages’ of recreation characterized by the particular confluence of certain organizations, actors and their activities (or ‘practices’), specific locations and facilities (‘materialities’), and connections to, or lack of, resources and support (‘associations’)? How are these assemblages representative of, and implicated within, the future of recreational opportunities in Baltimore?
- How might these research directions provide nuanced theoretical insights and potential methodological approaches relevant to related fields, including physical cultural studies, kinesiology, public health, urban sociology and urban studies - and how might this contribute to an approach to urban physical cultures that seeks to both act and analyze within a frame of social equity?

Public Health, Physical Activity and Recreation

As a study of how the interactions between a specific urban government and population within localized economic, political and social conditions result in the generation and deployment of particular forms of recreation policy and planning, this research seeks to provide results that will further understandings of the relationships between urban environments, historical and contemporary forms of urban development, and the provision of recreational sites and services. As a relevant project within physical cultural studies, kinesiology, and public health, this work thus also contributes to the exploration of the inter-relationships between health, physical

activity and the broader processes of urbanization (Cockerham, 2005; Crawford, 1980; A.G. Ingham, 1985; Lupton, 1995; Pitter & Andrews, 1997). This includes a necessity to recognize the interrelationship between modes of urban governance and disparities in health and physical activities, in particular in regard to the diverse and dynamic conditions of different cities and neighborhoods (Marmot, 2005; Silk & Andrews, 2006). In this mode, the qualities of a strong, vibrant urban community involve and are intertwined with sites and resources for recreation and physical activity, in that neighborhood health and quality of living are often essentially and inherently linked (P. A. Hall & Lamont, 2009). Thus as Norman, et al. (2006) assert, there is often a strong correlation between space of and for physical activity, resources for recreation, and housing environments as potential ‘determinants’ of a neighborhood in terms of health outcomes. In short, the provision (or lack) of public recreation resources has significance for the ways in which the neighborhood is perceived and experienced by both residents and outsiders (Leyden, 2003; Ries et al., 2008; Diez Roux & Mair, 2010).

This relationship between recreation resources, physical activity and health is even more pronounced among children and adolescents, the key ‘target demographic’ of much of the programming offered by Baltimore’s recreation centers both historically and currently. Gordon-Larsen et al (2000) describe the evidence of “important associations between modifiable environmental factors, such as participation in school PE and community recreation programs, with activity patterns of adolescents” (2000, p. 46). In short, the provision of public recreation can lead to higher levels of physical activity, the potential for improved health outcomes, and (by

extension) the possibilities for a positive experience of the urban community. Yet while there has been literature on the benefits of recreation for individual and neighborhood health (Bennett et al., 2007; Cradock et al., 2005; Lopez & Hynes, 2006; Pollack, Sadegh-Nobari, Dekker, Egerter, & Braveman, 2008), there is a lack of scholarly attention towards the interrelationships between public recreation and modes of urban governance. Moreover, and as demonstrated within this project, concerns for health and physical activity are embedded within recreation policy and planning - thus this project recognizes that the relationship between health, physical activity and recreational opportunities means that the provision and distribution of recreation should not be outside of the purview of public health and kinesiology, nor apart from concerns for issues and conditions of social inequality (Vertinsky, 1998).

Finally, the value of this project extends beyond the contribution to scholarly research, as this work answers the call for further qualitative research within public health fields. Cheek (2008) is explicit in her assertion of the potential significance of qualitative research for public health and physical activity research, in particular in relation to the ability of qualitative approaches to deal with “complexity” within these traditionally positivism-based fields: “[Complexity]...provides us a raft of opportunities for further developing qualitative health research that can continue to foster a spirit of enquiry designed to better understand health and its concomitant practices” (p. 974). To that end, this work seeks not only to develop scholarly material for the purposes of publication and pedagogy, but also to address the possibilities for physical cultural studies to interact and engage with formation and implementation of policy and planning. As Bennett (1992a; 1992b) explains, despite

the commitment to praxis that is at the center of cultural studies, the engagement of and with public policy and policymaking institutions has been a continuing challenge for qualitative researchers – therefore **this dissertation seeks to incorporate and develop an approach to studying urban physical cultures that not only serves a scholarly and pedagogical purpose, but also actively contributes to the understanding and shaping of urban recreation policy and planning.**

That is, this project has attempted to co-produce knowledge from different groups - the city government, including recreation and other agencies, community organizations, and individual citizens - that can then be communicated to and between these groups towards the development of a public recreation system that provides recreational opportunities and resources for all citizens, and can potentially address at least some of the factors within health disparities and general social inequality (Humphries, Mertons, & Truman, 2000; Johnson, Chambers, Raghuram, & Tincknell, 2004a; Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004). Through an examination of the development and implementation of recreation policy and planning, this research focuses on 'opportunity' rather than 'outcomes', thereby emphasizing the social determinants of health over individual choices and lifestyles and challenging the idea that changes to health behaviors can adequately address health disparities, while responding to the call for addressing health disparities as part of a broader engagement with social inequality (Crawford, 2006; Howell & Ingham, 2001; Marmot, 2005; Wilkinson & Marmot, 2003).

Physical Cultural Studies - Paradigm and Praxis

For Guba and Lincoln (2005), a research paradigm encompasses the axiology (or the ethics and aesthetics), epistemology (way of knowing the world), ontology (way of being in the world), and methodology (way of acquiring knowledge) of the researcher and/within research project. While my own physical cultural studies (PCS) ‘positionality’ would be most located within the critical theory and constructivist paradigms, it is imperative to note that physical cultural studies should be understood as “multiparadigmatic” (Nelson, 1992). This means that the variety of different axiological, epistemological, ontological and political positions within PCS coexist and interact in tension, without one paradigm ever succeeding in becoming the primary positionality. Instead, this tension serves to emphasize the inherently political nature of physical cultural studies research and simultaneously allows PCS researchers to be “critical humanists” (Nelson, 1992). Ingham’s (Alan G. Ingham) view, PCS should distance itself from dominant formations of positivist knowledge, and instead emphasize a preference for contextually-bound determinations of social and cultural life over and against scientific ‘laws’ of nature and behavior – thus within PCS, no one epistemology, axiology, ontology, or methodology should be privileged. This productive paradigmatic tension suggests that PCS is multi-methodological, in that those engaged in PCS research projects are expected to appropriate whatever methods are necessary for the critical and reflexive inquiry of a given social world (Nelson, 1992). In avoiding theoretical and methodological promiscuity, while also evading the rigidity of orthodox disciplinarity, the PCS research paradigm makes clear that researchers of all (inter)disciplines and fields are

always situated researchers operating with situated knowledges, drawing attention to the embedded nature of research and ways of knowing and being in the world¹.

This situational understanding of interaction and knowledge-formation serves to place reflexivity at the core of cultural studies research, a term that has implied different meanings both within and outside of cultural studies (Johnson et al., 2004a). The concept is invoked within the PCS paradigm not in terms of an effort to recuperate some potential form of research objectivity, but rather in regards to recognition of the partiality and positionality of research practices and the knowledges they produce. That is, reflexivity “is about others as well as the self...it is about how relations of power and inequality are negotiated, represented and changed in the living” (Johnson et al., 2004b, p. 53). In short, the theory and practice of reflexivity serves as the self-interrogation of the processes of academic research, clarifying the contextually-bound and inherently political nature of the production of knowledge. Specifically for this project, this paradigmatic reflexivity is invoked in order to take seriously Williams (1977) charge that “no dominant social order...ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention” (p. 125). In this analysis, this conception of reflexivity implies that physical cultural studies should always be aware of the forms and practices of both control and contestation, as well as the plurality of life beyond and outside these conditions, and should be concerned with how those involved in the co-production of knowledge might participate within the making and remaking of social and cultural experience.

¹ Following Harvey (1989a): “The building of theory entails a continuous dialogue between experience, action, concept formation, and dialectical theorizing” (8). Or to quote the late J Dilla: “I keeps it simple as well as complicated” (2003).

Thus rather than being predetermined in regard to formulating hypotheses, ultra-specialized research questions, or rigid forms of analytic procedure, this project employs the ‘bricoleur’ approach central to the paradigm of (physical) cultural studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). As described above in relation to this project, this research positionality aims to draw upon the interpretive theories and methods that are most appropriate for analyzing and engaging the specific subjects and contexts of research. This also means that any evaluation of the value and significance of this study should be centered on its ability to both encounter and make knowable and meaningful particular social phenomena, and to emphasize the relations of power between and within given sociocultural environments and interactions. Accordingly, the research approach adopted in this dissertation is also grounded in the “radical contextualism” of cultural studies, in that it attempts to utilize the methodological and theoretical resources that are best suited for a particular project, in order to make light of the relations of power within that project’s research focus (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Grossberg, 1997). An integral aspect of the radical contextualist approach is the idea of “articulation” – Slack (1996) explains that articulation is both theory and method: “it is, then, not just a thing (not just a connection) but a process of creating connections, much in the same way that hegemony is not domination but the process of creating and maintaining consensus or of co-ordinating interests” (p. 114).

As Andrews and Giardina (2008) point out, radical contextualism and articulation therefore not only constitute a combined theoretical and methodological approach, but also “an ontological understanding, closely aligned to marxist cultural materialism” (p. 113). While not wedded to the principles and politics expressed by

these authors and other researchers within the PCS research paradigm, this project nevertheless seeks to contribute to the advancement of physical cultural studies as a mode of inquiry and as a pedagogical and research-based project. In short, this analysis attempts to “grasp, understand, and explain...to produce a more adequate knowledge of the historical world and its processes; and thereby to inform our practice so that we may transform it” (Hall, 1988, p. 36). Within the research approach explained here, the core objectives of this dissertation are:

- 1) To explore the intersections of governance, policy, planning and urban experience, through the transformations within and to the provision of recreational opportunities and resources;
- 2) To examine the changing spatial and social manifestations of recreation policy and planning, in order to better grasp how the provision of recreation was and is related to different historical and contemporary forms of urban governance;
- 3) To engage with the ongoing re-structuring and re-organization of recreation, through an analysis of the relations between recreation policy and plans and contemporary processes of urbanization;
- 4) To seek a grounded understanding of the complex and contested nature of urban recreational services and opportunities that can be communicated with diverse audiences; alongside this project’s scholarly value or intellectual importance, the potential for both direct and indirect forms of engagement with urban recreation contributes towards the larger significance of this research.

Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks

The research approach developed and implemented in this dissertation is characterized by the incorporation and utilization of multiple theoretical and methodological frameworks, allowing for a qualitative analysis of the policies, processes and practices of public recreation in Baltimore. In line with the research positionality described in the previous section, the mode of inquiry employed in this project is therefore ‘multi-paradigmatic’, with each chapter existing as both a singular

aspect of this analysis and a part of the larger research endeavor (Nelson, 1992). Following Andrews (2008) this dissertation is thus predicated on the ways in which active bodies “become organized, represented, and experienced in relation to the operations of power” (p. 54). The purpose and focus of this research also means that while the four chapters that make up the empirical engagement of this project all seek to demonstrate the interconnections between recreation policy, planning, and the changing processes of urban governance, each of these chapters is in turn framed by a specific theoretical and methodological paradigm.

In this section, my aim is to provide a brief overview of the key theoretical concepts and methods of analysis that are engaged within the chapters that follow, in order to give the reader a short introduction to these underlying frameworks. Specifically, the focus here is on the following conceptual and analytic approaches to studying the dynamics of urban environments: 1) ‘governmentality’; 2) ‘space’ and ‘scale’; 3) ‘urban neoliberalization’; and 4) ‘assemblage urbanism’. While these theories and methods are further detailed in both the chapter overviews at the conclusion of this Introduction and within the chapters in which they are engaged, this section serves as a primer to the modes of inquiry that are constituted in and through this dissertation.

Governmentality

As Brockling, Krasmann and Lemke (2010) explain, the term ‘governmentality’ first surfaces within critical social theory in the lectures of Michel Foucault at the College de France in 1978 and 1979 - these lectures marked an intellectual turning point within Foucault’s work, as an attempt to expand the “analysis of power” that

had guided his earlier research and publications (p. 1). As a “genealogy of the modern state”, these lectures were focused on the interactions between the state, populations, and individual subjects, and how particular forms of government have attempted to organize, coordinate, discipline and create different elements of social life (Foucault, 2007, p. 354). However, Foucault was careful to emphasize that within his analysis, governmentality did not refer to the structure or practice of a specific state or government, but rather to *governance* as the processes of organizing, coordinating, disciplining, and creating forms and ways of life. This means that rather than focus on how governments operate for the sake of developing an improved or more efficient process of governmental operation, governmentality as invoked in this dissertation instead signals an analysis of how economic, political, technological and cultural processes are involved in the governing of specific peoples and places. That is, within governmentality studies the emphasis is not on how effective governments are or should be, but instead “how they unfold their effects” (Brockling, Krasmann & Lemke, 2010, p.13). Moreover, the analytic approach offered by governmentality precludes a focus on the operations and relations of power that aligns with the aims of both this dissertation and physical cultural studies as an interdisciplinary project (Grossberg, 1997).

While Foucault himself was only able to carry out the type of analysis that he described in the lectures in limited form before his death only a few years later, the concept and perspective of governmentality as the ‘art of government’ has continued to be incorporated into multiple (inter-)disciplinary fields, including those of principal interest to the current analysis. Following an approach to thinking about

governmentality as “the conduct of people, individuals, or groups”, researchers have utilized this conceptualization in studying various aspects of social life, from the organization of multi-national corporations to the practices of parenting – though many of these studies focus on different empirical topics and are produced within specific disciplinary settings, they all share a “common analytic perspective” (Brockling, Krasmann & Lemke, 2010, p. 11). Again, the most important linkage within this perspective is the characterization of governance as double-sided, constituted in and through programs that are always “both descriptive and prescriptive”:

“[programs of governance] always presume a reality that they describe and problematize on the one hand, and in which they intervene – trying to change or transform it – on the other hand. At the same time, confronted with forces removed from their access or blocking it, deflecting it, or neutralizing it, these programs also consistently go astray” (Brockling, Krasmann & Lemke, 2010, p. 11).

Miller and Rose (2008) emphasize the processual nature of governance, rather than the singular role and influence of the state as government, by evoking the example of the computer programmer – governmentality recognizes that governance is not the “programmer’s dream”, but rather that the operations of power and resistance mean that “the programmer’s world is one of constant experiment, invention, failure, critique and adjustment” (Brockling, Krasmann & Lemke, 2010, p. 39). By analyzing the connections between and within the urban recreational governance of Baltimore, this the analysis in Chapter 1 addresses the different ‘governmentalities’ of recreation demonstrated in and through the evolution of BCRP policy, and how the different strategies and approaches to recreation policy and

planning both reflected and shaped the dynamic processes of the city's historical, geographical and social development.

Space and Scale

In the second chapter of this project, the primary focus is on the spaces of urban recreation, and in particular the network of public recreation centers in Baltimore as the site of changing approaches to recreational programming and services. As Tonkiss (2005) explains, the examination of urban space has been included in the fields of urban studies and urban sociology dating back to the researchers of the Chicago School in the early 20th century – in contemporary analyses of urban issues and conditions, this emphasis on studying space is evident across sociology, geography, cultural theory, and other disciplines (p. 2). While these approaches vary in terms of their engagement with and examination of particular urban spaces and places, underlying this focus on space is a theorization of the social and the spatial as inherently inter-related, in that urban spaces both structure social relations while also being shaped by social actions and meanings. Therefore, as Simmel (2004) states, “spatial relations...are only the condition, on one hand, and the symbol, on the other, of human relations (p.73).

In particular, this approach to spatial analysis has proved useful when examining cities, as urban spaces denote both the ‘real’ structures of buildings, streets, and other materials that make up the physical reality of the city, as well as the symbolic and imaginary aspects of urban life. This means that interrogating space and spatial development allows researchers to avoid choosing between either “distinct spatial formations” or the “imaginaries” that are included in urban planning and policy

(Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 2). Instead, a focus on urban space provides an understanding of the real and imagined, and of the social and the spatial, as imbricated in the processes of contemporary urbanization. In regards to urban sociology and urban studies, this approach to encountering and analyzing urban space is central to the concept of ‘uneven spatial development’, developed by critical geographers in order to study the efforts and effects of late capitalism (Harvey, 2001a; Massey, 1995; Soja, 1996; Zukin, 1991). These authors, and many others, have helped to constitute the ‘spatial turn’ within sociology and cultural studies, as these fields have increasingly sought to utilize and develop theories of ‘socio-spatial’ relations and effects (Soja, 1980).

Following Friedman and Van Ingen (2011), the ‘spatializing’ of physical cultural studies has been reflected in an incorporation of the work of Henri Lefebvre in studying the relations between active bodies and the spaces in which they operate and work to co-constitute. In particular, Lefebvre’s theorization of urban space is predicated on the framing of space as a social product, in that particular spaces are produced through the interaction between spatial practices, spatial representations, and representational spaces – these three elements refer to the ways that we use and think about space, the ways that space is ordered and organized, and the ways in which we imagine and embody space (Friedman & Van Ingen, 2011). Further, this approach emphasizes that there are no ‘empty spaces’, but rather that “space is always an only produced as a complex of relationships and separations, presences and absences” (Tonkiss, 2005, p. 3). Thus while this project’s engagement with the specific details of Lefebvre’s theory of spatial production is limited, the approach

allowed by this theorization of the social production of space is utilized in and through an analysis of the spaces of public recreation centers.

As theories of urban space have often centered on the socially-constructed nature of specific spaces, critical geographers have more recently also focused on a re-conceptualized understanding of ‘scale’ as integral to spatial development. Whereas spatial analysis recognizes that space is never an empty container, but rather only and always exists as the product of different and interconnected social processes, theories of scale have also often sought to problematize scale as a neutral aspect of cartography and geography. Therefore, theories of scale seek to explore how different and specific scales are produced, maintained, and operate in relation to other spaces and scales. That is, as Mahon and Keil (2009) explain,

“Scale thus defined provides a better way of grasping the ever-changing and contested world...rather than assuming set dimensions of social reality and the structuring of the human condition, scales are socially produced and reproduced through myriad, sometimes purposeful, sometimes erratic, social, economic, political, and cultural actions” (p. 8).

In this project, the critical approaches to space and scale underlined here allow for a consideration of how the development and deployment of particular strategies for recreation policy and planning resulted in the historical and contemporary conditions of recreation facilities in Baltimore. In short, the approach introduced in this section and utilized within Chapter 2 demonstrates how the physical structures of recreation centers have both shaped and been shaped in and through the social production of specific spaces and scales.

Urban Neoliberalization

As this dissertation seeks to examine the connections between and within public recreation policy and planning and the larger social and spatial restructuring of the contemporary urban milieu, the third chapter analyzes the discourses of recreation in relation to the processes of urban neoliberalization. As an ideological project, neoliberalism has emerged in the late 20th and early 21st centuries as “a mixture of neoclassical economic fundamentalism, market regulation in favor of capital, moral authoritarianism with an idealized family at its center, [and] international free trade principles” (Moody, 1997, p. 119). Thus on the one hand, neoliberalism can be viewed as the counterpoint response to previous formations of urban governance, specifically in relation to Keynesian economic models that stressed the provision of public welfare in and through the state. As Hackworth (2007) explains, the connections between Keynesian economic policy and ‘egalitarian liberalism’ meant that beginning with the New Deal platform and through the post-war era, American cities were characterized by government regulation, the management of demand and progressive tax policies that were all designed to address the often exploitative excesses of free market capitalism (p. 6).

In contrast, the formations of neoliberal urban governance that have emerged since the 1970s have been marked by the prioritization of the private market over and ahead of the public sphere, and the individual citizen over the collective. Following Brenner and Theodore (2002), “neoliberal doctrines” have therefore been deployed in American cities over the previous four decades in order to justify, foster and sanction

“the deregulation of state control over major industries, assaults on organized labor, the reduction of corporate taxes, the shrinking and/or privatization of public

services, the dismantling of welfare programs, the enhancement of international capital mobility, the intensification of interlocality competition, and the criminalization of the poor” (p. 3).

However, and as these and other authors focused on both the operations and implications of neoliberal urban doctrines have emphasized, this general characterization of neoliberalism does not mean that these processes always have similar functions and effects across different temporal and spatial locations. This means that while neoliberal strategies are often marked by shared principles, they are always both implemented and contested in relation to contextually-specific social and economic conditions and political forces – in short, there is a “blatant disjuncture” between neoliberal ideology and “its everyday political operations and societal effects” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 4). Therefore while neoliberalism as an overall ideology and economic and political project is rooted in a ‘utopia’ of free market capitalism, in practice neoliberal strategies have actually resulted in an intensification of state interventions towards the cultivation and imposition of market rule (Keil, 2002). As Brenner and Theodore suggest, this disconnect between the ideology and practices of neoliberal urbanism emphasize the processual nature of the ongoing restructuring of policy and planning in American cities, in that “we are dealing less here with a coherently bounded “ism” or “end-state” than with a process...of *neoliberalization*” (p. 6, original emphasis).

In other words, studies of urban neoliberalization seek to focus on the “actually existing” forms of neoliberal urban governance, rather than a systematic understanding of neoliberalism as an economic and political philosophy (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). In particular, the examination of the more recent changes within

and to urban recreation that constitutes Chapter 3 of this project incorporates the work of both Peck and Tickell (2002), and Keil (2009), in demonstrating how neoliberal urban governance can be recognized in and through the different formations or phases of ‘roll-back’, ‘roll-out’, and ‘roll-with’ neoliberalization. In short, these different formations of re-arranged and re-oriented policy and planning signal the reduction of public services through the dismantling of the Keynesian social and economic model (‘roll-back’); the development and deployment of market-based modes of public service provision and the creation of new forms of public-private governance (‘roll-out’); and the naturalization of neoliberal strategies within urban policy and simultaneous foreclosing of alternative possibilities (‘roll-with’). Thus as this project is focused on the relationships between the transformations to Baltimore’s urban governance and the reorganization of public recreation, the discourses of recreation policy and planning exhibit how the restructuring of recreation has been and is embedded within the historical and contemporary social, economic, and political processes of urban neoliberalization.

Assemblage Urbanism

The fourth chapter of this dissertation is framed by a different perspective for thinking about and studying the processes of urbanization, specifically in relation to both the concept and approach entailed by assemblage urbanism. Assemblage as a theoretical construct is most often traced back to the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1981), and the Deleuzian definition of assemblage as “a multiplicity constituted by heterogeneous terms and which establishes liaisons, relations between them” (Deleuze & Parnet, 2007, p. 52). However, assemblage has also been incorporated

into a distinctive approach to engaging and analyzing the dynamics of urban environments. Thus as McFarlane (2011) explains, while assemblage conceptually denotes the relations between people, places and things in the re-making of the social world, it also entails “an approach, an orientation that operates as a way of thinking of the social, political, economic or cultural as a relational process of composition, and as a methodology attuned to practice, materiality and emergence” (p. 23). In this project, the incorporation of assemblage as the fundamental concept of assemblage urbanism means that this approach is specifically focused on the interactions between and across specific actors, associations, practices, and particular social and material environments – together these elements constitute the ongoing re-assembling of recreation in Baltimore.

As Farias (2010) explains, there are several specific intellectual, academic, and political rationales for the approach offered by assemblage urbanism – this includes the natural affinity between ‘assemblage thinking’ and cities, as the city exists as “multiplicity” that is always unfolding in and through the relations between people, places and things (p. 373). In this mode, assemblage urbanism links to actor-network theory (ANT) in calling for an empirically-based analysis of the particular practices of both human and non-human actors, and an emphasis on the micro-processes of social life through ‘following the actors’ (Latour, 2005). While this project does not claim to be an ANT-ian analysis, it nevertheless adopts the framework of assemblage urbanism in engaging with the assemblages of recreation in Baltimore. Further, this stress on empiricism ahead of the incorporation of abstractly theorized social processes – including urban neoliberalization, as described above – seeks to recognize

the urban everyday as never reducible to these processes, in that urban experiences are not only about discursive subjects, but also “objects, natures, built environments, [and] bodies” (Farias, 2011, p. 367).

As Brenner (2011) explains, assemblage urbanism therefore often forgoes an examination of the “context of contexts” in and through the larger social processes that are the purview of critical urban theory. Instead, assemblage urbanism recognizes the explanatory value of these theories while also engaging in fieldwork that is primarily focused on the practices, actors, and materialities involved in the enactment of particular ‘urban assemblages’ (Acuto, 2011). This means that while assemblage urbanism allows for a focus on the operations and relations of power that is found in the other chapters of this project, it also provides an alternate perspective on how power operates through social relations. Therefore, assemblage urbanism is “indeed at odds with an understanding of critique based on a notion of power as a resource held by the ruling classes, and of knowledge as an ideological construct that needs to be unveiled” (Farias 2011, p. 364). That is, rather than attempt to only interpret the empirical findings of urban research through the theorized frameworks of large-scale social processes, this approach seeks to instead describe the practices and associations that make up the small-scale formations of urban experience. Rather than ignoring or silencing the presence and evidence of social inequality in urban environments, assemblage urbanism engages the actual practices, processes and “sociomaterial orderings” of the ‘asymmetrical’ social, economic, and political formations of contemporary cities (Farias, 2011, p. 341). In the fourth chapter, this approach guides an analysis of the restructuring of recreation in Baltimore through the incorporation of

‘non-state’ (Swygedenouw, 2005) actors and organizations in the planning, operation and management of city recreation centers.

Data Collection and Analysis

The multi-paradigmatic research approach developed and implemented in this dissertation and described in this section also required the use of multiple qualitative methods in the analysis of the past, present and future of public recreation in Baltimore. As the preceding discussion of these theoretical and methodological frameworks has demonstrated, the historical breadth and depth of this project necessitated both archival and textual analysis, as well as the use of qualitative methods in accessing and describing the current conditions of recreational opportunity in the city. In total, these methods allowed for an examination of the connections between public recreation and urban governance, both historically and in the contemporary context.

To this end, the first two chapters are focused on the transformations to recreation policy and planning from the inception of Baltimore’s Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) in 1940 to the early 2000s. The primary form of data collection in regards to these chapters was through identifying and analyzing archival documents from both BCRP, other City agencies, and media organizations – this documentation was specifically collected in both the City Archives near North Avenue, the BCRP main administration building in Druid Hill Park, and the Maryland Room at the city’s Pratt Library. Altogether, my research into these sources accounted for over 500 pages of planning and policy documents, including master plans and mapping, facility designs, annual reports, meetings minutes, and internal and external departmental

communications, along with over 70 years of various media reports regarding recreation facilities and services.

The third chapter, focused on the restructuring of policy and planning in and through the processes of urban neoliberalization, builds on this examination of both departmental documentation and other texts in and through a discursive analysis of the previous 30+ years of BCRP policy and planning, including the recent 2011 Mayor's Task Force plan for the city's network of recreation centers. This research also utilized the various archival sources mentioned above in collecting documentation of contemporary recreation policy and planning, as well as my own engagement with contacts at BCRP and other organizations involved in the provision and distribution of recreation in Baltimore, in particular the Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CPHA).

While originally initiated in conducting these processes of data collection, my involvement with both the department and various community and non-profit organizations also allowed for the use of qualitative methods in analyzing the current developments in the reorganization of recreation. That is, while gathering data and documentation about historical and current conditions of the city's recreation centers, my research process also involved identifying the individuals and groups involved in the ongoing policy and planning efforts aimed at these facilities; my engagement with these individuals and organizations (unexpectedly) led to a part-time internship position at both BCRP and CPHA through the fall of 2012 and spring of 2013, and subsequently to an ongoing part-time paid position with BCRP. Through my work in assisting with the capital planning for recreation centers and aquatics at BCRP, as

well as analyzing the provision and distribution of recreational opportunities and advocating for community recreation programs and facilities at CPHA, I was able to ‘follow the actors’ (Latour, 2005) and analyze the practices, actors, and physical spaces involved in the restructuring of recreation sites and services. Given this empirical engagement, and in line with the theoretical and methodological framework of assemblage urbanism, the fourth chapter of this analysis utilizes the specific method of qualitative interviewing.

Following Kvale (1996), qualitative interviewing is characterized by both its commitment to engaged fieldwork, while not requiring the duration and scope of traditional ethnographic research. This also means that qualitative interviewing, unlike ethnography, makes no claims to interpreting a particular ‘way of life’ – instead, researchers are charged with describing the specific practices of specific actors within the local conditions in which they operate (Kvale, 1996). My use of the qualitative interviewing approach resulted in six interviews with individuals representing different organizations involved in the current reformations of recreation center policy and planning, and these interviews serve as the primary empirical data for the fourth chapter. Overall, the textual, discursive, and ethnographic methodologies utilized within this research serve to link all four chapters in examining the re-making of recreation in Baltimore.

‘Right to the Active City’ – Public Recreation and Urban America

As described above, the overall impetus of this dissertation is to demonstrate and examine the interconnections between public recreation in Baltimore and the dynamic formations of urban governance, and to evince the implications of both historical and

contemporary changes to the policies and planning of the city's recreation centers. The title of this project, 'Right to the Active City', therefore signals the intent of this analysis as based in praxis, in that my 'positionality' as a researcher within physical cultural studies demands a recognition of, and engagement with, the political 'stakes' of the research focus (Andrews, 2008). The purpose of this section is therefore to provide a brief history of the origins of public recreation in the United States, and specifically within American cities, while also linking this history to two inter-related rationales of and for the provision of recreational and physical activity opportunities in urban settings: first, the connections between and within public recreation as a form of discipline and social control, often related to concerns for the health and well-being of urban populations (Corburn, 2009); and second, the linkages between public recreation facilities and programs and the necessity of public sites and services as a fundamental aspect of everyday urban life (Purcell, 2008). In the following description of the 'roots' of public recreation and the implications of different ideas about health, physical activity and leisure for both urban governments and citizens, these notions of recreation as control and recreation as a right are equally evident. Specifically, I will emphasize the relationship between this history of public recreation, the analysis of Baltimore's recreation policy and planning that constitutes the primary focus of this dissertation, and the implications entailed in thinking about recreation and the 'right to the city' (Lefebvre, 1996).

Within the industrializing urban centers of the early 20th century, ideas about physical activity and the wellbeing of the city's population were inextricably linked to the emergence of theories and models of public health. As Krieger (2011) explains,

the management of population health had been a concern for earlier political regimes dating back to the Enlightenment and French Revolution, where rulers had often initiated population health controls and checks in order maintain order and quell any potential political dissent (p. 64). However, the rapid urbanization of the industrial era within the 19th and 20th centuries meant that the population of cities became increasingly important, and research in and about public health was implemented in urban areas to develop models and techniques for managing urban health. Following Corburn (2009), we can identify several periods within urban public health that are characterized by the particular theories and models of thinking about the health of the city's population that were popular and utilized at the time.

For American cities such as Baltimore that were industrializing centers of the late 1800s, the dominant ideas about the health of city's population initially centered on the notions of 'miasma' and 'contagion' – the first focusing on the air-borne nature of disease and ill-health, and the second focusing on the person-to-person transmission of disease (Krieger, 2011, p 67). The differences between these approaches to thinking about health and disease were marked not only by their ideas about how diseases were distributed and carried, but also about the appropriate intervention to fight against any potential epidemic. As the notion of 'contagion' held that skin-to-skin contact was the primary model of transmission, the use of quarantine as a method to divide the healthy and the ill was seen as most appropriate – however, theories based on 'miasma' held that poor air quality and general filth were seen as the primary causes of disease, and sanitation and the availability of open spaces and fresh air were seen as the best interventions. The influence of these theories of

miasma were influential in the representation of cities as ‘slums’ of poor living conditions, as urban neighborhoods were viewed as having conditions that in large part caused many of the “pathologies” of crime, violence and social decay that marked urban life (Boyer, 1983, p. 28).

In many cases, issues of specific areas that were marked by disease were also neighborhoods with racial and ethnic characterizations, thereby linking certain populations with poor living conditions. As Corburn notes, health experts including scientists and physicians “perpetuated ideas that the poor, immigrants, and especially African-Americans had genetic defects that led to their immoral behavior and explained the origin of infectious diseases” (2009, p. 59). As these ideas were both predicated on and helped to support the notion of ‘race’ as a valid biological marker, they also supported public health practices that viewed race as biological and the modification of the physical environment as the appropriate intervention. The validity of race meant that practices of removing and segregating particular parts of the population were seen as legitimate methods of maintaining the health of the overall citizenry (Cooper & David, 1986; DuBois, 1906).

However, alongside the ‘contagion’ and ‘miasma’ models of public health in the industrializing era another approach emerged, focused primarily on the conditions of poverty within burgeoning forms of industrial capitalism. As evidenced by texts such as Friedrich Engels’ *The Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*, the conditions of poverty inextricable from the processes of industrial capitalism were recognized as a factor within the distribution of disease, health and social inequality more generally. Within this view, the importance of both miasma and contagion was

placed behind a concern for the social conditions of poverty, as both air quality and personal interactions were “one step in a causal pathway from economic exploitation to ill health” (Krieger, 2011, p. 73). The ‘poverty’ approach to public health, and in particular the health of city populations, placed emphasis on a strategy of reform as the appropriate intervention, in that addressing the conditions of poverty would alleviate potential risks of ill health. As (Krieger & Birin, 1998) point out, this focus on the social conditions and outcomes of capitalism was related to broader social movements of the era, as ‘natural’ metaphors and explanations gave way to ‘social’ causes that referred to the changing nature of industrial life.

In fact, the emergence of public parks and playgrounds as open spaces for physical activity was in some ways at the intersection of the ‘miasma’ and ‘poverty’ models of public health. As these spaces were set off from living and working areas and based in the elements of nature that were not always readily available in urban neighborhoods, they were supported by theories of miasma in that they featured better air quality than the home and factory, while reformers also argued that parks and outdoor recreation spaces were need to “alleviate crowded urban living conditions and offer green ‘breathing spaces’”(Corburn, 2009, p. 39). For many American cities including Baltimore, the Reform Movement was among the most prominent forms of political and social intervention, as individuals and groups sought to directly engage the conditions of urban life through a variety of policies and programs including those involving health and physical activity.

As one example, in the first two decades of the 20th century social reformer Jane Addams emphasized the necessity of centers of public recreation for residents of

American cities – in her view, the “power of public recreation” included the ability to support social cohesion and the physical and mental health of urban citizens (1909). Addams prioritized that those places, spaces and services that focused on physical activity and social relationships should be provided by governments for their citizens, explaining that providing these centers was arguably a “solemn obligation of the modern heterodox city” (1912). Until this point, many American cities had engaged in the provision of spaces of and for physical activity primarily through the development of urban parks, most famously Central Park in New York City, which opened in 1858.

The Reform Movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries impacted not only the American political arena (with the election of pro-Reform candidates like President Theodore Roosevelt), but also the physical lives and experiences of many urban denizens of American cities during this era. The movement centered on progressive ideas of educating the ‘masses’ – of which the foreign immigrants and domestic migrants involved in the processes of industrial urbanization were undoubtedly a part – into an appropriate American public, each grouping and individual full of the particular characteristics and values that were markers of citizenship. The urbanizing cities of this period, and in particular the development of practices and forms of physical activity and health, serve as evidence of the emergence of the urban governance of populations and individuals within and through specific spaces of the city, including a focus on public parks, playgrounds, and centers of sport and recreation. For Davis (1985) the beginnings of the Reform Movement in concerns over politics and debates over education meant that moral and

physical health were easily incorporated, as it was “a logical step from kindergartens to campaigns for public playgrounds” (p. 61). Health reformers emphasized the dual role of sports as both a physical and moral educational tool, and recognized the potential of sport and physical activity as a medium that could encourage principles of self-character, fitness, and integrity.

These efforts often drew on ideas from Ancient Greece linking fitness and education, as well as Puritan notions of the socially positive nature of sport – and this view precluded the idea that any concept of ‘play,’ especially for children and adolescents, that was seen as unstructured was therefore a waste of otherwise productive time (Riess, 1989). The individual reformers and social institutions that developed in and through the Reform Movement thus had a vested interest in the processes influencing urban sport and physical cultures, and sought to create spaces for these (specific) forms of ‘play’. Other work (Cavallo, 1981) has documented many of these specific individuals, including Jane Addams – whose Hull House organization organized the first public playground in Chicago in 1893 – and Luther Gulick, Jacob Riis, John Dewey, and G. Stanley Hall, among many others. These reformers held differing political and social views, but all were concerned with the establishment of spaces in which education – at once mental, physical and moral – could take place, especially in the increasingly congested and regulated spaces of the industrially urbanizing city.

Alongside public playgrounds specifically intended for children, the development of public parks and open, green spaces also involved the concerns of reformers for public hygiene, health and well-being – often intrinsically tied to ideas of citizenship.

Gagen (2004) explains that the formation and maintenance of these “everyday spaces of physical culture” beginning in the 1890s and continuing through the post-World War I years are a primary marker of the need by reformers to create and retain elements of social control and population regulation. As she argues, the efforts by reformers to create the physical spaces of playgrounds and parks were accompanied by both an understanding that these spaces were ‘public’ in that they were intended for all urban residents and especially those without private alternatives, as well as specifically designed programs that would take place within. Further, as Cranz (1982) explains, the public park was increasingly seen as a potential tool for the formation of urban policy during the industrializing era, as evidenced by the establishment of several major urban parks during this period. These green spaces were secured by urban governments, and during the early 1900s became the site for the construction of public recreation facilities such as pools and civic buildings, in part to encourage the Americanization of immigrants and cultural assimilation of migrants. The efforts toward public urban spaces designed of and for physical activity and sport were equally matched by efforts at designing appropriate citizen-producing athletic and active programs and activities.

Already fueled by concerns for population health and the influx of recent and arriving newcomers to urban centers, the promotion and evaluation of physical fitness increased further with the events of World War I. Following the war, the cultural linkages between physical fitness and citizenship – including and emphasizing military action – were entrenched within reinvigorated forms of nationalism both in United States and elsewhere (Pope, 1995). For American urban denizens, this would

mean increasing attention towards how individuals and groups were or were not deemed physically ‘fit’ for citizenship, and a multitude of programs designed to cultivate forms of physical and moral certitude. Park (2008) details how social policy initiatives during the 1920s and 1930s at the federal, state, and municipal levels incorporated concerns for physical fitness, and explicitly sought to tie the growing amount of scientific evidence of health to ‘practice’ that could utilize this knowledge in promoting healthy lifestyles. Thus throughout the years following World War I and up until the founding of Baltimore’s public recreation department in 1940, ideas about physical education and public recreation were increasingly interrelated to notions of governance, population health and forms of ‘active’ citizenship.

As this historical analysis of the origins of public recreation demonstrates, on the one hand the importance of health, physical activity and public recreation were increasingly important within the development of federal, state, and local governance throughout the late 19th and early 20th century. The relationship between the provision and distribution of physical activity and recreational opportunities, and the processes and practices of the state, thus provides one impetus for the research conducted in this dissertation as an examination of recreation policy and planning in Baltimore.

However, on the other hand, the history of public recreation also evinces a relationship between physical activity and recreational opportunity as a necessary and basic aspect of urban life – as Mitchell (2003) explains, recreation has historically been included in conceptions of and contestations over the ‘rights’ of urban residents for public spaces and services. Following Friedman and Van Ingen (2011), this project thus recognizes that the inclusion of opportunities for physical activity within

the fundamental rights of urban populations links a focus on urban physical cultures with the political and intellectual approach offered by Henri Lefebvre's conceptualization of the 'right to the city':

“Lefebvre (1996) argued that every person has a “right to the city”, which would allow “city-zens” to fully participate in urban life, enjoy full use and appropriate of urban space, and would elevate use value over exchange value...urban residents would have the right to conceive, create and implement urban space as they desire rather than rely on decisions made by the state (p. 98).

In this mode, the right to the city is both predicated on and expressed through the participation of all urban residents within the decision-making processes of urban development, and the rights of all citizens to basic social resources. As evidenced both historically by the reformers of the Progressive movement, and in the contemporary sense by the more recent report by the World Health Organization (Edwards & Tsouros, 2007) declaring sport and physical activity as an international human right, concerns for the equitable provision of recreational opportunities have and continue to be an important aspect of the social and spatial development of American cities. As Dahmann, et al. (2010) explain, the conception of the 'active city' therefore denotes a specific concern for the disparities in urban recreational resources and services that characterize many contemporary American cities.

This dissertation is thus framed by and within an approach of the 'right to the [active] city' that is premised on the promotion of social equity in regards to the provision and distribution of opportunities for sport, recreation, and physical activity. Accordingly, this research seeks to both examine the ways in which the historical and current conditions of public recreation in Baltimore reflect and shape the economic, political, and cultural dynamics of the city, while also engaging with the

contemporary forms and practices of urban recreation in order to address existing recreational inequities. Following the analysis of recreational sites and services in Baltimore through the first four chapters of this project, the Coda section serves to extend both a discussion of the right to the city, and to link this approach to what I refer to as the ‘politics of provision’ that characterize the current restructuring of the city’s recreation centers.

Further, while the ‘right to the [active] city’ as incorporated and enacted within this project is centrally focused on urban physical activity and recreational opportunities, the conceptualization of the right to the city as expressed by Lefebvre is not only concerned with the provision of social resources, but also with the critical engagement of how cities are thought about and organized (1996). As David Harvey explains, “the right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city” (2003). In other words, the participatory element of the right to the city extends to all aspects of urban everyday life, including both the scale and scope of services and resources that are made available to all citizens, as well as the very purpose and possible futures of urban environments. Along with a specific focus on recreational policy, planning, and the provision of physical activity opportunities, my aim is thus to also acknowledge and adopt the right to the city as an approach to researching urban physical cultures that realizes the goals of this project as the act of a ‘public intellectual’ (Said, 1996).

Chapter Overviews

In summary, through multiple theoretical and methodological frameworks and with a focus on the inter-relationships between public recreation in Baltimore and the

practices and processes of urban governance, this project examines how the ongoing changes to recreation policy and planning demonstrate different ideas and approaches to re-structuring the ‘active’ city. Specifically, through an incorporation of theories of governmentality, space and scale, urban neoliberalization, and assemblage urbanism, as well as the approaches of textual and discursive analysis and qualitative interviewing, this research demonstrates the connections between recreational opportunity and experience within a specific postindustrial metropolis. While the individual chapters all relate to this larger focus, each chapter was designed in order to serve as a singular aspect of the project, meaning that there is slight redundancy within the empirical, theoretical and methodological content of the chapters.

However, though each chapter can ‘stand alone’ in some senses, several major themes are evident across these different analyses. First, each chapter empirically engages with the relationships between recreation and governance, and how interactions between policymakers, planners and residents are both reflected in and actively shape the re-organizing of recreation policy. Second, the specific focus throughout on Baltimore’s public recreation centers recognizes these facilities as the social and spatial manifestations of policy and planning, in that the physical spaces of the centers have been and are constituted in and through specific social relations. Third, all of the chapters engage, at varying levels, the economic, political, and cultural dimensions of recreational sites and services, and emphasize the contested nature of recreation as an aspect of urban governance. Finally, impetus of these chapters is linked by ‘right to the [active] city’ as an expression of a concern for both

the equitable provision and distribution of recreation and physical activity opportunities, as well as public participation in the re-making of the city.

Chapter 1, *Public Recreation in Baltimore – Governmentality and the Active City*, examines the relations between the changing economic, political, and social conditions of the city, and the development and implementation of recreation policy and planning from the founding of the Department of Recreation and Parks in 1940 to the turn of the millennium in 2000. Specifically, this chapter asserts that over this duration, public recreation in Baltimore has been characterized in and through three distinct ‘governmentalities’, in the formations of recreational policy and the experiences of recreation that are entailed within these formations. This analysis demonstrates that each governmentality of recreation was intertwined with the socio-historical processes that have shaped the city throughout the late 20th century.

Chapter 2, *Recreation and Urban Planning - Designs of the Active City*, focuses specifically on the spaces and scales of recreation in and through the incorporation of modern urban planning. This analysis recognizes that the physical structures of Baltimore’s recreation centers exist as manifestations of different ideas and strategies about urban development, as well as the purposes and places of recreational opportunity within the American city. In particular, this chapter seeks to interrogate how and why recreation centers were built, and what these physical conditions mean in relation to both the historical conditions of Baltimore’s neighborhoods, as well as the contemporary spaces of the city.

Chapter 3, *Recreation and Urban Neoliberalization – Discourses of the Active City*, explores how public recreation in Baltimore has shaped and been shaped by the

processes of urban neoliberalization. This analysis focuses on the previous thirty years of recreational policy and planning, in describing the implications for urban recreational opportunity within the changing dynamics of American urban governance. Specifically, this chapter suggests that through the related and yet differentiated processes of ‘roll-back’, ‘roll-out’, and ‘roll-with’ neoliberalization, the realities and experiences of public recreation in Baltimore have been and continue to be formed in relation to the restructuring of urban policy and planning.

Chapter 4, *(Re)Assembling Recreation: Urban Assemblage and the Active City*, describes the more recent developments in regards to Baltimore’s recreation centers, focusing on the transfer of centers to private, non-profit and other non-state organizations. Through participant interviews with the actors involved in this planning process, this analysis incorporates the approach of assemblage urbanism in examining how the specific material conditions, associations between and within different institutions, and practices regarding recreational and community services all reflect the re-assembling of recreation in Baltimore.

Finally, in the Coda section – *Right to the Active City: Planning, Policy and Physical Cultural Studies* – my aim is to outline how this research might contribute to a particular perspective for studying and engaging with urban physical cultures. By further elaborating on some of the underlying ideas that have guided the completion of this dissertation, this section attempts to provide physical cultural studies with an intellectual and political approach for thinking about, and inter-acting within, the urban environments of active bodies.

Chapter 1: Public Recreation in Baltimore – Governmentality and the Active City

Introduction

In 1937, Baltimore Mayor Howard W. Jackson appointed a special committee to research the administration of ‘public recreation’ in the city, taking account of what types of recreational and leisure activities that were available to residents and if these services matched the demands of the citizens of Baltimore. By 1939, city voters had amended the City Charter to create a Department of Public Recreation within the city government, and the provision of recreational opportunities and facilities had become an established city service. Until this point, recreation services were primarily directed by private citizens organizations like the Playground Athletic League, as well as community organizations that had formed programs in some of Baltimore’s most densely populated neighborhoods, including the Carroll Park Mansion House and the Patterson Park and South Baltimore recreation centers (“Long Range Plan,” 1943).

The incorporation of recreation and leisure into the collective purview of city government was not limited to Baltimore, as other cities followed similar steps in creating a city-operated agency focused on recreation programs and facilities that would complement – and in Baltimore’s case, eventually be combined with – a city agency focused on public parks and open spaces. The creation of a city department of recreation within Baltimore City serves as the formalized arrangement of recreation within the governance of the city, as part of the policies and practices that make up the collective actions of city agencies, employees and citizens. In this chapter, the primary aim is to illustrate the interconnections between different formations of urban

governance and the changing policies and practices of ‘public recreation’ in Baltimore as manifest over the nearly 75 years since the Department’s inception. In short, this sociohistorical analysis of the development and implementation of public recreation seeks to describe the ways in which city governments shape and interact with the lives of city residents, by focusing on the dynamics of the provision and distribution of recreation facilities and programs as one form of governmental policy, and as an aspect of contextually-specific and historically-located urban experiences.

Research Background

In contrast to analyses of the administration of city government in terms of the techniques and interactions within and between institutions, this chapter follows Pierre (1999) in distinguishing between the institutional practice of an urban ‘government’ and the processes of urban ‘governance’. While ‘government’ indicates the agencies and positions that make up the institutional bodies of a city’s management and supervision, ‘governance’ instead expresses the “process shaped by those systems of political, economic and social values through which the urban regime derives its legitimacy” (Pierre, 1999, p. 375). This means that the development and implementation of public recreation policy is not being analyzed in terms of relative efficacy of the specific policy tools and instruments employed, but rather in regards to how these policies reflect and shape the experience of the American city over different periods of historical (dis)continuity. That is, my focus is on urban governance in terms of *governmentality* as an ‘art of government’ that is about the processes of governing and the entanglements between policy, planning and the experiences of living in the city, against a focus on “how governors governed” as an

applied exercise of political administration (Foucault, 2010, p. 7). Within this chapter, the changing nature of the policies and rationales for the provision of recreation in Baltimore are taken to constitute different formations or *governmentalities* of public recreation, which both shape and reflect the processes of urban governance within different sociohistorical milieus.

For Pierre (1999), there are two other aspects of this approach to ‘governance’ that make it valuable and differentiate this approach from the ‘applied’ perspective traditionally found in political science: first, the governance approach emphasizes the interchange between different organizational bodies instead of considering local government to be generally directed by the political elite (Pierre, 1999, p. 375). This view prioritizes the process of governance within urban politics, and frames these politics as dynamic and contested in the continual remaking of the city, coordinating with overall emphasis of the chapter and this project. Second, the governance perspective takes into account the ‘embedded’ nature of the processes of governing a city, in that the values of particular governmental models are always adopted within the context of both intra-local and extra-local politics and forces, and the decisions and practices that emanate from these values are arrived to at particular times and for particular reasons. As opposed to urban regime theory, which attempts to arrive at different ‘models’ of urban governance and analyze these externally as one theoretical model of how a government might govern, Pierre’s (2005) governance perspective seeks to articulate the different culturally and historically specific formations of urban governance. Again, this approach coincides with a research project that seeks to detail the ‘situated’ nature of urban governance as exemplified

by the development of public recreation policy, and the changes to recreational sites and services as one aspect of life within the urban environment.

Through my adoption of this governance perspective and approach, this chapter broadly traces the changes to and within the constituting of public recreation services in Baltimore City from the establishment of the Department of Public Recreation in 1940, through the policies, plans and political realities of the department at the end of the millenium. Given that debates over the nature of public services and sites continue to dominate the contemporary sociopolitical landscape, both in regards to American cities and across the globe, this project seeks to explicate how public recreation is both reflective of and a force within the processes of urban governance, specifically through an analysis of the different approaches to recreation within Baltimore. The changing modes of governance that are the focus of my analysis support the incorporation of “governmentality” as both a theoretical framework and methodological practice, drawing from the ideas of French social theorist Michel Foucault (2009, 2010). For Foucault the notion of governmentality refers to attempts to govern modern life, as these attempts at governance were premised on bringing “life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge/power as an agent of the transformation of human life” (Foucault, 2010, p. 7). That is, governmentality as a concept and analytic framework is less concerned with different systems of government and their organization and distribution, and more focused on the practices and experiences that emanate from a particular modality of conceiving and implementing policies aimed at specific populations. In Foucault’s analysis, the conceptualization of governmentality as a mode of inquiry

was primarily focused on the restructuring of political life in and through the processes of liberalism, in which states and rulers enacted different formations of governance as the “conduct of conduct” – that is, as a means of managing and controlling populations in relation to health, labor, and other aspects of everyday life (Brockling et al., 2010, p. 297). This means that the theoretical and methodological approach inherent within governmentality seeks to describe the inter-relationships between acts of governing, the rationales utilized in the formation and deployment of particular policies and programs, and the lived experiences that are shaped by and constitutive of a particular social and historical location (The Foucault Effect, 1991).

In relation to public recreation in Baltimore, the incorporation of governmentality signals a focus on the ways in which recreation policy, planning and programs were and are always inextricable from the social forces that characterize a particular context. In short, this approach allows this chapter to emphasize the relations between recreation governance and the experience of living in the city, rather than an applied perspective of formulating ‘best practices’ for how public recreation was, is, or should be developed and implemented. As Larner (2003) explains, governmentality studies seek to prioritize the active role of governance in the production of “spaces, states, and subjects in complex and multiple forms,” and how specific formations of urban policy and planning have impacts and interchanges with specific “bodies, households, families, and communities” (p. 512). In doing so, the governmentality approach brings together ‘social history’ and ‘conceptual history’ as two related, but often distanced, forms of sociohistorical research – by starting from an “assumption about the intertwining of political language and political reality,” governmentality

seeks to document the ‘traces’ of connections between political concepts, governing institutions, and the populations that are being governed (Brockling et al., 2010, p. 45). By exploring the linkages between both the conceptual and institutional dimensions of the practices and experiences of specific ‘governmentalities’, this chapter follows in the lineage of governmentality studies (Larner, 2003), while also providing a unique analysis of public recreation as an under-represented and often ignored aspect of urban governance.

This means that as cities developed in and through the processes of industrial and commercial urbanization, the population of those cities also experienced immense changes and continual social flux – issues of difference based on national, ethnic, and racial formations of identity meant that the sporting cultures of these cities were contested and complex. Within this milieu, the reformers of this period sought to incorporate sport and physical activity into spaces and programs designed to cultivate healthy and productive citizens, and recognized physical fitness as both a marker of and means of acquiring moral health and citizenship. The processes involved in developing both the spaces of public parks, playgrounds and centers of recreation and sport, as well as the specifically-designed forms of ‘play’ that were initiated within them, are therefore embedded within the urbanization of cities during this era. The parks ‘movement’ of the late 19th and early 20th century spread through many American cities including Baltimore, where in 1860 the city officially commissioned the design of Druid Hill Park, making it among the oldest landscaped public spaces in the U.S. These spaces often reflected social attitudes concerning racial and class divisions within the city populace – as one example, Druid Hill’s pools, tennis courts

and other facilities were legally segregated from its inception until the late 1940s, and de facto segregation continued through the 1950s and into the 1960s.

Yet the call for public spaces in the Progressive era was to recognize that urban parks were not and could not be sufficient in providing public recreation opportunities for all urban denizens, and that other centers and spaces built and maintained by urban governments, and with city-operated programming and services, were needed. In Baltimore, this call was heeded by several private citizens' groups, including participants in the "Playground Movement" of the early 20th century – these groups sought to privately establish smaller spaces and services within city neighborhoods, often with goals of cultivating values and traits in line with dominant expectations of American citizenship (Boyer, 1983). Within this era, parks became just one place of public recreation provision, as the first community recreation centers and playgrounds came into being. This changed in 1940, however, when the city established a municipal department – what eventually became the current Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks, or BCRP – which consolidated the existing citizen groups geared toward recreation into a singular city-owned and operated entity. However, the establishment of a public agency charged with delivering recreation sites and services has not meant that the notion and value of 'public' recreation has not changed or transformed as well. Indeed, as this chapter argues the historical transformations of recreation in Baltimore, as always-already intertwined with larger processes of urbanization, (de)industrialization and suburbanization, evince the shifting nature of 'public' places, spaces and social services within the context of different periods and paradigms of urban governance.

In brief, my purpose with this chapter is to present a framework for analyzing how the ‘public’ in public recreation has changed and continues to change within the historical and current context of Baltimore City, and what this might mean for understanding larger shifts in urban governance and citizenship. Following Ong (2006), the conceptualization of citizenship being invoked here in relation to governmentality refers to the conditions and choices of everyday living within a given territory, with a special emphasis on how these conditions and choices are contested and continually fluctuating and “mutating” within particular social, cultural and historical milieus (p. 13). These ‘mutations’ are the dynamic formations of the expectations and responsibilities of daily life within a given space or spaces, and specifically for this project refer to the changing experience of urban citizenship – or what it means to live in cities, and in this case a particular deindustrialized American city – given the shifting nature of public service provision, including public recreation facilities and programs.

In my research, this dynamic understanding of *(active) urban citizenship* is explored primarily in relation to the development and implementation of public recreation policies, and the provision and distribution of public recreation facilities and programs. My argument is that these practices and policies of public recreation work to constitute particular recreation *governmentalities* – specific modes of and for the rationale and conduct of urban public recreation exercised within a given historical and social context. This analysis therefore focuses an examination of over seventy years of documentation related to public recreation in Baltimore, including more than 500 pages of official policy statements, reports, and meeting minutes from

BCRP, policy and planning documents from other City agencies, and media coverage of recreation spaces and services. These documents were accessed through various archival sources, including the City archives, BCRP archives, and the Maryland Room collection at the city's Pratt Library.

In short, through an analysis of this evidence of recreation in Baltimore, the aim of this chapter will be to introduce several formations of public recreation policies, programs and planning in an effort to demonstrate how shifts in urban governance and politics were inextricable from changes to the development and implementation of recreation services in the city, and what these changes have meant and mean for historical and current formations of 'active' urban citizenship. In turn, these distinct formations of recreational policy – and the differing conditions and experiences that emanate from the resultant sites and services of these policies – are examined in order to grasp how the 'right to the active city' has been conceived, interpreted and implemented within particular modalities of urban governance.

1940s-60s – 'Municipal Recreation'

“The function of the long range plan, therefore, is to assure suitable physical means of improving the life of the community through a skillfully developed recreation program. This recreation program contributes to the quality of living in several aspects. It is a means of achieving a group of satisfactions the desire for which is practically universal, of contributing to good health and physical well-being, and of character training. While recreation is voluntary and is a leisure time experience, it has such important disciplinary values that the courts have held it to be a municipal function important to the general public welfare.”
 (“Long Range Plan,” 1943).

As Durr (2003) explains, over the duration of World War II and into the post-war era Baltimore was principally characterized by two interrelated elements: first, the sharp increase in jobs, as large factory workforces grew in connection with both the

war and the peak of modern industrialism; and second, the number of individuals and families arriving for these jobs, swelling the city's population to a peak of over 950,000 in 1950. The city's demographic identity changed rapidly in this period, impacted primarily by African-American migrants from the U.S. South, working-class whites from Appalachia, and foreign immigrants from Eastern Europe, all entering into a city marked by a strictly enforced color line. This "southern segregationist inheritance" would mark the experience of both native Baltimoreans and those arriving from elsewhere, and impacted all areas of social life, including both at home and at the workplace (Durr, 2003, p. 16). The daily drawing of the color line also meant that new arrivals to Baltimore were generally situated on one side or another of the black/white divide. This meant that Appalachian migrant workers and families, while suffering some abuse from Baltimore natives in line with the 'hillbilly' stereotype, were "ultimately accepted" as part of white Baltimore's social fabric (Durr, 2003, p. 18). Thus the influence of industrial labor was also important in the formation of a 'new white working class' within Baltimore as it was across the United States, which often served to further support and entrench the already-existing practices of segregation within the city (Roediger, 2005). The building of the second public pool within Druid Hill Park in 1921 serves as one example, as the facility was designated the "Negro pool" in line with the segregationist norms of the early and mid-20th century. Further, and unlike any other (white) pools in the city, this pool was outfitted with recently-developed forms of recirculation technology, providing a physical manifestation of popular attitudes about the relationship between race, hygiene and health (Kessler, 1989).

The residual legacies and theories of segregation were therefore also embedded within forms leisure and recreation as well as the practices and policies of the city's government, and were evident within the creation and implementation of a department of public recreation. As Jordan (1993) notes, the first director for the newly-founded department in 1940 was Robert Garrett, a wealthy Baltimore citizen and prominent supporter of sports and physical activity who had competed for the United States in both discus and shot put in the first modern Olympics in 1896 - Garrett had then directed the privately-funded Police Athletic League recreation programs within the city, and had worked to secure a place for the League in the city Parks budget by 1914 (p. 84). When the city department of recreation was founded, Garrett's position and the recreation programs were fully incorporated into the city government as publicly funded and administered, and the practices and norms of segregation were included as well. The Department of Public Recreation was designed with a distinct "Colored" branch of administration, with separate facilities, separate personnel and segregated programming. The Bureau of Recreation established a separate "Colored Division" to operate the seven community centers, six school-attached rec sites, and four housing sites designated for black citizens – the Bureau also operated another 12 community centers, 39 school sites, and four housing sites for white citizens only. Druid Hill Park contained both a black and white pool, while Clifton Park and Patterson Park also had white-only pools (Jordan, 1993, p. 84). Following World War II, the Department of Public Recreation and Department of Parks were consolidated into the current Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) – this helped ease some competition and tension between parks

funding and programming and recreation funding and programming, but in some ways the division between the Bureau of Recreation and Bureau of Parks remained. Funding issues included an allocation of only \$187,000 in the 1949 budget for recreation maintenance after a request for \$900,000, and overall these issues suggested that the mission of public recreation in Baltimore wasn't entirely clear to city leaders (Jordan, 1993, p. 99). This would change as the city grew in population, and recreation increased in political and public importance.

In 1940 the African-American population of the city was approximately 20% of the overall population, yet the racial dynamics of Baltimore's population were beginning to shift dramatically in connection with the wartime and post-war industrial economy. By the end of the war, Baltimore was home to an emerging civil rights movement, led by several influential figures including Thurgood Marshall (McDougall, 1993). Included within this struggle for general racial equality, tensions over the disparity in both the allocation of recreation and parks resources also continued to mount, including maintenance of existing spaces. As one example, in 1946 Addison Pinkney, a representative for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) petitioned the city government to ask why "Negro squares" (those parks and public spaces designated for African-Americans) were being allowed to deteriorate rather than being maintained. Further, he voiced a community complaint that Parks Police had been driving black citizens from certain parks near predominately black neighborhoods, and asked why the Druid Hill "Negro pool" was lacking in maintenance when compared with the whites-only

pool immediately nearby, especially when attendance at the pool for African-Americans nearly doubled that of the whites-only (Jordan, 1993, p. 102).

While city representatives never responded to Pinkney's concerns or inquiries, 1946 also marked the passing of a proposal to fund the construction of a new recreation center for black communities in East Baltimore – the Chick Webb Memorial Recreation Center, named after the jazz and swing drummer who grew up in the neighborhood where the center was to be built ("WEBB CENTER BID APPROVED: City To Build Memorial To Negro Drummer On Eden St," 1946) . The project was the first truly 'public' recreation center that was designed, planned and built by the city, and as noted in the department's annual Guide for 1947 "the development of such a building has long been considered the most important recreation need in Baltimore" (Annual Report, 1947). The Chick Webb project received further support via public funding in 1948 when an indoor pool was included in the second phase of the facility's design ("WEBB CENTER POOL PLANNED: \$200,000 Made Available For Recreation Project," 1948).

Along with the struggle for public resources, issues of racial segregation and civil rights within early 1950s Baltimore were made evident through events that took place at city recreation sites, including the suspension of a whites-only team from a recreation basketball league after they were discovered playing a game against black players, and the arrest of several tennis players who played interracial matches in Druid Hill Park (Kessler, 1989). In general, the reaction to these integrationist protests mirrored the stance held by Robert Garrett, the first leader of the Bureau of Recreation – meaning while black citizens of Baltimore continued to demand further

access to public facilities, Garrett managed to move incrementally in actually making such changes. Despite Garrett's resignation from the Bureau post in 1950, changes regarding racial equality within Baltimore generally, and specifically in relation to public recreation, were not to come quickly or easily. By 1951 the City made its first move towards integration, as the city's public golf courses were to be integrated – however, policies did not reflect actual practice, as Clifton Park was the only golf course known to allow black golfers (Jordan, 1993, p. 104). Similarly, all tennis and basketball courts and playgrounds were still segregated, though some allowed for interracial play during specific days and times, while pools remained completely 'separate but equal.' Argued on the same day as the famous *Brown v. Board* ruling, the Supreme Court extended its ruling beyond schools to beaches, parks, golf courses and recreation facilities with *Boling v. Sharpe* in May 1954 – yet even after this ruling, actual integration remained largely absent (Jordan, 1993).

Public Recreation and the Urban Neighborhood

However, and as discussed further in the third chapter of this project, within the context of the postwar period the idea of public recreation as an essential aspect of living in a city was generally promoted across racial lines by city planners, as post-war urban planning prioritized the modern design of the neighborhood as a 'unit' of urban planning. As Corburn (2009) notes, the early 20th century evinced the development of particular theories for understanding, representing, and planning the urban environment – utilizing rationalized and supposedly 'universal' approaches that could be applied to any city, planners were influenced by concepts like the 'City Beautiful,' the 'Garden City', and the concentric zone model of the Chicago School.

Each of these approaches and representations of urban life were based on ideal models that were predicated on a scientific rhetoric of ‘natural’ laws and tendencies, and thus worked to “ignore the often contested, gendered, variegated, and value-laden characteristics of cities” by emphasizing a normative and unilateral method of city planning (Corburn, 2009, p. 53). In the view of these approaches, the city was taken to be a large and living ‘laboratory’ for the experiments and observations of urban planners, who often prioritized these models over and above the specific contexts of a given city or community. As these models of urban planning also developed alongside concerns for public health, the city-as-laboratory was accompanied by a representation of the city as an organic body, in which the city is represented through a metaphor of the body’s circulatory, nervous and other internal systems (Sennett, 1996). Representations and theories of the city as a laboratory and as an organic body meant that the dominant modes of urban planning following World War II were primarily reflective of a “placeless universalism” instead of engaging with the particulars of a specific community (Corburn, 2009).

While developed by Clarence Perry in the late 1920s, the ‘Neighborhood Unit’ model was another primary aspect of urban planning in the post-war period. While in line with the other dominant models of planning that centered on universalism, Perry’s ‘Neighborhood’ was designed as a community within the city, an effort to improve urban life that was scaled down to a smaller area of concentrated commercial and residential planning. This design scheme was centered on a school facility, and included a population of “5,000 to 6,000 people and 800 or 1,000 children of elementary school age...in single-family-per-lot sections requiring an area of about

160 acres” – in Perry’s view this was the environment “best adapted...for the growing of an urban neighborhood community” (Perry, 1929). Perry’s design might be best suited for expanding cities with undeveloped space, but even though the housing and transportation infrastructure of many existing communities meant that this ideal model wasn’t possible, the values and characteristics of urban life within the model were viewed as appropriate for any community. Corburn explains that the neighborhood-based model of urban planning, centered on safety, security and the efficient delivery and provision of services, “took hold” with planners – with one example being the linkage between urban planning and public health in the American Public Health Association’s 1948 publication of *Planning the Neighborhood*. This report linked the existence and persistence of health disparities with the provision of services and ‘amenities’ that supplemented and supported the family and community, calling for planners, developers and the public to “build not merely homes but neighborhoods” to ensure the physical, mental and moral well-being of all Americans (1948).

While these reports often sidestepped the issue of racial segregation, they did make apparent the need for community services that engaged urban residents, including spaces for and programs related to recreation, leisure and physical activity. The influence and popularity of the urban neighborhood as a ‘unit’ for planning and development meant that any community of quality would feature amenities related to recreation as part of the general design of the neighborhood. This theme was prevalent in the first major plan for the Department of Public Recreation in 1943, which recognized that the city was “serious lacking both large and small

neighborhood recreation areas and facilities” and needed a long-term plan to address these issues. The 1943 report explains that these areas and facilities make up a “municipal recreation program,” designed to “enrich and improve the quality of life in the community” (“Long Range Plan,” 1943).

Accordingly, the department worked to establish facilities in neighborhoods that were seen as lacking in recreational opportunities, as evidenced in the opening of the Canton Recreation Center in June 1950. Citing the popularity of recreation programming at the renovated police station in east Baltimore, as well as the need for further “recreational, educational and health facilities” throughout the city, Mayor Thomas D’Alesandro asked those in attendance to vote for the \$1.5 million recreation bond loan in the upcoming elections (“86 RECREATION UNITS TO OPEN: Facilities Include 20 Parks And Eight Play Lots,” 1950). This points to the process of municipal bond measures and public funding as a key characteristic of both neighborhood-based urban planning and of ‘municipal recreation’ as the primary formation of public recreation within this era. Within this governmentality or approach to the developing and implementing of recreation policy and programming, city residents were asked to provide funding through direct public subsidy of city agencies and projects, with an understanding that facilities and services would be provided within their neighborhoods and communities.

Yet as Corburn notes, while espousing the improvement of the quality of life in the urban environment, the same theory and approach included in the ‘neighborhood’ model was criticized both for its universalism and for being vulnerable to the further entrenchment of racial segregation (Corburn, 2009). Within the context of a

segregated Baltimore, the provision of recreation and other amenities to different neighborhoods were indeed often related to the racial and ethnic characteristics of specific communities. As the Department's 1943 long-term plan had maintained a clear color line in terms of recreation facilities and programs, the changing racial dynamics of the city in the late 1940s and 1950s were also evident within public recreation policy and planning, primarily through the connection between recreation services and city housing plans and policies. As Pietila (2010) explains, the practices restrictive covenants, redlining, blockbusting and predatory lending were evident throughout the country, yet the history of housing in Baltimore is uniquely inflected with concerns about race and ethnicity. These efforts directly created a city characterized by social segregation, and by the late 1930s the approximate 20% of Baltimore's population that was African-American was centralized in around 2% of the city's land size (Pietila, 2010, p. 83). The large influx in population that accompanied the wartime and post-war economic surge meant that new housing developments were needed for working and middle-class families, and these projects – often including recreation facilities and other neighborhood-based amenities and services – also were planned and functioned based on racial segregation.

The geographic limitations of housing within segregation saw a concentration of historical black communities in West Baltimore, centered around Pennsylvania Avenue, and in East Baltimore where communities saw the development of the recreation center named after Chick Webb. During the war, the city also sought to establish a 'Colored' community in the neighborhood of Cherry Hill, south across the Hanover Street bridge from Federal Hill and downtown. Plans for a federally-funded

black housing project had started in 1943 intended for the Herring Run area of northeast Baltimore, but protests and pressure from white citizens, community groups and politicians eventually led to Mayor Theodore McKeldin choosing to move the project to Cherry Hill, which was insulated by water from the white communities of Brooklyn and South Baltimore (Durr, 2003, p. 25). Between 1940 and 1950, the racial composition of Cherry Hill was inverted along segregated lines, as whites moved out at the same time that housing plans were implemented for black residents, who made up nearly the entire neighborhood by the early 1950s. Within this mode of urban planning, the development of housing projects aimed at specific communities also included considerations for recreation facilities and services. By the end of the 1950s, the Department of Public Recreation had established two different recreation centers to serve this community – the Cherry Hill center and the Cherry Hill Homes center were both part of the effort to realize the potential to improve the quality of urban life through the values of the neighborhood-based model of planning. These neighborhood ‘amenities’ were prioritized within urban planning for all citizens of Baltimore during this period, indicated by the provision of recreation centers at whites-only housing projects like Latrobe Homes, as well as in white communities like Brooklyn and South Baltimore.

The post-war period also evinced the emergence of suburbanization within many American cities, as middle-class and primarily white families relocated to areas outside of the city in search of suburban affluence and security. In Baltimore this process of ‘white flight’ was also accompanied by a ‘southern rush’ for much of the 1950s, as migrant workers and families sought the stability of industrial jobs, doubly

impacting the demographic makeup of the city's population (Durr, 2003, p. 66). Thus as the post-war industrial boom began to slow and eventually level, the changes in Baltimore's citizenry were both shaping and shaped by the distribution of communities and social resources within the city. In this context, the neighborhood-based focus of urban planning, including in the provision of recreational facilities and resources, worked to support and entrench these modes of social segregation, as this type of planning enabled the creation of 'miniature publics' that were often understood in racial and ethnic terms (McDougall, 1993, p. 23). Different Baltimore neighborhoods were characterized by different racial and ethnic identities, ranging from the explicitly named Greektown or Little Italy, to the more implicit understandings of the black communities around Pennsylvania Avenue or the working-class whites of Hampden or South Baltimore. These communities were caught within the dynamics of the city's demographic change, but throughout the 1950s many also worked to maintain and strengthen the sense of neighborhood cohesion, engagement and affiliation. As Durr explains, in Baltimore during this era notions of urban citizenship were often inextricable from the idea of 'community' as the social landscape in which the routines of family and religion were practiced – these communities were defined by racial and geographic boundaries, and revolved around traditional community institutions such as churches and social clubs (2003, p. 53). These organizations also worked to establish neighborhood-based social services, including recreation programs that operated out of city recreation centers, often focused primarily on youth programming. As one example, when the congregation of the Columbia Avenue (now Washington Boulevard) Methodist Episcopal Church

decided to vacate their building in the Ridgely's Delight neighborhood southwest of downtown, the city and recreation department agreed to take the building in as the Lions Club Recreation Center, which remained until the 1980s (Gunts, 2005). As the department sought to implement recreation planning and programs within particular neighborhoods, and many neighborhoods both supported and supplemented this programming with their own forms of community engagement through the use of department facilities, the formation of 'municipal recreation' during this period was marked by the neighborhood-based scale and scope of recreation provision.

Thus within the context of the social segregation and changing dynamics of the population of the city, the processes of industrialization and, by the late 1950s, emergent patterns of deindustrialization, the policies and practices of public recreation in Baltimore in the wartime and post-war era evince an approach to governing recreation that is defined here as 'municipal recreation'. Municipal recreation as a governmentality of public recreation is characterized by three key aspects: 1) the 'neighborhood unit' as a model and scale for urban planning, and the focus and intent of planning processes that resulted from this model and its influence, 2) the model of funding for recreation facilities and programs, especially through public bond measures, and 3) the focus on 'provision' and 'prevention' as two prominent rationales for supporting the recreation department and its programs. These three concerns were prominent within the discourses of the department, including the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meetings and other department projects and materials, as well as in the public reaction and media coverage of department policies. In this analysis, 'municipal recreation' contributes to a focus on the interrelations of

policy and citizenship, in that the place and purpose of recreation policy in Baltimore was both shaping and shaped by the socioeconomic and racial dynamics of the city. The general influence of and focus on neighborhood-based planning was reflected in recreation planning, and was connected to an understanding of urban citizenship based on ‘community’ that was conducive to claims about quality of life and the place of recreation within urban neighborhoods that made public funding feasible.

Municipal Recreation: ‘Provision’ and ‘Prevention’

In particular, the discourses of ‘provision’ and ‘prevention’ as rationales for support of recreation facilities, programming and the public funding of these was evident within the department and interactions with the public. From the department’s inception, the primary aim was to increase the provision of recreation to the citizens of Baltimore, through a larger number of recreation facilities and more quality programming that met the demands of city residents. The department’s annual report for 1948 recognized the “fine support from the public” in the increase in facilities and better “quality supervision” for recreation programs, as well as the support from Mayor D’Alessandro through his personal tour of the city to assess and call for further recreational opportunities (Annual Report, 1948). In line with the neighborhood-based model of planning which saw the central location of social, educational, health, recreational and other amenities within each neighborhood ‘unit’, the Mayor’s tour yielded the Locust Point Recreation Center, attached to the neighborhood’s school and adjacent to a branch of the city’s Pratt Library system and a public bath and health clinic, as the “ideal community setup serving all ages and practically all purposes of a neighborhood, from students to oldsters” (“Locust Point Recreation

Center May Be Used As Model: Preparatory to starting his citywide search ...", 1947). These neighborhood-focused planning efforts, in recreation as well as other forms of city services, were supported politically by both Mayors and City Council members for much of this era, including during a minor budgetary crisis in the early 1950s. After the department saw a minor increase in funding in 1952 as part of the Mayor's directive for all city agencies to "hold the line" regarding the annual budget, City Council members from several districts pushed for further funding of recreation facilities and programs, culminating in Council hearings focused on increasing recreation provision in 1954 ("RECREATION HEARINGS DUE: Council Sets Discussions On Additional Facilities," 1954). These efforts, common throughout the era of 'municipal recreation', illustrate the political support that this formation of public recreation invoked and received within city government.

This political support was influenced and accompanied by the support of the citizens of Baltimore, in particular through repeated public bond measures that enabled the department to grow and establish a system of recreation facilities and programs across the city. The first of these recreation bonds, worth \$1.5 million, passed in 1947 with overwhelming support from city voters, allowing the department to "proceed with a long delayed program for the construction of new playgrounds, playfields and recreational facilities in many sections of the city as well as improve some of the existing facilities" (Annual Report, 1947, p. 14). This initial bond was followed in 1949 with a larger loan proposal on the ballot which also was passed by voters, totaling \$4.5 million including \$2.5 million for the city's Memorial Stadium and another \$1.5 million for recreation (Annual Report, 1950, p. 1). The funding of

recreation via public loans serves to emphasize the formation of ‘municipal recreation’ as supported directly by city residents, in that citizens and community organizations viewed recreation as a priority that should be subsidized by municipal taxpayers, addressed through a city agency and enacted within city neighborhoods. By 1958, the model of public support for recreation bond measures had allowed for the authorization of three additional bond measures totaling \$3 million for the Bureau of Recreation (Annual Report, 1958).

In the context of ‘municipal recreation’, public recreation facilities and programming included not only youth and adult sport and physical activities, but also a focus on cultural events such as heritage festivals at Memorial Stadium and the city’s famous municipal band. The line for funding recreation in the annual city budget was officially titled “Recreation and Culture” for this entire period, as the department’s founding mission was to be the primary provider of public leisure activities in the city. A 1956 profile on the Leith Walk recreation center, built with public funding from bond measures and in line with the neighborhood planning model of co-located recreation and education facilities, highlighted that while basketball leagues and programs for boys and men were common at recreation centers across the city, Leith Walk featured the only girls cheerleading squad, demonstrating the dynamics of gender within recreational programming of the period (Baetjer, 1956). However, along with the rationale of provision for increased recreational opportunities, the rationale of prevention was also a growing concern, especially by the late 1950s. In some ways reflecting the emergence of juvenile delinquency as a larger social issue, a focus on recreation as prevention was predicated on the idea that

providing alternative activities for youth would promote an appropriate model of citizenship and deter mischief and crime. The department's annual report of 1958 included a section entitled "Engaging Children with Behavior Problems", detailing a new program implemented by both recreation and elementary school staff that sought to "reduce pre-delinquent tendencies in children" through mentorship and after-school programming – recreation leaders were instructed to recognize "problem children...and as long as these young folk stay in the Center, there is a good chance that some of the wrinkles will be ironed out" (Annual Report, 1958, p. 62). Programs such as these were indicative of broader claims about the ability of recreation to address urban social issues, echoing the emergence of public recreation in the early 20th century but also signaling the existing tensions within the changing dynamics of deindustrializing centers like Baltimore, wherein concerns about class, race and ethnicity were often focused on youth (Durr, 2003, p. 91).

Therefore within the governmentality of municipal recreation, recreational opportunities were increasingly considered an integral part of the social fabric of an urban neighborhood, and served to both foster development of forms of 'community' while also counteracting the potential ills of urban life. Thus between provision and prevention, the formation of municipal recreation was supported politically by community organizations and city leaders, economically by city voters, through bond issues, and by city planners as part of the neighborhood-based model of urban planning in the post-war period. These characteristics comprise the forms of 'active citizenship' within this era, in regards to the relations between recreational opportunities and living in Baltimore.

Baltimore City Recreation Centers 1940-1949



Figure 1.1

Baltimore City Recreation Centers 1950-1959

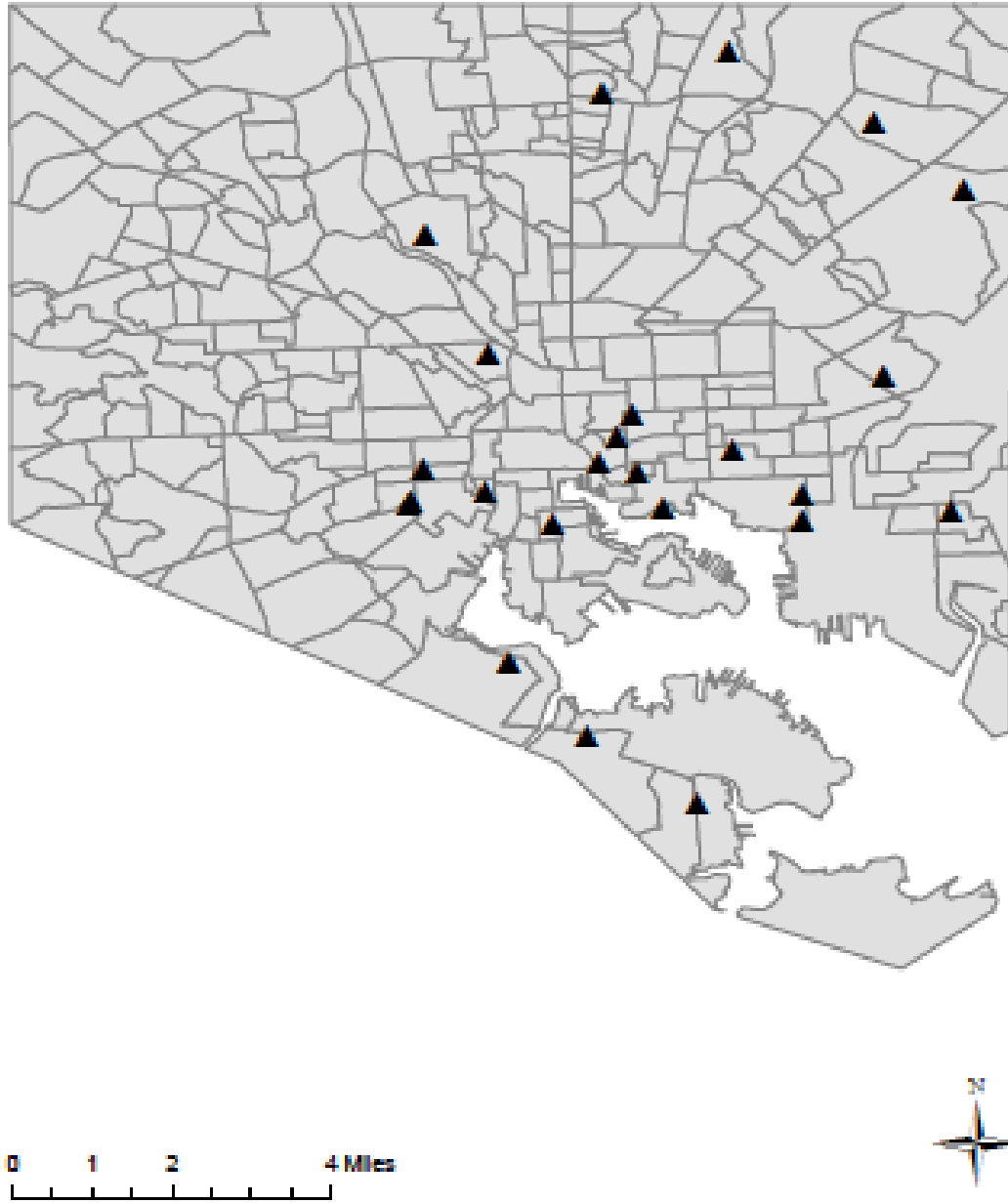


Figure 1.2

1960s-80s – ‘Urban Recreation’

“Baltimore’s total future environment may well depend upon the city’s park and recreation system – how soundly it is conceived and how effectively it is administered. Increasing land development for commercial, industrial and residential use and for arterial streets and expressways is creating physical changes directly related to people, and therefore to parks and open space. An increasing number of our population have larger income, more education, greater mobility and more leisure time. On the other hand, an increasing number of our economically underprivileged population are residing in dense urban areas. The needs of both must be understood and reflected in recreation plans...these physical and social changes are demanding a change in traditional recreational planning concepts.”

(“Long Range Plan,” 1965).

By 1959, the Bureau of Recreation operated 40 recreation centers in neighborhoods across the city, with that year’s annual report focusing on “Neighborhood Relationships” as a key aspect of recreation center operations and programming, as each center’s relationship with its corresponding neighborhood was ensured through the “exchange of services between neighborhood groups and the centers...that promotes a good neighborhood feeling” - in addition to recreational programming offered by the department, over 120 different community organizations utilized and supported recreation centers, including civic improvement associations and community councils, religious groups, neighborhood clubs and youth organizations such as the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (Annual Report, 1959, p. 61). Thus while many of Baltimore’s communities were caught up within the socioeconomic dynamics of deindustrialization and suburbanization in the late 1950s and early 1960s, this period also saw a continuation of a model of urban planning that emphasized social services and facilities based primarily at the scale of the neighborhood. The neighborhood scale of planning was evident in the further support

of the recently introduced model of co-located (and often physically attached) school and recreation facilities that could serve as the ‘focal point’ of community life within a given neighborhood. The school-recreation center model was backed by a Department of Planning report asserting that the “school of tomorrow” was more than a daytime-only facility for educating children – “it is rather a day-and-night center for cultural and recreational activity, for all ages – the heart of a good neighborhood” (Williams, 1957). By sharing a kitchen, gym or other multi-purpose space, school-recreation centers offered the design advantages of providing facility amenities to two services, meeting the educational needs of the school while also addressing the “correlation of juvenile delinquency and the lack of wholesome recreational outlets” (Williams, 1957). The model proved popular in Baltimore, as both an element of appropriate neighborhood planning and as a means of modernizing both educational and recreational facilities.

However, another aspect of the school-recreation center model introduced in the report also worked to implicitly signal the growing social and racial tensions present in the city, primarily through the acknowledgement of a disparity between existing school and recreation facilities in the ‘outer city’ and suburbs as compared to the ‘inner city,’ composed of the communities of East Baltimore, West Baltimore, and around North Avenue. While facilities in the city’s outer neighborhoods and the suburban areas extending into a growing Baltimore County were generally in good condition and “as a rule” had at least “adequate” recreational space, schools and recreation centers in these inner city neighborhoods were “aging and frequently crowded on small lots” (Williams, 1957). Not coincidentally, these areas of the city

were primarily made up of black neighborhoods, as the decades of a segregated housing policy and school system meant that by 1955, nearly 75% of black housing in the city was located in designated “blight” areas and black schools in many of these communities were “predictably crowded and deteriorating” (Durr, 2003, p. 91). Within the city’s Bureau of Recreation, the legal integration of public parks and recreation in 1954 did not result in an immediate restructuring of the department’s racially-based administration, as de facto racism still remained within management. In 1957, recreation Bureau superintendent Harold Callowhill called for lists of recreation jobs to be separated between ‘whites’ and ‘Negroes’, appealing to a clause in the ordinance passed by the city’s Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that allowed for certain jobs to “reasonably require” persons of a certain race – Callowhill’s reasoning being that black recreation staff could not possibly work in white neighborhoods, or vice versa (“RECREATION RACIAL LISTS HELD ILLEGAL: City's Advisers Cite Court Decision As Bar," 1957). While the appeal was rejected, the legacies of segregation via housing, education and recreation policy meant that by the 1960s, Baltimore’s ‘city of neighborhoods’ referred to both tight-knit and strong communities across the city, as well as entrenched geographic and racial boundaries that worked to impede forms of social integration.

Along with economic patterns and population changes, the civil rights movement and reactions to this movement all shaped the characteristics and future prospects of different neighborhoods during this period. As Durr explains, the ‘backlash’ by many working-class whites towards both the changing racial dynamics of the city and the demands by black citizens for full equality was exhibited through a strategy of

“community preservation” that included the continued support of community organizations and traditions like those taking place at city recreation centers (2003, p. 82). And as working-class whites attempted to ‘preserve’ their communities, many established black neighborhoods were subjected to transportation planning policies that would disrupt or potentially destroy the forms of community that existed. As one example, the most infamous of transportation plans in Baltimore included an expressway that would connect downtown Baltimore with the beltway that ran around the city’s outside edge. The plan was protested against after its original introduction in 1944, yet as Lieb notes, “as Baltimore grew blacker, highway builders grew more cavalier...highway building was less troublesome when there were fewer politically influential people around to object to it” (2011, p. 58). By 1965 plans for the construction of the highway had proceeded, and with the city attempting to relocate those living within the zone of the plan with little beneficence and many city services no longer attending to these communities, neighborhoods such as Rosemont and others along the proposed highway corridor in West Baltimore quickly declined from middle-class black communities to isolated and largely forgotten ‘ghettos’ (Lieb, 2011). The obduracy of segregation also proved evident in the city’s education policies in the wake of *Brown v. Board*, as the city adopted a ‘freedom of choice’ approach to school desegregation that was premised on voluntary integration, as opposed to forced busing as in other cities.

As Baum (2010) argues, while the racial violence related to school desegregation that afflicted Boston and other American cities was largely avoided, the ‘choice’ strategy within the neighborhood-based forms of community in Baltimore ultimately

worked to display the 'limits of liberalism' by further entrenching residential and social segregation across the city. The cumulative effect of these patterns and policies was to leave a unique and enduring mark on the development of different communities within the city, and yet these processes and their impacts were not unique to Baltimore during this era.

Recreation and the 'Inner City'

As evidenced by the publication of studies and texts like Michael Harrington's *The Other America* in 1962, the postwar economic surge had largely been replaced by growing social inequality in many American cities, involving both racial segregation and the 'white flight' of suburbanization. By the early 1960s, the 'inner city' increasingly referred not only to the core of the city but also to the minority and predominately black populations of these areas - and the struggles of joblessness, decaying infrastructure and the stigmatization of the urban underclass were disproportionately endured by these populations (Sugrue, 1996). As Corburn suggests, the 1960s thus signaled the advent of the 'urban crisis' within American politics, policy and planning, as cities were commonly viewed as the locus of social problems linked to economic inequality and racial and ethnic divisions (2009, p. 54). This 'crisis' was responded to across different scales and sites of government, including federal, state and local planning and policy efforts aimed at addressing urban social disparities. By 1964, President Lyndon Johnson had announced his "War on Poverty" policy platform, including a broad set of programs directed specifically towards urban communities and the issues that affected them – similarly, politicians and institutions in cities also focused on social inequalities ranging from education to

health (Biles, 2011) . Recreation spaces, facilities and programs were also included in this policy and research focus on urban America, both in terms of disparities in the amount and condition of facilities and programming between different areas of the city and suburbs, and also in terms of how recreation might serve progressive means of building forms of community and improving the quality of life in urban neighborhoods. Thus in contrast to other city services and in some ways because of this framing of the American city as in a state of crisis, public recreation in Baltimore during this “era of growth” expanded in terms of funding, programming and facilities (Deppe, 1986). These changes in regard to funding sources and to recreation as a political and public priority and concern, especially and particularly as related to cities and urban communities, signal the emergence in this era of a governmentality of ‘urban recreation’ as characterized by the relations between recreation policy and programming and deindustrializing and desegregating cities such as Baltimore. As this analysis suggests, urban recreation as a formation of recreation policy takes into account the myriad shifts within American social life within an era of contested cultural politics, in particular those dynamics centered around the definition and meaning of the American city and what it meant to live in an urban center.

By the early 1960s, public and political support for recreation areas, facilities and programs administered by a city agency was high in Baltimore, as evidenced by the department’s own annual reports and public relations material as well as local media coverage. Unlike the earlier era of small increases in growth, this period saw the department swell in terms of staffing, and facilities were funded and developed at an increasing rate throughout the decade. Further, this support displayed the popularity

of public recreation in terms of a city-operated agency, as opposed to other community and private-based forms of recreation and leisure facilities and programs. When serving as governor of Maryland in 1953, Theodore McKeldin had expressed a concern about ‘civic recreation’ at an event focusing on recreation and sports, arguing against a speaker that had recommended tax-supported programs operated by a municipal body – instead, McKeldin suggested that both the privacy of the family home and the private-based community organizations in many neighborhoods were preferable to a “government invasion” of recreation and leisure programming (Recreation Department To Operate 106 Playgrounds "Recreation Department To Operate 106 Playgrounds For Summer," 1953).

However, when serving as Mayor of Baltimore in 1966, McKeldin’s evaluation of the different forms of recreation available to Baltimore citizens had changed considerably, as he claimed at the opening of the city’s Hilton Recreation Center that “this is one of the best investments the city can make” (Recreation Center Begun "RECREATION CENTER BEGUN: Mayor Breaks Ground For Hilton Facility," 1966). Thus while the purposes, forms and practices of recreation were subject to critique and change, within the 1960s this examination yielded the popularity and support for the provision of community-based and city-operated programs and sites. However, though the rationale of provision would continue to mark the formation of urban recreation, an emphasis on ideas regarding prevention as a rationale for recreation would become especially important throughout this era, especially in regards to youth delinquency and the disintegration of traditional forms of community. In this mode, a city would be expected to provide recreation facilities and

programs for its citizens within different neighborhoods as demonstrated through the neighborhood-based model of urban planning – but the development and implementation of recreation policy would also be viewed as a necessary and vital tool within the effort to ‘revitalize’ urban communities and address the cumulative effects of social and economic inequality within different American cities.

Thus on the one hand, recreation facilities and programs were incorporated within neighborhood planning and as part of efforts to engage and strengthen communities, as evidenced by both capital investments in recreation sites as well as programming initiatives and associations. In regards to the neighborhood model of planning and investment in recreation and leisure infrastructure, the department’s 1965 long-range plan served as both an update from the previous plan of 1943 and a potential vision for the next 20 years of recreation in Baltimore. This report supported the inclusion of the school-recreation center model that was already being implemented in neighborhoods across the city, but also elevated the concern for community-centered recreation planning by recognizing the dynamics of the postindustrial and polarizing city, in which certain segments of the population had increasing incomes and greater mobility while the “economically disadvantaged” were largely concentrated in areas of the inner city (Annual Report, 1965). In order to address these different urban environments the department argued against “traditional recreation planning concepts”, and called for an expansion of existing and new recreation planning based on the “Neighborhood Recreation Center” model – rather than seek to establish a structure or building as the ‘center’ of recreation programming, this planning model emphasized a school facility, neighborhood park, and possible recreation facility as

the essential elements of appropriate recreation space for an urban community, “with a population range of 8,000 to 12,000 persons” (Annual Report, 1965). This model incorporated the elements of neighborhood-based recreation policy and planning, but also packaged the delivery of recreation sites and services with other ‘quality of life’ services, promoting an overall sense of community engagement.

That is, by co-locating educational, recreational and community spaces not only enabled the support of existing communities, but could address and possibly even create forms of community where population change and other dynamics had effected neighborhoods, families and residents. Citing sociological data that suggested that “in large, amorphous cities it is highly desirable that families develop a sense of neighborhood identity...and no neighborhood is better than the focal points to which it orients,” the Neighborhood Recreation Center model thus provided a “year-round cultural-recreation-park center and focal point for the neighborhood” (Annual Report, 1965). The implementation of the recommendations from the 1965 report saw the number of recreation centers, in terms of structures operated and maintained by the department, increase from 40 in 1960 to 78 by 1970 (Jordan, 1993, p. 211). This increase in facilities was further aided by the continued partnerships between BCRP and both Baltimore Public Schools and the Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency (BURHA), as recreation was a key feature of a combined \$80 million in community development funding in early 1960s (Jordan, 1993, p. 79). By 1965 the department administered recreational programming at 12 BURHA sites, as efforts at urban renewal were increasingly linked with recreational policy and programs based on the ideas of neighborhood planning and recreation as an essential social service

and quality of life element (Annual Report, 1965). Capital investment in recreation planning and facilities were thus accompanied by the support of neighborhood-based program initiatives, in order to foster and encourage the neighborhood ‘feeling’ of social cohesion, safety and security. These concerns were evident in the department’s recognition of the growing number of “Neighborhood Councils” that utilized recreation centers for meetings and community programs (Annual Report, 1964). These councils were often aided by neighborhood volunteers, who also increased in numbers throughout the late 1960s – in 1967 the department honored over 700 volunteers from the 60 recreation center locations across the city, whose work equated to 109 full-time recreation leaders (“Recreation Bureau Fetes 700 Volunteers,” 1967). Thus throughout this era, recreation programs and community initiatives made up an essential aspect of the attempts to support and create neighborhood relations.

Further, the efforts to establish and maintain forms of community were increasingly strained in the late 1960s, as Baltimore reflected the antagonistic nature of other cities characterized by social polarization and economic and racial inequality. As Pietila explains, within the context of changes to the geographic boundaries formerly entrenched by segregation and middle-class mobility to areas such as Baltimore County that reflected the pattern of ‘white flight’, throughout the 1960s the idea of ‘urban renewal’ in Baltimore increasingly took on a particularly racialized and classed meaning that indicated an area was, or was about to be, the focus of government planning designed for poor blacks (2010). In this mode, elements of ‘community preservation’ and urban planning often reflected the growing social

tensions and potential for violence across racial and class lines that were connected to popular political and cultural issues of the era. These tensions were evident within city recreation spaces and facilities in the early 1960s, evidenced in part by the issues involving protests and violence against black residents attempting to use the Riverside and Roosevelt city pools in the predominately white neighborhoods of South Baltimore and Hampden (Jordan, 1993, p. 115). By 1967, two sets of events signaled that public recreation in Baltimore was increasingly framed as a public and political priority, as support for recreational services and facilities was included within attempts to both meet the demands of citizens and to address the multiple causes and effects of social inequality in the city.

The first of these events was the publishing and media coverage of a report by the Citizens Planning and Housing Association (CPHA), a Baltimore community group focused on community development and political representation, that largely criticized the department for not providing an efficient level of services within the city's poorer neighborhoods. In response to CPHA's claims that the department should work "on the streets" to engage communities and encourage participation in recreation programs, volunteerism, and relationships with other community groups and city agencies, recreation Bureau superintendent John G. Williams explained that he felt that "everything today is slanted towards the inner city...kids in other sections of the city...don't have that much to do either if there isn't any recreation program for them. They can be just as much of a menace as the inner-city kids" ("Recreation Chief Plans 'Hard Sell': New Training Program And Higher Budget Set By Williams," 1967). The depiction of inner-city neighborhoods and residents, especially

children and youth, as both at risk and already dangerous and in decline, worked to contribute to increasing calls for the provision of neighborhood recreation services, with a primary aim of implementing the popular rationale of prevention. However, in contrast to the preventative rationale of municipal recreation focused primarily on juvenile delinquency as a growing social problem, ‘prevention’ in relation to the governmentality of urban recreation implied both a method of preventing youth delinquency and neighborhood crime, and also a means of community engagement and revitalization that could address the social issues of the postindustrial city. The CPHA report in 1967 was followed up by a *Baltimore Sun* story later that year that highlighted the lack of recreation facilities in the core of Baltimore, stating that the shortage of recreation services both exacerbated existing community issues and created new ones – meanwhile the city’s Community Relations Commission, focused on anti-poverty programs and legislation, had pulled their support of the previous year’s recreation bond referendum after finding that all of the recreation projects scheduled for the bond funding were on “the periphery of the city” (Woodruff, 1967).

The second set of events inextricable from the development of urban recreation within Baltimore happened in other American cities, as the racial based rebellion and violence that had occurred earlier in Los Angeles (1965) and Chicago (1966) flared again in the summer of 1967 in both Detroit and Newark. In response to these “rolling riots”, and while Detroit was still witnessing civil disorder in July 1967, President Johnson announced the forming of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to focus directly on the causes of the unrest and any possible measures that could stop it from happening again or in other cities (Levy, 2011, p. 5). The outcome

of the committee was a report released in February 1968, unofficially referred to as the “Kerner Commission Report” after the committee’s chief, Illinois Governor Otto Kerner. The report was widely distributed and gained both popularity and controversy, as its findings essentially implicated the practices and politics of white America in the deprivation and disillusionment of many African-Americans, especially those living in America’s cities – these ideas were encapsulated in the report’s claim that the nation had failed “to make good the promises of American democracy to all citizens,” and that social trends indicated the prospect of two “separate and unequal” American societies divided along racial lines (Levy, 2011). While this report and similar publications focused on urban America had limited success in directly influencing policymakers, it further supported and enacted the ideas and models of community development and urban renewal that meant increases to the public backing and funding of social services, including recreation facilities and programs.

Taken together, these ideas and models, as well as the policies and programs that sought to implement them, represent the rationale of intervention as a key aspect of urban recreation – ‘intervention’ here signaling both the provision of recreation in order to engage with and support community institutions and improve the quality of life in urban neighborhoods, as well as the preventative view of recreation that held that recreation facilities and services could essentially address and deter youth delinquency, crime and general social incoherence. Recreation as intervention was made evident in the linkages between recreation policy and urban planning throughout this era, and highlights the different scales of intervening policies and

programs between community, city, state, and federal agencies and initiatives. As Corburn states, the “activist city” of the 1960s and into the 1970s was marked by the involvement of organizations at the neighborhood, municipal, state and national levels within efforts to address the problems of American urban centers, ranging from ‘grassroots’ community and political groups to wide-ranging and massively funded government programs (2009, p. 56). The multiscalar nature of urban interventions was especially apparent in Baltimore, where federal programs and funding were often in support of an increasing number of community activists and organizations throughout this era.

The neighborhood-based culture of communities across the city, especially within black neighborhoods that had experienced the dynamics of population change, meant that private citizens and policy makers were linked through a focus on applying interventionist principles and self-organizing techniques that were supported by governmental funding. As McDougall explains, in Baltimore and other Rust Belt cities, community organizations in black communities throughout the 1960s and 1970s often became the focus of urban politics within these communities, even more so given that the appointment of many “first blacks” into public office were “symbolic rather than tangible” social advances that did little to impact the everyday lives of black citizens (McDougall, 1993, p. 3). In this mode, recreation policy and planning was both a community concern and included within other scales and forms of intervention – as an example, in 1967 the department continued to incorporate the increased involvement of community volunteers and civic organizations within recreation programming, was instructed by the Mayor’s Office to keep all city pools

open and free of charge to all residents for the duration of the summer, and received over \$100,000 in federal funding as part of ‘Project Recreation’, which enabled an increase in summer staffing and programming (Jordan, 1993, p. 115).

Thus the deployment of recreation as ‘intervention’ within and through these different institutions, and at different scales of policy formation and implementation, is another primary characteristic of urban recreation as an approach to the governance of public recreation. In Baltimore, the impact of federal policies created as interventions into urban centers and communities was further evinced in the development of the Model Cities initiative, designed in the mid-1960s to target specific communities and areas of declining cities with anti-poverty, educational, health, and community development programs (Haar, 1975). In Baltimore, the ‘Action Area’ of Model Cities and other anti-poverty programs was centered in West Baltimore’s poorest neighborhoods and other surrounding communities – by 1967, 16 of the department’s previous 28 capital projects were located at or near this area, including 5 new school-recreation centers and the addition of lighting and blacktop resurfacing to basketball and multi-use courts, and federal programs like ‘Operation Champ’ served to engage community residents in recreation programming (Woodruff, 1967). These sources of federal funding were especially valuable to the department as a resource for hiring qualified staff, and for implementing programs like the ‘Fun Wagons’, pull-behind trailers that were equipped with a basketball hoop, jump-ropes and other recreation items, and portable pools and sprinklers that could be temporarily installed – this type of “highly mobile, ‘instant recreation’ was favored

by the department as a supplement to recreation facilities, especially in the summer months (Annual Report, 1967).

The prioritization of public recreation would take on even more importance the next year, especially in the wake of the violence and social unrest that gripped Baltimore following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. The fires, looting, arrests and eventual National Guard patrols that marked Holy Week of April 1968 began in East Baltimore, but quickly spread to other areas of the city including the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor in West Baltimore and all along the city's North Avenue. Within several days, nearly all of the black communities in the city except for Cherry Hill were experiencing some kind of unrest, and violence threatened in other sections of the city as well – the city police and National Guard were both necessary to turn away mobs of white citizens that gathered in Patterson Park and near other white neighborhoods and attempted to cross into black communities to incite further violence (Levy, 2011, p. 9). Along with revealing and exacerbating the racial and social tensions that permeated the city, the disturbances of April 1968 also further entrenched the demand for recreation policies and programs that supported community development and, more importantly, addressed the prevention of further unrest and reduced the possible negative influences on the city's youth. In June 1968 the Western Community Improvement Association, representing several communities along the proposed expressway through West Baltimore, petitioned Mayor D'Alesandro III (son of the earlier mayor) for a neighborhood recreation facility, invoking the prospect of a difficult summer by stating that “all intelligent Americans

would rather not have ‘long, hot summers’” like those of Newark and Detroit the previous year (Keidel, 1968).

That same month, a delegation of recreation leaders from 25 other U.S. cities arrived in Baltimore for a two-day tour focusing on ‘street recreation’, including a newly constructed playground, a sprinkler attachment for a fire hydrant, and the portable pool located in DeWees Park – the tour had been sponsored by the President’s Council on Fitness and the national Operation Champ program to display Baltimore’s “model-type and very progressive” recreation programs, though several of the delegates questioned the strategy of temporary rather than permanent facilities (Keidel, 1968). The department responded by locating additional temporary programs and staffing in neighborhoods without permanent recreation facilities, and increasing efforts to engage residents of these neighborhoods. These efforts complemented and built on the existing Street Club Worker program, designed to hire young adult staff that would work specifically with recreation programming and activities that would target ‘hard-to-reach’ teen youth (Annual Report, 1968). That year’s annual report recognized the all-time high in staffing, as 367 full-time staff and over 200 part-time staff aided in the operation and maintenance of 77 recreation centers in or attached to school buildings and 84 year-round recreation centers, with a Bureau budget also at an all-time high of \$3.8 million (Annual Report, 1968). The department and Mayor’s Office also worked that year towards securing funding from the sale of the city’s airport to the State of Maryland for the purchase of 50 additional portable pools, as well as five smaller but permanent ‘Walk-To’ pools to better accommodate the demand for neighborhood-based swimming facilities, while 22 recreation centers

within the ‘Action Area’ were kept open on weekends with funding from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and federal funding enabled the expansion of Camp Concern, a program aimed at providing outdoors and camping experiences for urban youth, and Camp Variety, a similar program designed for youth with disabilities (Jordan, 1993, p. 195).

While capital investment was still increasing in some of these neighborhoods, especially in the Model Cities Action Area of West Baltimore and other inner-city communities, the application of supplemental ‘street recreation’ programs and the extralocal federal funding sources that enabled these programs evince the influence of the ‘interventionist’ rationale for recreation in this era. Interventions such as the temporary facilities and mobile programming of street recreation and other programs designed for engaging with and maintaining order in urban neighborhoods, especially when in conjunction with increased support and funding from different scales of governmental sources, serve as a defining characteristic of urban recreation as a particular governmentality of recreational governance within this period. The inclusion and prioritization of recreation sites and services within federal and local initiatives aimed at urban communities thus also signals the height of a particular formation of urban governance in the same era, as these policies reflected the linked ideas of Keynesian economics and the political and philosophical tenets of ‘egalitarian liberalism’. That is, the support and funding of public recreation programs was in line with both the Keynesian principles of state intervention into the market, as well as the egalitarian liberal principles of protected individual autonomy, including enabling the basic economic conditions for personal rights – in this mode,

support for public recreation projects and programs was therefore a “justifiable intervention” for policymakers of this era at different levels of government, especially in reference to America’s ‘urban crisis’ (Hackworth, 2006, p. 7). In Baltimore, the peak of influence for this formation of urban governance and the accompanying implementation of urban recreation would be evident throughout the period from 1965-1975, as an influx of funding and corresponding increase in both facilities and programs would see city recreation departments in Baltimore and other American cities expand the reach and scope of public recreation services.

The ‘Golden Age’ of Urban Recreation

By 1970, Baltimore’s recreation agency boasted 93 full-time recreation centers including school-recreation centers and several sites operated by BURHA, as well as 48 portable pools to supplement existing permanent aquatic facilities, and five mobile Fun Wagons and two Nature Wagons for engaging neighborhoods without recreation centers - federal funding also helped to increase the number of staff involved with recreation services, as 900 federally-subsidized summer youth workers supplemented the existing staff (Annual Report, 1970). Further, funding from the state of Maryland was seen in a grant that supported the School-Community Centers Program, allowing several school recreation facilities to be kept open beyond the school day, and all city pools remained free for the entire summer, per the Mayor’s directive (Jordan, 1993, p. 153). The same year saw a growing corporate and philanthropic interest and involvement in city recreation programs, as a group of local companies including SunPapers, Coca-Cola Bottling, and WMAR-TV combined to donate \$22,000 for the BCRP-operated Neighborhood Basketball League, made up of 176 teams across 45

leagues and hosted at 20 different recreation sites (Jordan, 1993, p. 153). This combination of federal, state, and private funding and local political backing for enhanced recreational services was accompanied by public support through passed bond measures, which ensured that capital investment in new and renovated facilities would increase alongside expanded recreation programming. A department report in April 1971 showed that since 1966, 16 recreation centers, three fieldhouses, and 23 playgrounds had been built; another 38 playgrounds had been redeveloped; and six recreation centers were under current construction with acquired funding (Jordan, 1993, p. 156). In line with the tenets of egalitarian liberalism and the interventionist rationale of urban recreation, these facilities and many recreation programs were especially designed for and implemented within communities of lower socioeconomic status. As recreation Director Douglas Tawney explained, "in those areas of the city that are less affluent, where people can't afford to buy recreation, we must try a little harder" ("Bureau Of Recreation: Nature Wagon To Visit 59 Centers And Playgrounds," 1971).

Through 1972, sustained sources of federal and state funding enabled the expansion of Camp Variety, the purchase of three additional portable pools, bus transportation to various sites and events for youth involved with BCRP programs, and provided approximately 7,000 free lunches each day at recreation centers through the federal Summer Lunch Program (Jordan, 1993, p. 156). However, the continued investment in recreation facilities via public bond measures was increasingly a point of debate in Baltimore and other cities, as emerging groups and individuals began to call for curbed public spending on recreation and other social services. In both 1971

and 1972, the Baltimore-based City Commission on Governmental Efficiency and Economy (known locally as the E & E Commission) would call on city voters to reject proposed recreation bonds designated for the construction of new or renovated recreation centers – the primary criticism of these bond measures from the Commission was that while capital funding would allow for the construction of new and renovated centers, the department was lacking in plans to ensure that the multitude of centers would receive adequate programming and operations costs (Price, 1971).

Yet the influence and popularity of the interventionist rationale underlying urban recreation during this era was evident in the public response, as both bond measures passed. A Sun editorial in 1972 appealing to city voters to support the bond measures reflected these ideas of recreation as an integral part of daily life in urban communities and as a crucial aspect of efforts towards urban renewal. Citing that the new recreation centers would be part of a city master plan and would result in approximately \$5 million in federal urban renewal funding based on the location of proposed centers in areas targeted for renewal projects, the editorial stated that while “the stock argument for organized recreation is ‘to keep kids off of the streets’ ...the values run deeper than this, starting with teaching small children to play constructively, follow the rules and develop leadership skills and extending through the adult leisure-time hobbies into the preoccupations and sociability of the senior-citizen groups” (“City Loans for Recreation and Pools,” 1972). This view of public recreation as an essential social service for urban centers meant that by the early 1970s, Baltimore’s network of recreational facilities and programming evinced the

urban recreation approach to and formation of recreational governance. Thus after being chosen as the host city and host recreation agency for the US Youth Games in 1974, the BCRP's annual report for that year celebrated what can now be recognized as the 'golden age' for urban public recreation, as the city maintained an extensive and growing number of recreation and aquatic sites and federally and state-subsidized programming efforts (Annual Report, 1972). The combination of interventionist policies and programs at the federal, state and local levels, in conjunction with political and public support for capital investment, had resulted in over 100 recreation centers throughout the city, each supplemented by increased staffing and temporary and mobile 'street recreation' programs. As Jordan explains, the increase in recreation centers across the city meant that by the mid-1970s, there were centers located within blocks of each other in some cases, most often within the 'action areas' of urban renewal initiatives (1993, p. 170).

However, this era was also marked by larger shifts in the politics and modes of governance of American cities, and these shifts were to have particular and important effects on the formation and implementation of urban recreation policy and within the operation of city recreation departments – indeed, this project argues that these changes entailed a questioning of the mission and role of recreation in urban America at a fundamental level, including the purpose of recreation as a publicly-operated service and the attendant sources and levels of funding that enabled urban recreation to exist and operate. In Deppe's (1986) terms, the mid- and late 1970s marked a "great switch" for public recreation, especially in American cities, as part of the larger transformation of American politics and policies away from the New Deal

model of Keynesian economic intervention and investment by the state (often accompanied by at least some aspects of egalitarian liberal policies that were intended to alleviate social stratification), and the first steps towards the ‘New Federalism’ approach of governance that meant to curb state intervention and expenditure on public services and projects (p. 62).

The seeds of the shift to New Federalism are often recognized in the transition between the Johnson and Nixon presidential administrations, as Nixon sought to establish his own position and policies in relation to the concerns of and within American cities. As Corburn notes, in effect Nixon’s position resulted in a shift from a concentration of federal policies that prioritized urban issues as possible sites for interventionist programs (including recreation) to a position of “benign neglect” on many of these same issues, as the Nixon administration sought to declare America’s ‘urban question’ as over and done with, even if many social and economic issues persisted (2009, p. 57). Among the many forms that this position took in regards to changes to policy that had immediate and lasting effects on American cities, the restructuring of federal fiduciary support from a grant-funding system to revenue-sharing had particular impacts on the administration and implementation of public recreation in many urban areas, including Baltimore.

In short, the switch to revenue-sharing meant that taxes could be collected and distributed at the federal level to states and cities for local policies and projects, rather than the application-and-award grant process that was used to implement many of the interventionist initiatives that characterized urban recreation, such as the Model Cities program or summer youth employment programs (Conlan, 1998). As the

department's 1974 annual report explained, the transition to revenue-sharing would mean that the department would continue to receive a federal subsidy, but this funding would be distributed through the city budget process, rather than through specific projects (Annual Report, 1974). This meant that recreation programming, already heavily dependent on federal funding sources, was now reliant instead on revenue-sharing levels that were not necessarily consistent from year to year.

Within the context of the national economic recession of the mid-1970s, the effects of this change on Baltimore's public recreation programs were made evident in the spring of 1975, as the department faced a potential loss of funding that would force cuts to aquatics programs, the elimination of Camp Concern, and the layoff of the entire staff employed at summer playgrounds – though the federal funding was eventually secured, the ordeal pointed to the department's dependency on federal support (Jordan, 1993, p. 192). The department's program and facility guide for 1976 espouses the agency's directive to provide recreational opportunities as a "social service," including providing activities at recreation centers that were free of charge ("Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide 1976-77," 1976). However, as many of the federal programs within the interventionist mode were reduced or removed altogether – for example, the Model Cities program was disbanded in 1974, as related federal urban policies were also being restructured – the combination of a loss of grant funding sources and unreliable revenue-sharing funds meant that public recreation in cities such as Baltimore were facing growing fiscal and operational challenges. By 1977, the combined loss of over \$2 million in grant funding and other support from federal sources resulted in the elimination of both the Camp Concern

and Camp Variety outdoor recreation programs, the phasing out of the Street Club Worker program, the closing of all city pools a week early that summer, the closing of all city ice rinks for the duration of the year, the loss of many part-time positions for recreation center personnel, and the closing of recreation centers on weekends (Jordan, 1993, p. 196). The department's operations and programming displayed the effects of the changes to federal funding, as the percentage of the operations budget comprised by federal aid declined from 22% in 1975 to 18% in 1980 (Annual Report, 1991).

Yet while the funding of operations and programs was almost immediately impacted by the restructuring of federal revenue-sharing and reduction of grant programs, capital investment in recreation facilities continued throughout the late 1970s. As one example, while facing the operational cuts to different programs in 1976, the department also saw the approval of another public bond measure for the use of state Open Space funds towards six new recreation centers – thus as Jordan explains, the building of new facilities would continue even without the adequate operating funds and funding sources for existing facilities and services (1993, p. 201). In fact, while revenue-sharing and cuts to urban programs would curtail federal support for recreational programs during this period, the forms of federal and state funding would actually increase, if only temporarily. From 1973 to 1977, these forms of extralocal funding would comprise 58.7% (10.7% federal, 48% state) of the total capital budget, while between 1978 and 1982, federal and state funding would make up nearly approximately 84% of the department's capital budget (31% federal, 53% state), with the state's Open Space program the leading source of capital funding.

These figures suggest that while the turn to New Federalism and away from urban-centered federal and state policies would result in the gradual decline of financial assistance for recreation programming and staffing, the concurrent continued support for capital investment would compound the agency's primary problem of a wealth of recreational facilities, a lack of qualified staffing and programming, and increasing operational and maintenance costs. In effect, throughout the mid- and late 1970s the department was attempting to both respond to the decrease in public and political support for the interventionist rationale behind many recreation programs, as well as the removal of many of the federal funding sources for these programs, while also carrying on with a prior strategy of capital investment that sought to establish recreation facilities in as many different neighborhoods across the city as possible. This combination of a growing number of recreation sites, and the accompanying increase in programming and operational costs attached to these sites, together with a shrinking pool of possible funding sources and limited departmental budgets, meant that the department increasingly faced constant challenges in terms of maintaining recreational services throughout the city.

By the late 1970s, the interventionist formation of urban recreation was irreversibly in decline, as the modes of urban governance that had been based in support from federal urban renewal programs were faced with a lack of support as these programs were restructured. Thus in this analysis, urban recreation as a governmentality of public recreation can be characterized by several key aspects, including the initial incorporation and development of the 'interventionist' policy and planning rationale, in which neighborhood planning and efforts at social and

economic renewal in urban communities were considered inextricable from the provision of recreational opportunities and services. Urban recreation is also characterized by the inter-related shift in primary funding sources, from municipal ventures such as public bond measures to a growing adoption and eventual reliance on federal and state funding intended explicitly for projects targeting urban communities. This analysis of Baltimore's public recreation system thus points to the linkages between public recreation in American cities and changes in the forms and practices of American urban governance across this period, as the New Deal social welfare model of egalitarian liberal social policy and Keynesian economic intervention was slowly eroding and giving way to an emergent New Federalism that deprioritized and disengaged from urban issues.

As such, the governmentality of urban recreation, as both a historical phase and as a particular formation of public recreation policy and planning, evinces a transition of the primary rationale(s) for recreation at different scales of governance: from the 'provision' and 'prevention' rationales of the municipal recreation governmentality, to the 'intervention' of urban renewal programs and policies, and then eventually to a stance of 'benign neglect' that would result in recreation being rapidly transformed from a priority to a near-constant problem that would be addressed repeatedly by future city leaders and organizations. As Biles (2011) explains, the processes of federal and state 'disinvestment' in urban centers meant that by the late 1970s and into the 1980s, many American cities and their citizens were essentially left to "fend for themselves" in comparison to the peak of social services funding and programming, especially in regards to federal programs and policies (202).

In particular, urban recreation evinces changes to these rationales that resulted in Baltimore's recreation system being (re)constructed with unprecedented financial and political support, but also left this same system in a state of nearly permanent struggle in regards to operations, staffing and maintenance once this support had waned – in short, the formation of urban recreation signals the 'high-water mark' and subsequent gradual decline of public recreation as an essential social service for citizens of Baltimore and other American cities. These transitions therefore had specific relations to, and impacts on, the forms and experiences of active citizenship within this era.

Baltimore City Recreation Centers 1960-1969

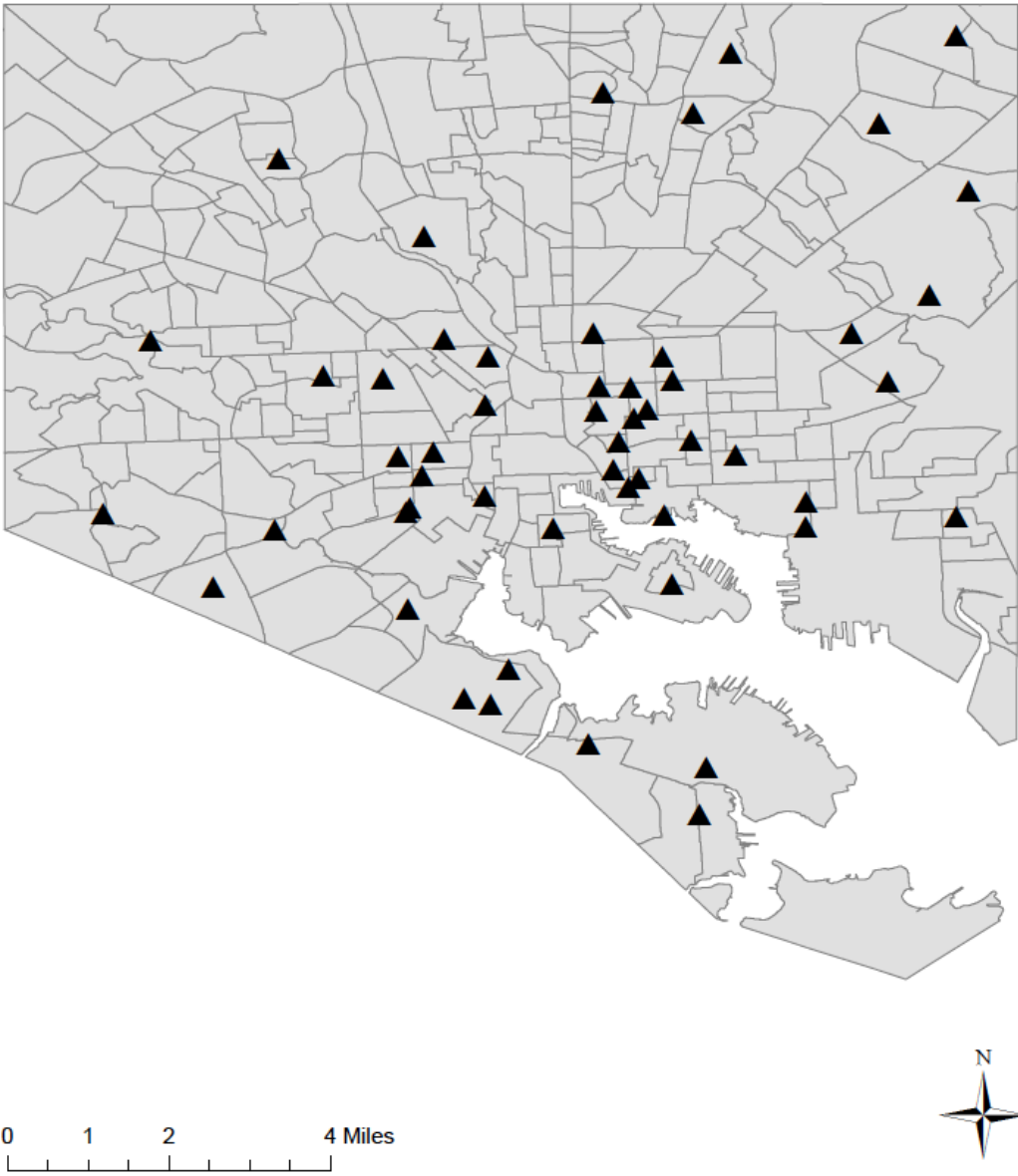


Figure 1.3

Baltimore City Recreation Centers 1970-1979

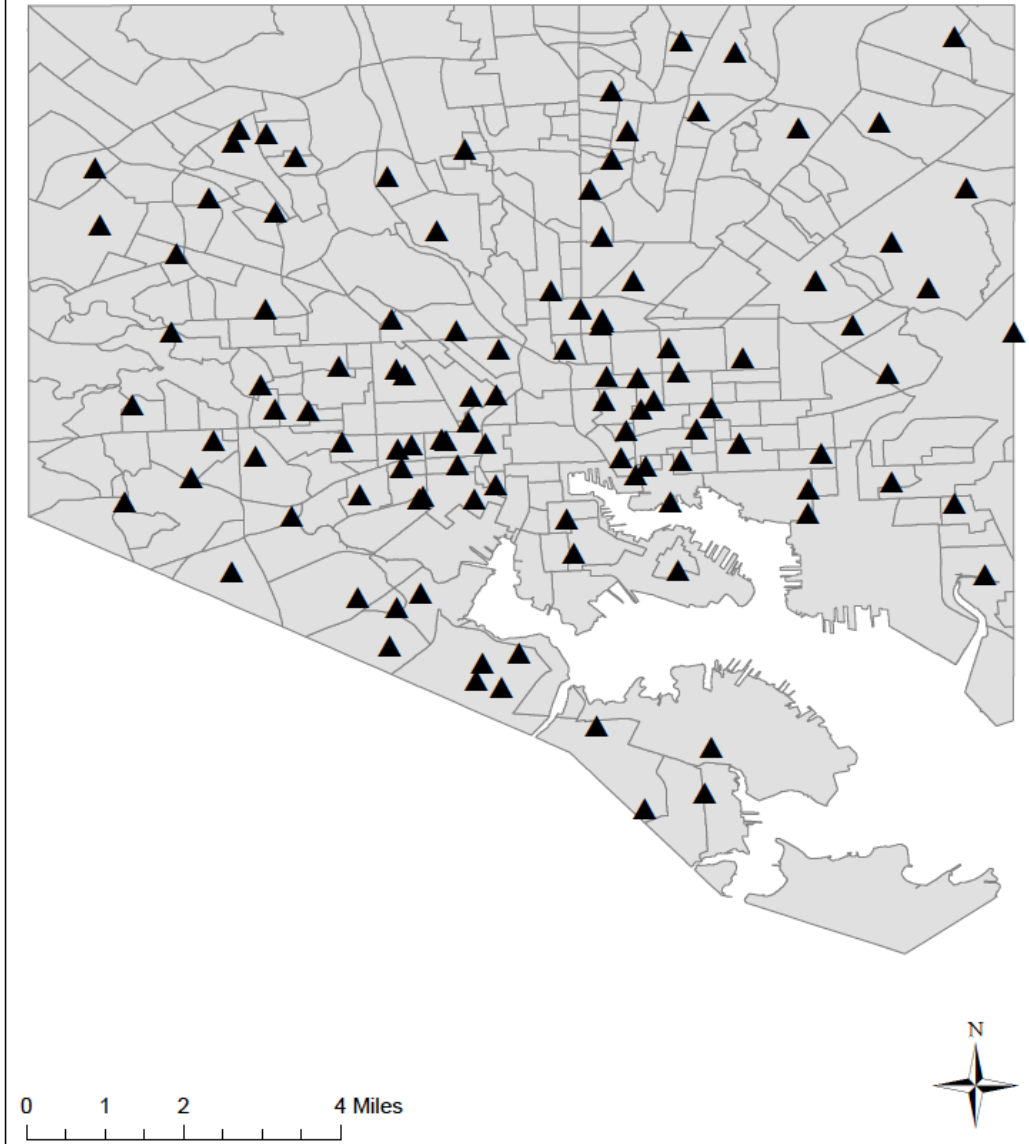


Figure 1.4

1980s-2000s – ‘Public-Private Recreation’

“Increasing attention must be given to the possible role that private enterprises might play in ameliorating some of the most pressing urban problems. Programs could be developed if corporations were approached with the idea that providing the necessary funds to underwrite them could have a tremendous influence in urban areas...a number of urban problem conditions might potentially be attacked at their core if business were sold on the idea of supplementing governmental efforts, thereby relieving some of the financial burden from the city.”
The Crisis in Urban Recreational Services (Shivers & Halper, 1981).

In March 1978, the Baltimore Sun reported that public recreation in Baltimore was facing a crisis, in particular due to the request by Mayor Donald Schaefer to cut nearly \$1 million from the Department of Recreation and Parks budget for the next year - in response, department Director Douglas Tawney explained that the department was beginning to look into possible partnerships with private operators in order to offer fee-based programs at city parks (Watson, 1978b). While other city agencies were also asked to make budget cuts, the specific changes to the delivery and provision of recreation programs indicated that the era of increased funding, staffing and programming was nearing an end, if not completely over. The budget decrease for the Bureau of Recreation meant that in 1979, 24 summer playgrounds were not put into operation, all city pools and ice rinks would close a week early, all aquatics programs and basketball leagues held at school facilities were cancelled, and all weekend and after-hours programming were eliminated – along with the decreased budget, layoffs within the department saw staffing levels reach their lowest totals since before the influx of federal programs and funding (Jordan, 1993, p. 225). The decrease in the size and scope of recreational services was not unique to Baltimore but evident in other American cities through the late 1970s and into the 1980s, as

public recreation in urban centers was again transformed by inter-related local circumstances and broader political and economic shifts.

The deprioritization of recreation as an essential social service for urban citizens was evident as cities faced with growing fiscal challenges often targeted recreation funding as one way to balance municipal budgets, especially in comparison to making cuts to emergency response, educational or social welfare services, though many of these agencies were also impacted. Decreasing budget levels, combined with growing political and public demand for a reduction in social services spending, meant that the purpose and mission of urban recreation as a critical aspect of urban living was put into question. As Deppe (1986) explains, in many American cities by 1980 “[urban] recreation as an end to itself was totally unsalable” in regards to local, state, and federal government policies (p. 34). In part, this was due to the severe changes in demographics for many deindustrializing cities like Baltimore, as urban populations were increasingly characterized by economic and social disparities. The impacts of suburbanization, especially in regards to social stratification along racial and classed lines, reshaped Baltimore as a post-industrial city that was losing both economic opportunities and parts of its population at the same time that federal and state governments disassembled social service policies and programs (Durr, 2003; Levine, 2000). This meant that as many American urban centers were increasingly characterized by “a deteriorated economy, an inability to provide needed services, political indifference from state and federal authorities, and a forecast of increasing concentration of local poverty,” recreation programs and funding were increasingly

less a priority and more a persistent thorn in the side of municipal governments who faced other issues (Shivers, 1981, p. 44).

As BCRP entered the 1980s, the “era of budget-tightening had begun,” leading to both decreased programs and services as well as cuts to part-time staff and the elimination of several full-time positions (Jordan, 1993, p. 256). Thus throughout the early years of the decade the department’s working slogan of “Do More with Less” served as a reflection of the changes to recreation governance, in relation to both reduced federal and state assistance and declining municipal budgets (“Recreation Centers open,” 1982). In 1981, 44 full-time positions were eliminated and nearly 400 part-time staff were laid off, with many of these positions in the Bureau of Recreation – this included the elimination of the entry-level ‘Recreation Aide’ position and numerous position vacancies that were not allowed to be filled, with the shortages in staff resulting in a partial or complete closing of 15 of the city’s approximately 120 full-time recreation centers (Davis, 1981). At the same time, the construction of the Fort View recreation center in southeast Baltimore marked one of the last instances of large amounts of federal and state capital funding (Davis, 1981). As with dozens of the other recreation centers built throughout the previous decade, the Fort View center was funded in part by the state of Maryland’s ‘Program Open Space’ initially created in 1969 to convert motor vehicle tax revenues to parks and recreation funding – however, by the early 1980s this program, along with other tax-based spending programs, was facing mounting political criticism as a form of public spending. Yet as Mayor Schaefer explained when defending the program at a state session in 1981, the importance of the program as a funding source was even more pronounced in

Baltimore City, in part because unlike all other Maryland counties that were required to use at least half of the annual Open Space funding amount for land acquisition, Baltimore City was allowed to use all of its funding on development and capital projects, especially in regards to parks and recreation facilities and maintenance (Corddry, 1981). While Program Open Space would be allowed to continue, it would remain a contested political issue and the department would continue to face mounting problems in relation to operational, maintenance and staffing costs and a lack of funding sources.

As Jordan explains, the relative dearth in grant funding that once supplemented and supported the Bureau's programming and staffing budget – after nearly a decade of annual grant monies totaling in the millions, the grant allocation for 1982 was \$444,000 – meant that the department increasingly sought out strategies for generating revenue and alternative funding sources (Jordan, 1993, p. 260). The emergent focus on any and all funding sources that would avoid further cuts to staffing and programming was made evident in the department's nearly three-year attempt at placing arcade video games in several of the city's recreation centers, beginning in the summer of 1981. The video games were originally premised on the idea that they could encourage youth to patronize the centers, and to a lesser extent also serve as an alternate source of some funding that might go back to recreation projects and services – however, the department faced public backlash when the video game proposal was submitted at the same time that Mayor Schaefer had called for closing two of the city's ice rinks due to budget shortfalls, including the

temporary facility that was constructed annually in the west parking lot of Memorial Stadium (Davis, 1981).

Growing pressure from City Council members resulted in the department reversing course on both issues that fall by keeping the ice rinks open and halting the video game proposal, but the idea of video games in recreation centers would surface again the next year, as the Mayor again requested that the recreation advisory board discuss the proposal and how it might be implemented, suggesting a ‘trial run’ for the games at four recreation centers around the city (Banisky, 1982). Again, the incorporation of video games into recreation services was proposed as both a means of encouraging participation at the centers, and also as a supplementary source of funding that could mollify the department’s ongoing budgetary crisis. The Parks Board chairman, Louis Grasmick, argued that it would be a mistake if recreation centers didn’t provide the video games as opportunities for youth to spend money, stating “if we don’t get their quarter, someone down the street is going to get it” (Banisky, 1982). By November of 1982 the video game proposal was being implemented in four recreation centers on a trial basis, with Gramsick citing national data that indicated the average youth spent nearly \$5 a week on video games, and that crime and vandalism had decreased around recreation centers in other cities where video games had already been introduced (Davis, 1982). By December, the video games were “passing [the] test by luring patrons” according to the Baltimore Sun, who reported that at the Morrell Park Recreation Center in southwest Baltimore, nearly 20 to 30 were playing the center’s “Ms. Pac-Man” and “Dig & Dug” video games and spending from \$4-\$8 a day – the center’s director explained that the games

had meant in increase in attendance, and that staff had limited the hours for different age groups to use the games, and would not make change for more than \$2 to “discourage repetitive play” (Prewitt, 1982). However, the initial income and increase in attendance to the recreation centers from the video games did not last, and by 1983 the proposal was once again eliminated and the games were removed from their trial locations (Jordan, 1993, p. 280).

That the meaning of public recreation in Baltimore could transform so markedly from the previous era - from a public and political priority focused on community recreational opportunities, to a fiscal quandary potentially solved by video games - evidences a broader shift that was not unique to recreation as a social service, nor to Baltimore as an American city in the early 1980s. The election of Ronald Reagan in 1979 symbolized an emergent and specific interpretation of the philosophy and policies of “New Federalism,” as the Reagan administration supported and implemented a platform of tax cuts, decreases in public spending towards domestic ‘social welfare’ programs, and increases to defense and military spending (Navarro, 1995). As Navarro explains, the Reagan era signaled the advent of a libertarian social policy that espoused and practiced a decrease in taxes and public spending towards domestic programs, completing the transition away from the social welfare model of the Great Society era and programs like Model Cities, and also a concurrent exponential increase in defense funding – thus between 1982 and 1985, federal military spending increased by approximately \$90 billion, while social expenditures were cut by nearly \$75 billion (1995, p. 32)

For many American cities, and especially formerly industrial centers such as Baltimore, the 1980s were characterized by forms and practices of urban governance that were a marked shift from the previous era of social services and interventionist programs, including and especially in regards to public recreation agencies and programs. As the Baltimore Sun noted in February 1983, the ‘fitness boom’ that was emergent in 1980s American popular culture was leading to increased private opportunities at gyms and through home equipment, while simultaneously “the Reagan administration’s budget-cutters have made less money available for state and municipal recreation programs...[these] reductions have occurred at every level”(Kirshenbaum & Sullivan, 1983). Thus this analysis demonstrates that this era evinced critical shifts in the governance and provision of physical activity and recreational opportunities in American society and culture, in particular the restructuring of publicly funded and administered recreational services and concurrent expansion of private alternatives. In this analysis, the deprioritization of public recreation as an urban social service and as an integral aspect of urban social life was marked by the overall shift away from social services spending and programs, resulting in different approaches and models for the provision of urban recreation facilities and programming.

In particular, and along with the decline in funding towards public provision of services including recreation, policies at the federal, state, and local levels were often restructured to support and incorporate the private sector as a means of stimulating and maintaining re-development projects within the urban core and central business district of many cities (Corburn, 2009, p. 55). As Harvey (1989b) has

explained, Baltimore serves as a primary example of this shift in urban governance and the organization and operation of American cities away from a model of public provision of facilities and services, in and through state funding and policies, and towards a model of privatization and ‘partnerships’ that seek to coordinate public and private interests – evidenced in particular by the development of the city’s Inner Harbor tourist area and downtown financial sector in the late 1970s and 1980s (Harvey, 2001b). These projects serve as physical manifestations of the broader social and political shifts of the period, as they became the focal point of regeneration and development efforts within the city at the same time that the city’s annual budgets were annually in crisis and social services were reduced in size and scope.

Following Harvey (1989b), this transition in forms of urban governance and subsequent transformation of American cities is encapsulated in the shift from urban ‘managerialism’ in the 1960s and 1970s to ‘entrepreneurialism’ in the 1980s – whereas managerialism entailed the “local provision of services, facilities and benefits to urban populations,” entrepreneurialism instead prioritizes ‘growth’ through direct municipal involvement in economic development and investment, often ahead of social services spending (2001, p. 4). As one example in regards to public recreation in Baltimore, the impacts of this shift were immediately evident in that federal funding and programs that accorded resources to the department that could then be ‘managed’ were in short supply or simply no longer available, as the city confronted the loss of nearly \$26 million in federal revenue sharing funds when this program was eliminated by the Reagan administration (Jordan, 1993, p. 208).

Thus Baltimore and other cities instead increasingly turned to the private sector as a resource and necessary ‘partner’ within investment and development projects.

According to Harvey (1989b), two aspects of the arrangement primarily characterize this model of the “public-private partnership,” as the integration and convergence of local business interests and governmental powers. First, that the partnership is ‘entrepreneurial’ in that there is an element of risk involved, and that this risk usually assumed more by the public entity, rather than the private ‘partner’; and second, that partnership projects and programs are often focused on the scale and political economy of a particular place, rather than a larger territory (Harvey, 1989b, p. 8). As Harvey explains, urban entrepreneurialism’s introduction within Baltimore’s structures of governance might be recognized in the passing of the 1978 referendum that sanctioned the use of city land for private development of the Inner Harbor project, wherein the municipality essentially ‘risked’ the land with the hopes of utilizing private development towards revitalizing a specific area of the city’s waterfront. The process of securing the land and development rights for the Inner Harbor was orchestrated in particular with the help of the City Trustees, a two-person quasi-public group that worked with the Mayor in managing over \$150 million in allocating public development funding (M. Levine, 1987, p. 92). As Harvey states, in the wake of the Inner Harbor as a ‘quasi-privatized’ municipal project in Baltimore, “the policy of public-private partnership had a popular mandate as well as an effective subterranean presence in almost everything that urban governance was about” (1989b, p. 7). This mandate and presence was also evident in the governance of recreation, and in particular the distribution and provision of recreational facilities

and programming opportunities – thus within this period the popularity and influence of privatization and the public-private partnership as a model and technique of urban governance would shape ‘public-private recreation’ as an emergent formation and governmentality of public recreation in Baltimore.

As a mode of public recreation policy, administration and services that contrasts sharply with the preceding formations of municipal and urban recreation, public-private recreation is characterized by the dismantling of federal and state programs and funding resources, often through the increasing incorporation of the partnership model and processes of privatization into a growing number of recreation projects and services. These efforts were often premised on two interrelated rationales, in that the department could essentially supplement their own limited and declining services with partnerships that included utilizing non-profit and other private programs and facilities, and that the department could also potentially build and operate revenue-generating facilities that could provide alternate revenue streams to support the department’s expenditures. In fact, the responsibility of operating revenue-generating facilities had previously been evident in the department’s managing of the city’s Memorial Stadium for much of the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the operations of the World War II submarine USS Torsk docked in the Inner Harbor in the late 1970s, though revenue for these operations was always structured to return to the city’s general fund, rather than return to the recreation and parks departmental budget (Bustad, 2012). However, as the department was marked throughout the late 1970s and 1980s by a loss of previous funding and resources, this era also evinced the process of privatization and the partnership model as increasingly

important aspects of recreation governance, in stark contrast to the previous modes of public recreation.

In particular, the impact of ‘entrepreneurial’ privatization and the partnership model in regards to recreation in the 1980s was evident through two distinct strategies that were enacted by the department in order to counter the changed environment of public recreation, related to programming and operations as well as capital development. On the one hand, the department would work to identify and support potential partnership opportunities, especially for revenue-generating facilities and recreational ‘special facilities’ that were considered distinct from the system of recreation centers, pools and athletic fields where most recreation programming took place. The Baltimore Zoo serves as one example, as it was effectively handed over from the Recreation and Parks department to the non-profit Baltimore Zoological Society, Inc (now the Maryland Zoo and Maryland Zoological Society) in 1985 on a lease and operating agreement with the city (Jordan, 1993, p. 290). However, several other recreation and park facilities were also incorporated into the privatization process and partnership model in this era, most notably the city’s five public golf courses. In part at the behest of BCRP Director Chris Delaporte, who took over the head position in 1984 with the aim of restructuring the “antiquated recreation system” in Baltimore, the department helped to create and establish the Baltimore Municipal Golf Corporation in 1985, and worked to transfer operating responsibility of the golf courses to this organization (Jordan, 1993, p. 291). Delaporte then worked to secure both equipment and a \$500,000 ‘loan’ to the Golf Corporation that would be paid back to the city as revenue was generated – this essentially removed the golf courses,

as well as maintenance, operations, staffing, and programming costs from the recreation and parks budget (Bustad, 2012).

The partnership model was also incorporated in the process of helping to establish and maintain the Parks & People Foundation non-profit organization as the major parks conservancy group in the city, one of several examples of partnerships that continue to operate in regards to recreation and park facilities across the city. While the original purpose of Parks & People was focused on supporting and advocating for parks as well as recreation, as the organization grew in size and in terms of connections to both other city non-profits as well as ‘open space’ and ‘green space’ funding sources, the group became much more focused on parks and open spaces in the city as opposed to recreation facilities and pools – though the organization still receives public funding through BCRP as well (Bustad, 2012). These examples of public recreation ‘partnerships’ evince the devolution of the scope and scale of Baltimore’s public recreation system within the processes of privatization throughout the 1980s, as the department’s overall services were restructured by utilizing the model of partnerships with private and City-supported non-profits. Further, the zoo and golf course partnerships in particular also point to both a key advantage and some of the limits of private or non-profit privatization, in that this model was selectively deployed towards only those revenue-producing facilities that could sustain the partnership.

In other words, while this model potentially yielded some benefits in terms of increased efficiency and operations, it was largely only available to those ‘special facilities’ that were considered worthy economic investments by the various partners

involved, and not to community facilities such as recreation centers and pools. Many of these centers and aquatic facilities had been built with, operated and maintained over the previous 30 years by a combination of public support through municipal bond measures and federal funding and programs, but the social and economic realities of the 1980s meant that municipal budgets were shrinking, federal funding was largely eliminated or disappearing, and partnerships focused on non-‘special’ recreation facilities were lacking. In particular, the ‘Shake and Bake Family Fun Center’, opened in Baltimore’s Upton neighborhood by former professional football player and Baltimore Colt Glenn Doughty in 1982, serves as one example of the limited prospects of the private partnership model for recreation centers within this period. In part due to the support of Mayor Schaefer, the Fun Center had been constructed with a \$4 million loan through the Board of Estimates and the City Trustees, in order to offer bowling, skating and other recreational activities (Constable, 1981).

However, by August of 1984 the Center was nearly \$500,000 behind in loan payments, and the city was considering taking the facility over against protests by both Doughty and Center management, who argued that fees at the Center were kept low in order to promote community involvement and thus didn’t generate the maximum revenue, as well as community organizations and churches who hoped the Center would remain open as part of a larger private development initiative in the area (Davis, 1984b). The issue of the Center’s fate quickly became a topic of public and political debate, in particular over the ‘risks’ taken by both Doughty as a black entrepreneur investing in black neighborhoods, and by the City in directly financing

the Center's construction, as part of a limited focus and investment on communities in West Baltimore (Davis, 1984b). However, by late January of 1986 the Center's success and potential as part of any larger economic redevelopment was put into doubt by two events on Friday, January 25: first, when an extension period granted to Doughty to raise the amount of the missed payments passed with no further resolution, the City Trustees ordered the department to physically takeover the facility and secure all keys to the facility (Bustad, 2012). The department was also tasked with managing the Center as a bowling and skating 'special facility', as city financial officials created the Baltimore Neighborhood Recreational Facilities, Inc. as a "quasi-public non-profit corporation" comprised of a three-person staff that would oversee the turnover of the Center to a publicly-owned and 'quasi-publicly' operated facility (Danisky, 1985). The situation was made even more complex that night, when an employee of the Playworld arcade located inside Shake and Bake was arrested inside the Center and charged with the double murder of a 25 year old Center maintenance worker and an 18 year old customer and Playworld job applicant whose bodies were also found inside ("Shake and Bake suspect was in court the day of killings," 1985). Following the killings the Playworld arcade was permanently closed, and the city would take over operations of the Shake and Bake Center for most of the next decade.

While the violence at Shake and Bake were not in any way common, the contested and tumultuous process of privatization that enabled the Center to be constructed and ultimately taken over and operated by the city also point to the difficulties and limits of the partnership model for community forms of public recreation. Private social and economic development was generally guided by the

potential of the investment to yield a return in that investment by ‘paying off’ financially, a large challenge for any recreation facility or service and certainly for public recreation programs that were structured to be affordable and accessible to all city residents (Jordan, 1993, p. 294). As Delaporte explained after the city had taken control of Shake and Bake, the Center would have been regarded as ‘successful’ if the operation could break even rather than turn a profit, as municipal recreation centers were “not in business to make money” - though advertising space and other forms of revenue generation were also being considered (Davis, 1986).

Restructuring Recreation: Privatization and Partnerships

Thus as the privatization process was increasingly incorporated into the management and operations of public facilities and services by urban governments and their private, non-profit and quasi-public ‘partners’ throughout the 1980s, the partnership model was often deployed as a potential ‘cure-all’ for different issues of urban governance that might be addressed by complete or semi-privatization, most often focusing on market logics of fiscal accountability and efficiency (Savas, 1999). Yet while the partnership strategy of organizing and managing a particular service or facility primarily as an economic investment and business opportunity proved viable in relation to several special recreation facilities, Baltimore’s recreation centers most often lacked these partnership opportunities, as they were often based on the same economic and fiscal rationales that yielded the ‘successes’ of the golf courses, Zoo and other partnerships. Unlike revenue-generating and other ‘special facilities’ that could attract and support a private or non-profit partner, Baltimore’s recreation centers and community-based programming remained dependent on municipal and

federal funding even as these sources were in decline throughout the 1980s – and unlike these facilities, the forms and sources of partnerships for recreation centers were often meager and potentially laden with risk in regards to the status and prospects of any potential partners. Thus while the private-public partnership model was deployed with various amounts of success in relation to economic development and some of the city’s public facilities, the perceived benefits of this aspect of the privatization process eluded the vast majority of Baltimore’s recreation system.

While the department selectively enacted and supported the partnership model in order to reorganize the operations and management of several existing facilities, the restructuring of public recreation via privatization included specific impacts on capital development, and in particular the financing of capital projects. Prior to this period, funding for recreational infrastructure had primarily from municipal bonds, or a combination of bonds and supplemental federal and state funding – however, by the mid-1980s both the process of public funding and the vision of Baltimore’s public recreation system had changed. A December 1984 *Sun* profile of Delaporte as the recently hired recreation chief explained that the new director sought to shift the focus of the department to offering “Olympic quality” facilities, including “a new boat house for rowing, at least two indoor swimming complexes, a gymnastics center, an indoor soccer arena and a track-and-field center” (Luxenberg, 1984). In this mode, the department would utilize the partnership model in identifying and working with a private or non-profit operator for a newly constructed recreation facility, meaning that the city would build and see some revenues from the operation while not actually staffing or managing the site. Further, faced with a lack of public support for

municipal bond funding and a disappearance of federal and state funding, Delaporte also restructured the process of financing capital development for many of these facilities, by working with the quasi-public City Trustees and private investors – most often outside the state of Maryland – to raise private capital that would be allocated through the City Trustees development ‘bank’ and paid back through long-term debt service financing (Bustad, 2012).

This turn away from public financing models and towards private funding sources in many ways echoed the process through which the city financed the private development costs of the Inner Harbor, in that private investors worked with the City Trustees and the Mayor in organizing and allocating funds for particular development projects (Harvey, 2001a, p. 155). This model of private investors and debt servicing, also known as a “conditional purchase agreement,” was initially incorporated by the department in the mid-1980s in the construction of both the Mimi DiPietro ice rink in Patterson Park as well as the rowing facility on the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River (now the Baltimore Rowing and Water Resource Center) (Luxenberg, 1984). Both of these facilities served as primary examples of the ‘new vision’ of Baltimore’s public recreation system being put forward by Delaporte and supported by the Mayor in this period, as each was a special facility constructed through a conditional purchase agreement, and with a designated private or non-profit operator already in place before the facility opened. While the rowing facility was operated by the Baltimore Rowing Club, the private investors for the DiPietro ice rink would include the family of former Baltimore Colt Johnny Unitas (Bustad, 2012). These facilities – including the rowing facility, both DiPietro and the Mount Pleasant ice rinks, as well

as the Du Burns Indoor Arena and Myers Soccer Pavilion – were results of the new “build and pay long-term debt” model for the department, in contrast to the “build and operate” model made possible through the increased funding levels and sources of previous eras (Luxenberg, 1984). For Delaporte, while the capital investments in special facilities were not without risks, including the possible lack of attendance and revenue, and the interdependency of the department and the ‘partner’ organization, there were limited alternatives in regards to the overall operations of the department. As the previous era of urban recreation had been supported and supplemented by both direct and indirect forms of funding and services through a variety of federal, state and local sources, the lack of these sources made the restructuring of the department’s capital and programmatic development a necessity.

Thus the use of debt service financing, or ‘conditional purchase agreements,’ in relation to public recreation in Baltimore is again evidence of the inter-relationships between the public-private formation of recreation policy and planning and the sociopolitical context of the era, as the debt service model was an integral aspect of the larger shift away from the previous model of urban governance. Whereas the municipal bond and federal social program models of funding recreation capital projects of previous formations had essentially built and expanded Baltimore’s public recreation system, each of these models were also characterized by specific constraints – for municipal bonds, this included the necessity of local political and public support, and a relative limit in regards to the amount of annual capital investment; while funding amounts were often much higher when coming from federal programs, these sources were dependent on not only local but also state and

federal political support and implementation. The conditional purchase agreement and debt service financing model evaded these limits, as the City Trustees worked with a Mayor in a process that essentially removed both public referendums and the City Council from the approval or denial of particular projects, and the purchase agreement allowed the city's Board of Estimates to approve the expenditure as outside the city's \$35 million 'debt ceiling', which applied only to municipal bond measures (Harvey, 2001a; Jordan, 1993).

While the process of conditional purchase agreements may have allowed the department to avoid the potential issues of other funding arrangements, the transformation of public recreation that was articulated by Delaporte and supported by the Mayor still faced some detractors within the department, though these issues were similarly addressed through departmental restructuring. In particular, this occurred when the Parks and Recreation Board, a group nominated through the Mayor and other recreation advocates to review and approve recreation programs, projects and issues, expressed their concern and stalled on decisions requested by Delaporte for capital investments ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting November 1984," 1984). Shortly thereafter, the role of the Board was amended to a solely 'advisory' capacity, absolving the group of any legislative power to review and delay projects (Jordan, 1993, p. 299). Thus by the 1980s the dwindling support for funding recreation and other social services across all scales of American politics - combined with the continued post-industrial economic decline and annual decreases in agency budgets - made the restructuring of the department's facilities and services both possible and necessary, in that the department utilized the partnership model in

regard to both capital and operations in part because of their increased efficiency and the perceived benefits of privatization, and in part because the previous models of recreation provision were untenable.

Yet while the various special facilities, including the rowing house, indoor arenas, and ice rinks all serve as evidence of the implementation of a different approach to public recreation in Baltimore, they also served to symbolize a move away from the provision of neighborhood-based recreation facilities and programs. Thus while many of the funding sources for recreation facilities, staffing and services during the ‘golden age’ of urban recreation had already experienced reductions or removal by the mid-1980s, the construction and partnership operation of large, relatively expensive special facilities also evinces the formation of public-private recreation as characterized by a focus away from the community or neighborhood recreation approach of previous eras. In this mode, a division began to emerge between ‘recreation’ as the declining system of neighborhood-based recreation centers and facilities built over the course of the preceding three decades, and ‘recreation’ as the newly-constructed special facilities and partnership operators of these facilities. Both within the department and in regards to the Mayor’s administration, there was growing distinction between the ‘special facilities’ and the recreational opportunities available through these facilities, and the ‘antiquated’ model of a previous generation represented primarily through the network of approximately 100 recreation centers (Bustad, 2012). Moreover, the vulnerability of the neighborhood-based recreation centers was underscored by the initial release of the 1985 budget, which was presented to the recreation Board in December 1985.

Delaporte explained the proposed budget meant the possible closure of up to 80 of the recreation centers as a result of the “total loss” of federal revenue sharing funds, stating ““We are moving into a time when limited resources prevail upon us to seek new and innovative sources of recreational activities...we must look to providing recreational activities and services that are strictly comprised of programming costs where the cost of participation is completely associated with the activity itself” (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting December 18, 1985,” 1985). These comments illustrate the prioritization of ‘special facilities’ and the fee-based programming at these facilities as both a key aspect of moving the department away from the neighborhood-based model of recreation provision, and towards a ‘new and innovative’ approach to public recreation that was markedly different from the previous formation.

Public concerns for this fundamental shift in the mission and vision of the department emerged over the partial or full closures of several of the city’s recreation centers, including the fate of the Mullan Recreation Center in Baltimore’s Pen-Lucy neighborhood in the spring of 1985. In May of that month, the Northeast Community Organization (NECO) issued a response to a statement from a parks official that Mullan would be recommended to be closed, stating that a decision to close Mullan would not only be a mistake but also part of a larger process of prioritizing “costly, elite” capital projects such as the ice rinks and arenas over neighborhood recreation centers and programs – according to the NECO response, the closing of Mullan would be only part of a “systematic decline of recreation and other youth services through closing recreation centers, curtailing youth programs, or ignoring building

and park maintenance” (Davis, 1985). While Delaporte would initially respond by saying that the recreation center needed maintenance but would remain open, within a month the Board had passed the recommendation and Mullan was shut down, citing the lack of necessary maintenance and the overall state of the facility as “in terrible shape” despite its construction only 12 years prior (Gunther, 1985). Delaporte explained that the department was attempting to restructure the department around an “alternate system” with the expectation of continued budget cuts and constraints in the near future (Gunther, 1985).

Thus for many citizens and community groups including NECO, the closing of Mullan was the latest sign that the department and Mayor had chosen to move away from a system of neighborhood-based recreation that was previously an integral aspect of Baltimore’s communities. Citing the similarities of the approach to capital investment and political support for particularly large and expensive projects in both the city’s Inner Harbor redevelopment and the department’s ice rinks and arenas, one NECO member stated that the closing of Mullan was one example of the “Inner Harborization” of the city’s public recreation system, principally through the work Delaporte and the Mayor (Gunther, 1985). In fact, these projects do share similar characteristics beyond the use of debt service financing and the incorporation of the private partnership model towards capital implementation and operations. First, both the Inner Harbor and recreation projects are characterized by an urban ‘entrepreneurial’ strategy of focusing development on a particular revenue-generating project in the anticipation of revenues that might be utilized towards other non-revenue services – in effect, subsidizing neighborhood economic and social

development through concentrated redevelopment projects, and neighborhood-based recreation facilities and services through ‘special’ recreational facilities (Harvey, 1989b). Second, as a result of the concentration of investment on particular areas and projects - especially in contrast to the previous era of social services spending - both the Inner Harbor redevelopment and recreational special facilities were viewed by some as prioritizing particular business and political interests ahead of neighborhood-based development initiatives. However, a third commonality between these projects is that within the context of transformed and transforming modes of urban governance in the 1980s, these entrepreneurial strategies were at least in part enabled by the lack of viable alternative models, in particular given the collapse of the previous approaches to urban and recreational governance.

While different organizations and individuals contested the feasibility and intentions of the restructuring of public recreation in Baltimore, the department continued to encounter new reality in which social services and agencies needed to be as self-sustaining as possible (Hackworth, 2005, p. 67). In particular, the continued lack of funding sources and declining budgets meant that the implementation of recreation and aquatics fees, which had been unthinkable for at least the previous two decades, were considered and eventually adopted by the department throughout the late 1980s. As Jordan explains, this strategy was employed both as a means of generating even minimal revenue in order to supplement cost recovery of recreation funding, and as part of an initiative to attach a real financial value to public recreation facilities and services (1993, p. 302). Pool fees were instituted in summer of 1986, with a 50 cent daily attendance fee for the larger park pools and a \$3 seasonal pass for

the smaller neighborhood 'Walk To' pools, while there was \$1 participation fee for the 'Operation Birdland' baseball league, and a \$60 annual fee for the City Track and Field team ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting June 1986," 1986).

While in most cases the fees remained minimal, their adoption signaled that the department continued to address the necessity of a restructured approach to the provision of public recreation, one that was at least in part premised on the market model of revenue generation and 'customer' relations. According to Jordan, the department's own research had shown that "fees encouraged the participants (and their parents) to feel that they had a "stake" in the activity", and those paying fees had shown higher participation rates (1993, p. 311). The shift to the consideration and focus on the 'price' of public recreational opportunities is another aspect of privatization and the formation of public-private recreation, in that the department increasingly adopted the operations model utilized by private operators. However, unlike these operators, the department's services were also based on a model of "universalism" that provided recreation that was accessible and affordable for all citizens - in the dynamics of a socially stratified post-industrial city such as Baltimore, this primarily meant the predominately black working-class and poorer neighborhoods in which public recreation centers were among the few recreational facilities and services in the area (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). Thus within the context of public-private recreation, the department attempted to maintain a basic mission of providing recreational facilities and programs for all city residents and specifically for communities without alternate options, while at the same time also attempting to

address the increased importance of fiscal efficiency based on a market model of price, operating costs and revenues.

The often oppositional nature of these goals – on the one hand dedicated to public provision of a social service, and on the other a primary focus on market efficiency - had particular impacts on the operations and structure within the department, as well as the perception of the agency within the city. The combination in losses of political support and funding sources for neighborhood-based recreation programs and facilities, as well as a decreasing overall city population, meant that many of Baltimore’s neighborhood-based recreation and aquatic facilities were gradually drawn in to a cycle of neglect that exacerbated already existing facility and staffing issues. Within this cycle, a lack of funding and political support continued to result in improper and deferred maintenance and less qualified staff and programming, which meant lowered attendance and participation levels and a negative perception of many of the facilities, which in turn brought criticism and a lack of funding and support. Thus in the context of the various efforts within and outside the department to restructure the overall mission and vision of public recreation in Baltimore in the 1980s, the neighborhood-based recreation centers often remained an integral part of community life, even as they increasingly also served as remnants and relics of a previous generation’s relationship between public recreation and urban social life. The growing tensions, between the competing visions of an ‘universalist’ model of public recreation rooted in the earlier formation of urban recreation, and increased calls for a market model based primarily on fiscal markers of success and failure, were also evident in the contestation of another aspect of the

policy changes within the department during this period, in the incorporation and institution of user fees for recreation sites and programs. While the issue of user fees had already been a key aspect of the partnership model for recreation ‘special facilities’, including the city ice rinks and indoor arenas that had been supported by Delaporte, it was not until the late 1980s that fees for neighborhood-based facilities would even be considered (Jordan, 1993, p. 299). After initially delaying the issue for further consultation, the department eventually instituted user fees at the city swimming pools and for youth and adult sport programs by 1988 (Jordan, 1993, p. 299). The user fees were thus another a point of tension and symbol of the changing nature of recreation provision, and the tensions between a former and current approach to public recreation that were premised on differing formations of urban governance and recreation policy and planning.

The late 1980s also saw another development within Baltimore politics that would have particular impacts for public recreation, as Mayor Schaefer’s election as governor of Maryland meant that the 1987 mayoral race would be the first to come down to two black candidates in the Democratic primary (historically and currently the only party of consequence in Baltimore City’s electoral politics). The election was eventually won by Kurt Schmoke, a native Baltimorean lawyer who ran primarily on a platform of returning the focus of the city’s social development initiatives and resources to neighborhoods and residents ahead of ‘downtown’ interests and projects. In attempting to distance himself from the Schaefer administration, Schmoke sought to “tilt city priorities towards education and neighborhood revitalization,” often through community-based educational and social programs, including the school-

based “City that Reads” campaign (Bustad, 2012). Later that year, a new director was to be appointed by Schmoke to succeed Delaporte, and the appointment of Ralph Jones, Jr. – a former athletics coach at Morgan State University and recreation and leisure faculty at the University of Baltimore – was taken as a positive sign for the department, as it continued to face the changed realities of public recreation and Jones was viewed as true ‘recreationist’ that could reinvigorate the agency and its services (Jordan, 1993, p. 312). Together the election of Schmoke and appointment Jones heralded the possibility of a new direction for the department, as the combination of Schmoke’s platform of support for neighborhood-based programs and Jones’ experience and skills held promise for a renewed approach to recreation. Yet Jones made clear that his vision of public recreation was not necessarily a return to a previous formation of recreation governance that was primarily based on and through a vast network of recreation centers. Shortly after taking over as director, Jones explained that years of budget cuts and gaps in capital improvements had transformed the neighborhood-based centers, which had declined to 93 by 1988, into a system of ‘expensive dinosaurs’ that were both costly to maintain and lacking in amenities and features (Evans, 1988).

Instead, and in order to move the department and the city past the enduring crises of underfunded and declining facilities and programs, Jones’ proposal and plan was to build six recreation ‘supercenters’, including a fitness center, gyms, pools, a day-care and a senior center, as well as accompanying programming one (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting December 14, 1988,” 1988). Jones also planned to locate one of these facilities in each of the city’s council districts, a strategy that he

hoped would gain the favor of local politicians, who he viewed as part of the reason for the continued presence of neighborhood recreation centers due to previous experiences in which recreation centers facing maintenance and staffing issues were kept open due to political pressure, exerted from local politicians and community groups to the Mayor and in turn to the department (Evans, 1988). This consideration of local and neighborhood politics points to the continued importance of the neighborhood-based model of planning and political representation throughout the 1980s and 1990s, in that the support by local politicians for neighborhood-based recreation and social services signal the political vestiges of the same approach that resulted in the citywide system of recreation centers. While neighborhood-based facilities had most often been constructed and operated in conjunction with support and funding from both the federal, state, and local levels within the previous formations of recreation governance, by this period the lack of funding and support from the federal and state levels contrasted and conflicted with a mode of political representation still based firmly in the neighborhood model. This meant that Jones faced immediate political pressure for a plan that would move away from the neighborhood-based recreation system, even if the funding and support for that system had long since been eroding and the system itself was in decline in regards to the condition of facilities and levels of staffing and programming.

In short, the ‘supercenters’ proposal and response evince the often obdurate nature of the previous formation of urban recreation, and the public recreation system that was created through the variety of funding sources and programs of the previous generation of recreation planning and policy. Jones’ plan in 1988, as well as

Delaporte's vision for special facilities several years earlier, both sought to restructure the department and re-create the system of public recreation in Baltimore, and yet both of these restructuring efforts were undermined by the continued physical and political presence of the neighborhood recreation centers. There were several concerns expressed towards the approximate \$8-\$10 million cost of each 'supercenter', though Jones was confident that the investment would effectively reorganize the department into a more modern city recreation agency (Evans, 1988). However, the optimism towards Jones' appointment was to be short lived, as he unexpectedly passed away less than a year into his first year as director. From this point, the department would often face challenges in regards to leadership positions including department director, as political considerations and the declining state of the agency as a whole meant that many positions became 'revolving doors' with continual turnover and little in the way of sustainable guidance or a clear vision for the department's goals and practices (Jordan, 1993, p. 313).

The possible optimism surrounding Schmoke's election platform of neighborhood-based planning and development also began to wane in the first few years of his mayoral administration. As McDougall explains, Schmoke's election in Baltimore was similar to that of other 'first' black mayors and politicians in post-industrial American cities such as Detroit and Cleveland, in that by the time black officials were taking over principal municipal positions, these cities were no longer characterized by the increasing populations, industrial and commercial growth, and federal funding and support that had been present for most of the post-World War II period (1993, p. 18). Within the context of these changes, Schmoke inherited an aging

public recreation system that was for the most part without the federal, state and local support that had allowed for an expansion of recreation facilities and services – instead, the reality of Baltimore’s public recreation in the early 1990s was often characterized by continued budget and staffing cuts, and temporary or full closures of facilities and programs. This era would also evince an effort to continue the process of reducing the number of recreation centers, utilizing a strategy that essentially reversed the manner in which many of the recreation sites had come under departmental control.

That is, many recreation centers had been built throughout the previous formation of recreation governance by utilizing federal funding through housing, education and other neighborhood-based programs, and then control of the facility was transferred to BCRP – throughout the late 1980s and 1990s, this process would be inverted so that recreation centers would be ‘given back’ to the agency that was the actual owner of the facility. This process was utilized primarily in relation to centers that were attached or immediately adjacent to schools - these centers were the results of the neighborhood-based approach to community planning that was no longer supported by federal funding and programs, and in many cases the department could vacate the center and allocate this space to the school. This strategy of inter-agency devolution, or transferring responsibility of recreation facilities to other agencies, was also utilized in regards to several recreation centers that had been built near or within housing complexes and projects and supported by the approach to neighborhood-based urban planning. In 1990, a group of families in the Claremont Homes housing project (now Orchard Ridge townhomes) in northeast Baltimore

organized to re-open the recreation center that was located within the housing complex, after it had been closed two years before due to recreation budget cuts – however, the facility was in fact owned by the city housing agency, which had re-taken control of several centers within public housing complexes due to the recreation budget cuts and subsequent lack of recreation staffing (Evans, 1990). Under this arrangement, and similar to situations where recreation centers were turned over to nearby schools, the recreation department had removed their staff and equipment from the facility and transferred control to the housing agency, leaving an empty building with an owner but no operator or tenant except for possibly community volunteers (Evans, 1990).

Thus throughout this era, and often through the strategy of inter-agency devolution, the city's network of recreation centers was slowly but steadily reduced. The combined effects of constantly shrinking departmental budgets, decreased staffing, services, and programs, and increased maintenance and operational costs meant that the number of functioning recreation centers also continued to decline, falling to 77 centers by 1991 ("Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks Providing Leisure Time Services for You," 1991). In response to the overall state of the department, Mayor Schموke worked with the department in hiring a consultant to conduct a comprehensive evaluation and formulate recommendations for the immediate and long-term future of Baltimore's recreation and parks, resulting in a report and plan of action that were completed in 1991.

In the study, department director Marlyn Perritt stated that the plan recognized that "the needs of our clients have changed dramatically over the past thirty years,"

and that in response the recommendations were “proposing a revolution in recreation and parks in our city” (“Strategic Plan for Action,” 1991). While a large aspect of the report was focused on the maintenance and development of Baltimore’s system of parks, the study also described the network of neighborhood-based recreation facilities as both a strength and weakness of the city’s recreation system. As the study explained and as this analysis has examined, throughout the 1960s and 1970s the “major criteria” for recreation planning and programming had been addressing “underserved” and “redeveloped” neighborhoods – yet by the 1980s and 1990s, this approach had become “increasingly less feasible...as the city’s population and tax base have decreased and its financial condition has worsened” (1991). The impacts of these different formations and approaches to public recreation were thus especially pronounced within the context of Baltimore’s neighborhood-based recreation facilities, resulting in the city having the highest number of recreation centers per capita of any city in the country, despite continued cuts to staffing and programming that meant many of these centers often relied on community volunteers for services and equipment (“Strategic Plan for Action,” 1991).

The transformation in both the implementation and funding model for public recreation planning was also evident in the changes to the funding sources for the department’s budget, as the share of the operating budget provided by the city increased from 70% in 1975 to 92% in 1990, while during the same span federal funding fell from 22% to 0.3% (“Strategic Plan for Action,” 1991). This acknowledgement of the fundamental shift in approaches to recreation governance and the realities of recreation planning and policy was further illustrated by the

description of the department's budget situation of annual cuts and reductions. According to the study, the departmental operating budget had "never kept pace with either inflation or the additional burden of operating new facilities," illustrated by a chart showing that when adjusted for inflation, the annual BCRP operating budget had fallen from \$23 million in 1975 to \$17 million in 1990 ("Strategic Plan for Action," 1991). The study also focused on the problems that came from the transfer of other agency properties to parks and recreation management, such as the housing complex-based recreation centers. With many of these housing projects and accompanying recreation facilities built with federal funding in the same era as the neighborhood-based recreation centers, the study pointed to the disconnect between having capital projects from multiple agencies eventually place under the BCRP operating budget, in that the department was "expected to maintain facilities that we did not design, and HCD [housing] has not provided a source of funds to compensate the additional burden" on the operating budget ("Strategic Plan for Action," 1991).

"1000 Points of Light" – Recreation, Volunteerism and the Social Problem Industry

Due to these continued strains and constraints on the department's budget, the sustainability of the network of recreation centers was a progressively challenging task, and in response the department continued to turn to a strategy of devolution and consolidation. The 1991 study recommended that while the city operated 77 recreation centers, the budget was sufficient for staff at only 43 centers, further evidence of the continued deprioritization of public recreation as a social service within Baltimore's politics and policies ("Strategic Plan for Action," 1991). As part of the study also featured several recommendations for immediate implementation,

Mayor Schmoke announced his support for the recommendation that the department close 8 centers that were currently operating, though the 8 sites would not be finalized until after that year's mayoral primary and general election (Evans, 1991). Schmoke would address the decline of Baltimore's public services, as well as further contribute to his re-election platform, by supporting the "Save Our Cities" march organized by Baltimore community and religious organizations in October of that year. Citing the 75% cut in federal funding to Baltimore from 1980 to 1990, and the impending loss of nearly \$25 million in aid due to the state of Maryland's own budget crisis, Schmoke explained that "these are the times that mayors are having to choose between school textbooks and additional police...between closing libraries and closing recreation centers" (Thompson, 1991). Within this analysis, these 'choices' involving Baltimore's recreation centers within the early 1990s serve to again display the scope of the transformation of public recreation within the city, from the formation of urban recreation, characterized by municipal control of recreation capital development and program implementation and based in federal, state and local support and funding, to the formation of public-private recreation, characterized by forms of devolution and consolidation, as well as forms of privatization and partnership models that were supported and necessitated by the restructuring and reduction of recreation services. In short, the decisions regarding the closure of facilities and curtailing of services reflect the changed nature of public recreation between these two eras and corresponding formations of recreation governance, as urban recreation gave way to an emergent public-private recreation in regards to the mission, vision and values of recreational sites and programming.

This means that while Schmoke went with the Save Our Cities march to advocate for a model of federal funding for social services, including recreation, that was premised on a particular approach to urban governance, this approach had actually long since eroded in favor of other, ‘entrepreneurial’ models, as the response to the protest indicated – President George H.W. Bush was out of town during the rally (Thompson, 1991). In fact, Bush’s response to the larger shift in urban governance away from federal funding and support and towards forms of devolution and privatization had been indicated at both his acceptance speech for the Republican presidential nomination in 1988, as well as his inaugural address in January 1989. In each of these speeches, Bush explained a key aspect of the revamped approach to American urban governance in the 1980s and 1990s by evoking the notion of a “thousand points of light” symbolizing the multitude of community organizations, civic organizations, and volunteer programs that were “doing good” based on a form of “patriotism...that finds its expression in taking part and pitching in” (George H.W. Bush Speech, 1988). However, implicit within this move to a focus on community organizations was also the implementation of further reductions to federal and state-supported public services and funding, meaning that local civic and neighborhood groups would be essential in an emergent era of community ‘self-reliance’ (Bowles & Gintis, 2002, p. 421). The recognition of volunteerism as a key aspect of an emergent form of recreational governance was further evidenced by the establishment of a BCRP ‘Volunteer Coordinator’ in 1993 in an effort to organize and encourage citizen volunteering, as the subsequent efforts to secure funding for the position were based on premise that the department was actively looking to engage in the “turning over”

of recreation services and programming to city residents ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting February 23, 1993," 1993). In this analysis, within the context of Baltimore's post-industrial economic diminution and population decrease during this period, and especially in regards to the decline in maintenance, staffing and programming for neighborhood-based recreation centers, this governance approach of devolving the responsibility of social service provision to community organizations and volunteer citizens resulted in two primary outcomes.

On the one hand, those centers that were located in neighborhoods with remaining density, and that had community support in terms of attendance, participation and use of the facility, were often at an advantage in regards to both political support to keep the center open and in relation to resources that could help maintain the facility and programming. As one example, Roosevelt Recreation Center in Hampden, a primarily white, working-class neighborhood in north-central Baltimore, was one of the city's most popular recreation centers throughout this period, and was supported by the local community through a volunteer-based recreation council ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting April 9, 1992," 1992). These factors made Roosevelt, and other recreation centers with neighborhood support, both a higher priority for any available maintenance or programming funds as well as less vulnerability to potential center closures. Alternatively, a lack of population density and community engagement could possibly impact the risk of a recreation center's potential closing, as budget reductions continued to make this an annual possibility. In the worst cases, centers that faced mounting maintenance costs, inadequate staffing, and reduced programming were effectively dissolved from the

department – this included those centers that were transferred to control of either local schools or, as in the case of Claremont Homes Recreation Center, to the city housing agency.

Yet as also evidenced by the Claremont Homes example, when recreation centers were closed, often volunteers and civic organizations would work to open and operate the facility unsupported by any federal, state or municipal governmental program, thereby incorporating Bush's model of volunteerism and devolution, though at least partially in necessity. This same response to the devolution of recreation services was evident in the efforts made by residents of the Towanda-Grantley neighborhood in northwest Baltimore in October 1992 to open and operate a recreation and multi-purpose 'resource center' in that community, utilizing volunteers and completely "without government help" (Hilson, 1992b). In short, as federal and state governments continued to reduce funding and support for social services, the process of devolution and rationales of community self-reliance and volunteerism both suggested and made necessary a transformed approach for public recreation, in which citizens were increasingly made responsible for their own neighborhood-based recreation facilities and programs through policies and politics that favored privatization and a decrease in city-operated recreation services.

Thus when the department faced the necessity of closing some centers due to budget cuts again in 1992, and the process of transferring facilities to other agencies was not an option, the department employed the 'request for proposal' or RFP process to transfer control of the center to community and volunteer groups ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting June 22, 1992," 1992). Within this process, particular

facilities were identified as a 'open' to potential partnerships, and then RFP applications were submitted by interested groups and vetted by the department – in this case, these groups included civic organizations such as Vietnam Veterans of America, smaller faith-based neighborhood organizations such as Amani Temple, or in the example of Rognel Heights Recreation Center, a collective of approximately 20 different community groups ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting July 20, 1992," 1992). The variety and unequal nature of these organizations in regards to financial resources and uses for the centers evidences the influence of both volunteerism and the partnership model within this context, as community engagement and involvement was encouraged and made necessary by the reductions to city-operated public recreation in regards to budgets, personnel and facilities.

Further, this analysis recognizes that this shift had particular impacts in post-industrial cities such as Baltimore, in which demographic changes and population loss had compounded a process of re-segregation and deepening social inequality along racial and classed lines (Pietila, 2010) . In short, as the city's neighborhood-based recreation centers were often characterized by the communities in which they were located, patterns of social inequality also extended into the possible resources that a community may or may not have had in supporting either a department-operated recreation facility or, if this facility had already been closed, a volunteer-organized and operated facility. This uneven topography of social and economic resources and political influence meant that as Baltimore's neighborhoods endured very different impacts to the processes of deindustrialization and post-industrial urban entrepreneurialism, the separate fates of each facility within the city's network of

recreation centers were often intertwined with the prospects of the community in regards to economic redevelopment (Levine, 2000, p. 133). Those neighborhoods with the appropriate political, social and economic capacity were not only targeted for redevelopment efforts, but were also able to either support a BCRP recreation center directly or organize and sustain a private, non-profit or volunteer-based alternative – those neighborhoods lacking in resources faced larger challenges in regards to either keeping an existing center open, or opening and operating an alternative through volunteer and non-profit efforts.

In these latter communities that lacked both a city-operated center and the capacity and resources to self-organize and maintain a recreation facility through volunteerism, another aspect of the shift towards private-public recreation was made evident in the incorporation of private and non-profit national and state-based recreation organizations. In contrast to the scale and scope of community-based volunteer groups, the devolution and privatization of Baltimore's recreation centers also included the model of transferring centers to larger privatized and non-profit recreation providers, such as the state chapter of the national Boys & Girls Club. By 1992, the Boys & Girls Club of Maryland had taken over operations of three recreation centers that were previously operated and then closed by the department, all at public housing sites in struggling communities (Hilson, 1992a). Thus the combined effects of decreased funding and support for public, city-operated recreation centers, as well as the concurrent incorporation of the processes of privatization and devolution into recreation governance, meant that as Baltimore's public recreation department was shrinking, private and non-profit alternatives at both

the local, municipal and even state and national levels were both growing in number and in political and public support. However, these alternatives were also conspicuously deployed in relation to the neighborhoods and recreation centers that were targeted for and by the partnership model – again, the relative social, economic and political resources of a community could directly impact the operation of a BCRP recreation center or the possibility of a private or non-profit alternative.

By the mid-1990s, the dominant approach to urban governance in Baltimore would continue to be characterized by entrepreneurial strategies of redevelopment, as Schmoke's earlier promises of reversing the city's prioritization of 'downtown' back to neighborhoods and communities were muddled by the Mayor's support for several projects utilizing a similar model (and in the same geographic area) as the Inner Harbor. As Levine explains, by Schmoke's second term it had become clear that the Mayor supported downtown development as much as his predecessor, as the city "redoubled" its efforts at a tourism and 'carnival city' strategy through nearly \$1 billion for a variety of projects including a professional baseball and football stadium, convention center expansion, and nearby hotels (Levine, 2000 p. 126). The city's 'public-private' approach to public recreation would also continue, as the department worked to support existing and potential new partnerships in relation to special facilities, while also attempting to sustain a decreasing number of often inadequately staffed and poorly maintained neighborhood-based facilities. As primary aspects of the formation of public recreation governance in this period, the partnership model and necessity of a solution for the declining system of neighborhood-based recreation facilities converged in the form of another effort at restructuring both the department

and the general administration and provision of recreation services in Baltimore: the reinvention and expansion of Police Athletic League recreation centers, or PALs centers, which utilized the neighborhood-based model of recreation facilities but were staffed and programmed by city police officers instead of BCRP personnel.

The PALs program had been operating in other cities, including New York and Philadelphia, for several decades before being implemented in Baltimore – while Baltimore’s police had previously had limited youth-directed programming, it wasn’t until 1995 that the PALs program was officially developed and implemented in the city, in part as the personal project of police Commissioner Thomas Frazier ("Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble," 1996). Specifically, the PALs initiative was a response to the “link between juvenile delinquency and inadequate youth programs” in many of Baltimore’s communities, especially in the context of the “glaring inadequacy of city recreation centers in some neighborhoods that need them most” ("Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble," 1996). That is, many of the neighborhoods in which the first 10 PAL centers had been organized were already facing issues in regard to recreation facility closures and decreases to staffing and programming, meaning the PAL strategy and facilities signal another formation of an alternative to recreation services administered by and through a city recreation department.

In fact, the PALs program effectively evidenced the processes of privatization and devolution as they combined several aspects of both the partnership model and the rationale of volunteerism that were present in other examples of recreation provision

in Baltimore that have been discussed in this analysis. On the one hand, the partnership model was deployed in regards to both an ‘inter-agency’ partnership between recreation facilities and police staff, as well as in relation to the primary funding of the PAL centers through non-profit grants and private donations ("Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble," 1996). On the other hand, the PAL centers also directly incorporated the rationale of volunteerism - specifically in the context of decreased funding and support for neighborhood-based recreation services and facilities - by supporting volunteer efforts at the centers through community engagement. Thus the initial strategy was to implement a PAL center in each of the city’s 29 police districts over the next several years, each of which would be funded entirely by grants and donations and staffed by at least one full-time police officer at each center, “with other roles filled by volunteers” ("Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble," 1996).

However, aside from serving as another example of the processes of privatization and devolution, the PALs initiative also signals another intersection of Baltimore’s public recreation governance and broader political and social processes of the period – in particular, the implementation of the PAL centers points to the development of another aspect of privatization in the shift from the support and funding of recreation services through government resources and programs, to the provision and administration of recreation primarily through private, non-profit and volunteer-based facilities and services. That is, this analysis recognizes that the PAL centers and strategy represent the re-emergence of the ‘prevention’ rationale for urban recreation

services, as the PAL approach was based on the re-prioritizing of recreation as an especially efficient deterrent for juvenile delinquency and general community disassociation in city neighborhoods. While the prevention rationale had been evident in the earlier formation of municipal recreation, and had been central to the approach of urban recreation that centered on recreation as a particular ‘intervention’ for and within urban communities, the structure and organization of the recreation-based interventions of public-private recreation in the 1990s differed from previous models.

In particular, as Hartmann (2001) notes, the re-emergence of recreation as ‘prevention’ and as ‘intervention’ in the 1990s was marked by two inter-related developments – the increase in scope, scale and number of public-private partnerships within public recreation departments and organizations, and the focus of many of these partnerships on the perceived relationships between neighborhood-based recreation programs and community stability and safety (p. 340) . As this analysis has already discussed, the partnership model was implemented in varying degrees and towards different goals in relation to Baltimore’s recreation system throughout the 1980s and 1990s, with the PALs program being an example of a multi-partner ‘partnership’ that incorporated the process of privatization by effectively removing recreation services from the city-operated and funded department and transferring this service to an arrangement of public, private and non-profit organizations. However, the PAL centers also evidence the relationship between the partnership model and the re-emergence of the prevention and interventionist rationales as a primary justification for the support and funding of neighborhood-based recreation programs,

as the program was organized with the direct goal and purpose of reducing crime and juvenile delinquency, in particular in poorer communities.

Commissioner Frazier explained the PALs strategy was appropriate for Baltimore as a city characterized by the social polarization of “haves and have-nots”, and conditions that were “a recipe for civil disorder,” as PAL centers were sites where the police could directly intervene into the lives of children and adolescents and provide an alternative to delinquent and criminal activities (Hermann, 1996). In Frazier’s view, the PAL sites were in a better position to offer recreation services as the program depended on private and non-profit funding rather than the city budget, and the centers served as opportunities to build “social capital” with youth and within communities, constituting the police as not only law enforcement but as “part of the social fabric of the city” (Hermann, 1996). The PALs program thus signals a re-articulation of the prevention and interventionist rationales for recreation services in this period, uncoupled from the previous formation and approach of urban recreation based in government funding and support, and instead linked specifically to the partnership model of public-private recreation. Further, the PALs qualify as one part of what Pitter and Andrews describe as the “social problems industry” that emerged within the context of American cities in the 1990s, often in response to the descaling and decline of public social services (Pitter & Andrews, 1997). In this mode, urban communities characterized as “underserved” in regard to decreased public recreation facilities were unequally affected by the processes of devolution and privatization, often reflective of larger patterns of race and class inequality.

Thus in response to the decline of public recreation services and facilities, many communities, families and individuals instead were faced with two alternatives in regards to recreation provision – the private, fee-based model that was not accessible or affordable for all city residents, or the “new brand of social welfare” in the form of neighborhood-based recreation through private and non-profit organizations and programming that were often premised on the rationale of recreation as a method of preventing social ills (p. 86). However, and in contrast to the ‘universalist’ approach included within the formation of urban recreation that sought to implement recreation programming for all city residents, the ‘social problems’ organizations of the 1990s also most often incorporated the rationales of ‘prevention’ and ‘intervention’ into recreation programming that was specifically organized towards children and young adults, including the popular and controversial ‘midnight basketball’ programs that were developed in many American cities during this period (Hartmann, 2001, p. 99). The PAL centers also were organized around these ideas, as each center included a ‘midnight’ or evening basketball league as part of its programming, which was usually limited to children ages (Matthews, 1997a). Given the goals and structure of the PAL centers, the incorporation and implementation of the PALs program in Baltimore signals one aspect of the refigured approach to recreation as prevention, and as intervention – in short, within public-private recreation these rationales for recreation re-emerged, but were most often incorporated into the processes of privatization, devolution and volunteerism, rather than as a premise for funding and supporting a city-operated public recreation agency.

Thus in the context of Baltimore's recreation system, both community and volunteer-based recreation services - such as the community recreation site organized by the Towanda-Grantley neighborhood, as well as larger recreation 'partnerships' that coordinated both inter-agency arrangements and non-profit organization, including the PAL centers - serve to evince the transformed nature of public recreation governance within the formation of public-private recreation. The magnitude and scope of this transformation, as a near-complete restructuring of how an urban municipality was to administer a public recreation agency and develop and provide recreational opportunities, was made especially clear by the comparative model of the PALs program. The PALs program, like other private and non-profit alternatives interested in the neighborhood-based recreation model and premised on the re-articulated rationales of prevention and intervention, had several advantages over public recreation departments, primarily in regards to the differences in funding and support - while PAL centers attracted tax-exempt donations and grants from local and regional non-profit foundations, the department was reliant on continually decreasing budgets and a lack of grant-funding opportunities. In July 1996, this "special advantage" meant that while the department was facing a further \$2 million budget shortfall and the possibility of further facility closures and staff layoffs, the PALs program expanded to 11 sites that were all former BCRP recreation centers, and was receiving over \$200,000 annually in donations and grant funding for equipment and other facilities, including a former 7-Eleven on Goodnow Road in northeast Baltimore that was offered to the city for \$1 by the non-profit MACHT

foundation with the understanding that it would developed as a PAL site (Hermann, 1996).

The growth and support of the PALs program, while an example of the shifts to private and non-profit ‘partners’ in the place of public recreation provision, also meant that the department was increasingly recognized as an inefficiently administrated and organized social service. Later that year, Mayor Schmoke indicated he was assembling a 12-person ‘task force’ to examine how the department could implement increased user fees, the sale of parkland, and conversion of vacant land towards generating revenue that could help the department “pay more of it’s own way”, also suggesting that the further budget cuts were to be expected (Matthews, 1996b). While the ‘task force’ model of recreation planning and policy would emerge again in Baltimore nearly fifteen years later (and as part of the focus of Chapter 2 of this project), Schmoke’s utilization of this model signals the necessity of alternative solutions to public recreation governance, as the department’s attempts to maintain a ‘universalist’ mission and vision of public recreation, but without the resources and funding that had made that mission and vision possible, had resulted in a broken recreation system. As Schmoke indicated in announcing his task force, if the current trends of “downsizing” and “consolidation of services” continued, the department would also continue to “dwindle to a level that is unacceptable” (Matthews, 1996b). Thus along with being viewed as a more viable alternative and better-equipped competitor to the department’s recreation centers, PAL sites were often used to explain the inefficiencies of the department and its inability to effectively restructure recreation provision.

As this analysis has shown, however, the ‘rise’ of the PALs program and decline of the department-operated centers within the same period is not coincidence but rather the consequence of the larger changes to recreation provision in American cities, as support and funding for neighborhood-based recreation did not disappear but was instead re-articulated within the processes of privatization, devolution and volunteerism. These processes were inextricably linked to the decisions to restructure public recreation in Baltimore, specifically in the fiscal necessity to ‘consolidate’ the neighborhood-based recreation system of facilities and programs that had been constructed over the previous 40 years. As this analysis suggests, these decisions were primarily reflected in the ‘dwindling’ number of recreation centers – previous reductions had brought the number of centers to 69 by 1996, which then decreased to 58 with the conversion of 11 centers to the PALs program in 1997, and then to 51 full-time centers with further closures and inter-agency partnerships in 1998 (“Department of Recreation and Parks Program Guide Fall '98/Winter '99," 1998). In the final years of Schmoke’s administration, the department would also continue to be restructured in regards to administration and staff, as the Mayor attempted to address the decline of recreation facilities and services through a myriad of different strategies while also targeting the department for annual budget cuts.

Baltimore City Recreation Centers 1980-1989

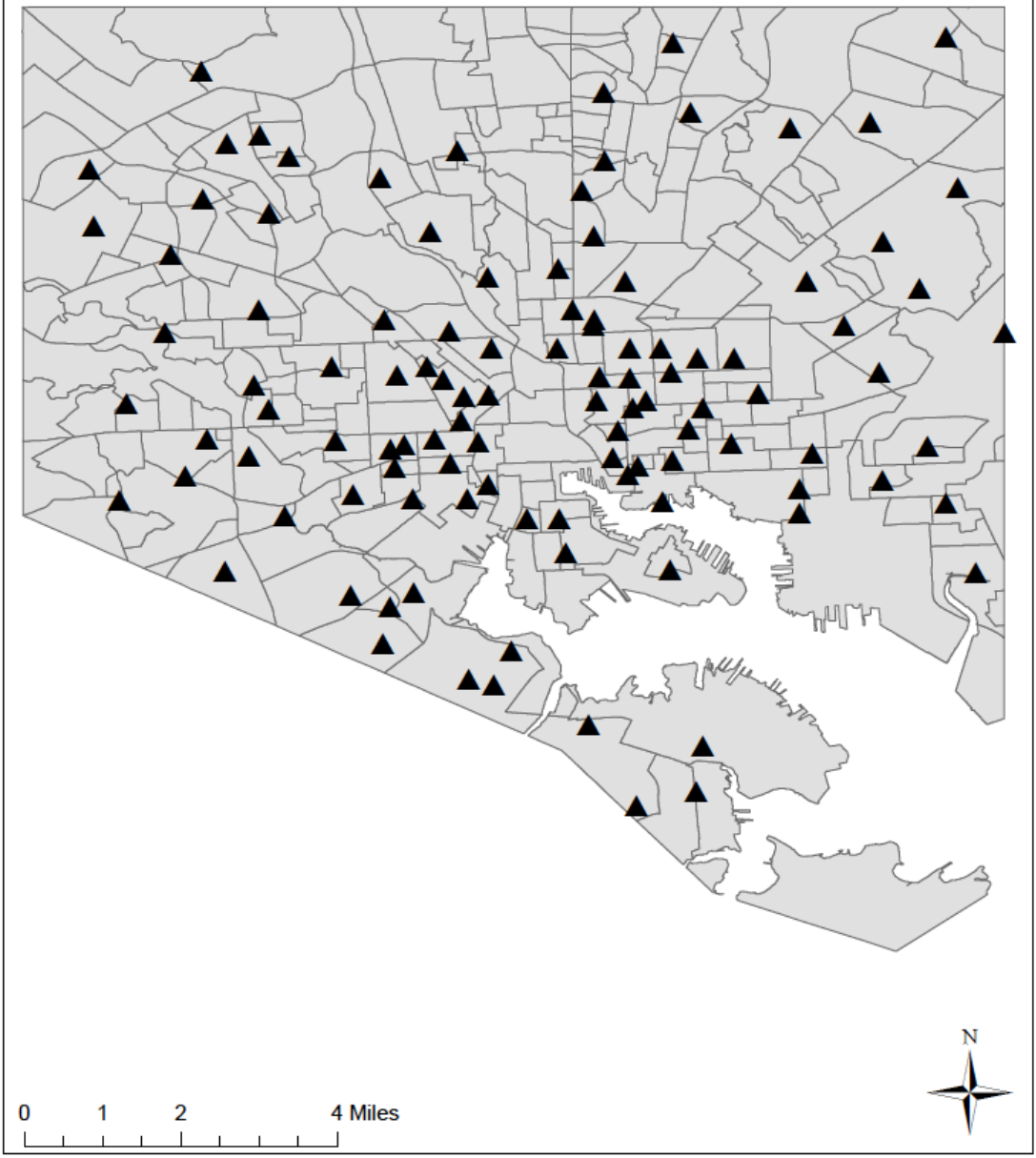


Figure 1.5

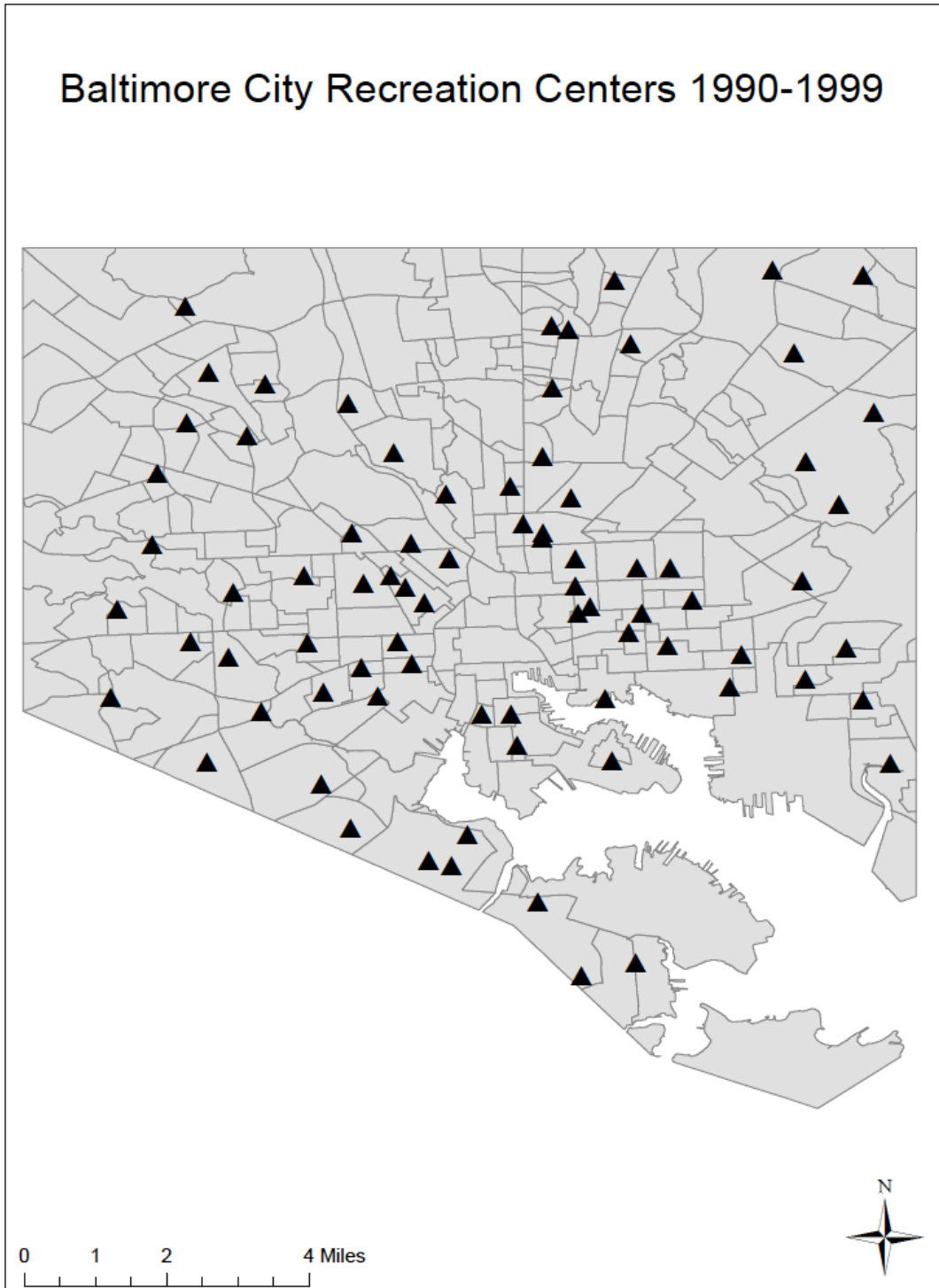


Figure 1.6

Baltimore City Recreation Centers 2000-2009

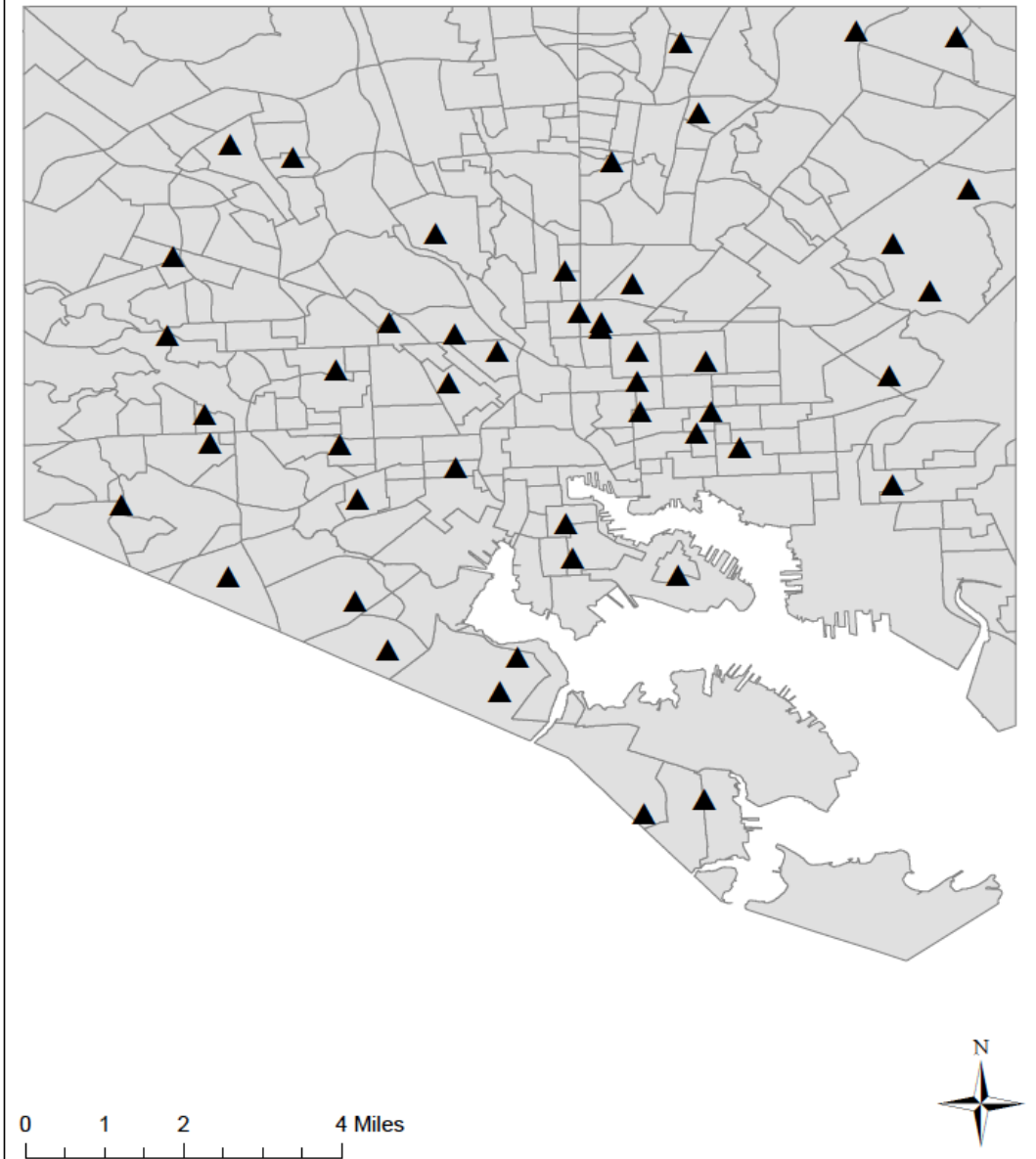


Figure 1.7

2000: A BCRP Odyssey

By June of 1999, Mayor Schmoke faced his final challenge in regards to the city's recreation department – following the release of his administration's proposed budget, a large crowd had come to a City Council meeting to protest the planned \$2.9 million cut to the department, meaning further layoffs and the temporary or permanent closure of facilities (Shields, 1999). The protests came after earlier tensions at the city's annual 'Taxpayer's Night' public forum, and focused on the decisions over the previous three years that had seen a combined \$15 million cut from the department's budget and the closing of 18 recreation centers, prompting one resident to call for Schmoke to "stop the destruction of our recreation department" (Shields, 1999). However, in many ways the restructuring of public recreation in Baltimore had already been underway for several decades, as part of the shifts in recreation planning and policy from the distinct governmentalities of municipal recreation, urban recreation, and public-private recreation. The attempts by Schmoke and others often amounted to minor efforts at a complete overhaul that ultimately situated the city's recreation system – and especially the neighborhood-based recreation centers and facilities – as disconnected from the taxpayer-supported model of 'municipal' recreation, the federal, state and local funding and support of 'urban' recreation, and the advantages of private and non-profit resources and funding as part of privatization and the partnership model within 'public-private recreation'.

As a new mayor took office in 2000 in the form of former City Councilman Martin O'Malley, Baltimore's recreation system continued to be shaped by both the broader processes of contemporary urban governance, as well as changing ideas

regarding the administration, mission and vision of the department, the combined effects of which also continued to restructure the city's approach to recreation. O'Malley had recognized the realities of Baltimore's recreation programs, planning and policy three years before his election, explaining that a lack of reform to recreation services meant that the city had "instead chosen to let recreation die a slow death" (Hermann, 1996). As O'Malley entered office, the challenges and issues regarding BCRP and public recreation in the city would continue to develop in relation to shifts in urban governance, and would result in further transformations to recreation policy, which are the focus of the second chapter.

As an examination of the particular policies and plans, as well as the specific rationales and models involved in the three governmentalities or formations and approaches to public recreation over a period of nearly 70 years, this analysis recognizes the gradual expansion and contraction of Baltimore's recreation system across this era as intertwined with larger processes and shifts within American urban governance. Through an analysis of over 70 years of BCRP documentation, as well as media reports and other documents related to the policy and planning of recreation in Baltimore, this chapter has proposed the governmentalities of municipal recreation, urban recreation, and public-private recreation as differentiated formations of recreation governance, each marked by particular ways of conceiving, developing, implementing and experiencing recreation facilities and services.

Therefore as this chapter has discussed, the different approaches to the implementation of recreation facilities and programming are not only evidence of distinct forms of the organization and purpose of providing recreational opportunities

for urban citizens, but also serve to display specific approaches to the ‘right to the active city’ as constituted within the interconnections between public recreation and the historical, social, economic, and political processes of urban governance. As this engagement with the development of recreation policy and planning over nearly 70 years has demonstrated, the formations and experiences of active citizenship in and through urban recreational opportunity have reflected and shaped the different ‘governmentalities’ of recreation as an aspect of urban life. The following chapters will build on this analysis by focusing on both the spaces of Baltimore’s recreation centers, as well as the subsequent developments within and contemporary realities of public recreation in Baltimore City.

Chapter 2: Recreation and Urban Planning – Designs of the Active City

Introduction

On July 15, 1972, officials from St. Louis, Missouri commenced the expansive demolition of the city's largest public housing facility, the Pruitt-Igoe complex. Pruitt-Igoe had been built only 20 years earlier to fanfare and celebration as a shining symbol of modernist urbanism, the final realization of the potentials of modern urban planning and design to organize and support metropolitan living in the 20th century – yet the short life span of the structures and their dramatic demise has meant that the “myth” of Pruitt-Igoe has persisted beyond its actual existence (Bristol, 1991). Now-infamous images of the large buildings exploding and crumbling were circulated by worldwide news media with descriptions of the failed aspirations of the project, leading renowned architectural theorist Charles Jencks to refer to the date of Pruitt-Igoe's demolition – via “a final coup de grace by dynamite” – as “the day Modern architecture died” (Jencks, 1991). However, as a narrative of the relations between public architecture, planning and policy and the capacity and responsibility of governments to provide for their citizens, this version of the rise and fall of Pruitt-Igoe incorporates the destruction of a carefully planned residential area as symbolic of the larger end of an era in regards to urban planning. According to this view, the flattening of St. Louis' massive public housing units also indicated the final recognition of the futility of modernism as a theory and practice within urban planning and design, the ruins of Pruitt-Igoe serving as rubble-concrete evidence of the inability of municipal governments and urban planners to address the changing

realities of American cities. For Bristol (1991), the ‘mystification’ of Pruitt-Igoe and its razing over the past forty years has thus worked to both center blame on planners over and ahead of “institutional or structural” issues including social divisions along racial and class lines, while also legitimating the role of architecture by “implying that deeply embedded social problems are caused, and therefore solved, by architectural design” (p. 163). These ongoing debates about the roles and rationales of planners and architects demonstrate that Pruitt-Igoe lives on as a representation of a particular approach to conceiving and implementing urban planning and design, the legacies of which continue to have myriad effects on American cities.

That is, the post-war era witnessed the rise of modernism as more than “simply another turn in taste” – in this mode, while modernist design did entail the use of particular styles, “modernism in architecture and planning spoke for the people and their interests” (Glazer, 2007, p. 2). Before World War II, modernism was “translated” into city planning in response to the effects of industrialization, as the first planners sought to curtail the various ‘ills’ of the industrial city and simultaneously promote growth in a rational and predictable manner. Yet in the wake of global conflict, the precepts of modernist planning and design were even further embedded within the “planning imaginary”, and cities became the focal point of modernist architecture (Bridge & Watson, 2003). In short, as the theories underlying modernist architecture and urban design were incorporated into American urban development in the years following the war, the purpose and practices of urban planning were transformed. Following Glazer (2007), during this period:

“Modernism put forth one big and all-embracing idea: the city as the functional envelope of urban needs, which can be designed and implemented in one grand

plan. Just as modernism calls for “machines of living,” or for manufacturing, or selling, as against the architecturally elaborated structures of age before modernism, so it calls for the city to be the newly made proper envelope for all these machines” (p. 15).

Modern urbanism, then, was much more than a collection of particular artistic styles or principles that could be applied to a given project or design – in many ways it signaled a clean break from historical markers that were, especially in the aftermath of war, often associated with conflicts of the past. As Gelernter (1996) explains, the ‘triumph’ of Modernism as a method for envisioning urban centers was based in four ideals that appealed to and emanated from the post-war generation: these include the “break with the past” to facilitate a “shiny new age of peace and prosperity,” as well as an incorporation of “rational and efficient building technology,” in reference to technological advances in general during the period (p. 263). The other two ideals are more focused on urban development, and in particular the rationales of modern planning and design within American cities. On the one hand, the “visual character of the Modernist style” was framed as congruent with the “self-images” of both states and corporations as rational and efficient, powerful but not ostentatious – on the other, Modernist planning and design were conceived and implemented as forms of “rational problem-solving” that could be used to take on the “logistical complexities” of organizing and managing governance just as it had been used within the war (p. 263). This points to the inherent positivist nature of modern city planning as both capable of, and responsible for, the overall improvement of urban societies and spaces (Gelernter, 1995).

Modernism thus both projected and sought to make real specific forms and experiences of urbanity, in and through the arrangement of city life by rational,

calculated planning and development. This meant that the relationship between cities and modernism centered on the framing of planning as a tool for addressing, and potentially ‘solving’, the issues of metropolitan centers and their populations. That is, the modernist “imagination of cities” comprised an urbanism characterized by “ordered, well-functioning, streamlined spaces, where different land uses were clearly demarcated and separated out, and conflict between these was avoided” (Bridge & Watson, 2003, p. 505). This conception of the well-ordered modern city was also often marked by a retrenchment of social divisions, especially in regards to race and class, which did little to address the structural processes of social and economic inequality (Thomas & Ritzdorf, 1997). Yet as Bridge and Watson (2003) explain, embedded within the imaginative conception of modern urban existence were several “assumptions” that emphasized notions of societal ‘progress’ that were attainable in and through modern planning, and concluded that “order and rationality were better than chaos and irrationality” (p. 506). As these authors also discuss, the massive and carefully managed housing projects in many American cities, including Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, served as the culmination of these ideals – fully-planned, high density urban communities, the archetypal attempts at the re-organization of ‘modern’ life.

Yet the literal rise and fall of many of these public housing structures, while undeniably a critical aspect of the ongoing transformations within American cities, do not hold the complete account of the perpetuating consequences of modern urbanism in the United States. Following Glazer (2007), the most pronounced of these effects are often evident in the realm of “public architecture”, which includes both public housing and any other facility “for the public”: “our government buildings, our

courthouses, our schools and colleges and universities...we can extend the list to other public buildings” (p. 23). Thus this chapter seeks to contribute to an examination of these enduring changes in the public architecture of urban America by concentrating on the linkages between the fate of modernist urban planning and design and the built spaces of public recreation, through a focus on the city of Baltimore’s recreation centers. As the previous sections of this dissertation have engaged with the restructuring of public recreation in Baltimore in regards to planning and policy, this chapter both supplements these analyses and provides another point of inquiry into the relations between recreation and urban governance. While these previous chapters have explained how recreation policies have reflected and shaped the conditions of different formations of governance, this section emphasizes the actual structure, design and planning of the recreation center facilities as physical manifestations of differing approaches to public recreation. Therefore this aspect of the study continues the larger theme of locating recreation within the historical, social, economic and political processes of urban experience, and also gives attention to the roles and realities of the built environment of public recreation in a specific urban context.

The impacts of modernist urban planning and design remain visible in many postindustrial American cities, as planners and architects were central to the creation of many of the public spaces and structures that characterize urban centers (Savitch, 1991). In Baltimore the ideals and models of modernist urban planning are evident through several projects that showcase both the vision and capability of planners, as well as the enduring effects of modern urbanism. This includes the city’s Cherry Hill

neighborhood – beginning in the early 1940s and in coordination with the federal war effort, this area south of downtown was constructed as a racially segregated ‘planned suburb’ for black workers and their families. As Lieb (2011) explains, race and class dynamics were also central to development and planning throughout Baltimore during the post-war period, and several planning projects had dramatic, and in some cases intended, consequences for black neighborhoods throughout the city. Many of these projects centered on the construction or expansion of Baltimore’s roadways, with plans for highways that would both make the city’s downtown more accessible, but would also “replace the city’s most troublesome neighborhoods” – however, instead highway plans “carried disinvestment and decay wherever they went” (p. 52). By conflating “magic motorways” with “slum clearance,” city planners – often with the aid of nationally-recognized planning consultants, including Robert Moses – developed highway plans that proposed the restructuring of large sections of the city; while most of these roads were never built, including the city’s infamous ‘highway to nowhere’ in West Baltimore, the plans alone meant that often the “neighborhoods in their path rotted so thoroughly that they were unsuited to any other use” (Lieb, 2011, p. 52).

The residual effects of these planning efforts, among others, continue to mark Baltimore as a city characterized by both the rise and decline of modern urbanism. While focused on different goals, the careful management and purposeful deployment of these projects demonstrate the capability of modern planners to envision and actively shape the lived spaces of the city, through the incorporation of the ideals and practices of modernist planning and design. Thus the aim of this chapter is to

contribute to this discussion of social and historical forces and the built environment by focusing on specific elements of modernist public recreation in Baltimore, with each being the physical manifestation of different approaches to developing and implementing spaces of recreation. The first of these is the school-recreation center model, as the initial form and design of neighborhood-based recreation planning developed in line with the post-war modernist movement. As discussed below, the school-recreation model was central to the conception and development of the ‘neighborhood’ as both a mode of urban life and as a critical aspect of modern urban planning. This conceptualization of the urban neighborhood as a unitary object of planning and design marked the development of Baltimore throughout the post-war period, with recreation considered an essential service for residents and families. The second example focused on, also in regards to neighborhood-based urban planning, is the park fieldhouse model. The fieldhouse facility represents a variation on the recreation center designed in particular for coordination with open space planning and provision of recreation services and programming in city parks.

The third element of modernist recreation in this analysis is the community multi-purpose center model and design, in regards to the incorporation of recreation into local and federal ‘urban renewal’ programs of the late 1960s and early 1970s – this study focuses specifically on the Model Cities program, which targeted specific neighborhoods for social and economic redevelopment. While examples and vestiges of both the school-recreation center, the park fieldhouse model, and the federally-subsidized community multi-purpose center remain as physical structures within Baltimore’s contemporary built environment, many have been effected by the

restructuring of recreation policy over the last several decades, as described in the first two chapters of this dissertation. Following (Cranz & Boland, 2004) this analysis recognizes that spaces of urban recreation have corresponded to the social, political, and economic forces of a given era and context, and have “evolved to address what were considered to be the pressing social issues of the time” (p. 102). Therefore by focusing on the original planning and design of these facilities, as well as the contrasting legacies of their physical structures, these models are examined as the built spaces of different and shifting approaches to urban governance in and through the rise and decline of modern urbanism.

Research Background

As this chapter concentrates specifically on the built spaces of recreation, the approach for this research is based in the theories and methodologies of spatial analysis. In this mode, the spaces of everyday life are understood as inherently socially constructed, over and against the Cartesian and cartographic model of space as a neutral and objective concept – as del Casino, Jr. (2009) explains, the interdisciplinary project of social geography has been comprised of various attempts to problematize this traditional view of space. In particular, the alternative approach to conceiving space that is incorporated here focuses on the ‘socio-spatial dialectic’ of the urban built environment, referring to the processes through which spaces are shaped in and through social relations, and simultaneously social relations are structured and enacted in and through space (Soja, 1980). Following Dear and Flusty (2002), this chapter asserts that space is continually both a product and producer of this socio-spatial dialectic, meaning that social interactions are concurrently

“constituted”, “constrained”, and “mediated” in and through space. Further, this emphasis on particular spaces within a specific urban context serves to underscore the necessity of contextualization within these approaches – that is, space does not constitute the ‘background’ of social interaction, cohesion and dissolution but is part and parcel of these processes themselves. Borrowing from this approach, we can recognize that any space is a “complex synthesis” of social processes and histories (Dear & Flusty, 2002).

Thus in arguing for the “spatial turn” both more generally (Arias & Warf, 2008; Benjamin, 1999; Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 1989b, 2001) and within physical cultural studies specifically (Friedman & Van Ingen, 2011; Fusco, 2006, 2007; Van Ingen, 2003), numerous scholars have recognized the potential for rethinking the practices, forms and experiences that occur in and through specific spaces. In particular, this work seeks to build on these analyses of the spaces of physical culture by incorporating a focus on space as comprised by the inter-relationships between particular knowledges and materialities – in this mode, particular spaces and places exist as the conjunctures of material knowledge that comprise the actual physical structures of our lived environments (McFarlane, 2011). That is, spatial analysis lends to physical cultural studies an explicit understanding of spaces as “relational ... [the] connections between places and across spaces are both structured and driven by power differentials that are themselves productive – not least for identities and subjectivities” (Johnson et al., 2004b, p. 110). This emphasis on the relational nature of socio-spatial contexts and experiences means that research concerning spatiality is

necessarily focused on the relations of power of and between actors, institutions and the spaces that these relationships construct and inhabit.

Further, the conception of urban spaces as the “site and stakes” of political and social struggle has specifically characterized the approach to spatial analysis within critical and Marxist political economy, wherein the city is often viewed as both a problematic element of capital accumulation and a potential resource for social transformation (Merrifield, 2001). For Lefebvre (2003), the relations between and within social spaces means that while space is socially constructed, particular spaces are constructed in and through the processes of a society’s specific mode of production – therefore each mode of production “has ‘produced...a type of city, which ‘expresses’ it in a way that is immediately visible and legible on the environment” (Lefebvre, 2006, p. 32). This emphasis on the spatial processes of urbanism has been evidenced by a focus both on urban spaces more generally (Harvey, 1989a; Benjamin, 1999, Gottdeiner, 2010; Merrifield, 2013; Smith, 1996; Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Massey, 2005), as well as the spatial transformations of Baltimore as a specific postindustrial American city (Harvey, 2001; Levine, 2000; Silk & Andrews, 2006).

In particular, and as discussed briefly in the first two chapters of this project, Harvey (2001) has described the implications of changing modes of urban governance for the spatial realities of Baltimore over the past 40 years, including the re-development of the city’s Inner Harbor commercial and tourism sector and downtown financial district. More recently, research has focused both on the ongoing nature of redevelopment in relation to downtown and Inner Harbor, the city’s

professional sport stadiums, and sport mega-events such as the ill-fated Baltimore Grand Prix (Friedman, Bustad & Andrews, 2012), as well as the effects of redevelopment policies and programs on the city's residential neighborhoods (Ponzini & Rossi, 2010; Silk, 2010).

As these studies indicate, the methods of urban spatial analysis – for example the examination and comparison of design and architecture, or the interrogation of symbolic arrangements and spatial partitions and divisions – have been recognized as a key and necessary element of both urban studies and physical cultural studies. The spatial analysis approach being utilized here follows that of McFarlane (2011), in that it allows for an analysis of social spaces in a methodologically rigorous manner. In doing so, this framework focuses on and engages with four inter-related elements of the spaces of Baltimore's public recreation centers: 1) the 'power' involved in the promotion of particular modes of knowledge and practice, in and through planning and policy, 2) the 'objects' of planning and design, or the "problem-spaces" that design and planning creates and addresses, 3) the 'forms' of planning and policy-making through organizational structures and interactions, and 4) the 'imaginary' utilized in these spaces, in the images, descriptions, design and planning of these sites (p.11). By combining an examination of the design procedures, architectural projections, policy and planning of recreation centers within particular historical contexts, together with an interrogation into the uses, practices and knowledges of these spaces, this approach emphasizes the 'lived-ness' of spaces as mutable bundles of shifting social relations.

Along with and as part of a focus on spatial relations, this analysis also incorporates a focus on scale and scalar arrangements, in reference to the multiple levels, ranks, or gradations of social, economic, and political processes, and the group and individual associations involved in the formation and implementation of public recreation policy. As an important part of the larger ‘spatial turn’ described above within sociology, urban studies, physical cultural studies and related fields, a focus on scale has enabled different conceptions of the ways in which scales are not natural or given cartographic and experiential categories, but instead are produced and constructed in particular ways and within particular contexts (Mahon & Keil, 2009). This means, in contrast to often naturalized conception of different scales of operation and existence, that there is no preset or preordained scalar arrangement of lived experience, but rather that particular scales are invoked, (re)produced, maintained, and contested within, across and between different sociohistorical contexts. In large part, scale has been engaged and discussed by spatial theorists located in the fields of critical urban geography and political economy (Brenner, 2004; Herrod & Wright, 2002; McMaster & Sheppard, 2004; Swyngedouw, 2005) – this means that interpretations of scale have often focused on the production of scale(s) of particular processes of urbanization, and how broader political and economic forces both shape and are shaped by specific constitutions of scale. In this way, the social production of scale is similar to the process that Lefebvre (Lefebvre, 1991) described as the ‘production of space’, in that scales are both taken as naturalized categories by urban planners and policymakers, and simultaneously created and transformed through planning, policy and the processes of (late) capitalism. For Brenner (2004), the

naturalized nature of scale is often evident within both urban planning and in many analyses of political economy, in that researchers often conceptualize spatial and social interactions as occurring at pre-determined scales, rather than acknowledging and interrogating how these scales are enacted, operate and experienced.

Thus scale, as a related aspect of spatial analysis, is also an often naturalized category – as in our colloquial understandings of the ‘local,’ ‘regional,’ ‘national,’ and ‘global’ scales – while also a modality for understanding how political and social processes operate in our daily lives. As one example, Smith (2008) and others have attempted to portray how different forms and processes of capitalist redevelopment have centered on not only a ‘spatial fix’ in regards to the territorialization of capital through transforming particular spaces (Harvey, 1989a), but also a ‘scalar fix’, in reference to the particular ‘configurations’ of scale that emanate from and contour the social and political realities of given historical context. As such, this approach seeks to explain the ways in which scales “simultaneously circumscribe the social relations of capitalism within determinate, if intensely contested, geographical boundaries and hierarchize them within relatively structured, if highly uneven and asymmetrical, patterns of sociospatial interdependence” (Brenner, 1998, p. 6). That is, scale resonates as a useful conceptual tool for recognizing and understanding the ways in which the uneven development of contemporary cities is imbricated within the processes of urban governance, and gives emphasis to the interconnections between broader social and historical forces and the characterizations of particular spaces of urban recreational opportunity.

Further, the emphasis on scale and its relation to urban experience has brought increased attention to the scale of the human body, meaning that the ‘scalar turn’ both encourages and is part of the prioritization of the (active) body within physical cultural studies. The notion of the body as scale provides one avenue for investigating how forms of social difference – class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, (dis)ability, etc. – overlap, intersect and interact at the ‘level’ of the body, and how these intersecting forms and identities have particular implications within different cultural contexts (Marston, 2004; Ong, 2006; Williams, 1995). This conception of a scale of the body that is always-already in relation to other scales – including the different scales produced in and through urban planning and design - serves to underscore the importance of a multiscale perspective, in that these differently-structured and structuring scales are involved in the “elaboration of new mechanisms of multiscale governance, involving the rearticulation of primary, nodal and marginal scales” (Mahon & Keil, 2009, p. 13). Again, this view emphasizes the relations of power embedded within the processes of re-constructing different scales, through the operations by which space and scale-based conceptions of the ‘nation’, ‘city’ and ‘community’ are invoked, deployed, and understood in urban life. In short, the approach adopted here incorporates a notion of spatial and scalar processes as relational and in-process, without a relativist perspective of social power - scales are actively being re-produced and practiced in and through everyday life in different ways for different individuals and groups (Mahon and Keil, 2009; Marston, 2000).

This means that as a concept rooted in critical urban theory, thinking with scale inherently means thinking about relations of power, often in regards to the

arrangements of political representation, the distribution and access to services and resources, and the forms and practices of economic and social (in)opportunity available to different individual citizens and groupings. However, in contrast to a geographical or ecological model of scale in which larger scales naturally dominate smaller ones, and scales remain relatively obdurate over time and space (Sheppard & McMaster, 2004), the approach offered by critical urban theory instead incorporates scale as a constantly contested and reorganized aspect of both governance and lived experience. This allows the conceptualization of scale adopted in this analysis to evade an assumed ‘top-down’ hierarchy of social and institutional relations, and instead recognize that “while power hierarchies always exist, with dominant, nodal, and marginal scales, the largest scales need not dominate such hierarchies...rather, a periodic reconfiguration of scale occurs” (Leitner & Sheppard, 2009, p. 236). In short, thinking with and through scale enables a conception of power as often conceived, practiced and experienced in hierarchical terms, but with the accompanying understanding that there are multiple and inter-related hierarchies operating in and through a given socio-spatial context.

As this analysis is focused on the particular spaces and scales of public recreation within the processes of urbanization, this work seeks to contribute to what Hackworth identifies as “a segment of critical scholarship particularly concerned...with the way that such ideas permeate, and are experienced at various geographical scales” (2008, p. 11). Thus the relationship between space and scale means that this chapter concentrates on the re-structuring of different scales in relation to the design, planning and implementation of the spaces of public recreation in Baltimore. As

described above, the focus of this analysis is centered on several different ‘models’ of recreation center facilities – and the scalar arrangements that are imbricated within these spaces. Specifically, this chapter engages the school-recreation center model, park fieldhouse model and community multi-purpose center as three distinct formations of modernist urban recreation, evidenced by the planning and design of these facilities. After describing the characteristics of these facilities that mark them as elements of modern urbanism, this analysis also demonstrates the consequences of the decline of modernist planning and design for these spaces, in particular two aspects of this shift that continue to have impacts on city’s recreation system: on the one hand, the expansion and subsequent decline of Baltimore’s network of recreation centers has had particular significance for the relationship between recreation centers as aspects of neighborhood-based urban planning, as the design of modernist recreation often implied an association between localized spaces, and the socially-constructed scale of the urban neighborhood as a frame for both policymakers, planners and citizens. At the same time, the decades of disinvestment that have accompanied the larger shift in American urban governance described both here and in the first chapter of this project have resulted in the deterioration and decline of many of Baltimore’s ‘modern’ recreation centers as part of the city’s “Fourth World” postindustrial landscapes.

In general, the aim of this analysis is to engage the spaces and scales of public recreation centers as socially constructed and constructing aspects of urban experience, in that the planning and design of recreation centers demonstrate particular rationales and strategies of urban governance both historically and in the

contemporary moment. Therefore the approach incorporated here asserts that urban planning and design have specific implications for the lived experiences of urban centers, and that recreation centers continue to serve as prime examples of the sociospatial dialectic that shapes both physical spaces and the associations between actors and institutions that occur within them. Following (Silk & Andrews, 2012),

“In this way, transformations within cities are not just the result of the uneven hand of capitalism, and local complexities are neither neutral nor innocent with respect to the practices of domination and control; rather, urban design and city planning embody, implicitly or explicitly, power/knowledge relations - plans are never neutral tools of spatial ordering and the imagination and different forms of representation seep subtly, and at times more visibly, into the rhetoric of governmental practice” (Silk, 2012, p. 131).

Thus in short, this examination of the physical spaces of Baltimore’s recreation centers reflects the changing dynamics of urban governance, as well as the implications of what these spaces mean in the city’s contemporary built environment. This chapter therefore focuses on how the ‘right to the active city’ has been manifest in and through particular spaces and scales of urban experience, as well as the implications of different approaches to the design and planning of recreation center facilities for the current and future conditions and experiences of urban recreation.

Recreation in the Modern(ist) City

As discussed in the introductory chapter of this project, the origins of public recreation in the United States were embedded within the social reform programs and politics of the late 19th and early 20th century. In this context, concerns about the relationship between health and physical activity of urban populations, and especially the health of the working masses, were manifest into the development of particular spaces of leisure and recreation for urban citizens (Friedman & Bustad, 2015). This

interest in improving city life, often through studying and addressing the ‘ills’ of industrial urbanism, was also shared by the first researchers of the Chicago school of sociology in the 1920s – led by Dr. Robert Park, this group sought a “total understanding” of urban social experience that was both based in sociological theory and tested by observation and analysis (Hall, 2014, p. 431). In particular, the research of the Chicago school focused on a singular aspect of living in the city, in the “simplest and most elementary form of association”: the urban neighborhood (Park, 1925). As Park explained, the neighborhoods of industrial Chicago were characterized by particular arrangements of individual, family, and class interests, and in response the reform movement of the period was reflected in the “attempt [that] has been made to renovate evil neighborhoods by the construction of playgrounds and the introduction of supervised sports of various kinds” (Park, 1925). This included not only the further development of urban parks and open spaces, but also the first ‘centers’ of recreation, in the form of structures for physical activity and leisure programs and activities.

The purposes of public recreation were therefore inextricable from attempts to reform and improve urban life, including the early stages of both urban sociology and urban planning that emerged throughout the first decades of the 20th century. That is, the domain and profession of urban planning was in part the result of and response to the changing dynamics and demographics of industrializing cities that were the focus of the Chicago school’s research, as planners sought to foster particular approaches to re-organizing urban spaces and communities. Urban planning thus has many of its initial foundations within the cities of industry and immigrants, wherein “urbanization

was uncoordinated, even chaotic, and led to living conditions that were very unequal” (Troy, 2003, p. 543). As the size and scope of growing centers of industrial capitalism meant that efforts at organizing and planning social life also increased in importance, planners sought to incorporate specific forms and models of development and design – as explained above, these forms and models were most often based in modernist notions of societal progress, as well as the ‘problem-solving’ nature and purpose of planning in relation to urban neighborhoods (Boyer, 1983).

Bridge and Watson (2003) identify two particular examples of the “utopian” vision of the modernist neighborhood as a concept and practice within urban planning during this period, each of which continued to shape planning theory and practice well into the postwar era. The most popularized and influential of these was Le Corbusier’s “grand vision” for neighborhoods as part of the larger redesign of modern cities, in which planning was “large scale, comprehensive, and embodied a relief in rationality and the possibility of order” (p. 506). In his conceptions of the city as a “machine for living”, Corbusier sought to unite planning and architectural design in an attempt to re-create the ideal conditions for urban living (Knox, 2010, p. 118). Corbusier’s vision of a city and its neighborhoods thus involved a conception of ‘planning from above’, wherein “the organization of space implied the organization of people,” that continues to resonate within contemporary planning (p. 506). Another example of early modernist planning of and for the urban neighborhood was the ‘garden city’ model developed by Ebenezer Howard, in which the “problems of the large metropolis were to be solved by building a number of small garden cities”, with each surrounded by green belts to “ensure their autonomy rather than a satellite

relation to the city” (p. 506). While Howard’s garden city approach would have a limited impact on pre-war urban planning in the U.S. (Greenbelt, Maryland exists as one of the few centrally-conceived and planned American ‘garden cities’, see Parker (Parker, 2003), the overall impetus shared by both the garden city and Corbusier’s modernist visions was to utilize planning as a tool for re-structuring the urban neighborhood, including the distribution and provision of recreational spaces and services. Both parks and recreation facilities were an aspect of Baltimore’s growth as an industrial center throughout the early 1900s as well, with reform groups and social clubs often providing recreational spaces and programs designed for youth and working adults in the city’s most populated areas (Kessler, 1989). This included the first Roosevelt Park recreation center, originally founded by members of the city’s Hampden neighborhood in 1911, and the establishment of the ‘Recreation Pier’ site at the foot of Broadway in Fells Point in 1914, with the latter developed in response to the “lack of a breathing spot” for a “congested district” of citizens (“NEW RECREATION PIER MAY BE OPENED: Also, It May Not Be Opened On That ...”, 1914). These examples characterize the nature of many recreational facilities and services in the city throughout the early 20th century.

However, the establishment of the Baltimore Department of Recreation and Parks in 1940 would signal not only the formal incorporation of recreation into the city government, but also the full integration of public recreational services and spaces into the city’s planning and design. That is, as the timing of the department’s founding was aligned with the rise of modernist planning in urban America, public recreation and city planning were inherently connected as elements of the modern(ist)

city. As Troy (2003) explains, the duration and conclusion of World War II “was followed by increased determination to improve the quality of urban life” – while housing was a primary concern in these efforts, “the programs were not only devised to build better housing with greater security of tenure, but also to ensure the provision of properly located employment, facilities, and services” (p. 546). Urban planning in the postwar context was thus characterized by the increased influence of modernist ideals, but with a renewed emphasis on the utilitarian aspect of rationalized planning as a tool for organizing urban life. In short, while ideas about the “nature” of postwar planning were linked to earlier modernist conceptions of the city, “views about the *purposes* or *aims* planning should pursue were more particular to that time and had their roots in more recent history” (Taylor, 1998, p. 120). In particular, these concerns about the purposes of planning were reflected in the incorporation and prioritization of ‘design’ as an essential aspect and practice within urban development.

As with the roots of city planning, the history of urban design – in regards to the physical space and architecture of buildings, streets, communities, and entire cities - was shaped by rational modernism, in that design was conceived as a method for improving the overall quality of life (Madanipour, 2007). However, in the postwar era the centrality of design within urban planning was evidenced by the “proliferation of government programmes for housing, urban renewal, land use zoning, transportation planning, environmental planning and comprehensive planning projects” – further, this increase in *planning* corresponded with a growth in the number of urban planners, as revamped educational programs turned out planning professionals with “self-confidence concerning the possibility of delivering better, safer, nicer and more

efficient cities” (Knox 2010, p. 112). As Knox (2010) explains, in this period urban design signaled a form of “social redemption” within planning, in that creating structures and spaces marked by order and efficiency was inextricably linked to attempts to plan out the ‘intentional city’ (p. 120).

As discussed in the first chapter of this project, in regards to the implementation of recreational services, the most important aspect of modernist urban design was in the development of the neighborhood as a unit of planning theory and practice. In the history of American urban planning, the neighborhood emerged in the late 1920s in the form of Clarence Perry’s ‘Neighborhood Unit’ model, which was a primary aspect of urban planning in the post-war period. Perry’s ‘Neighborhood’ was designed as a community within the city, an effort to improve urban life that was scaled down to a smaller area of concentrated commercial and residential planning. This planning and design scheme was centered on a school facility, and included a population of “5,000 to 6,000 people and 800 or 1,000 children of elementary school age...in single-family-per-lot sections requiring an area of about 160 acres” – in Perry’s view this was the environment “best adapted...for the growing of an urban neighborhood community” (Perry, 1929). As an attempt at fostering ‘neighborhood spirit’, Perry’s design and plan centered local shops and a central community space around the school facility, and called for arterial streets to handle traffic (Biddulph, 2000).

Further, the portended advantages and effects of the neighborhood as a unit of planning meant that it was popularized by and for different reasons in different contexts. As Hall (2014) explains, throughout the postwar era the neighborhood

model was also favored by groups supporting the assimilation of immigrant and migrant populations and the cultivation of citizenship, as well as planners concerned with the growing importance of the automobile within urban development. The modern neighborhood as a unit of planning and design was also inherently connected to concerns about the health and well-being of urban populations, including an interest in physical activity opportunities and services. As Corburn (2009) explains, the neighborhood-based model of urban planning - centered on safety, security and the efficient delivery and provision of public services including recreation - “took hold” with planners during and after World War II, often in regards to the relationship between the design of urban communities and public health (p. 53). One example of this linkage between urban planning and concerns for health and physical activity is evidenced in the American Public Health Association’s 1948 publication of *Planning the Neighborhood*. This report linked the existence and persistence of health disparities with the provision of services and ‘amenities’ that supplemented and supported the family and community, calling for planners, developers and the public to “build not merely homes but neighborhoods” to ensure the physical, mental and moral well-being of all Americans (1948). In sum, the city neighborhood – as an actually existing physical space, and as an approach to organizing and providing public services – was therefore a central aspect of postwar urban planning.

Modern Recreation I: the School-Recreation Center and Park Fieldhouse

In this analysis of the built spaces of Baltimore’s public recreation, the emphasis on neighborhood-based modernist planning and design is primarily evidenced through two distinct models of the urban recreation center, both of which were

conceived and implemented in the postwar period and in conjunction with the neighborhood-based approach to urban development: the school-recreation center model and park fieldhouse model. Both the school-recreation center and park fieldhouse models were utilized extensively by the city's public recreation department (Baltimore City Recreation and Parks or BCRP) in regards to capital investment and facility construction throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. As such, many of these facilities were also characterized by their inclusion within larger development projects and comprehensive planning reports, as well as similarities in regards to their physical design. In particular, the design of the school-recreation center and park fieldhouse reflects both the incorporation and adaptation of particular principles of modernist architecture, especially in relation to service-oriented public buildings that were seen as representations of organized, rational governance (Glazer, 2007, p. 23). However, and as Glazer (2007) explains, the streamlined and straightforward 'international' style of larger, more expansive examples of modernist architecture – including the first modern 'skyscrapers', as well as large-scale public works projects such as Pruitt-Igoe – was often selectively employed by planners in relation to public architecture, meaning that the modernism of Corbusier was effectively diluted into an approach to planning that emphasized design as a rational practice and form (p. 24).

Further, the design of many neighborhood-based public facilities also evidences the linkage between modernist planning and the technologies and materials utilized within building construction at the time. Following Troy (2003), modernist urban architecture was also marked by the development and incorporation of new technologies for acquiring, transporting and assembling building materials, especially

those viewed as efficient and inexpensive such as brick and steel, as well as technological and engineering advancements in building construction and maintenance (p. 547). In this mode, the physical design of a public facility was to reflect the services occurring within it – in other words, the building was to be designed based primarily on its purpose, without any unnecessary ornamentation or added details. While recreation programs took place in a variety of settings, modernist city planners in Baltimore emphasized the efficiency and adaptability of the school-recreation and park fieldhouse models of recreation facility. Thus school-recreation centers and park fieldhouses built in this era, much like other public facilities including schools, were often marked by straight-angled, brick-and-mortar buildings that prioritized the ‘form follows function’ dictum of modernist architecture (Glazer 2007, p. 24).

These elements of straightforward, functional design, as well as the prioritization of public services as a part of neighborhood-based planning, characterized the school-recreation center as the initial ‘model’ recreation facility within Baltimore’s postwar built environment. While the city’s public recreation department (BCRP) grew slowly throughout the war, the increasing population that accompanied the wartime industrial effort meant that planning and design became progressively more important in regards to housing and public services, even more so given the city’s entrenched racial and class dynamics and divisions, as well as the limitations of a wartime economy (Durr, 2003). The reality of racial segregation within Baltimore’s home front experience was starkly evident in the first capital plans for the Bureau of Recreation in 1943, which called for the purchase of several properties with an aim at

establishing facilities that could offer recreational opportunities for nearby communities, including:

“\$168,930 for use in the construction of recreation facilities for Negroes at Madison Square, a project involving the purchase of fifty houses; \$15,150 for a center in Brooklyn; \$25, 725 for one at Perkins Square for Negroes; \$39,075 for facilities at Princeton Place; \$100,000 for the purchase of Friends’ School on Park avenue; \$80,000 to buy the Bennett Hall and annex part of the Goucher College property... [these] properties should be purchased at this time in order that they may be developed during the post-war construction period when materials are available” (“\$428,880 ASKED FOR RECREATION: Properties Would Be Bought To Start Department’s First Year Program,” 1943).

Following the war, the emphasis given to neighborhood-based planning and design meant that both politicians and urban planners advocated for a coordinated, rational and efficient distribution of city services, including recreational facilities and activities. By 1948, the Mayor’s Office, Department of Planning and BCRP had arranged a “personal tour” of recreation programs across the city by the Mayor and department officials, as recreational services had been amongst the most requested issues by citizens over the previous several years (Annual Report, 1948). During the tour, the Mayor identified the Locust Point Recreation Center in south Baltimore – attached to the neighborhood’s school and adjacent to a branch of the city’s public library system, a public bath, and a health clinic – as a prime example of the potential for modern urban planning, describing the facilities as the “ideal community setup serving all ages and practically all purposes of a neighborhood, from students to oldsters” (Locust Point Recreation Center, 1947).

Over the next two decades, this strategy of grouping public services together, and then positioning this co-located group of facilities as the focal point or ‘hub’ of a particular neighborhood, was a key aspect of urban planning across the city. Based in

both the support of local politicians and citizens, as well as the rationalized, functional approach of modernist planners, this strategy yielded the school-recreation center as the standard recreation facility for Baltimore's communities. Initially, this strategy was developed by having BCRP programs operate within public schools, but often without a designated space for recreational services, equipment and staff. This led to a design that sought to incorporate the co-location of a school and recreation center, but with distinct boundaries and exclusive entrances, so that each facility could effectively be accessed and utilized without entering the other. In 1956, this 'school-rec' model was lauded as a success in the example of the Leith Walk Recreation Center, which had been completed a year earlier and featured recreational programming for young men and women as well as seniors (Baetjer, 1956). In this design, the recreation center was stationed in a two-story, brick and glass wing of the neighborhood's elementary school - the school's gymnasium featured separate access doors to both the school and to the recreation center, which comprised 8,600 square feet of a multi-purpose room, small activity room, boy's and girl's bathrooms, and an office . This model represented the implementation of neighborhood-based recreational services as part of the larger planning and design of the community, as it literally and directly connected public educational and recreational services.

Thus the center's infrastructure extends from the school's architectural form as an efficient use of available and affordable building materials, while the exterior of simple square windows and brick façade also reflects the functionalism of the building's interior, with rationalized and easily rearranged spaces for accommodating different activities. The shared gymnasium also underscores the use of efficient

construction methods and materials, and emphasizes the functionality of the design in regards to the programs and services that could potentially utilize the space. In short, the physical structure of the Leith Walk recreation center represents the services-oriented approach to planning the modern urban neighborhood, as part of the design of both the school, the surrounding community, and the overall city.



Figure 2.1 - Leith Walk Recreation Center (Photo by Author)

The school-recreation center therefore expresses the focus on the neighborhood as a unit of postwar urban planning, in that communities were to be function in and around this facility in regards to public services. However, while the design and planning of the school-recreation model was intended for specific locations and populations, it was also simultaneously predicated on a universalism that neglected and often erased the particular dynamics of existing communities. As Corburn (2009)

explains, modernist neighborhood-based planning was characterized by a “physical deterministic orientation” that emphasized the potential for design to improve on the previous conditions and practices of the community – in short, modernist urban planners could (and should) create and implement something better than that which was already in place (p. 51). Thus while neighborhoods made up the critical element of modern planning, the principles and practices of this approach were often utilized without regard to local contexts. Instead, the urban neighborhood was developed within the frame of the functionalist city, in which each element of urban life could be appropriately organized and coordinated. Following Taylor (1998), this emphasis on “universalist” and “comprehensive” forms of city planning in the postwar period was reflected in the growth of municipal planning departments, as well as the development of urban ‘master plans’ that attempted to outline a planning strategy for the entire city (p. 42).

By the early 1950s, city planners in Baltimore – as in other American cities – had prioritized the development of comprehensive, city-wide planning projects, often in conjunction with the neighborhood-based approach to developing urban communities. This included a “Master Plan” for the city that was constructed in two phases – the first phase, completed in 1953, was focused on the ‘inner-city’ area bordered by the harbor to the south, North Avenue to the north, Patterson Park to the east, and Monroe Street to the west, making up “virtually all of the older city”; the second phase, completed by 1957, focused on the “outer city” and suburban neighborhoods (Williams, 1957). As the study explained, these areas were characterized by differences in the conditions of public facilities, in particular in regards to schools and

recreation centers. While suburban schools were “for the most part...in good structural condition and, as a rule, are surrounded by more or less adequate play space,” those facilities “nearer the heart or inner core of the city...are aging and are frequently crowded on relatively small lots” (Williams, 1957). In response to the needs of both ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ neighborhoods, the city’s Department of Planning identified a single structure that could function as both a service facility and a space of and for community relations: the school-recreation center. Following the characteristics of the Leith Walk school-recreation center model described above, in the comprehensive plan the school-recreation center was to operate as the “focal point of a community” and “the hub of neighborhood activity” – thus the combination of a school and ‘play space’ into a singular building was developed and implemented by planners engrained with the modernist rationales of efficiency and functionalism (Williams, 1957). Further, according to *Baltimore Plans*, the 1957 master plan released by the city’s planning department, the school-recreation model had a specific design necessary for it to work best as the “heart of a good neighborhood”:

“A typical school-recreation center is an L-shaped structure set in the near corner of a rectangular area. Along the street corner is the administration unit, flanked by the classroom wing, and backed up by a unit that houses an auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria, kitchen, game rooms, multiple-use rooms, and arts and crafts areas. Behind the combined facilities’ wing and skirting one side is an ample hard-surface activities area, and flanking it and running up to the classroom wing is a soft-ball area...while about the whole area is seating for both neighborhood adults and children” (*Baltimore Plans*, 1957).

As a critical aspect of the modern urban neighborhood, the school-recreation center therefore enabled the types of community services that planners considered essential for community development, while also allowing planners to implement a similar model in different locations across the city. As the 1957 master plan

explained, this approach to urban planning incorporated both the need for “modern, adequate schools”, and also recognized that “sociologists emphasize the correlation between the rising rate in juvenile delinquency and the lack of wholesome recreational outlets” (Williams, 1957). The school-recreation model was therefore supported by rationales concerning the purposes and goals of public recreation policy (as discussed in the first chapter of this project) - yet it also represented an element of planning and design that could be put into practice regardless of existing conditions. That is, while school-recreation centers could easily be implemented in growing communities around the city’s periphery, many of which featured available open space for new construction, the universal and functional design of these facilities meant they would also be utilized in ‘urban renewal’ projects aimed at older neighborhoods. Therefore the 1957 study indicated that the school-recreation model could be intended specifically towards the ‘inner city’ area, as “in razing slum dwellings in connection with rehabilitation, open space may be created on which to develop adequate, modern school-recreation centers” (Williams, 1957). This strategy again reflected the emphasis in modernist planning on re-designing and, where necessary, razing and replacing existing structures and spaces in advance of a rational, efficient built environment of ‘progress’ that could better organize and make use of the different aspects of urban life (Taylor, 1998, p. 42).

The centrality of the school-recreation center within Baltimore’s communities was thus evident in both BCRP policy and planning throughout this period, as the recreation department sought to develop neighborhood-based recreation spaces wherever possible. In 1958, both the Gardenville and Mount Royal school-recreation

facilities opened, with the planning and design for each based in the model proposed by city planners: each was a “cooperative project” between the education and recreation departments, in which the “school-recreation center was included in the school plans and built in conjunction with the school building” (“Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide,” 1958). Also, and again predicated on rationality and efficiency of modernist design, the interior of the recreation ‘wing’ attached to the Gardenville school contained “a multiple purpose room with sliding panel for conversion to two sections for lounge room; club room, craft shop, clothes check room, kitchen, storage room and office (“Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide,” 1958). The facility’s inherent functionality was also exhibited through the shared gymnasium, along with locker rooms, showers, and a playground that could be utilized by either the school or for recreation programs (“Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide,” 1958). The Mount Royal school-recreation center incorporated many of these same design elements, including both the multi-purpose and sliding panel rooms within the recreation wing, as well as the shared gymnasium and locker rooms – further, the recreation wing was positioned “in one end of the building so that it can be closed off from the balance of the school building when in use” (“Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide,” 1958).



Figure 2.2 - Gardenville Recreation Center (Photo by Author)



Figure 2.3 - Mount Royal Recreation Center (Photo by Author)

Thus in line with both the city's comprehensive planning efforts and the prioritization of the neighborhood as a unit of modern design, school-recreation centers were implemented as the model public recreation facility in Baltimore throughout the late 1950s and into the early 1960s. By 1963, the Park Board was recommending that six new recreation centers be built within the next year to serve different communities throughout the city, with three of these centers utilizing the school-recreation model – at the same time the department had already hired architects to do “advance planning” for school-recreation facilities at four other school sites (“6 RECREATION CENTERS ARE SLATED IN '64: Park Board Releases Recreation Bureau Report, Review,” 1963). These recreation centers - including the John Booth center in Highlandtown in East Baltimore, and the James McHenry center in Hollins Market in West Baltimore – were each characterized by the same planning strategy, as part of the ‘focal point’ for community services. They also shared similarities in regards to aesthetics and appearance, in that they were most often square brick structures attached to or within a wing of the school building.



Figure 2.4 - John Booth Recreation Center (Photo by Author)



Figure 2.5 - James McHenry Recreation Center (Photo by Author)

As Glazer explains, the use of efficient building materials and lack of ornamentation marks out many aspects of modernist public architecture, demonstrating the ‘less is more’ ethos of modern design (2007, p. 23). However, many of the school-recreation facilities also reflected both the rationales and constraints of urban planners, in that public departments worked with specific goals and limited budgets. Relph (1987) identified this particular condition as a “third type of modernist architecture”, concerned with “the work of local architects and engineers adapting modernist styles to immediate needs and limited budgets” rather than the more (in)famous architects and projects that are commonly known (p. 198). In Relph’s view, the result of this incorporation of modernism into public planning and architecture could be described as “no frills modernism”, as the “mostly anonymous vernacular architecture of the new industrial state”:

“Industrial state vernacular has the rectangular forms and unadorned surfaces of modernist architecture, thereafter the similarities are few. There is little elegance or concern for proportion and perfection of finish; construction materials are ordinary and used in combination – bricks with concrete blocks, laminated panels, prefabricated sections, aggregates, squarish windows of standardized dimensions...[‘no frills’] structures may have a partly decorated façade, perhaps of stucco or stone cladding, which they present to the public, or at least to the street; around the side there or the back there are concrete block walls, mass-produced window units and windowless metal doors” (p. 200).

The ‘no frills’ approach, in regards to building materials, construction techniques, and architectural design, emphasizes the rationality and efficiency that was incorporated into many of Baltimore’s school-recreation centers. As demonstrated by the examples in this analysis, these structures most often featured the types of ‘squarish’ and ‘unadorned’ characteristics that marked much of modernist public architecture, while also being designed on principles of functionality and

universalism that enabled the school-recreation model to be implemented in different locations, regardless of existing community dynamics. The heavy use of brick and concrete, and the prioritization of these building materials ahead of glass and other surfaces, meant that the school-attached recreation center was a large box with few windows and metal doors from the exterior, while the interior was subdivided rooms with at least several multi-purpose spaces. The center usually shared utility access with the school building, and most centers were single-story, though in some cases, usually when the connected or adjacent school facility was more than a single story in height, the recreation center would also have two floors.

By 1963, a departmental review of the previous 15 years of capital investment in recreation facilities and sites showed that 15 centers had been built, including over 10 school-recreation centers. The other primary model for a public recreation facility in this period was the park fieldhouse – the fieldhouse model shared many characteristics with the design of the school-recreation center, in its use of efficient building materials and emphasis on functionalism. Moreover, the fieldhouse was often implemented in accordance with neighborhood-based planning, in an effort to connect the community to local green spaces and parks (“6 RECREATION CENTERS ARE SLATED IN '64: Park Board Releases Recreation Bureau Report, Review,” 1963). Community parks thereby also served as the ‘hub’ of community relations within the vision of city planners, as green spaces were also seen as an essential element of a modern urban neighborhood (Cranz, 1982). Accordingly, the capital plan released by the department in 1963 would not only involve the planning and design of seven school-recreation centers, but also the construction of several

park fieldhouse facilities. These included the Latrobe Park (now Locust Point) Recreation Center in south Baltimore, as well as the Hilton Recreation Center in west Baltimore – each was built in 1966 as the first permanent structure for recreational services in the surrounding neighborhoods, and each was positioned in a park or open space and with access to athletic fields (Recreation Centers Begun "RECREATION CENTER BEGUN: Mayor Breaks Ground For Hilton Facility," 1966). As these examples demonstrate, the fieldhouse model - while not extending from or attached to another public facility - featured some of the same 'no frills' design elements as the school-recreation center, in particular the architectural form of a squat brick box with a few standardized windows and heavy metal doors. Further, the functionality of the fieldhouse, in that it was designed and constructed in order to facilitate recreation services and programs within nearby open space, meant that these facilities most often did not have a gymnasium, instead consisting of a multi-purpose room, office, bathrooms and storage for equipment.



Figure 2.6 - Locust Point (formerly Latrobe Park) Recreation Center



Figure 2.7 - Hilton Recreation Center (Photo by Author)

In 1965 the confluence of both a demand for comprehensive urban plans, as well as the centrality of design within recreational facilities, resulted in BCRP's own long-range planning effort – this recreation 'master plan' was conducted by the department in conjunction with a professional planning consultant firm hired by the city. This report incorporated the school-recreation center and park fieldhouse model as the primary models of recreation space, as it recognized the importance of these structures within Baltimore's existing recreation system, as well as the role of these types of centers in the "future environment" of the city (Annual Report, 1965). However, the previous design and plan for school-recreation and park facilities had most often been deployed where and when capital investment was needed, including in regards to the centers described above. The comprehensive size and scope of the 1965 master plan meant that recreation planning could instead attempt to coordinate both capital investment and construction projects, as well as staffing and programming, across the entire city. As the plan explained, "It is no longer enough to build parks and parkways at random within a city; the effort must be to so devise the park and recreation long range plan as to make the whole of the city one great inter-related system of land-water parks and parkways" ("Long Range Plan," 1965).

In this mode, the department and consultant planners developed and proposed the "recreation activity center" as the collection of multiple public facilities and services available within a given area – in this conception the physical recreation facility, whether a school-recreation center or park fieldhouse, was considered as one necessary 'component' within the provision of recreation to the neighborhood ("Long Range Plan," 1965). Rather, the long range plan called for the distribution of

recreation based on the population of a neighborhood, which was defined as between 8,000 and 12,000 persons – for each designated neighborhood in the city, recreational sites would consist of both parks and open space as well as built facilities (“Long Range Plan,” 1965). Reflecting concerns for these sites as a necessity of neighborhood-based planning, the plan explained that “it has been said that no neighborhood is better than the focal points – such as a church, school, shopping center, mall, topographical feature, or park – to which it orients” (“Long Range Plan,” 1965). Therefore the 1965 BCRP master plan again reflects the principles of modernist urban planning within the development of Baltimore’s spaces of recreation. In utilizing the school-recreation and park facility as part of a larger design and plan for the city’s communities, this plan epitomized modern recreation. In short, both the school recreation-center and park fieldhouse model – and the physical structures that resulted from their implementation – therefore reflect the presence and purposes of public recreation services and facilities within the neighborhood-based forms of modernist planning and design prevalent throughout Baltimore (and much of industrial urban America) from the postwar era and into the 1960s.

Modern Recreation II: the Multi-Purpose Community Center

Yet while urban planning shaped and was shaped by the conditions of industrial American cities throughout the postwar period, the purposes and practices of planning, design and urban governance were again transformed in the context of the late 1960s. This era was characterized by shifts in the role of both the local and federal government in relation to urban areas and populations, predicated on specific economic and social philosophies. Following Hackworth (2008), the combination of

Keynesian economic models, based in state interventions in order to regulate and guide the effects of market capitalism, and an “egalitarian liberalism” that emphasized political and economic rights, meant that urban spaces and populations became the primary focus of social policy (p. 6). The culmination of these ideas was in the formation of a “redistributive nation-state” designed to “aggressively intervene to provide some of the basic economic conditions necessary for experiencing the putative political freedoms of classical liberalism” (p. 6). In this mode, governmental policy and planning prioritized the development and implementation of particular ‘interventions’ that could improve the quality of life of urban residents. While these ideas had germinated in the New Deal and response to the economic struggles before World War II, the growing inequality of American society after the war was often reflected along both racial and class lines, divisions that were even more pronounced in metropolitan areas – this context bore the opposing realities of the suburbs and the ‘inner city,’ which was increasingly redefined as the racialized American ‘ghetto’ (Sugrue,1996). As Durr explains, the differentiating aspects of race and class were embedded within the development of Baltimore throughout this period, as the city was shaped by both the historical and contemporary realities of racial and ethnic segregation and economic (in)opportunity (2003). The 1965 BCRP master plan for the city’s recreational services also briefly discussed this larger polarization of urban America and the effects on Baltimore, stating that

“an increasing number of our population have larger income, more education, greater mobility and more leisure time. On the other hand, an increasing number of our economically underprivileged population is residing in dense urban areas. The needs of both must be understood and reflected in recreation plans. These physical and social changes are demanding a change in traditional recreational planning concepts” (“Long Range Plan,” 1965).

The transitions that entailed the modernization of recreation planning and design in the context of the 1960s were thus inextricably linked with the specter of social inequality, in that city planning itself was often viewed as the potential solution to the myriad urban issues of the time (Mabin, 2003, p. 556). That is, and as further discussed in the first chapter of this project, the intersection of ‘interventionist’ public policy and the conditions of race and class in American cities in the late 1960s had specific impacts on the administration and provision of urban public recreation – primarily in the increased funding and support recreational programs and facilities, concurrent expansion of recreational services. Thus as Baltimore’s recreation department entered the “golden age” of public recreation in urban America, the planning and design of recreation centers also reflected the emphasis on physical activity and leisure as essential elements of urban life (Deppe, 1986). In part, however, this renewed support for recreation was a response to the disparity in public facilities and services across different parts of the city, which often mirrored the social divisions between and within neighborhoods.

This disparity was the focus of one of the initial connections between the social welfare policy of the late 1960s and Baltimore’s recreation system, in the formation of an officially designated ‘Action Area’ for federal and local anti-poverty programs that began in 1967 (Macnees, 1967). The Action Area included 1/13 of the total land size of the city, and was comprised of communities in both east and west Baltimore, most characterized by both a majority African-American population and a lack of both economic development and public facilities – as the Baltimore Sun explained, “from the heart of the West Baltimore ghetto to the nearest ball field of the

Department of Recreation and Parks is 36-block walk” (Macnees, 1967). In response to charges that the city had invested more in recreation facilities outside of the inner city area, the department indicated that 16 of the 28 capital projects that had been started in the last year were in or immediately around the Action Area, including the construction of five school-recreation centers (Macnees, 1967). The perceived necessity of and support for urban renewal programs and development projects, and by extension the support for public recreation facilities and services, was only heightened by the tensions and violence that characterized Baltimore and other American cities following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in April 1968. In response to the threat of further disturbances, and with the help of federal funding for summer youth worker programs, the department moved to incorporate more elements of mobile ‘street recreation’ programming that targeted underserved neighborhoods by operating out of a trailer or truck, rather than a built facility – this included over a dozen portable, temporary pools that were utilized during the summer swim season (“Mobile pools to cool inner city youngsters,” 1968). Additionally, in both 1968 and 1969 BCRP received unprecedented levels of funding for recreation programs, while capital investments were also expanded (“Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide,” 1969).

Among the projects included in this expansion of capital projects, and specifically in relation to the provision of recreation in the ‘inner city’ area, was the design, planning and construction of the Bentalou Recreation Center in west Baltimore. The Bentalou center, while still classified as a school-recreation center due to its location immediately next to an existing school building, was nonetheless distinct from the

school-recreation facility described above. In particular, the Bentalou recreation structure was funded using both municipal and federal funding, and was implemented as a separate but co-located facility adjacent to the community school, as part of a “city-wide program to expand recreation facilities at city schools built prior to the time when recreation centers were included in school construction” (“Recreation Unit Added At Bentalou,” 1970).

In regards to the architectural form of the center, the exterior and interior both shared features of the previous school-recreation model, while also having several key differences. Like the school-recreation model previously utilized by city planners, the Bentalou recreation building utilized efficient building materials in a functional design. Thus the exterior of the center featured an “all-on-one-level design”, with a material of “medium red-brown brick”, while the architects sought to create an “open quality” while simultaneously reducing maintenance costs by utilizing “damage-resistant glazing for the fenestration”, and by placing “all windows – which slope back from the exterior walls – above the seven foot level” (“\$250,000 Bentalou Recreation Center,” 1971). While the existing school building meant that the recreation facility was separated from the school altogether, with a short walkway extending from the north side of the school towards the recreation center. Inside, the 7,000 square foot center comprised “a large multi-purpose room, game room, kitchen, meeting room, arts and crafts room with adjoining work room, office space, large storage areas and rest rooms”, and the multi-purpose and game room were separated by a removable partition (“\$250,000 Bentalou Recreation Center,” 1971).

However, and in contrast to the standardized functionality of the previous school-recreation center model, the Bentalou facility was also characterized by a particular approach to planning that viewed the structure as part of a larger intervention into the community. The design of the center was therefore intended to “serve the recreation needs of a large inner city neighborhood and provide an artistic focal point for the community” – one of the architects involved with the project explained that the facility was “not done as a straightforward building, but as an artistic entity, a structure that can uplift the neighborhood” (“Recreation Unit Added At Bentalou,” 1970). In this manner the Bentalou center expresses the same rationality and efficiency of the other modernist recreation center models discussed in this analysis, but also integrates the interventionist approach that saw planning and design as instrumental to the re-development of urban communities. The exterior of the facility reflected these changes in the addition of multiple windows at different angles in order to maximize ‘openness’, a clear change from the sparsely-windowed box of the previous design. Further, the interior was not only “flooded with natural light from the high-sloping windows,” but also featured the use of colors beyond the industrial greys and off-whites of other functional, modernist centers, as the colors used in the interior spaces of Bentalou were “what the architect describes as ‘fun’ colors – brilliant yellows, blues and greens add interest to the exposed block interior walls” (“\$250,000 Bentalou Recreation Center,” 1971).

These characteristics demonstrate that the Bentalou center, as a stand-alone facility positioned next to a school building, both incorporated design and planning elements from the school-recreation model, but also marked out a new form of

recreation structure in Baltimore. The use of a collection of slanted windows set in formed concrete as part of the exterior finish, as well as the functionality of the interior spaces, means that the Bentalou center displays an aesthetic and architectural approach that not only adopts the ‘no frills’ modernism described above, but also borrows from another type of modernist design in the form of ‘new brutalism’. As Relph (1987) explains, as a corresponding aspect of the “industrial state vernacular” of public architecture during the postwar era and into the 1960s, new brutalism was developed by architects that purposely utilized industrial building materials and sought to reveal the details of windows, doors, ceilings, and other aspects of the building’s functions – thus new brutalism operated “by exposing building materials which would normally have been hidden, by leaving heating ducts and hot water pipes in full view, and by being brutally honest in expressing the functional realities of a building” (p. 200).

However, while new brutalism was often developed within public architecture that sought to both be efficient and rational, and yet exude a certain austere style as well, this design also addressed other issues faced by urban planners, specifically in regards to rising construction and maintenance costs. That is, in practice new brutalism also offered a “neat aesthetic justification for cheap no frills modernism”, in which “things like pipes and air circulation ducts can be left exposed and the cost of installing ceilings can be avoided” (Relph, 1987, p. 201). The design and planning of the Bentalou center therefore is characterized by both its development as an ‘intervention’ into the local neighborhood as a community recreation space, but also

by the economical and inexpensive approach to construction and maintenance that underscores the functionalism of the facility.



Figure 2.8 - Bentalou Recreation Center – Front (Photo by Author)



Figure 2.9 - Bentalou Recreation Center – Side (Photo by Author)

At the same time that the recreation department was developing facilities such as the Bentalou project as part of an effort to address the lack of recreational opportunities in Baltimore's 'inner city', the city was also being shaped by another aspect of interventionist policy and planning, in the form of federal programs designed specifically for American urban centers. As discussed above, these programs had their roots in Keynesian economics and egalitarian liberalism, but in the decade of the 1960s the centrality of the federal government was reflected in the growth of national agencies and their programs, as between 1960 and 1980 the federal "growth mode" was reflected in an increase of employees (from 2.4 million to 3.1 million) and overall budget (from \$92 billion to \$591 billion) (Walton). Further, this approach to federal governance also resulted in a specific approach to the governing of cities – as President John F. Kennedy wrote in 1963, "the art and design of changing cities aims not only at providing better homes and community facilities, more efficient transportation and desirable open spaces, but also a setting in which men and women can fully live up to their responsibilities as free citizens" (cited in Walton, 2001, p. 2).

Given the impetus on societal progress, and the responsibility of government within these efforts, many of the initiatives developed by both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations during this period have been referred to as 'Great Society' programs. As Biles (2011) explains, the Great Society policies entailed particular concerns for the development of industrial urban areas in this era, even more so following the events in many cities during the 'long, hot summer' of 1967 and after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. Thus governmental concerns for

civic and economic development, coupled with the influence and popularity of modern urban planning and design, meant that cities became the premier space of federally-funded public architecture during this era.

While federal support towards anti-poverty, housing, and urban renewal campaigns all contributed to recreation programs and facilities in Baltimore throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s (see the first chapter of this project), one initiative in particular resulted in a distinct form of planning and design for recreational facilities. This was the Model Cities program, a program that was initially envisioned as “a vehicle for the manipulation of social conditions and the redistribution of economic rewards” (Ripley & Franklin, 1990, p. 32). In short, while other policies and programs were designed for and implemented in urban communities, the Model Cities program served as the primary example of a comprehensive and combined approach to social and economic development.

As Waldhorn and Waldhorn (1972) stated in a review of the initiative, while other federal ‘interventionist’ program of the era sought to deploy federal resources towards the renewal and revitalization of impoverished neighborhoods, “Model Cities attempted to perfect the interventionist approach by combining the strategies into one program, designed to improve the quality of life in blighted neighborhoods” (p. 45). In short, this meant that the implementation of housing, education, social development, recreation and other programs within Model Cities reflected the federal government’s direct involvement with urban policy, in that national resources were directed towards renewal projects within American cities. Following Wood (1990), the origins of Model Cities can be traced to the restructuring of federal housing

policy, especially the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1965 – this legislation further entrenched the relationship between local city governments and the federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) agency, especially in regards to redevelopment programs and funding, including Model Cities. After expanding the number of cities involved from the 35 recommended by the program’s task force to 66, Model Cities grew even further after the events in 1967 and 1968 mentioned above, as federal legislation called for programs that would create a combined 26 million housing units in 10 years, and an additional 6 million units specifically for low-income families (Wood, 1990, p. 64). As Wood explains, the participation of both federal and local planners as well as citizens and community groups meant that Model Cities was therefore imbricated within the federal government’s response to, and in some cases coordination with, the civil rights movement of the 1960s – in short, the initiative represents an expansive attempt at addressing social divisions and inequality, often based in race and class, through urban planning and the design of entire community areas (p. 65).

It was within this context of racial and class stratification that Model Cities was implemented in Baltimore, as issues of polarization and the retrenchment of segregation were cited in the city’s initial application to the program in 1967. Citing the first overall decline in population in the city’s history from 1950 to 1960 (from approximately 950,000 to 939,000), as well as the simultaneously loss of 113,000 white residents and influx of 102,000 non-white residents, the Model Cities application acknowledged the impact of demographic change on Baltimore’s neighborhoods and especially in the ‘Inner City’ area (Baltimore Model Cities

Application, 1967). This redistribution of the city's populous in regards to race and class, according to the application, meant that "at the very time when desegregation has become a national goal, housing and related school patterns are becoming 're-segregated' ... as the Negro population of the Inner City grows and whites continue to leave" (Baltimore Model Cities Application, 1967). These processes of re-segregation were thus exacerbating already existing issues of social polarization, and creating conditions of pronounced inequality within the city. As the Model Cities application explained in introducing the specific 'Neighborhood Areas' that would be targeted by the program,

"Residents of East and West Neighborhood Areas, predominately Negro, are trapped by poverty and discrimination in a deteriorating and socially-disorganized slum ghetto. Few can move to less crowded and more adequate housing. Lack of income causes doubling up as does the tight housing supply of habitable dwellings. Low educational and work skills combined with discriminatory practices and attitudes block access to semi-skilled or white collar jobs, jobs with built-in opportunities for upgrading, and jobs with training opportunities. Negro children growing up in the Model Neighborhood Areas, the ghetto of Baltimore or the ghetto of Big City America, learn at an early age that school and work opportunities are neither interesting nor relevant to their lives... [Yet] the framework of life in Neighborhood Areas contain many positive values despite the prevalence of misery, want and human decay" (Baltimore Model Cities Application, 1967).

The acknowledgement of racial and class re-segregation, and the realities of this social stratification in regards to education, employment, housing and other aspects of urban life, were thus utilized as evidence for the inclusion of Baltimore within the Model Cities program. The application went on to detail other statistics that reflected the disparity between the inner city and suburban neighborhoods: 25% of residents in the program's 'Neighborhood Areas' lived below the \$3,000 poverty line; 10% lived in public housing, and 45% received some form of public assistance; unemployment

was over 10%, while over 70% of the labor force was “unskilled or uneducated”; crime was over double the rate of the overall city; and the infant mortality rate was over a third higher than the overall city (Baltimore Model Cities Application, 1967). These aspects of social polarization, experienced daily by those living within the Model Cities area, were thus primary characteristics of the city’s development during this period, as the processes of ‘white flight’ and suburbanization, as well as the early phases of deindustrialization, had specific impacts on communities across the city (Durr, 2003; Pietila, 2010).

In November of 1967, Baltimore was approved as one of 65 cities that would receive a combined \$11 million in funding and assistance through the initial phase of Model Cities, concentrated on the “social, economic and physical renewal of blighted neighborhoods” (“PARK CENTER SITE STARTED: Ground Broken In Brooklyn For Recreation Facility,” 1967). The ‘Neighborhood Areas’ that were the primary focus of these interventions were located in two sections, one each in east and west Baltimore, comprising a total population of approximately 103,000 of the city’s residents – within this area, the “objectives” of federally-supported urban planning included the “development of the social and economic organization of neighborhood areas...[and] raising income levels and reducing costs of living”, as well as “preventing and reducing crime while increasing personal safety” (“PARK CENTER SITE STARTED: Ground Broken In Brooklyn For Recreation Facility,” 1967). By 1970, the support for Model Cities – and the amount of funding directed to the program – had only increased, in particular following the events in many American cities in the late 1960s, as the rationales for urban renewal became even more central

in the context of heightened social tensions and civil disturbances. Within the first two ‘action years’ of Model Cities in Baltimore, in 1970 and 1971, over \$22 million in federal funding was allocated to the two program areas in Baltimore, primarily towards financing over 40 community-based initiatives focused on “education, housing, jobs, recreation and cultural and health services” (Barbash, 1971). From the outset, the program faced difficulties in coordinating the various federal and local agencies involved in planning and service provision, as well as issues with the incorporation of citizen participation into both specific neighborhood projects and the overall planning process (Barbash, 1971). Yet in total, Model Cities signaled an attempt by both policymakers, planners and local residents to have a direct and substantial impact on many of the communities situated within the designated ‘Areas’ of the program, especially in regards to community development and social services.

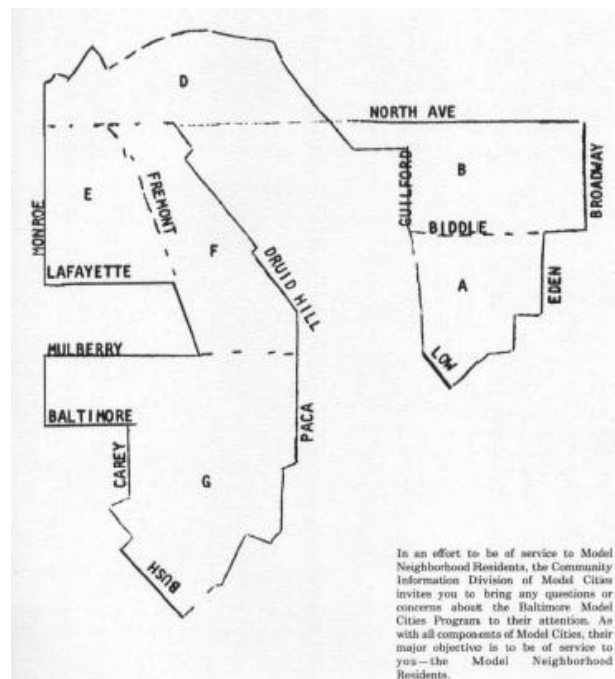


Figure 2.10 - Baltimore's Model Cities "Neighborhood Areas" (Baltimore Model Cities Application, 1967)

As evidenced by the program's implementation in Baltimore, the community services-based approach of Model Cities prioritized the inclusion of education, employment, and health within federal urban renewal projects, but also recreational and cultural facilities and opportunities. Indeed, from the program's inception the importance of programs and spaces for leisure and physical activity was reflected in the main objectives of Model Cities: "job training, health care, education and recreation" ("POOR AID SET FOR 11 CITIES," 1968). As described above, recreation was already considered an essential aspect in planning the modern urban neighborhood - however, the rationale for incorporating recreation into urban renewal was further supported by the disparity in recreation services across different neighborhoods, as many communities in the inner city either featured aging and declining facilities, or a lack of recreation sites altogether.

As the Baltimore Sun reported in 1970, despite the expansion of facilities and services over the previous decade, recreation remained a top priority for city residents, who "expressed the opinion that too much effort was being given to the development of the stadium and municipal golf courses and not enough to overall recreational activities" (Dilts, 1970). That year BCRP operated 95 full-time recreation centers, ranging from "old, beat up" buildings – most located within the inner city areas – to "new, fully-equipped wings in schools" (Dilts, 1970). Initially, the implementation of Model Cities funding in the city had focused primarily on programming, in the form of federally-subsidized services that were intended to supplement existing recreational services. This included Operation Champ, a youth summer recreation service established in 1966 as a form of mobile 'street recreation'

that was “best known for the trucks which unfold a street-full of gym and game equipment” (Dilts, 1970). By 1970, the annual budget for Operation Champ had grown to nearly \$1 million, as the program was fully supported by federal funding sources such as Model Cities, which provided \$330,000 for the provision of mobile recreation within that program’s targeted ‘Areas’ (Dilts, 1970).

However, the use of federal funding was also a key aspect of BCRP planning and development during this period, as the expansion of the city’s public recreation department was also supported through federal aid. The impacts of federal urban renewal programs were thus evident in both programming and capital planning for the built environment of urban recreation, as these programs sought to revitalize communities through the design and implementation of particular models for both parks and recreation facilities. This was evident even in the initial phase of Model Cities, as President Johnson had stated that among the primary goals of the program was “the establishment – in every ghetto in America – of a neighborhood center to service the people who live there” (“POOR AID SET FOR 11 CITIES,” 1968). This conception of a building for neighborhood-based services thus sought to realize the goals of Model Cities, specifically through the distribution, provision, and coordination of various public agencies and programs. Yet this model also reflects the centrality of planning and design as tools for urban renewal, by emphasizing the potential for a built structure to serve both as a location for social services and as a focal point of community relations. As federal urban programs such as Model Cities continued into the early 1970s, city planners in Baltimore also increasingly recognized the advantages of these ‘multi-service centers’ for the development and

design of neighborhoods. The incorporation of this model into the planning and design of public facilities was evinced by a 1971 Planning Commission report that called for the construction of a network of 40 “multi-service community centers” that could bring together schools, health clinics, library branches, and recreation programs (Dilts, 1971). As the report detailed, there were specific rationales for the development of these community centers across Baltimore, including the lack of coordination between agencies and services, as well as the expense of constructing a single larger facility instead of several smaller, separate buildings (Dilts, 1971).

The multi-services center model expressed both the functionalism of other aspects of modernist public architecture, but also reflected the possibilities of planning within community development. Thus the convergence of this demand for multi-purpose, community-based facilities, and the funding and resources of federal urban renewal programs such as Model Cities, would result in a distinct model for the urban recreation facility. In particular, the Greater Model recreation center, located in the Poppleton neighborhood of west Baltimore, demonstrates the impact of interventionist federal urban policy and planning on the physical spaces of the city, as it represents a federally-funded project focused on a multi-purpose community center model. The center emerged from the conjunction of BCRP planning and Model Cities funding, as the department received support for the development of an unnamed recreation center and playground for “Model Cities Area G” in 1973 (“Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Recreation Guide,” 1973). The Greater Model center opened three years later, featuring a design that marked it as unique in comparison to the city’s other recreation centers, especially in comparison to the school-recreation and

park fieldhouse models. In particular, Greater Model demonstrates the further assimilation of innovation and ‘artistic’ elements into the architectural form of a recreation center, building on the utilization of these aspects within the Bentalou model. However, while the use of interior colors and sunlight-yielding slanted windows were minor elements within Bentalou’s functionalist design, the expression of creativity and originality is evident throughout the entire structure of the Greater Model facility.

The irregularity of the overall shape of the facility distances it from the quadrangular orientation of other public facilities in Baltimore, while the use of color on the exterior contrasts sharply with the mundane brick façade of many of the other recreation centers. The heavy use of slanted glass exhibits the utilization of design aspects concerned with natural interior light, yet with larger and additional windows than in the Bentalou model, while the long elevated walkway on either side of the center provides an inventive method of access, as does the set of large sliding doors on the ground level of the building. Further, though the interior of the Greater Model center is based in functional, multi-purpose rooms for housing different activities and services, artistic design elements such as the cut-out circle form and exposed HVAC pipe also serve to emphasize the architectural creativity of the facility and mark it apart from other public structures. As such, the physical form of the building incorporates another aspect of modernist design and planning, in the form of expressionist architecture. Following Relph (1987), expressionism signaled an acceptable alternative to the “unornamented rectangularity” that characterized most public facilities of the era, including the school-recreation center and park fieldhouse

model – instead, the Greater Model center represents an example of “self-conscious modernist expressionism, in which the architect attempted to express some idea or symbol in an imaginative way” (p. 202). As the development of Baltimore’s recreation centers attests, the use of expressionist forms did not mean that the “conventional, boxy” structures were no longer built, but that by the late 1960s and early 1970s these models were joined by artistic elements that provided a sense of uniqueness to the design (p. 202).

Further, and in contrast to the limited resources and budgets that accompanied many of the city’s own recreation projects, the federal funding of urban renewal initiatives meant that planners and architects were allowed greater flexibility and possibility in regards to facility design and construction. Thus as evidenced by the implementation of Greater Model multi-purpose community center as an extension of the Model Cities program, within the context of federally-supported urban planning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, architects and designers “explored the aesthetic with creativity and enthusiasm...with pride, confident they were establishing a better environment” (Walton, 2001, p. 4). In short, the distinctive design of Greater Model signals the facility’s origins within both modern urban planning and the interventionist approach to federal urban renewal programs, as the center expresses the coordination of Baltimore’s public recreation department with the Model Cities and other interventions programs.



Figure 2.11 - Greater Model Recreation Center (Photo by Author)



Figure 2.12 - Greater Model Recreation Center (Photo by Author)

Recreation and the Decline of Modern Urbanism

As this analysis has demonstrated, when the Greater Model Recreation Center opened in west Baltimore in the spring of 1976, it represented the culmination of both neighborhood-based modern urban planning, as well as the resources and support of interventionist federal urban renewal programs. Over the previous 30 years the city's network of public recreation centers had expanded within different communities,

initially in the limited implementation of school-recreation centers and park fieldhouses throughout the postwar period, and then more widely during the 1960s and early 1970s in relation to specific formations of federal and local urban policy. Following Deppe (1986), this latter phase evidences the ‘golden age’ of public recreation in many American cities, through the increases in funding for, and the implementation of, recreation facilities and services in urban centers. In tandem with the analysis of the historical development of recreation policy in the first chapter of this project, this chapter has demonstrated the specific impacts of this general prioritization of recreation on the experiences and built environments of the city, as recreation centers became an increasingly important spatial and social aspect of both planning and living in Baltimore. In 1950, there were less than 20 public recreation centers in the city, as the department began its initial efforts at developing a city-wide system of sites and services. As Jordan (1993) explains, by the mid-1970s the combination of federal support and local planning initiatives that had resulted in the growth of BCRP staffing and programming also meant that in some cases recreation facilities were located within several blocks of one another, with over 120 centers spread throughout the city (p. 170).

Yet even by the time the Greater Model center had opened, many of the federal programs targeting urban areas had been curtailed or eliminated, including Model Cities – the program, which totaled nearly \$2.3 billion in aid and assistance for urban areas, operated through 1973 before budget cuts began to dismantle the funding sources and support for local initiatives (Wood, 1990, p. 65). These changes reflected a more general shift in the approach to both federal and local urban policy, as the

governing of American cities was shaped by both the erosion of the Keynesian welfare state and the simultaneous rise of a ‘New Federalism’ that sought to decentralize urban programs and restrain or remove federal support (Hackworth, 2009; Harvey 1989b). Thus as discussed in the first chapter, many urban public recreation departments in the 1970s witnessed the “great switch” in regards to federal funding, as previous forms and sources of subsidy for programming and capital investment declined and disappeared (Deppe, 1986). However, and as reflected in the continued growth of BCRP services throughout the decade until budget crises in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the initial cuts to Great Society programs first implemented by the Nixon administration did not mean the eradication of all federal aid for urban communities. This reflected the policies of the Carter administration, which attempted to implement a modified approach to urban issues, including the Urban Development Action Grant legislation passed in 1977, which “forced city government to rely more heavily on private sector initiatives for urban redevelopment” (Fainstein, 1990, p. 227).

As Wood (1990) explains, federal backing for low and moderate income housing projects actually increased until 1979, and community development programs – including those that essentially replaced the Model Cities initiative, in the form of community block development grants – actually peaked in 1981 at \$5 billion (Wood, 1990, p. 65). However, while limited elements of both public housing and community renewal programs “stubbornly hung on” into the next decade, in general the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 signaled the final rejection of the Great Society platform (Wood, 1990, p. 65).

Further, these shifts in the governance of American cities, and in particular the changing role of the federal government within the processes of urban development, were inextricably linked with the critique of, and turn away from, modernist urban planning and design. Following Glazer (2007), the principles and practices of modernism as an approach to planning and design were increasingly critiqued throughout this entire period, beginning with Robert Venturi's rejection of modernist architecture in *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972) and continuing through Peter Blake's *Form Follows Fiasco* (1974) – the French translation of Blake's work was purposely titled *L'Architecture modern est morte à Saint-Louis (Missouri) le 15 juillet 1972 à 15h 32 ou à peu près* (“Modern architecture died in St. Louis, Missouri, on July 15, 1972 at 3:32 p.m. or thereabouts”), referring to the destruction of the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex. These critiques of modernism claimed that rather than creating idealized spaces that emphasized efficiency and rationality in improving quality of life, modernist planners and architects were instead implementing inhumane structures that could not and did not accommodate the dynamics of the city. That is, these and other critics sought to end the influence and popularity of modern urbanism, “demanding an end to concrete fortresses, glass boxes and tower blocks approached by windswept walkways” (Annan, 1990, p. 291).

Thus as Gelernter explains, the “deflated 1970s” reflected the economic downturn of the American and global economy over the course of the decade, as well as the disillusionment with federal urban renewal policy, and urban planning and design in general (p. 294). In this mode, the characteristics of modernist public architecture that were largely celebrated and incorporated into the built environment of many

American cities during the postwar era and into the 1970s – including in regards to the different models of recreation centers in Baltimore discussed above – were instead condemned by the late 1970s as evidence of the incapability of planners and architects to sufficiently respond to the changing conditions of American cities. As Relph (1987) states, while modernist public buildings such as BCRP recreation centers were often rooted in a functionalism that offered the potential for serving as a space of community engagement and development, the general falling out of modernism in architecture was based in a view that these structures were “remarkable only for their ordinariness” (p. 200). As this chapter has demonstrated, there were specific rationales, theories and practices that went into developing and implementing the architectural forms of modernism into Baltimore’s recreation centers, from the ‘no frills’ aesthetic and approach of the school-recreation center and park fieldhouse, to the incorporation of elements of the brutalist and expressionist styles in the multi-purpose community center model. Yet even as these facilities received increasing funding and support from both federal and local sources throughout the 1970s, by the end of decade public recreation in Baltimore was being transformed, meaning these structures would (and do) continue to represent the residual effects of modern urbanism in postindustrial America.

At the same time that modernist architecture was being called into question, the design of at least two of Baltimore’s recreation centers were also being criticized in response to problems with the physical characteristics of the building. One of these was the Bentalou Recreation Center, which as discussed above was developed as a modified school-recreation center model that also incorporated aspects of the multi-

purpose community model, as well as elements of the exposed brutalist style. The center was therefore “modern in construction, with large windows, bright open rooms, and nooks and crannies everywhere”, and designed specifically “to be used by both the school children and by residents of the neighborhoods” (Chaplan, 1971). Yet the windows, which were described as a specific aesthetic feature by the center’s architects, proved to be more of a problem of maintenance than a solution to a lack of interior light – even before the Bentalou center had opened, seven of the building’s quarter-inch heavy plexiglass windows had been broken by vandals, and the center’s director had refused to move in equipment in fear of it being stolen (Chaplan, 1971). As the director explained at the time, the features of the building may have made it unique, but also did little to enhance or even consider the facility’s security – the “beautiful glass doors” that served as the main entrance to the center were easy enough to bypass, as “all you have to is take a cigarette lighter and cut through the glass...then you reach in and unhook the door” (Chaplan, 1971). In response, BCRP officials stated that metal screens would be placed over the windows at Bentalou, describing the center – again, only designed and constructed the previous year – as “out of date”, with the department ensuring that any new centers would “be made with very few windows and will use a lot of artificial light” (Chaplan, 1971).

This meant that as with the construction of school-recreation centers in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the final phase of the expansion of Baltimore’s network of recreation centers in the 1970s also featured the rectangular, windowless brick model of no frills modernism. Yet the school-recreation center model, while deployed throughout this period, also evinced its own structural and operational deficiencies,

many of which continue to resonate within contemporary recreation policy. On one hand, the criticisms of the school-recreation model were based in the same devaluing of modern public architecture, in that the ‘ordinariness’ of these buildings often lacked any connection to their local settings. Further, the lack of windows in many of these facilities may have been justified in regards to construction and maintenance costs, but they also directly contributed to the ‘fortress’ aesthetic that marked many centers. However, and importantly for the ongoing restructuring of recreation policy in Baltimore, the most problematic issue of the school-recreation centers proved to be the very feature that ensured its functionalism and efficiency, in the gymnasium that was accessible from both the school and the recreation building.

By the late 1970s, community groups were complaining to the recreation department that vandalism that occurred in the school was connected to the use of recreation centers when schools were not in session, meaning that the dual access to the gym was also an unsecured entrance to the school (Dilts, 1976). These issues were also evident in the planning process for the recreation center in the city’s Waverly neighborhood in central Baltimore, one of the centers constructed during the latter phase of BCRP expansion in the late 1970s. While the recreation department had planned to implement a recreation wing attached to the community’s Barclay school facility, community groups had protested against the decision, instead asking for the center to be built at a vacant lot nearby the school (Dilts, 1976). The rationales for this request were based in part in an attempt to eradicate the vacant lot, but more so in concerns for the security of the school building in relation to the recreation facility – in order to construct the school-recreation model, the school board asked planning

and recreation officials to “construct the recreation wing so that it can be sealed off from the rest of the school” (“Barclay school to get center for recreation,” 1976). Following these design changes, the Barclay Recreation Center opened in 1979 as part of the final wave of modern recreation centers in Baltimore. More recently, these matter of access between schools and school-recreation centers have again emerged as a specific issue within the future development of BCRP policy and programs. As the fourth chapter of this project discusses, the operational issues of these facilities are symbolized by the chain locks that are placed on the gym doors at many current school-recreation centers, underscoring the unforeseen consequences of modern architecture’s functionality and rationalism.

Moreover, as demonstrated above the physical traits of modernist public architecture were also inherently linked to specific approaches to urban planning, in that the design of these facilities was to coordinate with the general planning of the city and community. Yet these strategies and models of city planning also faced increasing criticism throughout this period, especially in relation to the designed modern neighborhood ‘unit’ as an improvement on, and thus replacement for, existing sociospatial arrangements. That is, and related to the critique of modernist architecture and the design of physical structures, the assumptions of progress, efficiency and rationality as the impetus for modern urban planning were called into question by the mixed results of many planning efforts. Within this formation of urban planning, modernist urban planners became “unhinged from a clear ideological platform and increasingly detached from reality” in holding on to “the prospect of a techno-utopian future” that only they could achieve (Knox, 2010, p. 125). As

evidenced by the support for urban development through comprehensive ‘master plans’ by local city governments, as well as federal urban policy of the Great Society programs such as Model Cities, modern planning had a direct, immediate and lasting impact on the built landscapes of many American cities. Following Knox, these different projects and programs were similarly characterized by a belief in the possibilities of planning to create a better world than the one existed – thus the “rationalism of modernity” resulted in a formation of architecture and urban planning characterized as “overwhelmingly prescriptive and deterministic, often involving...a privileging of spatial form over social process” (p. 101). These forms of physical determinism are reflected in the implementation of the specific recreation facilities models across Baltimore’s various communities, regardless of existing dynamics and local conditions, as the city attempted to actively construct the modern (active) city.

In total, and as demonstrated by this analysis, the application of modern city planning and design - through both local, neighborhood-based forms urban development and federal urban renewal policies and programs - resulted in specific aspects of the contemporary built environment of Baltimore. In the remaining space of this chapter, the impacts and residual legacies of these approaches to the spatial and social organization of the city are explored in relation to two particular elements or aspects of the city’s current conditions. The first of these is in regard to the critique and consequences of the modernist neighborhood as a unit of planning and design, in that – much like with the criticism of functionalist public architecture – the deployment of the modern urban neighborhood shaped the evolution of American cities in particular ways. In particular, this analysis asserts that this approach proved

instrumental in the construction of the scale of the neighborhood as an aspect of urban policymaking, planning, and everyday experience. Second, the processes of urban development that have taken place over the last 30 years have meant that while the vast majority of Baltimore's recreation centers exist as a built testament to a previous formation of urban governance, they also attest to the disinvestment and decline of many urban centers. Following Dotson and Merriweather (2013), this study suggests that many of the city's modernist recreation facilities are now one part of the "Fourth World" landscapes of contemporary postindustrial cities. In short, this theory focuses on the relationship between architectural form, planning, and the lived experiences of the present-day metropolis within the conditions of deindustrialization, neoliberalization, and the ongoing restructuring of American urban governance.

Planning and the Scale of the Urban Neighborhood

As discussed earlier in this chapter, modern urban planning was marked by the development and deployment of the neighborhood as both a unit of design and an approach to re-organizing the practices and policies of a city. Throughout the postwar era and into the 1960s, the centrality of the carefully planned urban community within planning was evidenced by both local neighborhood-based projects that targeted specific areas, as well as comprehensive planning efforts that sought to arrange the entire city based on a categorization of different neighborhoods (Taylor, 1998, 41). Yet while this approach to planning resulted in much of the modernist public architecture of industrial cities such as Baltimore, including the city's recreation centers built during the postwar era, neighborhood-based planning would also encounter growing criticism beginning in the 1960s. Most notably, Jane Jacobs' *The*

Life and Death of Great American Cities (1961) signaled an attack on the modernist development strategy employed by planners such as Robert Moses who often prioritized the automobile and highways over existing neighborhoods. In Jacobs' view, these highway projects and other expansive 'mega-block' initiatives that sought to redevelop entire areas were instead "destroying the aspects of neighborhoods that made them livable" (Corburn, 2009, p. 57).

As Gale (1990) states, modernist urban planning in the 1950s and 1960s meant that many redevelopment projects were based in the 'tabula rasa imperative', or the belief that nearly all issues of decline could be "overcome by clearance and development" – however, this assumption was also accompanied by the idea that the existing populations of lower-income and impoverished communities would need to be removed in favor of commercial and residential development (p. 20). Given the racial dynamics of the time, especially within cities struggling with issues of desegregation and social stratification, the tabula rasa approach to urban space often meant "replacing low-income (and often, minorities) with middle-income households and business (usually white)" (Gale, 1990, p. 20). Thus the physical determinism inherent within modern planning had uneven, if sometimes unintended, consequences for urban residents, often based in the dynamics of race and class. Indeed, and as demonstrated above in relation to the impacts of the Great Society programs in Baltimore, the formation of policies and projects that represented "urban renewal" in the 1960s and into the 1970s was inextricably linked to issues of social inequality and the disparity of resources and public services.

This meant that on the one hand, urban renewal as both a program and a theory of urban development was premised on the removal of ‘blight’ and the rebuilding of entire sections of a city, utilizing modern technology and rational design (Fishman, 2000). However, the legacies of many of these programs – as evidenced by the myth of Pruitt-Igoe – revealed not only the relative incapability of urban planners and architects to create and implement an improved quality of life, but also the tendency for renewal programs to actually increase poverty for residents through both displacement and the prioritization of commercial development over low-income housing (Weiss, 1980). The conflicting goals and impacts of urban renewal programs was also evident in the case of the Model Cities program, which emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as one aspect of the increasing connections between planning and other social programs including education, health, employment, and recreation. As Fainstein explains, these ties between social services and planning meant that “planning broadened its functional concerns beyond the physical realm” and led to distinct forms of citizen participation and community organization within the planning process (p. 225). These combined elements of both interventionist federal policy and programs, as well as the increased incorporation of citizen and community groups into development projects, meant that like other Great Society programs, Model Cities has continued to have a mixed legacy of both commendation and condemnation (Wood, 1990).

In any case, this analysis asserts that both the localized impetus of postwar planning and the focus of federal urban renewal programs on specific communities meant that policymakers, planners and residents alike increasingly emphasized the

neighborhood as one particular scale of modern urbanism. The basis for this inquiry into notions of scale is rooted in the de-naturalization of scale as a pre-formed concept – scale is “not a fixed or given category, rather it is socially constructed, fluid and contingent” (Moore, 2008). Therefore, in following the aim of this analysis in describing how modern urban planning and design shaped and were shaped by the conditions of American cities, this focus on scale demonstrates the construction and implications of a particular formation of scale. As previously discussed in this chapter, scale has emerged as one part of the ‘spatial turn’ within the social sciences, especially in relation to an emphasis on the spatial patterns and practices of urban (re)development. As Marston (2000) explains,

“the production of scale is integral to the production of space, all the way down. Scaled social processes pupate specific productions of space while the production of space generates distinct structures of geographical scale...the process is highly fluid and dynamic, its social authorship broad-based” (p. 616).

In this mode, different scales are socially constructed within the processes of spatial development, in that certain ‘interscalar arrangements’ of different global, federal/national, state, and local scales are involved in the physical changes to urban space (Mahon & Keil, 2009). This relationship between space and scale is evident between the spaces of Baltimore’s public recreation system – specifically the network of recreation centers constructed primarily during the postwar era and into the late 1970s – and the scale of the urban neighborhood as constructed in and through modernist planning and design. That is, as urban planners and architects during this period literally practiced and ‘traded’ in the design and implementation of spaces of and for the modern neighborhood, they were simultaneously constructing a particular notion of the neighborhood as a scale of urban development. On the one hand, this

was expressed through the deployment of the neighborhood as a frame for organizing public services such as recreation, as the distribution and provision of recreational facilities and services was explicitly based on the categorization of the city's total area into specific neighborhoods.

Yet along with and in part because of this approach to planning for city services, the scale of the neighborhood also became embedded in the practices and politics of Baltimore's communities, as politicians and citizens recognized and prioritized the spaces of their local neighborhoods through both policy and community organization. In this analysis, and in congruence with the first chapter of this project, the implications of the scale of the neighborhood within modernist urban recreation policy, planning and design can be recognized as both positive and negative, especially in relation to the city's existing and exacerbated social divisions based in race and class. That is, on the one hand the construction of the neighborhood was inextricably linked to the re-entrenchment of racial and class segregation, as communities encountered the demographic shifts entailed by both 'white flight' suburbanization and a rapidly increasing black population – following Durr (2003) and Pietila (2010), in the context of the postwar period and into the 1970s, the Baltimore neighborhood signaled both a sense of identity, as well as a source of apprehension and tension in regards to social change. Within these processes of demographic change and deindustrialization, the local neighborhood-based public facilities served as spatial representations of the neighborhood, thereby reinforcing the scale of the neighborhood as a frame for daily practices and political representation; residents either sought to improve, protect, or leave their

neighborhoods, but the focus was primarily on this scale and scope of urban development. Therefore on the other hand, following McDougall (1993) this era of the city's evolution was marked by the formation of various community organizations and neighborhood associations as a formally established and recognized aspect of the city's political system. As Wood (1990) states, the community focus of federal urban renewal programs was connected to the political gains made by black citizens and organizations throughout the 1970s. Thus in short, the construction of the scale of the neighborhood in and through modern recreation planning was critical in the development of Baltimore as a 'City of Neighborhoods', both in regards to the reinforcement of social divisions between communities and the organization of community resources for improvement and development.

Recreation, Public Architecture and the 'Fourth World' City

As this analysis has described, the contemporary spatial, social and economic conditions of Baltimore's communities reflect the myriad effects of modernist urban planning, from postwar neighborhood-based design, to the prioritization of highway construction as a form of urban development, to the impacts of federal urban renewal and community development programs. However, these phases of the city's physical maturation were also accompanied by the processes of deindustrialization, as the factories and large workforces that comprised the Baltimore's identity as an industrial center throughout the early 20th century and into the postwar period gave way to plant closings, layoffs, and the loss of a sizeable portion of the city's tax base through the 1980s – these changes in turn transformed the practices and policies of the city's leaders and residents, and had specific impacts on different communities marked by

the dynamics of race and class (Durr, 2003). This situation was compounded by the aforementioned ‘switch’ in federal urban policy, as following the implementation of urban renewal programs such as Model Cities, the federal government moved to shift urban development towards private enterprise and away from public funding sources. As Corburn (2009) explains, through the 1970s federal policy transitioned from a focus on interventionist initiatives, specifically those aimed at addressing disparities within distressed urban communities, towards an approach based in “benign neglect” of urban issues (p. 57). More directly, as Biles (2010) states, from the 1970s onward these processes and policies of disinvestment meant that most American cities were essentially left to “fend for themselves” in regards to economic and social development (p. 110). Thus from the late 1970s and into the new millennium, the confluence of changes to urban policy, the localized processes of deindustrialization and suburbanization, and the continuing specter of social inequality based in racial and class divisions all served to characterize both Baltimore and other American urban centers as ‘postindustrial’ cities (Sugrue, 1996).

Other analyses (Harvey, 2001; Levine, 2000) have extrapolated on the specific impacts of these processes in relation to Baltimore, in particular in regards to the prioritization of the city’s downtown as a financial service center and tourist attraction, which continues to be the site of redevelopment and other projects premised on market-oriented goals (Friedman, Bustad and Andrews, 2012). As these studies suggest, the previous 40 years of the city’s history have been increasingly marked by the dynamics of ‘urban entrepreneurialism’, implying a focus on the growth of the city in terms of economic viability over and ahead of social equity and

the provision of services (Harvey, 1989b). In short, these shifts within Baltimore's urban governance have resulted in a concentration of resources towards the spaces and services that offer the potential for privatized economic redevelopment, and a simultaneous disinvestment in many of the city's neighborhoods. Following Troy (2003), the transition away from neighborhood-based planning and renewal policies also had particular effects on urban public service agencies, as city departments were faced with both the loss of external support, through the curtailing of federal and state grants and assistance, as well as internal revenue sources via a loss of tax revenues and consequent shortfalls to municipal budgets (p. 550).

Further, while the initial response to the conditions of disinvestment by many municipal governments was to shift the responsibility of some services towards private enterprise, this strategy proved unsuccessful in regards to Baltimore's recreation centers, as described in relation to the privatization of Baltimore's 'special' recreation facilities during the 1980s in the first chapter of this project. Instead, throughout this period municipal governments justified the cuts to and elimination of many services, including recreation, by maintaining that they simply could not be offered at their previous levels – that is, “the government solution was to argue for a reduction of standards on the grounds that the old standards could no longer be afforded” (Troy, 2003, p. 550). Within these conditions, Baltimore's recreation department was characterized throughout the late 20th century by a seemingly perpetual fiscal crisis, decreases to staffing and programming, and the deferment of capital infrastructure and maintenance that in turn led to facility closures. As one example (discussed further in the first chapter), the Mullan Recreation Center in

north-central Baltimore was slated for closure amid community protest in 1985, only 12 years after the facility had opened (Davis, 1985). As evidence of the processes of urban disinvestment on the city's recreation system, the local neighborhood association would cite Mullan's closing as one part of the "systematic decline of recreation and other youth services through closing recreation centers, curtailing youth programs, or ignoring building and park maintenance" (Gunther, 1985). Yet the BCRP decision to close the facility was based primarily on a lack of necessary maintenance, and the overall state of the facility as "in terrible shape" despite its construction only 12 years prior (Gunther, 1985).

The closing of the Mullan Recreation Center, which was demolished afterward, signals the larger depreciation of public recreational services and sites within the context of transformed urban governance, in which cities were both excluded from the focus of federal policy and guided increasingly by the ends and means of market capitalism. More recently, these conditions have been recognized within the framework of urban neoliberalization, as a distinct formation of governance entailing specific social and spatial processes (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002). As Bridge and Watson (2003) explain, neoliberal ideas focused on cultivating economic growth have shaped the development of many cities over the last 30 years, as the primary role and mission of urban policy has become "to facilitate the operation of the market" (p. 511). However, and as evidenced by the stark reality of the differentiations between neighborhoods across postindustrial cities such as Baltimore, the processes of urban neoliberalization have resulted in asymmetries of economic opportunity and social resources, often linked to increasing forms of social

inequality. This means that much of the city's public architecture – in the form of buildings and facilities designed for social services, including recreation – also reflects the changing approaches to, and objectives of, contemporary urban governance. In particular, the current conditions of physical decline that characterize many of Baltimore's recreation centers means that these recreation facilities often exist as part of what Dotson and Merriweather (2013) describe as 'fourth world' postindustrial landscapes. Within this theory, fourth world urban spaces "are formed in part by race-based and uneven development", as "fourth world cities and innercity of many other cities in the United States have suffered from social and institutional abandonment" (p. 143). That is,

"The extent of distress and abandonment of some American cities...and the innercity of others resulting from neoliberal policies and practices [and] deindustrialization, historic segregation and discrimination patterns, suburban sprawl, erosion of a viable tax base, racism, inability to embrace the concepts of desegregation and civil rights legislation, fear, despair, crumbling infrastructure systems, disinvestment in urban school systems, and environmental justice issues define fourth world conditions...these conditions reflect political and economic practices evidenced in these physical locations" (p. 144).

While the primary focus of these authors' analysis is on a different postindustrial American city (Gary, Indiana), the characteristics of fourth world spaces are undeniably present within the contemporary landscapes of Baltimore's own 'distressed' neighborhoods. Thus on the one hand, fourth world theory provides an analytic approach that congruent with the main aims of this chapter, in that it (again) stresses the non-neutral relationship between planning, design and the lived experiences of cities. In this mode, the Baltimore's recreation centers have particular histories and legacies in regards to past approaches to organizing the city's development, and they also entail important implications for the ongoing

transformation of urban spaces. On the other hand, the framework provided by the fourth world approach also draws attention to practices of planning and design, in that just as modern planning shaped and was shaped by the industrial city which it encountered, contemporary architects, planners, and urban denizens all have the capacity to shape the future of American cities. Therefore fourth world theory focuses specifically on “the spaces and flows of abandonment in racialized cities,” but simultaneously seeks to position architecture and planning “to be a force of historic and geographic change” (p. 150). Thus within this framework – and in line with the overall impetus of this project – cities are shaped by already existing conditions, but are also viewed as open, incomplete projects. Accordingly, this study of Baltimore’s recreation centers recognizes that these spaces exist as elements of both the historical, current and future development of the city.

Space, Scale and Urban Recreation

This chapter has provided a spatial and scalar analysis of modernist recreation planning and design in Baltimore, by focusing on specific models of modern recreation facilities that were developed and deployed by the city’s recreation department throughout the postwar period and through the 1970s. Further, in asserting two particular implications of these physical spaces that continue to resonate within the city’s contemporaneous environment, this analysis has recognized the centrality of space and scale within the ongoing transformations of both the city and urban public recreation. Thus this chapter emphasizes both the importance of urban space as a site for the development and implementation of different approaches to planning and design, as well as the critical role of policymakers, planners and citizens

in producing spaces and scales of urban experience. In general, the aim of this study has been to interrogate the relationship between recreation and modern urban planning and design, in order to demonstrate the incorporation of recreational sites and services into the re-shaping of American cities. Following Barrett and Jones (1982), the form of cities may sometimes be unintentional, “but it is not accidental...it is the product of decisions made for single, separate purposes, whose interrelationships and side effects have not been fully considered” (p. 157). Therefore the spaces of Baltimore’s recreation centers have and will continue to comprise both a physical structure within the city’s built environment, as well as a representation and manifestation of particular approaches to planning, design and urban governance. Moreover, while the centers themselves work to demonstrate specific historical conceptions of the ‘right to the active city’ through the provision and distribution of recreational services, the current and future conditions of these buildings are an integral aspect of formulating the equitable provision of recreational opportunity for all city residents. This means that within the framework of this project, the ‘right to the active city’ would necessarily engage with the elements of design and planning that are constituted in and through the processes of making recreation spaces and programs viable across the city.

Finally, and in connection with this directive toward realizing recreational opportunity as a necessary condition of urban experience, a possible future extension of this chapter would be to link and contrast this analysis of previous models of recreation center design and planning with a focus on the recreation facility model being developed and utilized within contemporary recreation planning. As discussed

in the third chapter, the most recent re-organization of Baltimore's recreation centers through the city's recreation department has been the 2011 Mayor's Task Force plan, which proposed a new "community center" model in regards to recreation facilities across the city.

While the impacts of the Task Force proposal were primarily described in the next chapter in relation to recreation policy, an extension of the current analysis could focus on the community center as a distinct model for the design and planning of contemporary recreation structures – in other words, and in contrast to the modernist models of the school-recreation center and the neighborhood recreation center, this analysis would examine how the community center signals emergent forms of urban governance within the continued redevelopment of urban spaces. This means that the community center not only represents a novel design for a space of urban recreation, but also that this facility model is inextricable from the processes of contemporary urban development, including the forms of 'new urbanism' and 'smart growth' within city planning (Hall 2014). As such, an analysis of the community center model as a space of recreation would continue the focus of this chapter on recreation facilities as part of the larger built environment of urban contexts, and as a physical structure within the changing dynamics of urban governance.

Interlude

In a piece of music, the interlude serves as a short connection between two parts of the larger composition, a sort of harmonious ‘stretch break’ that allows for a moment of reflection on what has come before and contemplation on what lies ahead. Within this dissertation, this *intermezzo* between the first two and last two chapters serves a similar purpose in expressing the relationship of the chapters to one another and to the project as a whole. In short, while the first two chapters sought to analyze the historical development of public recreation in Baltimore – in particular in regards to the city’s network of recreation centers – the remaining chapters extend this analysis by focusing primarily on the more recent transformations of recreation policy and planning, while also further demonstrating the linkages between recreation centers, the processes of contemporary urban governance, and the practices and experiences of the contemporary urban environment.

The relative length of the first and second chapters, especially in relation to the third and fourth chapters, is explained through two primary rationales. First, the historical duration that makes up the focus of Chapter 1 and 2 requires a lengthier analysis, in that my aim was to provide a thorough historical perspective on the development and implementation of public recreation spaces and services. To this end both the first chapter, focused primarily on the changes to recreation policy that reflect the particular governmentalities or formations of recreational governance, as well as the second chapter, focused on the relations between modern urban planning and the physical sites of recreation, seek to document the overall shifts to and within public recreation in Baltimore throughout the mid- and late 20th century. Moreover,

the length of these chapters also reflects the necessity of analyzing these historical conditions and events in order to frame the engagement with the more recent developments in recreation within the third and fourth chapters.

Therefore, and following the socio-historical examination of recreation policy and planning that has preceded this interlude, the remaining two empirical chapters are primarily focused on how recreation has changed and is changing within the contemporary conditions and contexts of Baltimore. Specifically, Chapter 3 engages with the processes of urban neoliberalization, in examining how public recreation has been and is being restructured through neoliberal policies and programs. Chapter 4 then seeks to describe the more recent developments within the planning and programming of the city's recreation centers, focusing on participant interviews with several of the actors and institutions that are involved in the re-organizing of recreational services. Thus the remaining analyses seek to extend and build on the initial chapters, by examining the recent past and unfolding present of urban recreation in Baltimore City. In doing so, the examination of past approaches to thinking about and implementing a 'right to the active city' is complemented by a focus on the current and ongoing re-organization of urban recreation, in order to better grasp how the changing dynamics of recreational sites and services might be shaped by a concern for the equitable provision of recreational opportunity.

Chapter 3: Recreation and Urban Neoliberalization – Discourses of the Active City

Introduction

“The Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks currently operates 55 recreation centers. The majority of centers were constructed between the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the city’s population was nearly double its current size. Now, more than 40 years later, many centers are in need of substantial capital repairs and are obsolete for providing today’s recreational services, which have changed significantly over the last five decades. The need for modernization is obvious.

This situation is not unique to recreation centers. Over the last decade, Baltimore City has consolidated various public services, including schools and libraries, in response to the shift in population and need to maximize resources. In order to provide the desired level of service, these institutions recognized the need to develop more efficient modern facilities that serve a greater population. In this aspect, Baltimore City’s recreation centers are no different. Continuing to maintain underutilized and costly recreation will continue to result in low-quality centers and a significant drain on Department resources.”

(“Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake's Recreation Center Task Force Report,” 2011)

The report regarding Baltimore’s recreation centers that was released in August of 2011 was the end result of a planning process that involved both the city’s Recreation and Parks department and a ‘task force’ of civic leaders that had been organized by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake a year earlier to examine the problems within the city’s system of neighborhood-based recreation centers. However, the situation that the task force and the department faced in attempting to reorganize and ‘modernize’ the recreation centers centered on the vestiges of a previous era of public recreation governance, as throughout the postwar period and through the 1970s increased funding and support from a variety of local, state and federal sources and programs enabled both the construction of recreation facilities via capital projects as well as the proliferation of recreational services. As discussed in the first two chapters of this dissertation, the expansion of public recreation as a social service within Baltimore,

primarily throughout the postwar years and into the 1970s, was interconnected with the myriad social changes within that period. As Hackworth (2008) explains, the governing of American cities was transformed in this era in relation to the influence and centrality of two primary and related systems of thought: Keynesian economic models that focused on ‘interventions’ of the state to regulate the effects of market capitalism, and a social philosophy of “egalitarian liberalism” premised on a distinct conceptualization of an individual citizen’s ‘rights’ as both political and economic (p. 6). That is, we can recognize large-scale social and political platforms and initiatives of this era – including President Lyndon Johnson’s ‘Great Society’ and ‘War on Poverty’ in the mid-1960s, each of which directly resulted in funding and programs that were implemented in Baltimore – as emblematic of a larger sociopolitical consensus that sought to extend the New Deal focus on state interventions and direct federal spending specifically toward cities and urban issues, in part by acknowledging and emphasizing the notion that personal freedoms were based in forms economic (in)opportunity. The cumulative effect of these policies, and the numerous programs and social services that were funded in and through government support, were directed towards a “redistributive nation-state that would more aggressively intervene to provide some of the basic economic conditions necessary for experiencing the putative political freedoms of classical liberalism” (p. 6). In other words, and in regards to social services including public recreation in Baltimore and other American cities, the 1960s and 1970s were characterized by the breadth and depth of federally-funded and organized programs and investments, which allowed for a growth of recreation services and increase in recreation facilities.

Within this context, Baltimore's public recreation system expanded from approximately 14 recreation centers at the founding of the department in 1940, to 40 centers in 1960, and then to well over 100 centers by the early 1980s (Jordan, 1993, p. 6). These recreation sites were supplemented and supported by increased programming and staffing that were organized around recreation as a form of "intervention", including services that were designed specifically towards addressing disparities in recreational opportunities that were reflective of the city's racial and class inequalities (Corburn, 2009; Hackworth, 2006). Thus as the first chapter of this project explains, the interventionist nature of urban public recreation in this era evinces one approach or 'governmentality' of public recreation as interconnected within processes of urban governance.

However, this approach to organizing and implementing public recreation would be transformed again by the changes to the governing of American cities, as the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 would in many ways symbolize an emergent formation of federal, state and local governance. Following Navarro (1995), Reagan's 'New Federalism' signaled tax cuts, decreases in domestic spending, and increases in defense spending, all as aspects of a larger restructuring of both the federal government itself and the relationship between the federal, state and local levels (or 'scales') of governance. The impacts of these changes to urban governance make impossible the claim that Reagan's platform supported a more 'libertarian' existence, as the administration's policies did not diminish the impact of federal and state intervention, but rather changed the nature and effects of those interventions, especially in relation to American cities (p. 34). In relation to public recreation, the

massive reductions to federal funding and programs – sources of support that had allowed for the expansion of the recreation system over the previous three decades – meant the end of the ‘golden age’ of urban recreation, and a subsequent period of declining annual budgets, staffing and services for public recreation agencies (Deppe, 1986). For Baltimore’s recreation centers, the decreases to staffing and lowered funding, combined with rising operational and maintenance costs, resulted in the continued reduction of recreation services throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s – by 1998, the department operated 51 full-time recreation centers.

As Harvey (1989b) explains, the shifts within the governance of Baltimore during this era evidence a larger transformation in the methods and ideologies of American urban governance, specifically in the differing approaches towards operating and administering city services signaled by “urban managerialism” and “urban entrepreneurialism”. Intertwined with the processes of deindustrialization and suburbanization that changed the city’s population level, economic potential and demographic makeup, Harvey’s (1989b) analysis marks the transition away from the ‘managerial’ Keynesian model of social service provision via public funding and support, and toward ‘entrepreneurial’ strategies centered on inter-urban competition for tourism and consumption, often driven by attempts to re-imagine specific areas of the city toward capital growth and economic redevelopment. In Baltimore, this reorientation of the aims and models of urban governance was constituted primarily through the renewed emphases on economic redevelopment projects, and the concurrent de-prioritization and reduction of public services, including recreation. Thus on the one hand, Baltimore engaged in the processes of privatization and public-

private partnerships in order to complete tourist-focused projects such as the Inner Harbor, professional baseball and football stadiums, and Convention Center, among others, as part of a “renaissance” strategy that aimed to promote the city’s downtown area as a center of consumption and entertainment (Harvey, 2001a). On the other hand, this focus on downtown development occurred simultaneously with the retrenchment of social services and decline in population and housing for many of the city’s neighborhoods. By the late 1990s, these processes had constituted the formation of what Levine (2000) recognized as the ‘three Baltimores’ of 1) the suburbs, 2) downtown and the Inner Harbor, and 3) the multitude of underserved neighborhoods, as the city and region were increasingly characterized by both racial and class inequalities and different realities in regards to economic and social opportunity (p. 140). Within this context, the changing nature of urban governance resulted in profound impacts on the city’s public recreation system, as the department attempted to navigate the devolvement and consolidation of recreation services through annual cuts to department budgets and staffing, as well as a growing number of partial and full facility closures.

These shifts in the organization, structures and models of Baltimore’s approach to social services and economic redevelopment, as well as the specific transitions within public recreation policy and planning, evince the two primary aspects of the transformation of American urban governance over the previous forty years. In short, this analysis recognizes the restructuring of public recreation as one aspect of the ‘unraveling’ of the approach to thinking, organizing and implementing urban policy premised on Keynesian managerialism and egalitarian liberalism, and the

simultaneous emergence and ascent of a different formation of governance characterized by 'neoliberalism'. As Hackworth (2006) explains, as an economic, political and social philosophy, neoliberalism is at once a rejection of Keynesian economic models and the principles of egalitarian liberalism, and a "selective return" to aspects of classical liberalism that emphasize individual economic and political 'freedoms' (p. 9). Based primarily on the writings of Hayek (1960) and Friedman (M. Friedman, 1962), neoliberalism offered an alternative to the dominant (Keynesian) model, as it was primarily focused on the "trilogy" of the individual, the market, and the noninterventionist state (Hackworth, 2008). The adoption of neoliberal approaches to global, national, and local economic and social policy has resulted in the characterization of neoliberalism as a "project" that actively seeks to both redistribute wealth towards dominant classes and richer nations, as well as disassemble the egalitarian "institutions and narratives" of a previous generation (Harvey, 2007, p. 22). As a political project, neoliberalism gained influence within the United States and United Kingdom through the Reagan and Thatcher administrations, and by the 1990s was effectively "naturalized" as a dominant political philosophy in relation to a "variety of geo-institutional contexts" (Hackworth, 2006).

However, within this analysis neoliberalism is incorporated less as a particular ideology and philosophical system, and more as a process through which a contingent and malleable set of ideas and strategies are deployed selectively within specific sociopolitical milieus. That is, while neoliberalism represents a configuration of political ideals and economic models, the adaptation of neoliberal policies are always

“contested and spatiotemporally variable in form and outcome” (Davies & Pill, 2012). This means that rather than focusing on the projection or construction of neoliberalism as a political ideology, an analysis of urban governance provides a mode of understanding the processes of ‘neoliberalization’ within American cities. As Davies and Pill (2012) explain, this approach to conceptualizing the relations between neoliberalism and urban centers such as Baltimore emphasizes the ‘continuum’ of neoliberalization effects on and realization of distinct forms of governance, from “laissez-faire and state withdrawal, to the active cultivation of new citizen rationalities and practices by government” (2012). By incorporating this approach, this chapter focuses on how the impacts of neoliberal policy and planning on urban governance have primarily been evident in both moments of ‘destruction’, through the dismantling of “extant institutional arrangements and political compromises,” and moments of ‘creation’, through the development of “new infrastructure for market-oriented economic growth” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 15). In short, American cities including Baltimore have moved away from previous models of urban governance focused on the provision of social services, and instead have increasingly incorporated neoliberal strategies that prioritize economic redevelopment, realign the balance between public and private interests, and in general seek to redefine how cities are organized, operated and experienced.

Research Background

Thus this chapter seeks to detail the impacts of neoliberalization of Baltimore’s public recreation policy, and its effects on recreation programming, planning and the experiences that emanate from these efforts. However, and following Brenner and

Theodore (2002) , this analysis emphasizes the “contextual embeddedness” of the policy formations and interactions that make up the processes of neoliberalization. This means that this analysis of Baltimore’s public recreation policy as a site of “actually existing neoliberalism” seeks to problematize any linear or generic model of transition from the ‘Keynesian city’ to the ‘neoliberal city’ – instead, while acknowledging the entrenched influence of neoliberalism as a political ideology, an economic theory, and a personal philosophy, this chapter insists on a conceptualization of the processual nature of neoliberalism in relation to urban policy, accentuating the “complex, contested ways in which neoliberal restructuring strategies interact with pre-existing uses of space, institutional configurations, and constellations of sociopolitical power (Brenner & Theodore, 2002, p. 14). By examining the transformations to the institutional and policy frameworks that make up the development and implementation of recreation services in Baltimore, my aim is to provide a contextualized account of the linkages between the practices, policies and politics of public recreation and the neoliberalization of urban governance.

Further, this analysis contributes to and engages with two inter-related areas of research in regards to urban governance in general, and in particular the relationships between and within urban physical cultures. First, a focus on Baltimore’s public recreation policy is recognized as interconnected with analyses of the city’s spatial and social restructuring as an ‘entrepreneurial city’ over the past thirty years, primarily through the prioritization of economic redevelopment projects. This includes not only the Inner Harbor and other ‘waterfront’ and ‘downtown’-oriented projects (Harvey, 2001a; Levine, 2000), but also the city’s professional baseball and

football stadiums (Silk & Andrews, 2006) and, most recently, the hosting of the short-lived Grand Prix and plans for an expanded convention center and arena (M. Friedman, Bustad, & Andrews, 2012). In short, the development, implementation and continued political prioritization of these “spectacular spaces of (sporting) consumption”, in and through strategies of market-oriented growth and in contrast to the underdeveloped ‘borderlands’ of the deindustrialized city, signals one aspect of the transformations of urban governance within this period (Silk & Andrews, 2012, p. 137).

However, and in contrast to these analyses focused primarily on either the spectacular or ‘bifurcated’ aspects of the neoliberal city, this chapter instead engages the reorganization of the provision and distribution of recreation and physical activity opportunities over a range of spatial and social experience – in other words, the ways in which the everyday lives and physical cultural practices of Baltimore citizens are both reflective of and actively shape the arrangements of public recreation policy and planning. The multitude of opportunities and experiences in relation to recreation and physical activity across the spectrum of urban populations is often based on the distribution of different forms of recreation provision, especially in the contrast between ‘public’ and ‘private’ organizations and programs. In short, historically public recreation departments, facilities and programs most often – though not always – have operated with a primary goal of being accessible for all city residents, in part based on the Progressive Era principles that promoted recreation as an essential aspect of urban life (Friedman and Bustad, forthcoming). This ‘universalist’ approach to public recreation stressed the provision of recreational opportunities for those that

did not have access to other facilities, and was incorporated into both the origin of many city recreation agencies, as well as the expansion of recreational services throughout the post-war Keynesian era and into the early 1980s (Pitter & Andrews, 1997).

Yet as described above, the support and implementation of public recreation in relation to federal, state and municipal governance was effectively undermined by the restructuring of these different scales of governance in the context of Reagan's 'New Federalism' and the advent and influence of neoliberalism. As Giroux (2005) explains, these emergent and 'naturalized' neoliberal discourses have prioritized private interests and market models over the universalist, collective-based model of public service. Thus in contrast to the eras of "commitment" for public recreation, our contemporary period is primarily characterized by a simultaneous decrease in public facilities and programs, often through budget cuts and facility closures of city-operated recreational services, and increase in private gyms, fitness centers, and other market-based physical activity providers (Wiltse, Reader). Farrey (2008) has detailed many of the consequences of these changes to the provision of recreational opportunities in Baltimore throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, explaining that as the city's sports teams and stadiums were expanding, "sports and recreation resources for the city's children were imploding" (p. 229). The cumulative effects of deindustrialization, suburbanization and the shifts in governance and the distribution of physical activity opportunities has thus been evident in the exacerbation of social inequality and health inequities in many major American urban centers (Andrews, Silk & Pitter, 2008). In contributing to this line of scholarship concerned with both

historical and contemporary shifts in recreation governance and the continuing disparities in regards to physical activity provision in Baltimore, this analysis engages with the ongoing transformation of ‘public’ recreation and the changing relationships between physical activity and urban experience.

The research approach adopted in this chapter utilizes a theoretical and methodological approach focused on the ‘discourses’ of neoliberalization in order to analyze Baltimore’s public recreation policy. In this analysis discourse refers to the terms, meanings and relationships evident within the processes of urban recreation policy and planning, through over 600 internal department documents, as well as archival materials and media coverage of recreation services. As Peck and Tickell (2002) explain, in particular the discourses of neoliberalism have often proved “compelling” due to their “self-actualizing quality...even as they misdescribe the social world, [these] discourses...seek to remake it in their own image” (p. 35). That is, the discourses of neoliberalism are ‘strong discourses’ in that they are both naturalized within social experience, and congruent with contemporary forms and sources of social and political power (Bourdieu, 1998).

Given this focus on the discourses of public recreation policy, this chapter is framed methodologically through critical discourse analysis (CDA), a specific school of discourse analysis concerned in particular with the relations of power embedded within cultural practices and forms. This research method is appropriate within the research paradigm of this project, as CDA “explicitly intends to incorporate social-theoretical insights into discourse analysis and advocates social commitment...in research” (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2004, p. 247). In particular, CDA seeks to make

the relations between discourse and knowledge apparent – that is, the ways in which what is represented through language is lived and acted, and the meanings that competing discourses have for different individuals and groups (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). Most importantly, critical discourse analysis often rests on a dialectical understanding of social practices, in which “discourse” is an element in the making of meanings of everyday life.

As Locke (2004) explains, the relationship between power and discourse is less about an imposition of power through discourse and more the multifarious “effects” of particular “discursive figurations” that provide an ‘order of things’. This means that human subjects are, at least in part, constructed through discourse(s), and these discourse(s) are manifest in our actions, practices and knowledges. Following Smith’s (1990) analysis of the dialectical relationships between particular texts and forces and effects of power, Chouliaraki & Fairclough (2000) argue that “economic, social and cultural changes...exist as discourses as well as processes that are taking place outside discourse, and that the processes that are taking place outside discourse are substantively shaped by these discourses” (4). CDA allows for these ‘changes’ to be recognized and analyzed – in this project the focus is on the shifts, transformations and (dis)continuities related to Baltimore’s public recreation policy, planning and programming in the 21st century.

This project thus seeks to account for the ‘discourses’ of urban public recreation within Baltimore through critical discourse analysis - the CDA approach will be utilized when examining the 30+ years of documentation from the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks, or BCRP – this includes internal documentation

such as official meeting minutes, planning, organizational and other documents, annual and long-term reports, as well as other sources of public recreation discourse: community organization flyers, recreation programming forms, other City government documents. This material will be analyzed utilizing the particular form of critical discourse analysis offered by Wodak (2004) in the “discourse-historical” approach, which is based on a concept of sociohistorical “context” incorporating four dimensions of analysis, or ‘levels’: 1) the “immediate” text, 2) the “intertextual and interdiscursive relationships” between discourses, 3) the “extralinguistic social and institutional frames” of a specific context, and 4) the “broader socio-political and historical” contexts in which the discursive practices are embedded (205). By situating the discourse and ‘texts’ of public recreation in Baltimore within the relations between these various levels of association and scales of institutional scope and size, this chapter seeks to grasp the processes of interaction and exchange that lead to particular formations of public recreation policies, opportunities and experiences.

That is, my approach is based in analyzing and describing the discursive relations within the text’s meanings in relation to both the text itself, other texts and the discourses evident within them, the themes of urban governance and recreation provision emanating within the BCRP at different times, and the broader processes intertwined with the historical development of the department and the City. Taken together, these inter- and extra-textual relationships will allow for an analysis of how public recreation has been conceived and practiced within the City, and how these conceptions and practices are imbricated in the shifting processes of contemporary

urbanization. The transformations to the approaches to, and implementations of, public recreation policy in Baltimore has been and continues to be entangled with broader shifts in how cities were and are to be organized and governed. A critical discourse analysis of Baltimore's public recreation policies, plans and programs over the last 30 years will allow for exploration of how these modes of governance were intertwined with the provision of physical activity opportunities and resources. This chapter thus attempts to outline the discursive articulation, production and operation of the different approaches to public recreation, in an effort to analyze the inter-related and discursive arrangements of neoliberal urban governance. In short, this chapter seeks to support and extend an analysis of public recreation as an aspect of urban experience, in that recreation policy and the experiences that emanate from these policies are both actively shaped by the interplay of social, political and economic forces. These interconnections are examined in order to grasp how ideas of the 'right to the active city' are actively changing within the contemporary formation of American urban governance, and to better understand how the most recent restructuring of recreational policy and programming has specific implications for any concerns for the equitable provision of recreational opportunity.

Neoliberalization and Recreation

While the recent increase in research focusing on 'neoliberalism' in relation to global, national, urban and local contexts has been evident across and within many different academic fields, this agglomeration of studies on the types, forms, practices and experiences of neoliberalism as an economic, political, and social force has also threatened the potential analytic utilization and appropriateness of the term. Watkins

(2010) has described neoliberalism as nearing the end of its usefulness, with the danger of the word becoming “a dismal epithet...imprecise and overused” (p. 7). These charges have followed the expansion of neoliberalism as an academic conceptualization of many of the characterizations of contemporary lived experience, meaning that the term has increasingly been incorporated as a “stand-in term” for a “no-more-than approximate proxy for a specific analysis of mechanisms or relations of social power” (Peck, 2010, p. 14). Thus to address these concerns, this chapter seeks to detail the processes of neoliberal urbanism – discussed above as ‘neoliberalization’ – in order to evade a generalized analysis of neoliberalism as a coherent and centralized formation and philosophy. On the one hand, the processes of neoliberalization can and sometimes do share characteristics and values across and between locales, often in the development of policies and practices that have simultaneously diminished the role of the state in regards to both economic markets and to social welfare programs and public services, and prioritized capital accumulation by extending the scope and scale of market-based institutions and associations (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002). This has resulted in commonalities that mark neoliberal urban governance as distinct from other formations of governing cities, through the promotion of the free market and consumer-based individualism, the contraction of social services and public welfare, and the further marginalization and criminalization of urban poverty and other ‘at-risk’ populations (Wacquant, 2009).

However, the approach of this chapter emphasizes the contextually-dependent nature of neoliberal urban policy, as a formation of urban governance that been

manifest through the alterations and cross-referential development of different interpretations and implementations of neoliberal principles – that is, the ‘actually existing’ realities of neoliberal urban policy are most often “institutionally cluttered places marked by experimental-but-flawed systems of governance, cumulative problems of social fallout and serial market failure” (Peck, 2010, p. 37). This means that rather than incorporate neoliberalism as a systemic or centralized form of political and social policy development, there is instead a focus on how different and contradictory aspects of neoliberal policy have shaped and been shaped by specific urban contexts. In short, this chapter seeks to interrogate the ‘embedded neoliberalism’ of Baltimore’s public recreation policy, drawing attention to the contingent and situated nature of policy formation and implementation (Cerny, 2008). As Cerny (2008) explains, the framing of neoliberal policy formations as always entrenched within the confluence of inter- and extra-local actors, institutions and social forces draws attention to two aspects of neoliberal urban governance: first, the acknowledgement that our lives are indeed shaped through particular policies and initiatives that are often premised on neoliberal logics of market and individual ‘freedoms’; and second, that the adoption, adaptation and deployment of neoliberal policy does not constitute a closed system of neoliberal domination, but rather that the very contradictions and consequences of neoliberalism have “proven to be a relatively manipulable and fungible platform for actors to use to reconstitute their strategies and tactics” (37). Thus while this analysis recognizes the impacts of neoliberal policy in regards to the transformation of what comprises ‘public recreation’ and physical

activity opportunities in Baltimore, it also insists on and engages with the open-ended, contested and malleable nature of policy formations as always in-process.

In short, my aim is to detail a particular example of changes within a specific aspect of urban governance over the last approximately 30 years, in order to both understand patterns of neoliberal restructuring and invoke “part-whole connections” between local occurrences of policy reform and broader neoliberal discourses (Graefe, 2005, p. 3). To do so, this analysis incorporates a framework of neoliberalization that is based on three ‘layers’, ‘waves’ or “internal periodizations” of neoliberal policy formation, development and implementation in regards to public recreation (Keil, Spaces). Following Peck and Tickell (2002), and Keil (2009), this framework is premised on the distinct yet inter-related processes of ‘roll-back’, ‘roll-out’, and ‘roll-with’ neoliberalization – as further detailed below, these conceptualizations focus on different aspects of the restructuring of recreation policy, the effects on recreation sites and services, and the general transformation of public recreation in the American city over the last 30 years.

However, while each of these conceptualizations - as a bundle of governing policy, practices, and associations - are characterized by particular aspects of neoliberal policy restructuring, this analysis demonstrates that each relates and overlaps with the others to evade any linear or systemic model of neoliberalism (Keil, 2002; Peck & Tickell, 2002). In this way, the differing processes of urban neoliberalization can be understood not as finite periods or durational trends, but as flexible modalities of governance that prioritize particular rationales, strategies and models and de-emphasize others – consequently each of these approaches also has

specific impacts in regards to the provision and experience of public recreation services, and in particular the city's network of recreation centers. That is, by accentuating the ways in which instances of these different formations of neoliberalization are 'embedded' within the specific contexts of Baltimore's uneven development, this analysis highlights the contradictions and contestations of this development in regards to recreation, and avoids a generalized narrative of neoliberal urban governance. Thus in order to demonstrate the relationships between the different processes of neoliberalization and public recreation, this analysis describes how roll-back, roll-out and roll-with neoliberalization have been demonstrated within and through the administration and implementation of the city's recreation center policy over the last 30 years.

Recreation and Roll-back Neoliberalization

By 1980, the cumulative effects of Keynesian and egalitarian liberal forms of governance and policy had both directly and indirectly resulted in the expansion of BCRP services and a proliferation of city-operated recreation sites, through both federal, state and municipal policies that prioritized recreation as a public service and through federal funding and programs targeting urban communities. As Chapter 1 discusses in detail, the 'golden age' of urban recreation throughout the 1960s and 1970s was characterized by both local political and public support, as well as the inclusion of recreation within governmental interventions aimed at social cohesion and neighborhood re-development, especially in the context of the city's growing social inequality. In short, this period marks the high point of recreation as a publicly funded, operated and administrated service within American cities, as policymakers

and politicians included recreational services within attempts to both maintain existing communities as well as address forms of social and economic inopportunity (Corburn, 2009, p. 54). As briefly discussed above, this formation of public recreation policy and programing was essentially and fundamentally transformed through the shifts in urban governance that accompanied the ‘New Federalism’ of the late 1970s and 1980s, as symbolized by the ascent and length of the Reagan administration in the United States (and Thatcher’s administration in the United Kingdom). New Federalism as a political slogan and policy platform was often intertwined with and expressed through ‘roll-back’ neoliberalization, as the primary rationale and strategy of this political and social programme was the restructuring of the relationship between government, cities, and citizens through the reduction of state-sponsored and funded social welfare initiatives (Giroux, 2005).

Thus this aspect or layer of the neoliberalization of urban policy was primarily evident in the ‘rolling back’ of the previous era and formation of urban governance, through decreases in funding for social services and the decline of these services in regards to staffing and scope. For Brenner and Theodore (2002), the “dismantling and deregulation” of the Keynesian mode of governance signaled the transition to “lean government”, in that both the federal, as well as state and local governments increasingly moved to reduce or eliminate public spending towards social service programs (p. 25). As they explain, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, “municipalities were increasingly constrained to introduce various cost-cutting measures...including cutbacks in public services, and the privatization of infrastructural facilities...in order to lower costs of state administration, and thereby to accelerate inward investment”

(p. 26). The focus here is on the particular effects that these shifts in urban governance had on public recreation agencies, especially in deindustrializing centers such as Baltimore, wherein municipal budget reductions, a loss of tax revenues from a decreasing population base, and a restructured relationship between cities and the federal government combined to form a new reality for recreation.

The first wave of ‘rolling-back’ recreation was evident in the transformation of fiscal resources away from a model of social service provision, especially in relation to federal aid and initiatives aimed at urban populations. In this mode, the federally-funded and supported interventions towards improving the quality of life in city neighborhoods, and specifically communities impacted by the dynamics of demographic shifts and economic turbulence, were replaced by a model that emphasized a reduction in the scope and size of many city agencies. The first experiences with this shift for the BCRP occurred in the late 1970s, as the department faced a \$1 million budget cut in 1978 that represented the first time since the 1950s that the budget had not been increased or supplemented by federal assistance – however, the City Comptroller warned then that the budget shortfall could be a “preview of even worse things to come” (Watson, 1978a). The response to this budget cut would also establish a pattern in regards to the ‘disinvestment’ in recreational services that makes up one aspect of the roll-back neoliberalization of public recreation.

In 1979, 24 summer playgrounds were not put into operation, all city pools and ice rinks would close a week early, all aquatics programs and basketball leagues held at school facilities were cancelled, and all weekend and after-hours programming

were eliminated – along with the decreased budget, layoffs within the department saw staffing levels reach their lowest totals since before the influx of federal programs and funding throughout the 1960s and 1970s (Jordan, 1993, p. 225).

As Biles (2011) explains, this disinvestment in urban social services was characterized in particular by the transformation of the relationship between federal programs and funding and city governments and agencies, often symbolized at the national level with the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and the increase in power and influence of the New Federalism model. In regards to Baltimore’s recreation system, this meant that the same federal programs and funding sources that had enabled an expansion of neighborhood recreation centers and services were also some of the first federal programs to be re- and de-constructed through changing federal policy, leaving a recreation system that was at least partially dependent on these programs without a viable replacement or alternative. As one example of this restructuring and the effects of the rolling-back of recreation for Baltimore’s recreation centers, in 1985 the department faced the loss of both 5-10% of General Service funds from the city, as well as a total of over \$5 million in federal revenue sharing funds that were directed towards BCRP’s ‘Regular Recreational Services’ budget line, representing nearly 45% of recreational funding and over 15% of the BCRP’s overall annual budget (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting December 18, 1985,” 1985). As a result, the department was to “make the necessary cuts...in programming and maintenance for the recreation centers”, including the possible closing of 60 to 80 of the city’s 100 full-time centers (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting December 18, 1985,” 1985). While budget adjustments would allow for

many of these centers to avoid closure, if only in the short term, the prospect of facility closures, deferred and lacking maintenance, and reductions to recreation programs and staffing all marked the neoliberal roll-back of recreation throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s.

The transformed reality of funding, implementing and sustaining public recreation was made evident in a 1991 BCRP report that calculated that the department had endured a complete collapse of federal resources over the previous 15 years, from 22% percent of annual department funding from federal sources in 1975 to just 0.3% in 1990 ("Strategic Plan for Action," 1991). Meanwhile, the same report found that the persistent cuts and reductions to BCRP's municipal budget over the same period meant that the department's operating budget, when adjusted for inflation, had actually decreased by nearly \$6 million, from \$23 million in 1975 to \$17 million in 1990 (1991). In short, the 1980s marked an "era of budget-tightening" for public recreation in Baltimore, leading to reductions in services and staff (Jordan, 1993, p. 256). In this analysis, the discourses of 'cuts', 'reductions' and the restructuring or elimination of recreation programs throughout this era evince disinvestment as one aspect of roll-back neoliberalization. However, the disinvestment in recreation was not limited to this decade, as the department continued to face similar issues in fiscal instability throughout the next ten years and beyond. The 1990 budget situation meant that BCRP prepared for a "worst case scenario" in regards to the loss of up to \$7 million in funding, including the partial or full closure of over 10 recreation centers ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting February 21, 1990," 1990). In 1991, as the Mayor's proposed budget meant that further decreases in recreation staff and services

would be necessary, a recreation Board member explained that the Mayor was asking the department to “tighten its belt”, a situation that had become a near annual occurrence in regards to budget reductions (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting February 21, 1990,” 1990). The BCRP report on recreational services released the same year explained that while the department continued to maintain and operate approximately 77 recreation centers, the annual budget levels and continued reductions meant that there was currently adequate staffing for operating only 43 centers (Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Department Report, 1991). While the department was determined to sustain the neighborhood-based recreation system, this over-reaching of staff and operational and capital costs served to further accentuate the disinvestment and decline in recreation, as many centers were increasingly characterized by a lack in routine and necessary maintenance and a lack of equipment, staffing and resources.

By 1996, another impending \$2 million in budget reductions threatened further staff layoffs and facility closures, as Mayor Kurt Schmoke explained that the “downsizing” of recreational services was both undesirable and necessary given the city’s fiscal state (Matthews, 1996a). The continued reductions to the department’s annual budget, and consequently to facilities, staff and programming, would also result in political challenges for Mayor Schmoke’s administration in his final year in office in 1999, as a further proposed \$2.9 million cut to BCRP in that year’s proposed budget was responded to by citizens that rallied at City Hall to urge an end to the “destruction” of Baltimore’s public recreation system (Shields, 1999). These protests focused on the combined \$15 million in funding reductions that had been proposed

for BCRP facilities and services, and partial or full closer of 18 recreation centers, over the previous three year period (Shields, 1999). While the protests eventually caused a partial and temporary restoration of BCRP funding, they also symbolized the reaction to a culmination of nearly two decades worth of declining support for the city's public recreation services. That is, the discourses of budget cuts, staffing layoffs, facility closures and suspended or eliminated services demonstrate that the process of disinvestment - as one aspect of roll-back neoliberalization - was not confined to the initial period of Reagan's New Federalism in the 1980s, but continued throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium, as public recreation was increasingly deprioritized within Baltimore's annual municipal budgets and in relation to federal and state funding sources.

However, and along with the disinvestment in recreation in terms of a loss of support and funding, the rolling-back of BCRP sites and services has also been demonstrated in the incorporation of the processes of privatization within departmental planning and restructuring. Privatization, as another primary aspect of roll-back neoliberalization, also initially emerged within Baltimore's recreation policy in the early 1980s – in this mode the department, already encountering the effects of budget reductions and disinvestment, sought to incorporate the public-private partnership model of municipal governance. As public-private partnerships sought to encourage the coordination of private market interests and non-profit organizations with city agencies and municipal planning, this model gained influence and popularity with city governments attempting to adjust to emergent forms of national and local policy throughout this era (Savas, 1999). As Harvey (2001) notes,

the public-private partnership model was specifically and increasingly utilized in Baltimore's planning and development in the late 1970s and early 1980s, especially in relation to downtown-centered projects including the Inner Harbor tourism area. The incorporation of partnerships and privatization thus serves as one marker of the transition from 'urban managerialism' to 'urban entrepreneurialism', in the shift away from the Keynesian approach to federally supported urban services and programs and towards a neoliberal approach emphasizing local autonomy and responsibility for market-oriented 'growth' (Harvey, 1989b). In other words, cities have prioritized 'entrepreneurial' attempts to create and maintain spaces of tourism, consumption and commercialization ahead of supporting the 'management' of city agencies and services - in this mode, partnerships were and are often conceived and implemented in an attempt to re-center the approach to urban governance on economic redevelopment, over and ahead of the distribution and provision of social services.

This shift was reflected in recreation planning through the privatization of several of BCRP's 'special facilities' throughout the 1980s, including control and operation of the five municipal golf courses and the city zoo, both of which were transferred to newly-formed non-profit organizations in this period (Jordan, 1993, p. 291). The rationales for privatizing each of these facilities and thereby removing it from BCRP control were inter-related: on the one hand, the department had already endured several years of losses in resources and services and staffing, creating challenges in regards to adequately maintaining and programming these sites; on the other, the inclusion of the partnership model would allow for the department to restructure its focus on recreational services instead of special facilities, while also keeping these

facilities in operation through their private and non-profit partners. However, these rationales also suggested a deeper transformation in the mission and vision of public recreation during this period, especially in relation to municipal recreation agencies experiencing roll-back neoliberalization in the form of disinvestment. As BCRP Director Chris Delaporte explained at the December 1985 meeting of the Board of Recreation and Parks,

“We are moving into a time when limited resources prevail upon us to seek new and innovative sources of recreational activities. No longer can we absorb the soaring costs of building maintenance as a portion of the cost of provision of recreation to the general public. We must look to providing recreational activities and services that are strictly comprised of programming costs where the cost of participation is completely associated with the activity itself.” (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting December 18, 1985,” 1985).

Delaporte’s statement conveys an understanding of the changed reality of public recreation in Baltimore from the previous era, and suggests a restructuring of the mission of BCRP as a recreational agency in response to the changed conditions of urban governance – in short, instead of focusing resources and efforts on highly-subsidized programs and facilities, the department should and would move towards developing services that were self-sustaining in regards to generating at least enough revenue to decrease or eliminate the public subsidy that came from the city budget. As is further discussed in the first chapter, this change in strategy was incorporated into recreation policy initially through the use of privatized and ‘quasi-public’ funding for capital projects through “conditional purchase agreements”, wherein the department director worked with external private funding groups to raise the necessary capital for a given facility and debt servicing agreement, and the facility was arranged to be operated by a private or non-profit partner (Bustad, 2012). These

conditional purchase agreements were arranged with Delaporte through the quasi-public City Trustees, a group that worked with the Mayor in allocating funding for development projects, including the Inner Harbor. This model of financing and operating recreation facilities was utilized towards a number of BCRP projects throughout the mid-1980s, including MiMi DiPietro ice rink in Patterson Park and the Mount Pleasant ice rink, a rowing facility in Middle Branch Park, Du Burns Arena, and Myers Soccer Pavilion – each of these projects resulted from the emergent “build and pay long-term debt” model for public recreation, in contrast with the “build and operate” model of the previous era (Luxenberg, 1984). Each facility was completed utilizing the privatized model of capital funding, and each was built with a partnership arrangement in which the department would not be responsible for operations of the facility, allowing BCRP to continue to adjust to nearly annual decreases in budgets, funding levels, and staffing and services.

That is, the impacts of privatization would mean that while public-private partnerships for these revenue-generating ‘special’ facilities were implemented and supported, this ongoing reorientation of recreational services would also result in the continued deprioritization of neighborhood-based recreation, including and specifically the city’s recreation centers. As most of these centers had been built in the 1960s and 1970s, they were constructed and operated within an approach to public recreation that was incongruent with the changed realities of urban governance and recreation policy in the 1980s and into the 1990s. As Pitter and Andrews (1997) explain, the foundations of many public recreation systems – and as this analysis recognizes, including that in Baltimore – are based in a concept of “universalist”

recreation that conceived of recreation as a service for all citizens, and in particular those without access to other recreation and leisure services. Further, this rationale for the provision and distribution of recreation was critical in regards to the positioning of recreation as an essential urban service within the Keynesian, egalitarian liberal approach to urban governance that dominated the previous generation.

This approach was fundamentally restructured by the rolling-back of recreation through privatization, as recognized by residents of the city's Pen-Lucy in response to the proposed closing of their community's recreation center in 1985 – the neighborhood's Northeast Community Organization (NECO) argued that the closing of Mullan Recreation Center was directly tied to the capital investments in the ice rinks and arenas, with one NECO member stating that the opposing trends in neighborhood recreation and 'special' recreation constituted the "Inner Harborization" of public recreation in Baltimore (Gunther, 1985). While Mullan was eventually, though only temporarily, kept open at the community's behest, the increasing commonality of this episode demonstrates the ways in which recreation policy had been transformed by both broader shifts in urban governance, especially in the disinvestment in urban recreational services and concurrent emphasis on privatization and partnerships within capital development. The incorporation of the partnership model and the process of privatization thus allowed for a further rolling-back of recreational services, as the scope and size of BCRP's recreational system of facilities and staff was reduced through both the 'cuts' of disinvestment, as well as the redirecting of capital resources toward partnership facilities and the transferal of recreation services and facilities to private and non-profit operators.

The revenue-generating model that made these partnerships feasible, however, was largely unavailable to the network of recreation centers based in an earlier approach to urban recreation. The operating model for special facilities, including the golf courses, ice rinks, and indoor arenas was premised on the idea that other private and non-profit organizations would utilize and rent out the facilities (for example, local youth hockey teams paying for “ice time” to practice at the ice rinks), thereby producing revenue for the partnership operator and for BCRP (Bustad, 2012).

Yet the recreation centers, and especially the majority of centers that had been built next to or directly connected to a school facility, simply lacked the capacity and amenities for ‘special’ recreation services, as they had been developed in relation to a neighborhood-based strategy of recreation and public service provision that was rooted in an earlier formation of urban recreational governance. Without the types of public-private partnerships that were developed around the special facilities, by the 1990s Baltimore’s recreation centers were left with an uncertain future in relation to both disinvestment and privatization – continued budget reductions and staffing decreases would result in an further partial or full closures of centers and services, while the partnership model available to other forms and types of recreation contrasted with both the physical structure and programming dynamics of neighborhood-based recreation sites.

Recreation and 'roll-back' neoliberalization	- Disinvestment:	Reductions to annual budgets, capital funding, staffing and programming
	- Privatization:	Re-orientation of recreation services toward revenue-generating, fee-inducing programs and facilities

Table 3.1

Recreation and Roll-out Neoliberalization

By 1991, the rolling-back of public recreation in Baltimore was evidenced in a study commissioned by the Mayor, which found that while the department operated 77 recreation centers, the actual available staff and declining maintenance funding were adequate for only 43 centers to be operational ("Strategic Plan for Action," 1991). This situation was not improved by the release of the 1992 proposed budget, which included \$3.3 million in further cuts to BCRP, resulting in the proposed closure of 10 centers ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting April 9, 1992," 1992). In response, the department adopted a strategy that would be emulated in several ways by the 2011 Mayor's Task Force plan nearly two decades later, through the 'request for proposal' or RFP process for several recreation centers – this model, more often used to contract or 'bid' out particular services in relation to the

construction and maintenance of public facilities, was employed as means for BCRP to remove recreation services from a center while offering the building for “alternative use” by a community organization (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 7, 1992,” 1992). The budget situation in the spring of 1992, combined with the loss of the main tenant for Du Burns Arena when the Baltimore Blast professional indoor soccer franchise folded along with the league it played in, spurred the implementation of the RFP process for not only several special facilities including the arena, but also for 5 neighborhood recreation sites. Two of these sites were formerly full-time recreation centers - DeWees in north-central Baltimore and Rognel Heights in west Baltimore – and the department received “many requests” for further information about the facilities, including from several day care centers (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 7, 1992,” 1992).

However, when the RFP application deadline passed on June 30, only four applications had been received, as several groups either missed the deadline or pulled out of the application process (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting July 20, 1992,” 1992). On the one hand, the relative dearth of viable ‘partners’ for these recreation centers again demonstrates the contrast between special facilities and neighborhood recreation facilities, in that partnership opportunities were more feasible for special facilities that were geared toward trained staff and programming, and often did not materialize in regards to recreation centers. On the other hand, the incorporation of the RFP model within the city’s recreation policy, and in particular towards the centers, also evinces a process different from the privatization of recreation, as the RFP was not meant to privatize aspects of the provision of

recreation services as much as to devolve these responsibilities from the city agency to local organizations and citizens. This means that the RFP process, while a response to conditions of disinvestment and privatization that had left neighborhood-based recreation in decline – or what Councilman Martin O’Malley called the “slow death” of the department – was also an inter-related yet distinct aspect of the restructuring of Baltimore’s recreation policy (“Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble,” 1996).

In this analysis, the incorporating of the RFP process into recreation center planning and programming signals the initial emergence of a different phase of recreation policy transformation, in the form of ‘roll-out’ neoliberalization. Following Peck and Tickell (Spaces), this formation of neoliberal policy changes and initiatives is often interconnected to the rolling-back of public services within urban spaces, and yet is differentiated by particular rationales and logics. Whereas the roll-back formation of urban neoliberalization was most often associated with conditions that were ‘external’ to neoliberal policy – in other words, the rolling-back of services were often in part a response to the conditions of deindustrialization, suburbanization, and urban decline – the formation of “roll-out” neoliberalization that emerged in the 1990s was instead predicated primarily on the “contradictions and tensions” that were ‘internal’ to neoliberal urbanism, including the consequences of disinvestment and privatization (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 42). This means that while roll-back neoliberalization signals the transformation of American urban governance in regards to the erosion and dismantling of the Keynesian approach of an earlier generation, roll-out neoliberalization emerges in the form of policies and initiatives that sought to

simultaneously construct an alternative form of social service delivery and provision, as well as address the “recurrent failures...of deregulation and marketization” (p. 43). Thus as Brenner and Theodore (Spaces) illustrate, roll-out neoliberalization developed in relation to the “immanent contradictions and crisis tendencies” of neoliberal policy itself, as cities invoked other neoliberal strategies in an attempt to engage with the realities of disinvestment and privatization (2002, p. 34). In short, the transformation of urban policy within roll-back neoliberalization effectively created the necessity for alternate approaches to urban governance, often in the form of other neoliberal policy strategies that were enacted, or ‘rolled-out’, in order to address the shortcomings and tensions of the rolling-back.

As this study has demonstrated, the impacts of the rolling-back of recreational services in Baltimore meant that the scope and scale of BCRP programs was reduced, and the mission and vision of public recreation was fundamentally restructured. By the early and mid-1990s, these conditions would evince one aspect of the rolling-out of neoliberal recreation policy and planning, through the adoption of the RFP process in regards to the operation and control of city recreation centers. That is, the department turned to the RFP as an alternative to the reality of continued reductions to programming and staffing, and sought to adopt and implement this process carefully in regards to neighborhood recreation facilities by “moving slowly” into the realm of privatized community recreation sites and services (“Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 7, 1992,” 1992). However, and as discussed above, there were contrasting dynamics between the privatization of recreation through public-private partnerships in relation to special facilities, and opportunities for private and

non-profit operators of recreation centers. While the design, construction and operation of recreation special facilities were premised on a revenue-generating and self-sustaining model of market efficiency, recreation centers lacked the size and capability to appeal to potential private or non-profit ‘partners’. Instead of identifying and coordinating with a non-profit operator for a particular special facility – as in the case of the golf courses, ice rinks, and indoor arenas – the RFP process for recreation centers aimed to incorporate community organizations and volunteer associations into the provision of recreation services. These distinctions evince the difference between the processes of privatization within Baltimore’s recreation policy in regards to the partnership model of constructing and operating special facilities, and the processes of devolution in the form of relinquishing control of particular services and appropriating these services as responsibilities of other organizations (Kodras, 1997). In short, the RFP process symbolizes the renewed and formalized efforts to turn over BCRP facilities and services to community organizations and associations – thus throughout the 1990s, the rolling-out of public recreation was signaled by the active formation of recreation policy that attempted to devolve the responsibility of provision of recreational opportunities in Baltimore.

Within the context of the RFP process that was initiated in 1992, as the first to formally incorporate this model in relation to recreation centers, the example of Rognel Heights Recreation Center demonstrates the specific and inter-related impacts of roll-back and roll-out neoliberalization on Baltimore’s recreation policy. The center, attached to the community’s elementary school, had been built along with dozens of other facilities during the peak of federal funding for neighborhood

recreation, but by 1991 was facing maintenance and staffing issues that had resulted in partial closures and layoffs. Following the release of the Mayor's recreation study in 1991 that recommended closing nearly half of the 77 centers being operated, as well as the projections for the 1992 budget, Rognel Heights was identified by the department as a center that could and should be "turned over" to the community that it served ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 7, 1992," 1992). The RFP proposal for the Rognel Heights Center was submitted by a coalition of nearly 20 different community and volunteer groups, collectively titled as the Edmondson Village Community Coalition, who were committed to operating the approximately 9,000 square foot building and providing maintenance and utility costs for a three-year period ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 7, 1992," 1992). Initially, a potential agreement with the group raised concerns about both capital improvement and major maintenance costs (for example, a new roof or HVAC system) as well as insurance coverage and liability costs – these issues indicated that the department was "treading new ground" in relation to privatized recreation centers ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 7, 1992," 1992). However, by April of the following year the group had worked with BCRP to develop an agreement that would see the center turned over to a collective of eight community groups in exchange for \$100 per month to defray utility costs, with the groups assuming liability and insurance costs and responsibility for all maintenance and improvement costs totaling under \$500 (Siegel, 1993).

The formality of the RFP process, and of the contractual agreement between the Edmondson Village coalition and the department, point to the emergence of a rolled-

out form of neoliberalized recreation policy in two ways. First, the status of the Rognel Heights center in the early 1990s was symptomatic of a period of disinvestment and decline, and exemplifies the conditions created in and through the rolling-back of recreation, meaning that the center's re-organization was predicated on the necessity for alternative approaches to recreation provision. In other words, without the reduction to services and lack of maintenance and improvement funding, the RFP process and agreement model would not have been deployed. Instead, these groups were sought out by the department as a possible alternative provider of recreation in recognition of the continued decline in budgets and staffing, as the group planned to offer both sports and other activities like teen counseling in order to utilize the center as a "chance to make a difference" (Siegel, 1993). Second, the devolution of the Rognel Heights center and its services and programming to a community organizations – or in this case, an agglomeration of numerous community groups – was the first of many future attempts at relinquishing recreational services to neighborhood and volunteer associations. As a department spokeswoman explained when the group's contract had been approved by the city Board of Estimates, " This is a first for us [BCRP]...we have never before taken an actual rec center and put it up for alternate use" (Siegel, 1993). Following Rognel Heights, the department hoped to utilize a similar process in order to 'turn over' at least four other centers to community groups in the immediate future (Siegel, 1993).

The continuance of this strategy means that the Rognel Heights example in the early 1990s symbolizes not only the devolvement of public recreation, but also a moment of policy restructuring that would influence future decisions and approaches

to recreation in Baltimore. That is, the initial development and deployment of the RFP process within recreation policy and planning signals a larger shift within the neoliberalization of urban governance, in the rolling-out of policies aimed at addressing the conditions of disinvestment and decline and supporting market-oriented development within urban spaces (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). Again, in distinction to the reducing of BCRP budgets, staffing and sites via the rolling-back of recreation, the roll-out phase and formation of recreation policy emphasized the incorporation of particular models that could utilize community organizations in the process of devolving responsibility for the provision of recreational services. As Peck and Tickell (2002) explain, this form of devolution has often centered on the involvement of ‘extrastate’ agencies that vary in regards to size and scope (p. 391). As evidenced by the Rognel Heights center within the RFP process, this “selective empowerment of community organizations and NGOs as flexible, low-cost, non-state service providers” has effectively allowed a specific city government and particular service agency to transfer responsibility for services and opportunities to localized community organizations and volunteer associations, thereby assigning at least some aspects of the provision of that service to residents themselves (Peck, 2010, p. 27). Further, in relation to Baltimore’s recreation system, the rolling-out of neoliberal policy has meant the increased inclusion of not only small, volunteer-based neighborhood associations, but also state, regional and national organizations involved or interested in youth recreational opportunities. This was demonstrated in the same period as the RFP process in the early 1990s, as the city also worked during this time with the Maryland state chapter of the national Boys & Girls Club to re-

open three recreation centers in public housing facilities that had been closed due to budget cuts (Hilson, 1992a). These centers, operating with Boys & Girls staff and programming and supported by grants as well as funding from the United Way, also represent the devolvement of public recreation, as the provision of recreation in and through these facilities was ‘turned over’ to the organization (Hilson, 1992a).

In general, the incorporation and increased reliance on non-profit and private organizations for the provision of recreation reveals the consequences of declining budgets and staffing, but this shift towards implementing models that were premised on devolving service provision to ‘extra-local’ entities also demonstrates the distinctive rationales of roll-out neoliberalization. In particular, the approaches to and purposes of recreation policy have transformed in relation to what Pitter & Andrews have referred to as the recreation and physical activity sector of the “social problems industry”, evidenced by the rapid increase in non-profit and private organizations throughout the 1980s and 1990s and simultaneous decline in support for public services (1997). During this period, the increased support for projects and programs aimed at recreational opportunities for urban youth – and in particular for those considered ‘at risk’ in relation to delinquency and crime – was evidenced through the popularity of services like the “midnight basketball” leagues that were implemented in many American cities, which targeted young males from particular neighborhoods characterized by high crime rates and juvenile delinquency (Hartmann, 2001). Programs like midnight basketball and the overall inclusion of recreational services within the social problems industry also evince the emergent form of neoliberal policy in this period, as the incorporation of these programs and the non-profit and

privatized organizations involved resulted in specific models for urban recreation provision. That is, instead of reducing services and the size and scope of public agencies, roll-out policies have often taken on “more socially interventionist and ameliorative forms” in order to “regulate, discipline and contain those marginalized and dispossessed by the neoliberalization of the 1980s” (Albo, 2005, p. 68).

Following Brenner and Theodore (2002), the presence of recreation within the social problems industry of the 1990s aligns with a re-orienting of neoliberal urban governance, in which the same ‘inner-city’ communities that were shaped by both racial and class dynamics and targeted by the disinvestment of roll-back neoliberalization throughout the 1980s were reconstituted as the site for rolling-out different forms of neoliberal urbanism throughout the next decade. This same transformation was evident within BCRP policy throughout the early 1990s, as the department moved to organize alternative forms of service delivery that would allow the devolvement of the service from the agency to community stakeholders.

Within the shift to roll-out neoliberalization and the emergence of the social problems industry aimed primarily at inner-city neighborhoods and populations, the most strident example of devolution in regards to recreation in Baltimore occurred several years later, when in 1995 the city began to implement the Police Athletic League (PAL) program. This initiative represents a key element and force in the restructuring of recreation center policy within roll-out neoliberalization, as the department sought to supplement community and non-profit partnerships with a different type of recreation service aimed specifically at the youth population in particular ‘problem’ neighborhoods. Within the PAL program, city police officers

were assigned to “active participation...as role models, mentors, and caring adults for young people,” and tasked with programming specifically designed for ages 7 through 17 that offered “a combined focus on character development, academic enrichment, arts and cultural activities, and athletics” (Subhas & Chandra, 2004). Operating under the program’s motto, “Giving kids in our toughest neighborhoods a chance to succeed,” the PAL program sought to display “how law enforcement personnel can have an impact on youth by fostering academic excellence, civic responsibility, creativity, self-regulation, and social values” (Subhas & Chandra, 2004). The initial implementation of the program had immediate effects on the city’s recreation system, as several of the first 10 PAL centers were recreation centers that had been previously closed due to budget cuts, or centers that were facing immediate closure (“Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble,” 1996). The impact of the program on BCRP policy and planning was even more pronounced the following year in 1996, as the Mayor’s Office announced plans to expand the PALs program to 11 recreation centers within the next year and an additional 8 PAL centers (or ‘PALs’) over the following three years, while at the same time BCRP faced a \$2 million budget cut and possible staff layoffs and facility closures (“Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble,” 1996).

The simultaneous growth of the PAL program and continued decrease in the number of BCRP centers and staffing again evinces both the consequences of rolled-back recreation, as well as the formation of roll-out practices and policies that attempted to actively address these effects. Thus on the one hand, the deprioritization

of BCRP as a city agency and service provider throughout the 1980s and 1990s symbolized the ‘slow death’ of public recreation in the city, especially in comparison to the earlier generation of federally-subsidized support for recreation initiatives. On the other, the conditions of this decline in turn resulted in the rolling-out of policies and programs that sought to address the lack of recreational opportunities, especially in neighborhoods characterized by delinquency, crime, and general social inequality – the PAL program represents one such policy and program, in that it was designed in part to provide recreation in locations where BCRP services had been reduced, suspended or eliminated. As two examples, the opening of the Goodnow Road PAL center in 1995 was in part brought about because of partial and full closures of several BCRP centers in the nearby Herring Run neighborhood in northeastern Baltimore, while the Fort View center was transferred from BCRP to the PALs program after it was slated for closure in 1996 (Hermann, 1996). In each of these cases and like many others around the city, the PAL program was conceived and implemented as a method that could essentially “fill in the void” left by recreation budget cuts and staffing and programming shortages, through a reassignment of the responsibility of this service from BCRP to the police department (Hermann, 1996).

In particular, the Police Athletic League centers (or ‘PALs’) utilized two specific processes that further characterize rolled-out neoliberal recreation in and through devolution – first in regards to inter-agency transfer, in which the city government worked to move a particular service from one agency or department to another. In this case, specific recreation facilities were transferred from BCRP to the Police Athletic League administration and budget, while the programs at these facilities were

transferred from BCRP to officers from the Baltimore Police Department that were organized and deployed by the PAL program. By ‘turning over’ recreation facilities and services to the police department, this policy and program followed the process of devolution involving neighborhood associations and non-profit organizations, but with the difference that the PAL program entailed moving a service to another city agency’s responsibility and control. This means that in addition to the incorporation of extrastate entities into the formation of recreation policy and provision and delivery of recreational services, the inter-agency transfer of facilities and services between governing institutions also evinces a distinct aspect of the neoliberal restructuring of urban governance, in that these transfers often allow and encourage the further devolution and deprioritization of public services in favor of market alternatives (Tennberg, Vola, Espiritu, Schwenke Fors, & Ejdemo, 2014). The PAL program illustrated the discrepancies between the city’s declining public recreation system and the growing number of non-profit and ‘quasi-public’ policy initiatives, as the PAL centers were funded entirely through grants and private donations, including the sale of the Goodnow Road facility (a former 7/11 store) to the PAL program for only \$1 through a donation by the city’s MACHT Foundation (Hermann, 1996). In short, while the PAL mission of providing recreational opportunities for children and young adults duplicated many of the same rationales for BCRP programs, the PAL centers held particular advantages in regards to both funding and political and public support, leading to the continued reorganization of public recreation policy.

Second, and as the first chapter discusses, the PAL program in Baltimore was organized primarily by the acting police commissioner, Thomas Frazier, as a response

to the recognition of a “linkage between juvenile delinquency and inadequate youth programs” (“Police fill rec center void; Helping out: Officers assigned to run recreation programs keeping kids out of trouble,” 1996). However, the program itself was modeled after a similar initiative in several other cities including New York and Philadelphia, meaning the PALs also serve as a form of what Peck and Tickell (2002) refer to as “interjurisdictional policy transfer”, in which city governments share and incorporate particular elements of neoliberal policy restructuring across different locations (p. 391). In this mode, the PAL program not only resulted in the transfer of recreation facilities and services, but also itself represented the transfer of particular rationales and approaches to public recreation in an era of roll-out neoliberalization – specifically, the incorporation of recreation into the development and growth of the social problems industry, in which recreational opportunities were directly correlated with patterns of juvenile delinquency and viewed as a tool that could address the effects and consequences of social inequality. As Hartmann (2001) explains, programs such as midnight basketball – basketball games and leagues organized for young adults and in particular young men and boys during the evening and night-time hours, which were included in Baltimore’s PAL programming – were both supported and criticized throughout the mid and late 1990s, as they were viewed as a potential solution for the “problems based” cultural economy of crime prevention, risk and violence (p. 344). As these rationales for and approaches toward recreation gained influence, and as specific programs based on these rationales such as midnight basketball increased, the prevalence of initiatives like the Police Athletic League also spread across different American cities through the deployment of particular policy

strategies. In seeking to adopt some of the same principles in forming the PAL program in Baltimore, Commissioner Frazier asserted that the program sought to build “social capital” between officers and neighborhood youth, especially in the context of the city’s socioeconomic environment of “haves and have-nots” (Hermann, 1996).

In August 1997, the contrasting realities of the BCRP recreation centers and PAL centers – with BCRP facilities facing annual budget reductions, and the possibility of partial or full closures, while PAL centers continued to see increased private and non-profit funding and political support – were evidenced in Mayor Schmoke’s plan to expand the PAL program to another 10 centers, all of which were operating as BCRP facilities at the time of the plan’s announcement (Matthews, 1997b). The decision to simultaneously and directly increase the number of PALs while reducing BCRP centers provoked tensions regarding the roles and purposes of each of the agencies involved, including criticism regarding the role of staff and a lack of recreation training by police officers charged with operating the PAL centers. However, while a community volunteer at the Robert C. Marshall center in west Baltimore – one of the centers designated for transfer to the PAL program - would describe the plan as “one of the worst mistakes they can possibly make,” the overriding rationale was provided by the Mayor, who explained that the transfer of 10 facilities would mean that the city would “likely get through the year without closing any recreation centers” (Matthews, 1997b). The final plan would involve not only the immediate transfer of the 10 centers, but also the establishing of at least one PAL center in each of the city’s 29 police districts, as the PAL program was again framed as a potential solution to both

the issues of a declining public recreation system and the ‘problems based’ context of many urban communities (Subhas & Chandra, 2004). Thus as a form of rolled-out recreation, the PAL program and its effects on BCRP policy and the city’s recreation centers further evidence the devolution of recreation from the department’s responsibility, and serve as an example of a policy initiative that was designed and deployed specifically towards addressing the conditions of rolled-back urban neoliberalization.

While the devolution of services - both through the involvement of neighborhood and volunteer organizations and the processes of inter-agency transfer and interjurisdictional policy transfer - represented a major element in the restructuring of Baltimore’s recreation system, another and lesser aspect of rolled-out neoliberalization is evident in the discourses of financialization, or the incorporation and prioritization of market models within recreation programming and planning. Financialization is perhaps most often discussed within the context of global capitalism, as the processes of deregulation that have been central to the different phases of neoliberalization have meant that financial markets and actors have become increasingly important (Fine, 2009; French, Leyshon, & Wainwright, 2011). Within the context of urban neoliberalization, financialization has also been evident in an approach to economic ‘growth’ that has increasingly focused on financial markets and practices (Krippner, 2005). However, this analysis recognizes that the processes of roll-out neoliberalization have also resulted in the financialization of different phases and facets of everyday life, including the provision and distribution of public services (Aalbers, 2008; Allon, 2010).

Here the focus is primarily on the financialization of recreation through the implementation of market models for service provision – as was previously discussed in regards to the initial privatization of several recreation ‘special facilities’ and in relation to the revenue-generating models of the capital development and operation of these facilities, market-based approaches to recreation were not as feasible for Baltimore’s neighborhood recreation centers. This meant that while privatization provided an alternative mode of delivering special recreation services, the majority of recreation centers were not designed or equipped for activities that could be offered and programmed to operate on a revenue-generating model (Bustad, 2012). However, the increase in public-private partnerships has also meant that city agencies and services were and are increasingly evaluated against these alternative providers, especially in regards to financial efficiency as a marker of relative success or failure (Savas, 1999). In this sense, the impacts of financialization on BCRP policy are displayed in the ways in which BCRP programs and facilities, as well as the administration of the department, have been measured and criticized based on fiscal determinants, and specifically in comparison to other private and non-profit recreation providers.

This comparison of the fiscal models for recreation provision was at the middle of the tensions regarding the expansion of the PAL program through the transfer of BCRP centers in 1997, in that the trends pointed to a continued decline of both BCRP budgets and the ability of the department to manage and operate facilities, and the ongoing support of PAL centers via private philanthropy, local grant foundations and the participation of the police department. Accordingly, support for Schmoke’s

decision to transfer 10 centers from BCRP to the PAL program was based on the notion that the “police department can do a better job because it has more money, for better equipment, than the recreation department has” (Matthews, 1997b). While the PAL centers had received support from the Abell, Weinberg, and MACHT non-profit foundations over the previous year, the transfer of centers away from BCRP control resulted in a \$5.4 million budget cut, and Schmoke had also moved to restructure the department’s capital division, moving several positions out of BCRP administration and laying off several others – finally, the department’s director Maryln Perritt had resigned that summer following both political and public criticism, as well as conflicts with police commissioner Frazier about the competing visions for BCRP and the PAL program (Matthews, 1997b). Perritt’s resignation, however, was also a symptom of the continued diminishing of the agency’s size and scope, primarily through the seemingly permanent state of financial crisis. In general, the idea that the PALs could and would fulfill the mission and vision of recreation was supported by the discrepancy between the two systems in terms of resources, and specifically in regards to the financial constraints and capabilities of the facilities in terms of maintenance, staffing and programming.

While the fiscal comparison of BCRP centers and alternative providers would result in further support for the PAL program and other non-profit organizations interested in recreation, this contrast was not the only way in which the department was evaluated primarily on financial markers. By the early 2000s, the financialization of recreation was also evident in the relationship between BCRP and the Baltimore Efficiency and Economic Foundation, or BEEF – this organization was created in

1998 to “support improved governmental operations” through both independent review of fiscal and tax policy, as well as “helping City government achieve efficiencies in operations and services” (BEEF site). The linkages between BCRP and BEEF evidenced the processes financialization in two particular ways - first, in that the primary goal of the relationship was to allow for a financial evaluation of BCRP services, and make recommendations pertaining to both the reduction of operations, staffing and maintenance costs, as well as the possibilities for increasing revenue at recreation facilities. For example, a 2004 BEEF report focused on the department’s aquatics division concentrated primarily on “new procedures for cash management, overtime management and security...and to develop a business plan to make the pools revenue-generating” (“Baltimore Efficiency and Economy Foundation Newsletter - Summer 2005,” 2005). In this case, the emphasis on fiscal efficiency and revenue underscores the prioritizing of financial markers as evidence for the relative success or failure of recreational services, thereby displacing other possible markers of service provision. Similar BEEF reports conducted on recreation programs, including within BCRP centers, were also predicated on fiscal methods of evaluation and focused on increasing cost efficiency and the generation of revenue, instead of the distribution or quality of recreational opportunities. Following Peck (2010), this prioritization of financial models of evaluation and operation signals the “management by audit” approach to urban governance, in which city agencies and services are often held to a market standard while also expected to fulfill a public function (23). This means that as another aspect of the roll-out neoliberalization of

recreation, the processes of financialization have resulted in the further restructuring of BCRP policy.

As this analysis demonstrates, the discourses of recreation policy, planning and programming signal the myriad changes that effected the administration and provision of recreation in Baltimore throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and into the new millennium. As an aspect of the city's approach to public services, the neoliberalization of recreation through both the roll-back and roll-out phases also points to the shifts within urban governance throughout this period, as American cities were restructured, reorganized and re-oriented towards emergent formations of policy and practice. This means that following the period of rolling-back recreation, in which the size and scope of BCRP as a city agency and service were diminished through disinvestment and privatization, the processes of devolution and financialization evince the rolling-out of policies and programs that would address these conditions and provide alternative modes of service delivery. In this mode, the roll-out of neoliberal recreation – discussed here in relation to the RFP process, the PAL program, and the relationship between the department and BEEF – reflects what Peck and Tickell (2002) refer to as “the purposeful construction and consolidation of neoliberalized state forms, modes of governance, and regulatory relations” (p. 37). Moreover, the overlapping and interconnected nature of many of these changes to and developments within recreation policy, and in particular in regards to the city's recreation centers, also points to the complex and non-sequential form of the different phases of urban neoliberalization. In short, the rolling-back and rolling-out of recreation can be described through distinctive yet inter-related processes and

discursive formations, with each having specific impacts on the administration and delivery of a particular public service, while also responding to conditions created through previous policy decisions and approaches to recreation governance.

<p>Recreation and ‘roll-out’ neoliberalization</p>	<p>- Devolution:</p>	<p>Outsourcing of facilities and services through private and non-profit partnerships and inter-agency transfers</p>
	<p>- Financialization:</p>	<p>Prioritization of market-based models of fiscal efficiency and evaluation</p>

Table 3.2

Recreation and Roll-with Neoliberalization

By the late 2000s, Baltimore’s public recreation system was characterized by the contested and contradictory processes of urban neoliberalization, through both the rolling-back of the size and scope of BCRP operations and administration as well as the rolling-out of policies and programs that developed and incorporated alternative modes of providing recreational opportunities. In 2009, further changes to both recreation and urban governance in general were provoked by the local conditions of a global economic downturn, or ‘Great Recession’ – in the United States, the effects of this economic decline centered on unemployment, a housing crisis, and the role and consequences for Wall Street financial brokers (Hollander ‘Sunbelt Cities’). As Peck, Theodore and Brenner (Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2012) explain, these crises had particular circumstances for the governance of cities, in particular as the Great Recession did not – as some scholars and researchers had claimed – mean an end to the processes of urban neoliberalization, but rather entailed the “further entrenchment

of neoliberal rationalities and disciplines” (p. 265). Thus this section details the impacts of the interplay between the conditions of the economic recession and the circumstances of the localized socioeconomic and political context on BCRP policy and planning involving recreation centers – as this analysis demonstrates, this combination of external factors and internal conditions would again result in the continued restructuring of public recreation in Baltimore.

The primary effect that the recession would have on all city agencies and departments was in the budget reductions that would accompany the economic decline, as American cities faced several unprecedented fiscal challenges. This was especially true for many postindustrial cities, wherein these issues served to exacerbate already existing problems regarding employment, housing, homelessness, and other issues (Hollander). In Baltimore, the economic ‘downturn’ was evinced \$130 million in losses to the 2009 annual budget, from a proposed overall budget of \$2.2 billion – these losses included declining income tax and sales tax revenues resulting from unemployment and stagnant housing market, as well as \$50 million in withdrawn funding from the state of Maryland, which faced its own financial shortcomings (Scharper, 2009). Both administration and the provision of public services were effected by the budget reductions, as a hiring freeze was instituted across all departments and nearly 500 positions were eliminated, while trash service was reduced, fire stations were placed on rotating schedules, and the majority of capital projects for all agencies were suspended or reduced (Scharper, 2009).

The city’s system of recreation centers, already marked by the processes of roll-back and roll-out neoliberalization described above, were also impacted by these

losses within the city's annual budget. In a visit to the Recreation and Parks Board meeting in September 2009, Mayor Sheila Dixon expressed her support for the department, recognizing the efforts made in "finding ways to cope with the increasing amount of budget cuts that have unavoidably imposed on Recreation and Parks, along with other city agencies" ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting September 23, 2009," 2009). While the Mayor acknowledged that the economic situation had "required sacrifices on the part of all citizens," she remained optimistic that the challenges would pass "as long as everybody pulls together to weather the storm" ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting September 23, 2009," 2009). At the time, cuts to the BCRP budget had already resulted in the suspension of all capital projects, including the planned renovation of the Clifton Park and Morrell Park recreation centers – each of these were also funded in part by the state of Maryland's Program Open Space, tasked with supporting capital projects for parks and recreation spaces, which had been reduced from a 2009 planned overall budget of \$9 million to \$3.4 million ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 28, 2008," 2008). The latest round of departmental budget cuts had also resulted in reductions to staffing and programming at recreation centers, as several positions had been eliminated and the hiring freeze had resulted in the reduction of programs at many centers ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting September 23, 2009," 2009).

However, another effect of the citywide budget cuts in 2009 would impact the network of recreation centers even more than the direct reductions of staff and the loss of capital funding, as cuts to the police department budget would mean the final termination of the Police Athletic League (PAL) program. The program had expanded

to 27 centers by 2000, but had also been an issue early and often for the previous mayoral administration. Mayor O'Malley worked in the first year of his initial term to keep nine PAL centers open that faced closure due to budget issues, and eventually several centers were closed in his first two years in office (Craig, 2000). Then in 2003, after the non-profit organization that operated the PAL centers - and had previously been lauded as an alternative model for recreation service delivery in comparison to BCRP centers – announced that they were no longer financially capable of managing the program, O'Malley transferred control of the remaining 18 PALs to the police department, though this meant no major changes in operation and programming (Wilber, 2003). Thereafter, the program endured several years of financial shortfalls, and the budget cuts in 2009 ultimately made the operation of the PAL centers unfeasible for a police department facing its own fiscal challenges.

More importantly, the demise of the PAL program had immediate consequences for BCRP recreation centers, as the transfer of facilities from BCRP to PAL that had occurred in the mid and late 1990s was essentially reversed – the plan developed by the Mayor's office and BCRP in March 2009 meant that the majority of former PAL sites were to be transferred back to BCRP control and operation, while several sites would be either closed or turned over to non-profit operators ("Rec Centers Plan," 2009). Further, in order to meet budget expectations, the department planned to close two recreation centers of its own, lay off several staff positions, and reduce hours at several centers to 'after school only', from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays ("Rec Centers Plan," 2009). As this plan both closed several PAL centers, removed police officers from their role at neighborhood recreation facilities, and

resulted in changes to BCRP services and staffing, the public reaction to the plan was evident in the dozens of letters and emails that the department received, mostly in protest of the transfers and closures of PAL centers ("Rec Centers Plan," 2009). In the final implementation of the strategy to address the future of neighborhood recreation centers, 12 of the PALs would be re-organized into the system of BCRP centers, with a single center closing and the others transferred to schools or non-profit groups already operating in the facility (Hermann, 2009).

The transfer of facilities to BCRP control was, however, not accompanied by an increase to the operating budget of the department, meaning that recreation center staff and services were tasked with an increased number of facilities on a still-shrinking budget. Meanwhile, the departure of another department Director – a common occurrence throughout the period of this analysis, though in this case tied to the resignation of Mayor Dixon following a political scandal – evidenced the effects of the wayward direction of recreation planning and the tribulations of annual losses in funding ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting January 27, 2010," 2010). Thus in many ways, the addition of the former PAL sites represented an added aspect of the fiscal and administrative crisis, as the reabsorption of facilities and services into a system that was characterized by years of declining budgets and support only served to aggravate existing problems in regards to staffing, programming and maintenance.

These crises continued to worsen in early 2010 with nearly \$127 million in pending cuts to the city budget – these cuts were reflected in the release of the 2011 budget proposal by the Mayor's Office, under new Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, which called for the closing of half of the 57 BCRP recreation centers currently in

operation, and the curtailing of recreation services across the city ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting March 24, 2010," 2010). In response, the department moved in the first few months of 2010 to implement several particular strategies in relation to the recreation centers, with each a part of an overall attempt to address the situation. First, recreation center staff were asked by BCRP administration to "be even more creative" in regards to operations and programming, as future improvements in funding for equipment and maintenance was not to be expected ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting January 27, 2010," 2010). Second, as BCRP centers existed as part of the "prevention arm" for juvenile delinquency and crime, the department emphasized the importance of both non-profit and private partnerships and community volunteers in supplementing and supporting recreation programs ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting February 24, 2010," 2010). And finally, in an effort to re-make the recreation center system and 'modernize' the facilities and services, the department announced that the Mayor was forming a committee that would be tasked with studying the issues plaguing recreation centers and developing a vision for the future of the centers ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting May 26, 2010," 2010).

Taken both individually and collectively, these strategies demonstrate the effects and conditions of roll-back and roll-out neoliberal urbanism, in that the different policies and plans which shaped and constituted BCRP policy over the previous 30 years had specific impacts on Baltimore's public recreation system – yet in this analysis, these strategies also signal the emergence of a third formation of processes within urban policy, in the form of 'roll-with' neoliberalization. Keil (2009) argues

that roll-with neoliberal policy constitutes a distinctive phase within the transformation of urban governance, marked against – and yet interconnected with – the processes and effects of rolled-back and rolled-out neoliberal policy formations. Following Keil, the purposes and practices of rolling-with neoliberalization are defined by two particular characteristics that contrast this most recent and ongoing period of shifting approaches to urban governance with previous phases. The first is the embedding of neoliberal approaches within different facets of everyday life, including the planning and managing of urban spaces and services, as a “normalization of neoliberal practices and mindsets” (Keil, 2009, p. 232). This refers to the increasing and unquestioned approval of a neoliberal ‘conduct of conduct’, as a mode of individual governance that implies the “inciting of the subjects to conduct themselves after the model of enterprise and the general norm of competition” (Dardot & Laval, 2009, cited in Keil 2009). Accordingly, roll-with neoliberalization as “self-referential” contrasts from the destructive and creative tendencies of the other phases of neoliberal urbanism, in that it does not exist “in relation to what has to first be brought down [roll-back] or brought in [roll-out]” (Keil 2009, p. 232). For urban governments and agencies, including those involved with public recreation, the effects of this ‘deep’ neoliberalization has meant the narrowing of policy formations and eclipsing of possible political and social alternatives to neoliberalism, as more forms of governance operate under the ‘TINA’ (There Is No Alternative) framework (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). In short, rolling-with neoliberalization refers to the processes wherein “political and economic actors have increasingly lost a sense of externality, of alternatives (good or bad) and have mostly accepted the

‘governmentality of the neoliberal formation as the basis for their action’ (Keil 2009, p. 232).

The second characteristic is that given the contrast between roll-with and the previous formations of neoliberal governance, this does not mean that the phases are unrelated or work in a sequential order in which one phase replaces or removes another. Instead, roll-with neoliberalization exists as a “moment... alongside and intertwined with its historical predecessors, [which] have not ended but rather continue to work through the affected societies” (Keil 2009, p. 232). As each of these three formations are “simultaneous and interactive,” the implications of roll-back and roll-out neoliberal policies are imbricated within the conditions and consequences of the roll-with phase (Keil 2009, p. 232). In relation to the restructuring of Baltimore’s public recreation system, this chapter has already described how the rolling-back and rolling-out of recreation referred to the dismantling of a previous approach to recreation and development of alternative modes of providing recreational opportunities. As a response to the conditions created by these policies and processes within the context of Baltimore’s urban development over a 30 year period, rolling-with neoliberalization has meant that the key aspects of neoliberal recreation – the reduction and financialization of recreation services operated by the city through BCRP, and a concurrent increase in and prioritization of non-profit, private, and community organizations as service providers – have been ‘normalized’ as an unavoidable and unquestioned aspect of public recreation in 21st century American cities.

That is, Baltimore's recreation system supports the argument that in this most recent phase of urban neoliberalization, the premises and practices of neoliberal urban governance have been "generalized" to the extent that they no longer need to be established "through an explicit policy of roll-back and roll-out" (Keil 2009, p.239). As the discourses of recreation policy in regards to the fiscal and PAL-induced crises of early 2010 demonstrate, the notion that a public recreation department would be asked to do more with less support, while seeking out potential partnerships as a critical element of supplementing recreation, was less an issue of contestation and more an acceptance of common sense. Thus by the late 2000s, the embeddedness of urban neoliberalization meant that there were few alternatives available to these processes and strategies, and little resistance to the ongoing restructuring of the size and scope of the department. This re-organization included the decision by Mayor Rawlings-Blake in the spring of 2010 to adopt an approach to addressing the problems with Baltimore's recreation centers that had originally been utilized by Mayor Schmoke nearly 20 years earlier, in the formation of a mayor-appointed 'task force' charged with analyzing the centers and developing recommendations to revise and modernize both the facilities and services. In short, the 2011 Recreation Center Task Force – including both the processes involved in analyzing the centers, as well as the final report and plan that was produced through these processes – evidences the full arrival of roll-with neoliberalization in relation to BCRP policy.

The Task Force plan was originally announced to the Recreation and Parks Board in May 2010, as the Mayor had asked the department in assistance forming a group that could lead a more detailed study of the recreation centers. The Mayor then

worked with agency to select the members of the task force, which was made up of three different groups – the first comprised over 20 private and non-profit executives and political and agency representatives, ranging from the city Planning and Police departments, City Council offices, local recreation and sport organizations, and corporate partners such as Wachovia Bank; the second featured ‘Ex-Oficio and Staff Members’ including BCRP division leaders and representatives from the Office of the Mayor; and the third was the ‘Consultant Team’ of two consultants from AECOM, an urban design and architecture firm (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). The group met approximately five times between July and October of 2010, focusing on “taking a critical look existing center models” and “establishing a new vision statement with short-term and long-term goals” – this included a tour of several recreation centers throughout the city, as well as a visit to a public recreation center in Montgomery County, as the group sought to form criteria for a “model center” for future planning (“Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake's Recreation Center Task Force Report,” 2011). The group also used these meetings to review and approve a method for evaluating the 55 BCRP recreation centers that were currently in operation, developing a ‘Report Card’ that accounted for each facility’s overall condition, features, and advantages and disadvantages, in order to enable an “in depth understanding of how centers compare with each other and to quickly ascertain which centers are under-performers” (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). BCRP staff then worked to develop these report cards and accompanying data, which were then used to form the final report recommendations that were released in August of 2011. These recommendations called for the construction of three new facilities, and

the major renovation and expansion of an existing center, as ‘community centers’ with “new standards of size, amenities and programming”; the expansion of 10 existing centers into ‘community centers’ of at least 15,000 square feet; maintaining 16 other centers and increasing staffing; and implementing “charter, collaboration and partnership programs” at 19 remaining centers, with a proposal for Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) to “consider” taking on 12 centers attached to schools (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011)

Through both the group’s process of analysis and recommendations, the discourses of the Task Force report demonstrate the theme of consolidation as one aspect of rolling-with neoliberal recreation policy – on the one hand, this refers to the full integration of previously deployed neoliberal strategies, including privatization and devolution involving public-private partnerships, within departmental planning. While these approaches to recreation governance had been handled ‘carefully’ and in relatively isolated cases in previous planning efforts, including the 1992 RFP process involving the Rognel Heights center discussed above, within the context of the Task Force such partnerships were no longer a novelty but instead the norm. Moreover, these processes were recommended by the Task Force in part based on the continued fiscal challenges of the department, as the report’s recognition of alternative approaches given the “limited resources of the City” shows that budget cuts and a lack of funding for recreation had also been normalized (Task Force). In this sense, consolidation refers to the relative acceptance and entrenchment of neoliberal policies and practices within contemporary urbanism, as alternative models for organizing and delivering public services are increasingly marginalized in favor of market-based

forms of entrepreneurial governance (Meegan, Kennett, Jones, & Croft, 2014). Thus the full-scale incorporation of neoliberal processes that initially emerged in the roll-back and roll-out phases within the Task Force plan, especially in regards to the relationship between the department and potential recreation ‘partners’

On the other hand, consolidation also referred to the re-orientation of the size and scope of BCRP services, with a focus on an increased number of staff and programming, but at fewer facilities and locations. As the Task Force report indicated, this restructuring called for and would implement a “new way of doing business” for public recreation in Baltimore, which was necessary after “years of deferred maintenance, poor management and a lack of strategic planning” (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). In short, the consolidation of public recreation is evident in the emphasis on “quality over quantity” as a dominant theme in regards to recreation center planning within the Task Force report, as well as statements by BCRP and mayoral staff (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). In particular, the ‘quality over quantity’ mantra was connected to the development of a new “model” recreation center, as an example of a facility that had the size, features, and staffing to offer community recreational activities. The search for a new model center had been developed over the past several years within the department’s capital planning division, especially in relation to the Clifton Park and Morrell Park centers – while the Clifton project involved a major renovation of the Rita Church building in Clifton Park, the Morrell Park center was a new design and construction, though both were recognized as the “future” of recreation centers in Baltimore due to their size and design ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting February 23, 2011," 2011). The

Task Force also laid out the criteria for a model center, focusing on “physical characteristics, operational and programmatic needs, and qualitative aspects that define a high-quality center” (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). These criteria were reflected in the elements of the community center model proposed in the report, as a long term goal recommended that “for every 50,000 residents there will be one high quality model community center” (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011).

The accompanying aspect of identifying what the recreation center of the future entailed was the evaluation of the city’s network of existing centers, for the most part made up of facilities constructed during a previous generation of recreation governance, many with physical and operational inadequacies. The evaluation of the centers was managed through the facility ‘Report Card’ that was adopted from the city’s Department of General Services and developed through the task force process, which focused on three factors: the building system, including the overall condition and specific subsystems (lighting, HVAC, security, etc.) in the facility; the building function, in regards to both proximity to outside amenities such as aquatic facilities, parks, or athletic fields, as well as interior amenities and lay out; and building operation, referring to “staffing levels, program flexibility and diversity, neighborhood need, walkability, access to transit, and partnership effectiveness” (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). Each facility was given a score between 1-4 for the multiple parts of each area, with 1 being the worst and 4 being best, and these scores were totaled to form an overall score for each center – yet while the report released to the public included an uncompleted sample of the report card, it

did not include any of the data from these evaluations, meaning there was no indicator of how the evaluations were completed or why a specific center had ‘scored’ a certain number (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). This also complicated the report recommendations, in that there was no further information about which centers would be expanded as community centers, maintained as recreation centers, or possibly privatized or turned over to non-profit and community organizations – a map in the appendices of the report actually indicated that all 55 existing centers were available as possible sites for “charters, collaborations and partnerships” of varying types and degrees, further displaying a lack of clarity (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). In this mode, the evaluation of facilities provides a rationale for consolidation in both senses described here – in terms of the continued shift in BCRP policy towards an expanded and regionalized community center model and away from the neighborhood recreation center model, as well as a seeming lack of alternatives to the processes of disinvestment, privatization and devolution.

However, the report recommendations and related discourses within BCRP policy during this period also demonstrate that while privatization and devolution had until this point been incrementally incorporated into departmental planning, in the context of the Task Force these processes would make up another primary aspect of roll-with neoliberal governance. That is, while the department had previously engaged in working with specific non-profit, private and community organizations to assume partial or full control of particular recreation centers, the 2011 report recommendations called for any and all potential partners that might be interested in

any of the recreation centers across the city (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). In doing so, the plan demonstrated another aspect of roll-with recreation, through the increasing dependence by the city and BCRP on a variety of different entities for the provision and distribution of recreational opportunities: other city agencies including BCPS schools, private and corporate partners, non-profit organizations and community associations, and neighborhood volunteer associations. The scale and scope of the Task Force plan's incorporation of, and reliance on, these organizations as necessary parts of Baltimore's recreation system contrasts with the earlier forms of privatization and devolution, wherein specific facilities and services were transferred to partner groups – instead, the discourses within and surrounding the Task Force plan signal the process of activation within recreation policy. Here activation refers to the “incorporation (and under-writing) of local-governance and partnership-based modes of policy development and program delivery,” in which urban governments often seek to develop and implement “a range of extramarket forms of governance and regulation” (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 43). The Task Force plan evidences these strategies in regards to recreation, including the support for any and all potential partnerships, as well as the general transfer of recreation facilities and services to various organizations existing outside of BCRP administration and control. In short, the processes of activation reflect the shift from a mostly temporary and ad-hoc relationship between the department and other groups in regards to the operation and programming of neighborhood recreation centers, to a more dependent relationship in which different organizations and the citizens of Baltimore themselves would be relied on for the provision of recreational services.

Within the Task Force plan, this strategy of transferring centers away from BCRP control was included in the report's short term goals, one of which recommended that "underutilized facilities and those that have complete their useful life cycle will be turned over to outside groups or City agencies" (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). Again, by withholding the data from the evaluation of existing facilities, as well as information that would indicate which centers were planned to be expanded, maintained, or possibly 'partnered off' or removed from the BCRP system, the report released in August 2011 emphasized the open-ended nature of the transfer strategy and the necessity of outside organizations to actively participate in the restructuring of public recreation. Media reports regarding the plan similarly focused on the transfer of recreation centers: "For lease: Baltimore rec center, some wear and tear. Community groups, nonprofits and churches welcome to apply. Price negotiable" (Scharper, 2011).

Following the initial release of the report, the department worked to identify potential partners for over 20 of the 55 BCRP centers, recognizing that in contrast to the annual budget cuts that threatened BCRP programs – reflected in the decrease from a \$38 million BCRP annual budget in 1991, to only \$31 million in 2011 - these non-profit and community groups "would have considerably more latitude than city officials to solicit donations" and could operate without some of the fiscal challenges of a city agency (Scharper, 2011). Throughout the spring of 2011, the department would report progress in making contact with organizations interested in operating recreation centers, encouraging "any neighborhood with a strong community interest" to organize a proposal of the group's capabilities and what types of programs they

would be offering (Scharper, 2011). These months also saw the further development of the activation process within BCRP policy – on the one hand, the strategy of transferring centers away from the department became recognized as the ‘take-over’ of facilities by other organizations, as BCRP staff worked to review the variety of groups that had contacted the department ("Board of Recreation and Park Meeting March 23, 2011," 2011). By April of 2011, there had been over 100 inquiries about different facilities, with the next step being the formalization of a Request for Proposal (RFP) that would designate the terms and conditions of the agreement between BCRP and any partner group – in general, these agreements would mean that BCRP would assume responsibility for any major renovations or maintenance, but would otherwise turn over all operations and programming to the prospective organization ("Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting April 27, 2011," 2011).

While the conditions of the agreement for operating a particular facility between the city and interested parties were based in part on the specific details of the building and the groups involved, BCRP developed a ‘checklist’ for any partnerships that indicated some basic expectations for both the partner organization and the city. The requirements for potential partners included an identification of the group as a profit, non-profit, or government entity, registration by the group to conduct business in the State of Maryland for tax purposes, and a “track record of delivering programs and services closely related to those delivered by Recreation and Parks...or a service needed and/or requested by the community”, while also demonstrating proper accounting and preparing a long-term business plan (BCRP Recreation Center Management and Operations Checklist, 2011). Along with securing liability

insurance with an aggregated policy limit of \$10 million, partner groups were to be responsible for day-to-day maintenance and utilities, and were charged with providing operation and management of the facility to the public. Under this base agreement, the city and BCRP would be responsible for all capital improvements and major repairs, and would “maintain ownership and control” of all facilities, while seeking to provide \$50,000 to \$100,000 awards in ‘seed money’ to particular organizations that “demonstrate the ability to operate/manage a recreation center in a manner that is consistent with the vision and goals of Baltimore City via BCRP as well as the community” (BCRP Recreation Center Management and Operations Checklist, 2011).

As Rosol (2011) explains, current research on urban neoliberalization focuses not only on ‘classical’ neoliberal processes within the transformation of cities and city governments, but also on the “seemingly ‘soft’ strategies of involving civil society actors in urban governance,” focusing on the “changing relationship between state and citizens, usually described as a change from a welfare or providing state to an activating state” (p. 240). This activation of citizens and organizations within the processes and practices of urban policy and planning, and specifically in regards to the distribution and provision of public services – including recreation facilities and programs – characterizes the “governance-beyond-the-state” (Swyngedouw, 2005) presently evident in many cities characterized by neoliberal restructuring. As Rosol (2011) states, this aspect of contemporary urban governance refers to

“the increasing participation of non-state actors in (local) state decision making and the transformation of roles, responsibilities and institutional configurations of the (local) state and citizens in urban spatial politics. In many cases, this inclusion

of non-state actors is less geared at citizens' participatory rights, but rather at the outsourcing of traditional state functions to civil society organizations" (p. 241).

In regards to the reorganization of Baltimore's recreation centers in and through the 2011 Mayor's Task Force plan, the activation of citizens and non-state organizations follows a pattern similar to other efforts at urban 'governance-beyond-the-state'. First, the use of public-private partnership agreements to turn over the operation of public facilities to non-state actors is often the result of reductions to support for city services, meaning that volunteer and non-profit groups are expected to fulfill responsibilities formerly held by the municipality - in turn, these organizations are increasingly placed into a competition for existing and possible social and economic resources (Wolch, 2006).

Second, as Rosol (2011) explains, the decrease of the 'providing' state does not necessarily result in a "shrinking state", but instead entails an increased dependence on governmental support through contracts and grants (p. 241). This means that through the process of activation, the state's approach often represents an "attempt to hold on to the steering wheel while prompting others to do the rowing" (Lindenberg 2002, p. 78; translated in Rosol, 2011). Following the statement from the Mayor's Office that closures might be necessary if community groups didn't step forward, and with the resulting undetermined fate of approximately 30 recreation centers in the balance, the process and outcome of the RFP process in the fall of 2011 demonstrated the potential shortcomings of activation as a neoliberalized approach to recreation policy. While Baltimore's numerous community groups and non-profit organizations, as well as other city agencies, were directly engaged in regards to their interest in managing and operating city recreation centers, the lack of response to the RFP

reflected the turbulent recent history and unstable present of both the centers and the city's recreation department. In short, the city's lack of willingness to invest in recreation meant that any possible partners would be taking over aging, under-maintained buildings, and doing so in order to implement a previously-public service that the city seemingly could not, and in any case would not, pay for any longer.

As 30 different neighborhoods faced the potential loss of a public recreation facility, the response from both politicians and the public was immediately apparent. The late October meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Council was marked by 150 parents and children protesting the possible closure of recreation centers, organized by the BUILD (Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development) community association – the group also criticized the RFP process, arguing against the expensive insurance policy and the small 'seed money' grants for partner groups (Reutter, 2011a). In the same month, citizens from the city's Hampden neighborhood protested against the possible privatization of community's Roosevelt Recreation Center by a local day-care provider, and this center was eventually removed from the list of possible charter centers (Reutter, 2011b). These challenges to the Task Force plan therefore demonstrate the strategies of consolidation and activation as aspects of the neoliberalization of recreation policy, while also displaying the contested nature of neoliberal restructuring (Peck & Tickell, 2002).

Further, while this take-over of centers and services represents the principal aspect of activation as a part of roll-with neoliberal recreation, the department was simultaneously incorporating another aspect of citizen and community involvement, through the proposed formation of neighborhood-based Recreation Councils at all

BCRP centers (Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting, 2011). These councils, which were a feature of public recreation systems in other jurisdictions including Baltimore County, had often been informally enacted and managed by neighborhood volunteers at different facilities during previous periods in the city's history (Board of Recreation and Parks Meeting, 2011). Yet in the context of the Task Force plan, these groups were framed as another method of directly incorporating city residents into the provision of recreation, through the enlistment of individual citizen-volunteers, community organizations, and neighborhood associations within the formation of an emergent quasi-public recreation system.

That is, the policy discourses of and around the Task Force report envision a network of recreation centers organized and operated not only by BCRP as the city agency responsible for these services, but also supported by and dependent on the "mobilization of the 'little platoons' in the shape of (local) voluntary and faith-based associations" (Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 43). The various non-profit organizations and volunteer associations charged with assuming control and operation of Baltimore's public recreation centers comprise the 'little platoons', tasked with assuming responsibility for a service previously maintained by the city. As Peck and Tickell explain, this "selective appropriation of "community" and non-market metrics" within contemporary urban governance coordinates with the entrenchment of neoliberalized policies and practices (p. 43). The support for this approach to the provision and distribution of a public service, and concurrent limits to any alternative approaches given the fiscal and political conditions that invoked this support, serve to further underline the effects and processes of roll-with urban neoliberalization.

Recreation and 'roll-with' neoliberalization	- Consolidation:	Entrenchment of neoliberal processes; restructuring of services away from neighborhood-based model
	- Activation:	Full-scale mobilization of private, non-profit, community and volunteer organizations within recreation provision

Table 3.3

Recreation in the 'Neoliberal City'

This chapter has focused on the transformation of Baltimore’s public recreation policy and planning over the past 30 years, as an analysis of the relations between the administration and provision of recreational services – and in particular the city’s network of recreation centers – and the broader shifts occurring within American urban governance during the same period. The central argument has been that the processes of urban neoliberalization have resulted in the introduction, incorporation, and entrenchment of particular approaches to organizing and developing city government within the policies and practices of Baltimore, including the administration and provision of public recreation. The decline in the number of BCRP recreation centers over the past several decades, and the simultaneous fluctuations in regards to the support for and purpose of neighborhood recreational services, demonstrate that public recreation has been heavily intertwined with these processes

– and provides evidence for the claim that recreational policy is a strong area for the analysis of the conditions, effects and practices of neoliberal urbanism.

As explained above, while general descriptions of neoliberalism in regards to cities often provide a framework for understanding what neoliberal ideas have meant for both city governments as well as citizens, there remains a need for critical studies focused on particular issues and topics within specific urban contexts and characterizations of the ‘neoliberal city’ (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Hackworth, 2008). Adopting a conceptualization of urban neoliberalization following Peck and Tickell (2002), and Keil (2009), this chapter addresses that need through an examination of Baltimore’s public recreation policy, incorporating a detailed conception of urban neoliberalization as comprised of three inter-related, yet distinctively characterized, phases or modes of neoliberal processes. The initial roll-back phase throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s resulted in disinvestment, in the dismantling of the previous models of funding and support for BCRP programs and facilities, and the privatization of some aspects of the department through public-private partnership models of capital funding and service delivery. In the second, roll-out phase – beginning in the 1990s and continuing into the 2000s – the department moved to develop and implement policy changes that would address the conditions created in part through this rolling-back, through the devolution of recreation facilities and services to both non-profit and community organizations and the city police department, as well as the financialization of recreation programs through market-based evaluation. These processes both shaped and were connected with the third phase of urban neoliberalization, in the roll-with approaches represented through

the 2011 Mayor's Task Force – this includes the process of consolidation, referring to both the lack of alternatives to recreation planning and the continued shift away from the neighborhood-based recreation center model, and the strategy of activation, entailing the increased and necessary participation of citizens and volunteer associations, private and non-profit organizations, and other city agencies in the provision of recreational facilities and opportunities.

Yet while the neoliberalization of recreation in Baltimore has both meant the extensive and expansive reorganization of public recreation, it has never been a totalizing project, as different policies and plans have attempted to both address and move beyond issues and crises often created in part through previous policy formations and decisions. Moreover, as this chapter has provided a critical and grounded interrogation of the discourses of the city's recreation policy, it has recognized and supported the notion that the 'varieties' of neoliberalism are always practiced in idiosyncratic ways across different contexts (Cerny, 2004; Larner & Craig, 2005).

This means that this analysis, while primarily focused on the formation and implementation of recreational services in and through BCRP policy, does not preclude or diminish the public and political contestation of changes to the mission and vision of recreation and the restructuring of the department. As Keil states, while there may currently be "little imagination beyond thinking neoliberally" in regards to rolling-with neoliberal urbanism, city governments and their citizens continue to negotiate the future organization of cities and public services, and roll-with-it neoliberalism "has also created new contradictions that demonstrate its own

unsustainability” (2009, p. 243). Accordingly, the fourth chapter of this project will focus on the outcomes of the 2011 Mayor’s Task Force plan and the processes described here, examining how the social and political developments emanating from these policies and approaches continue to constitute emergent forms of recreational sites and services, through the ongoing reorganization of the administration, distribution and provision of recreational facilities and services in Baltimore.

Chapter 4: (Re)Assembling Recreation – Assemblage Urbanism and the Active City

Introduction

In August 2011, the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) officially released the most recent planning effort focused on the city's recreation centers, in the form of the Mayor's Recreation Center Task Force report. As further discussed in the third chapter of this dissertation, the Task Force plan called for the reorganization of recreation center sites and services in response to decades of disinvestment in Baltimore's public recreation programs, including a lack of operational, capital and maintenance funds that had already resulted in the closing of both numerous BCRP facilities as well as the city's Police Athletic League youth centers over the previous 20 years.

As Farrey (2008) explains, support for the city's professional sports teams and multi-million dollar baseball and football stadiums throughout the 1990s and into the new millennium stood in direct contrast to the realities of public recreation during the same period – while Camden Yards, and later M & T Bank Stadium, were completed in relation to the increased financial successes of the Orioles (Major League Baseball) and Ravens (National Football League), Baltimore itself encountered mounting fiscal challenges and “deep and immediate needs related to police, schools and emergency services” that meant “it seemed far easier to whack away at funding for recreation and parks” (p. 234). The decrease in the number of recreation centers was therefore inextricable from what former Baltimore Councilman Martin O'Malley had called the “slow death” of the city's recreation department via budget cuts, losses to grant

funding and other supplementary aid, and decreases in staffing and services – including a decline from nearly 130 recreation centers in the early 1980s to 55 in 2010 (Scharper, 2011).

The 2011 Task Force thus proposed the rearrangement of recreation programs through a combination of new capital projects, including the construction of at least three expanded and updated ‘community center’ recreation buildings, as well as maintenance and renovations to many existing centers (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). However, and more importantly for this analysis of the contemporary forms and practices of urban recreation provision, the plan also called for the restructuring of recreation center operators, including the transfer of up to approximately 30 existing centers to private, non-profit and community groups forming a system of “partnerships and collaborations”, as well as the possible closing of worn and “obsolete” facilities (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). However, this plan also reflected a general lack of specific details about the future of particular facilities, as further discussed in the third chapter of this project – instead, all of the existing recreation centers were included as “Potential Centers for Charters, Collaborations and Partnerships”.

The process of privatizing recreation centers was actually already underway when the Task Force plan was released to the public, as BCRP and the Mayor’s Office had worked to organize a two-phase process for exploring the options available for civic, private and non-profit involvement in the operation of city recreation facilities. The second phase of this plan, initiated after the release of the Task Force plan to the public in August 2011, was the Request for Proposal (RFP) process – the RFP, as a

requirement of Baltimore's municipal governance to ensure a fair process for any potential partnership between the city and individual citizens or organizations, comprised a "more comprehensive" measure of the "feasibility and sustainability" of any potential center operators and managers (Recreation Update Letter, 2011).

When the RFP process was initiated, both the Mayor and department officials emphasized the large number of groups interested in partnering-off a recreation center, including neighborhood civic associations, local private service providers, non-profit organizations, and city agencies. In the preceding 'request for interest' (ROEI) stage, the department had distributed the interest application and materials to approximately 130 different groups, and had received 45 in return (update letter). Yet when the RFP deadline passed on October 12 – after a week's extension to the original deadline – BCRP had only received seven bids to operate a city recreation center, resulting in immediate criticism of the RFP and privatization strategy from multiple sources. Many community groups, and in particular neighborhood-based organizations that were limited in size and scope, cited the complicated nature of the application process as a reason for the low turnout, as well as the expenses for the insurance policy required in the partnership agreement (Scharper, 2011).

The lack of bids also contrasted with the message given to Task Force members involved in the recreation center planning process, as one member stated that they were told there were over 50 interested groups (Scharper, 2011). With (only) seven bids under consideration for partnership, the future of over half of Baltimore's recreation centers was put into question, as the city budget provided funding for all 55 centers through December 2011, but after this date the recreation budget was planned

for operating only 30 centers. This meant, according to a Mayor's spokesperson, that if community groups didn't "step forward" to operate facilities, closure would be a necessary alternative – as "the current structure, with dilapidated buildings, understaffed centers, and a lack of resources and programming is not adequate... [the Mayor] was very clear from the beginning that rec centers could possibly close" (Scharper, 2011).

Within this context of privatization and possible closures, Baltimore's recreation policy and planning again evinces the processes of urban neoliberalization – as discussed at length in the third chapter, the phases of neoliberal restructuring within the city over the previous 30 years have been evidenced by the 'roll-back,' 'roll-out,' and 'roll-with' neoliberalization of recreation. Following Peck and Tickell (2003) and Keil (2009), this analysis traces the relationship between the city's recreation centers and the rolling-back, or dismantling of the Keynesian social welfare paradigm, especially in relation to American cities; the rolling-out, or creation and implementation of particular strategies for urban development, often emphasizing private, market-based 'growth' over public agencies; and the roll-with governance of engaging and enlisting private, non-profit and citizen-led groups in the provision of social services. In an extension of this critical urbanist framework from the previous chapter, the approach to reorganizing recreation sites and services embedded within the 2011 Mayor's Task Force, and in particular the incorporation of the RFP process and strategy, demonstrate several specific processes of urban neoliberalization. On the one hand, the plan to transfer management and operation of recreation centers signals the further 'devolution', or off-loading of public services to 'non-state'

(Swyngedouw 2005) private and alternative operators. At the same time, the possible closure of centers evidences the continued ‘consolidation’ of public recreation in Baltimore, through the centralizing and curtailing of services and locations. Finally, the policy of directly soliciting and developing public-private partnerships with a variety of potentially interested organizations demonstrates the increased ‘activation’ of the “little platoons” of neighborhood-based groups (Peck & Tickell, 2002).

As the city continued to explore other options for transferring recreation centers, it wasn’t until May 2012 that the Mayor’s Office and BCRP released the actual ‘Implementation Plan’ indicating the immediate future of different centers. In this plan, as of August 2012 four recreation centers currently in operation, as well as two others already shuttered, were to be permanently closed; five centers were to be transferred to the public school attached to the recreation building, and operated by both the school and a local community organization; and 10 other centers faced possible closure if partnership agreements were not made in the next fiscal year (Reutter, 2012). The latter condition of the ‘Implementation Plan’ meant that even after these closures and transfers took place, the outlook for many centers was not clear, as the processes of privatization (through the involvement of a non-profit or private organization), activation (in the engagement of a neighborhood-based voluntary group), and consolidation (via facility closure) all had different implications for recreation programming.

In the West Baltimore neighborhood of Allendale, residents responded to these conditions of instability in regards to the Mary E. Rodman Recreation Center throughout the summer of 2012 with rallies against the facility’s possible closing. In

August 2012, the organization of a New Orleans-style ‘funeral march’ for the center, including a large faux casket with the names of different recreation centers and a headstone reading ‘Rest In Peace Recreation Centers’, resulted in a two-month extension of a decision on the Rodman Recreation Center until October – while the facility was eventually kept open through the next fiscal year, hours and staffing were reduced as well (Smith, 2012). Finally, in February 2013 the Mayor’s Office announced that it had transferred an additional three recreation centers to non-profit organizations, while planning continued in regards to both the city’s proposed ‘community centers’ as well as existing centers facing possible closure (Blake, 2013).

Again, in an extension of the framework of analysis within the previous chapter focusing on urban neoliberalization, the processes involved in the development and deployment of Baltimore’s recreation planning described here demonstrate the contradictions and contestations of “actually existing neoliberalism” (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). That is, the incorporation of neoliberal strategies and ideas within recreation policy – as well as the public and political responses to the attempts to reorganize the city’s recreation centers – serve to evince the specific manner in which forms of urban neoliberalization take place, and the contested nature of neoliberalized urban politics. This analysis therefore aligns with other efforts at exhibiting the ‘path-dependency’ of neoliberal restructuring (Brenner & Theodore, 2005), while also working to ‘ground’ neoliberalism by acknowledging and explaining how urban neoliberalization (always) operates within particular geographic and social contexts (Hackworth, 2007). In this mode, the articulation of particular forms of recreation planning and policy by the Mayor’s Office and BCRP officials evince the processes

of this restructuring, and specifically the different implications of privatization, activation and consolidation for the city's recreation centers. The critical urbanist framework, focusing on the relationship between urban neoliberalization and the reorganizing of Baltimore's recreation centers, thus provides one mode of analyzing the current transformations to the city's public recreation policy and programming.

However, as this chapter is primarily concerned with the active and ongoing reorganization of recreation center operations and management, the empirical focus of the analysis below - on the recreation 'partnerships' resulting from the Task Force and RFP process - also demonstrates the limits to critical urbanism as a methodological and theoretical approach. That is, in my engagement with the various actors, institutions, practices, and physical conditions and spaces of Baltimore's changing network of recreation facilities and services, the realities of recreation are always related to, yet never reducible to, the processes of urban neoliberalization. Thus while this work recognizes the impacts of neoliberal policies and strategies in and on public recreation, the current chapter attempts to both acknowledge the explanatory value of critical theories of urban neoliberalization, while also shifting from this framework to a different mode of qualitative inquiry into the linkages between public recreation and urban governance in Baltimore. Specifically, this move entails a transition from critical urbanism – including the theoretical and methodological approach employed in the third chapter of this dissertation, as well as the introduction of this chapter to this point – to the approach of 'assemblage urbanism' (Farias and Bender, 2010; McFarlane, 2011a).

As described in the next section, assemblage urbanism offers a mode of inquiry that is attuned to the dynamics of contemporary urban environments, in part by incorporating the notion of *assemblage* as “a sort of anti-structural concept, that permits the researcher to speak of emergence, heterogeneity, the decentered and ephemeral in nonetheless ordered social life” (Marcus and Saka, 2006, p. 101). Thus on the one hand, a paradigmatic shift towards assemblage urbanism allows for a recognition of the processes of urban neoliberalization, while also acknowledging the limits of this explanatory framework in engaging and describing the emergent forms of urban recreational governance. On the other, this move provides the overall research project with an inherent opposition to qualitative rigidity that reflects not only the interdisciplinary and multi-methodological approach of the researcher, but also the ‘creative tension’ between and within different theories and methods that is at the core of physical cultural studies (Andrews, 2008). This analysis therefore adopts the particular theoretical and methodological approach of assemblage urbanism in order to interact with and better understand the unfolding relations of current urban milieus, and in particular the ongoing reorganization of public recreation in contemporary Baltimore.

Research Background

Following McFarlane (2011b), the incorporation of theories of assemblage within urban studies and urban geography have often drawn from Deleuze and Guattari (1981) in conceptualizing assemblage as ‘agencement’, or “the alignment of different elements” (p. 24). Without fully describing the theoretical linkages between assemblage urbanism and these authors, perhaps most importantly this approach has

reflected a prioritization of the practices that make up social life, and the heterogeneity of urban environments. Therefore within these fields, assemblage urbanism places emphasis on “indeterminacy, emergence, becoming, processuality, turbulence, and the sociomateriality of phenomena” (McFarlane, 2011b, p. 24). As McFarlane (2011b) explains, the approach to interacting with and studying urban environments constituted by assemblage urbanism is predicated on ‘assemblage’ as a concept used to

“emphasize the labour through which knowledge, resources, materials and histories become aligned and contested: it connotes the processual, generative and practice-based nature of [the] urban...as well as its unequal, contested and potentially transformative character” (p 1).

As an intellectual approach, assemblage urbanism has primarily emanated from the introduction and incorporation of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as articulated in the work of Latour (2005). Following Farias and Bender (2010), the opening forays of ANT into urban studies have demonstrated the potential for a recognition of the conventions and “blind spots” of other approaches to urban research, including the influential but increasingly dated paradigm of Marxist political economy and critical urban theory (p. 1). This means that by focusing on the practices and both discursive, material and ‘non-representational’ aspects involved in the re-making of urban environments, assemblage urbanism attempts to both acknowledge the reality of larger processes and structures, while also moving through and past the “impasse” in urban studies and urban theory (Thrift, 1993). However, while this project attempts to engage with and utilize this approach, there is admittedly more that could be done in fully realizing a focus on the non-representational aspects and affects of recreation, which is a future direction for this study. Thus though my claim is not to have fully

realized an ANT-ian perspective within this research, this chapter nevertheless recognizes the possibilities for ‘assemblage thinking’ within physical cultural studies, and especially those projects focused on urban physical cultures.

In particular, there are three principles of assemblage urbanism that frame this chapter as an attempt to utilize this approach in the following analysis of the ongoing ‘re-assembling’ of Baltimore’s recreation centers. The first of these guiding principles is an ontological conceptualization of the city as a ‘multiple object’, following from Mol’s (2002) research on how objects are always “enacted” within particular conditions and in relation to specific human and non-human elements. That is, the city is not epistemologically understood as a unitary social construction, but instead ontologically, “acknowledging that different realities are being enacted here and there, now and then” (Farias, 2010, p. 13). This approach again emphasizes the continual and unceasing re-shaping of urban social worlds, or what Amin and Thrift (2002) refer to as the process of “conrescence”, or the ways that different entities and elements encounter and associate with each other in displaying the inherent heterogeneity of cities (p. 27). This means that instead of referring to ‘the city’ as a bounded physical territory or as an economic unit and economic actor, and rather than relying on dual, bifurcated and ‘Dickensian’ (Burns, 2008) conceptions of the city, assemblage urbanism demonstrates and accentuates the multiple and processual realities of urban life. As Farias explains,

“The city is literally different things, has multiple different forms, gathers multiple different publics, fulfills multiple different functions, triggers multiple different practices, and so on...[it] is made of multiple orders of value and groups of people often running parallel to one another” (p. 19).

In order to apprehend and describe this multiplicity, assemblage urbanism therefore focuses on the ‘urban assemblages’ that are constituted in and through practices, actors, associations, and materialities. Importantly, this does not mean that an urban assemblage is the sum or total of a group of inter-related elements – rather, urban assemblages are the processes of this relation, the ways in which things come together. Thus urban assemblages refer to the processes “through which the city becomes a real-estate market, a filmic scene, a place of memory...to one particular enactment of the city” (Farias, 2010, p. 15). Further, urban assemblages again stress the ‘work’ involved in the re-constitution of multiple realities through associations and practices, in that the focus is not on assemblage as a noun but on the active ‘assembling’ of human, material, technological and biological elements (Latour 2005). As McFarlane (2011a) states, this approach to thinking about and engaging with urban milieus thus recognizes that the processes of neoliberalization and late capitalism, for example, are a part of the re-making of cities – but that these processes do not constitute the totality of urban practices, forms, and realities (p. 174).

As part of the framework of thinking about urban assemblages in relation to critical urban theory, the second principle or underlying assumption within assemblage urbanism most relevant to this analysis is the conceptualization of power in this approach. While theories of Marxist political economy and critical urban theory have often focused on the power of the state and of political and economic elites, these theories have also often entailed a top-down conception of power in which governing bodies and rulers are endowed with more power than others, and operate with and through knowledges that are hidden from the masses. Assemblage

urbanism seeks to recognize the interactions between actors and institutions, but disagrees with this understanding of power “as a resource held by the ruling classes, and of knowledge as an ideological construct that needs to be unveiled” (Farias, 2011, p. 365). Instead, urban assemblages are accompanied by a notion of power as an “immanent force”, as something that “works on subjects as well as through them – at one and the same time” (Allen, 2008, p. 65).

In short, and as Allen (2008) explains, this shift replaces the focus of critically investigating *who* has power and how much power they have, and instead focuses on “how power exercises us” – that power is both open-ended and allows for and results in the unexpected, while also simultaneously serving as a ‘normalizing’ force that provides stability and regularity in our everyday lives and routines (p. 66). This conception of power is congruent with my own interactions and descriptions of the reorganization of recreation in Baltimore that make up this chapter, in that rather than emphasizing how top-down processes of governance are shaping the practices and forms of recreational opportunity, or how bottom-up processes of resistance are contesting recreation policy, this analysis engages the active exchanges and associations between the city government, the various organizations involved in recreation center operations, and the material structures of the centers involved in these policies. This means that rather than convey the re-assembling of recreation through an understanding of the city ‘versus’ the public, my aim is to describe how particular actors, practices, and buildings are integrated within the constitution of recreation assemblages, and how these assemblages reflect the heterogeneous nature of contemporary urban recreation.

The third principle of assemblage urbanism most relevant to this chapter is inextricably linked to the conception of power as an immanent force, as well as to the attempt to move beyond the politics of Marxist critical urban theory. Again, while criticisms of assemblage urbanism have often referred to the possible ‘naïve objectivism’ of focusing on actors, associations, and materials instead of large-scale processes, Farias (2011) explains that any charges of objectivism could actually be applied to approaches that do not engage with the multiplicity of the city, but rather “assume having privileged access to the real urban...and [assume] that by unveiling these hidden structures, the strength of the powerful will be combated” (p. 366). Instead, a focus on urban assemblages prioritizes the situated relations between people, places and things, and the different operations and effects of power that are constituted in and through this ‘assembling’. Assemblage urbanism is therefore “a different theorization and lexicon of urbanism that seeks not to displace existing urban theory, but to add to it” in studying the practices and associations of everyday urban life (McFarlane, 2011b, p. 184).

Further, the approach entailed by urban assemblages provides another crucial political dimension, in that it recognizes that while economic and social asymmetries and inequalities are a regular and persistent feature of urban environments, cities are also the site of new spaces and forms of politics. In this way, thinking about and interacting with urban life through the assemblage framework also widens the field of political engagement, and works to delimit the conception of politics provided through political economy (Amin & Thrift, 2002, 57). This means that this chapter seeks to not only describe the ways in which Baltimore’s recreational sites and

services are being re-assembled, but also to frame the political stakes of recreational opportunity as not reducible to socioeconomic processes such as urban neoliberalization. My aim is therefore to think about the contemporary reconstruction of the ‘active city’, and the present and possible futures of urban recreational opportunities, without limiting these futures to the frameworks provided by neoliberal urbanism and critical urban theory. The Coda section that follows the current chapter therefore features a discussion of the relationship between different approaches to urban research within physical cultural studies, and the institutions and practices of urban planning and policy.

As discussed above, by February 2013 over 10 of Baltimore’s recreation centers had been involved in the process to ‘turn over’ recreation facilities from BCRP to various neighborhood associations, non-profit organizations, and other city agencies. As an extension of the analysis of the re-making of the city’s public recreation system as the primary focus of this dissertation, this chapter was conceived as an attempt to both engage with and analyze these more recent developments within recreation policy and planning – thus while the previous chapters of this analysis have focused primarily on the restructuring of the city’s recreation department, the incorporation of non-state actors within urban recreational governance required the inclusion of the practices and forms of these organizations within the current research. This meant that rather alongside accessing and analyzing the spaces and discourses of BCRP policy and planning, the primary research goal of this chapter was to contact and interview actors involved in the recreation center planning, and describe the different situations involving specific recreation centers and particular partnerships that had

been developed through the Task Force plan and the ‘turn over’ strategy. Therefore this chapter utilized qualitative interviewing as the principal method of research, resulting in interviews with six individuals representing different organizations involved in the ongoing reorganization of public recreation in Baltimore.

As a methodological approach often associated with assemblage urbanism, qualitative interviewing constitutes a set of practices and principles that are often utilized in very different ways by different researchers. That is, while qualitative interviewing is grounded in a form of empiricism that prioritizes interacting with those in the research field – for this project, those involved in the current ‘assembling’ of Baltimore’s recreation centers – this approach does not demand the duration and degree of participant-observation that is expected within ethnography, and does not make claims for interpreting or representing particular ‘ways of life’ within a specific sociocultural setting (Kvale, 1996). Instead, qualitative interviewing is utilized here to focus on how urban assemblages are to be engaged and described in and through research, as these understandings should incorporate and emphasize the practices and material realities of the actors involved in the assemblage. As Garfinkel and Rawls (2002) explain, the qualitative interviewing approach is therefore less concerned with finding stability and structure via analysis and interpretation, and more concerned with discovering “the things that persons in particular situations do, the methods they use, to create the patterned orderliness of social life” (p. 86). This charge of ‘following the actors’ in order to describe their own patterns of living thus reflects a larger concern within assemblage urbanism – specifically, that often what constitutes the “social” aspect of a particular research setting results from the

interpretation of observations and interactions in and through pre-formed theoretical frameworks, rather than describing the particular practices, forms and meanings involved in the contingent sociality of specific associations between actors and environments (Latour, 2005).

In short, my incorporation of qualitative interviewing entails “the study of members’ methods for producing recognizable social order(s)” (Rawls, 2000, p. 123). For this project, this approach entailed contacting and interviewing six participants as ‘actors’ directly involved in the reorganization of Baltimore’s recreation centers - five of these individuals represented a specific non-state organization that had partnered with the City and BCRP to take over the operations and management of particular a facility, and one participant represented a public advocacy group involved in recreation planning. The table below shows the name of each participant, as well as their organizational affiliation and the recreation center that this organization has been involved with.

Table 4.1 – Chapter 4 Interview Participants²

Participant Name	Organization	Recreation Center
Andrew Coy	Digital Harbor Foundation	Digital Harbor (formerly South Baltimore)
Erin O’Keefe	Loyola University – York Road Initiative	DeWees
John Bernet	Greater Homewood Community Corporation	Barclay
Talib Horne	Living Classrooms	Ralph J Young
Shantel Thigpen	Youth Sports Program	Furley
Mel Freeman	Citizens Planning and Housing Association	N/A (involved in general recreation planning)

² All research participants were contacted, consented and interviewed with IRB approval through the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board.

Each of these participants was identified and contacted through my interactions with other actors and institutions involved in recreation policy and planning, and each was interviewed for over one hour utilizing the same four themes in regards to questions and conversation. These themes included 1) the process of involvement in operating and managing a recreation center for both the individual and the organization; 2) the conditions of both the agreement between the city and the organization involved, as well as the physical conditions of the recreation center before, during, and after the organization had assumed operation and management; 3) the overall model and mission of the organization, and how this mission was reflected in the organization's current or potential future programming and services at a specific recreation site; and 4) the differences and similarities between the organization's mission and programming, and the model of public recreation provided by BCRP. While these themes served as general categories and starting points within the interview process, in general the interviews followed a loose format that allowed for follow up questions and further discussion of relevant questions and answers (Mason, 2002).

Recreation Assemblages – Materialities, Associations, and Practices

As discussed in regards to the theoretical and methodological framework of assemblage urbanism, this chapter's examination of the most recent developments in Baltimore's recreation center planning and policy is premised on the idea that cities are unfinished and enacted in and through practices and associations, and therefore that cities can never be seen "in a single glance" (Latour & Hermant, 1998, p. 8). That is, rather than attempt to provide a single narrative for the ways in which the 2011

Mayor's Task Force plan has resulted in emergent forms of organized recreational opportunity and social services, this research provides an account of how different recreation centers exist as both as the site and stakes of the interactions between actors and spaces, and how these assemblages of recreation in turn constitute and evince the multiplicity of recreation centers as an aspect of urban everyday life. The following analysis thus demonstrates how the interplay of specific forces and conditions have been constituted in and through the re-assembling of recreation, and specifically how heterogeneous relationships between different actors, materialities, associations, and practices reflect and shape the multiple and dynamic assemblages of recreation in Baltimore.

Within this framework, the 'actors' are primarily comprised of the individuals who were interviewed utilizing the ethnomethodological approach described in the previous section, as well as the other individuals and organizations involved in recreation policy and planning from 2011 through 2013 (see Table 4.1 above). The 'materialities' designate the physical structure and conditions of the recreation centers themselves, as well as the localized space of each recreation center in relation to the material conditions of the surrounding neighborhoods. 'Associations' denote the relationships and connections between actors and institutions, in the form of personal, economic, and political linkages that are integral to the processes through which recreation centers operated and managed by different groups. Finally, 'practices' refers to the work of the actors in relation to developing and implementing a particular service and program, and the actions of specific groups in operating and managing a facility as part of the ongoing restructuring of recreation. While each of

the organizations that were included through the participant interviews differed in relative size and scope – ranging from a small family-operated youth recreation program in northeast Baltimore, to an established, large non-profit organization that operates numerous facilities and education and after-school services throughout the city – the situations in which these groups were involved with, and eventually took over the operations and management of specific recreation centers were all distinctive³. Therefore, by organizing the following analysis around the elements of the re-assembling of recreation, emphasis is given to the relations between these aspects of the recreation centers and services, rather than displaying each recreation center and the operating organization as (only) another example of the large-scale socioeconomic processes of urban governance.

In short, by focusing on how specific materialities, associations, and practices are involved in the re-making of recreation in Baltimore, this chapter underscores both the labor involved in, and the open-ended nature of, the ‘conrescence’ of emergent forms of urban recreational sites and services (Amin & Thrift 2002). As this analysis demonstrates, the ongoing changes to Baltimore’s recreation centers continue to be characterized by the relations between the physical conditions of different recreation centers, the connections between the organizations operating centers and other institutions and resources, and the involvement of the organizations and the programs being developed at these centers. The incorporation of assemblage urbanism therefore

³ The organizations, facilities and programs described in the analysis below are reflective of the time period of the qualitative interviews (February-April 2013), and focus on arrangements and services that were still being developed during this time; the changing nature of these different situations further demonstrate both the appropriateness of assemblage urbanism as an approach to this research, and the ‘unfinished’ nature of the forms of everyday urban experience (Farias 2011).

emphasizes that while the broader socioeconomic processes of urban governance are indeed part of the ongoing re-assembling of recreation, the different assemblages of actors, materialities, associations, and practices are always being re-made in and through the relations and relationality of these elements.

Materialities

In this project, ‘materialities’ refer to the physical locations and conditions of the recreation centers involved in the 2011 Mayor’s Task Force plan, and specifically those centers that were operated and managed by various non-state organizations and partnerships following the RFP process. As discussed above, by February 2013 – and after both difficulties within the planning process, as well as public and political criticism – a total of 10 different recreation centers had been transferred away from BCRP control, with five centers being operated by a partnership involving a community organization and the public school that was attached to the center, and another five centers operated by non-profit and community groups. For each of these facilities, the physical structure and conditions of the building, as well as the location of the center in relation to other institutions such as schools and the ‘partner’ organization, made up key elements within the process of transferring operations and management. Thus on the one hand, this analysis of the materialities of Baltimore’s recreation assemblages evinces the necessity of considering how the buildings themselves ‘matter’ within these processes, and the active role that the material setting of the centers play in the emergence of different forms of recreational services.

However, as Latham and McCormack explain, ‘materialities’ do not simply denote the material as the ‘concrete’ reality of the city, as this often posits the

immaterial, or non-representational, as somehow less-than or subordinate to the physical world (2004). Instead, a focus on how material objects and conditions are actively involved in the re-making of urban environments emphasizes how the material and immaterial are concurrently incorporated into these processes, in that objects are always enacted in and through relations to different practices, actors and associations. That is, rather than invoke materialities to denote “reassuringly tangible or graspable objects” that exist in contrast to those elements that lack ‘concreteness’, assemblage urbanism proposes “taking seriously the fact that these realities are always held together and animated by processes excessive of form and position” (Latham & McCormack, 2004, p. 705).

Therefore, in order to better engage and understand how the particular materialities of different recreation centers were and are always imbricated in the processes of re-assembling of recreation, the analysis here focuses on the materialities made evident in and through the interviews with different individuals and organizations involved in recreation planning and the RFP process and ‘take over’ of specific centers. While there are different ways of conceptualizing the materialities of public spaces, including recreation facilities and programs, this section organizes the physical realities of Baltimore’s recreation centers into three primary categories: 1) the architectural design and physical location of the building, 2) the general exterior and interior conditions of the building, including supplies, equipment and other objects that make up these conditions; and 3) the aspects of maintenance that are needed or required for the building’s operation, including utilities and other custodial and functional responsibilities. Again, while this analysis provides evidence of how

each of these elements ‘matters’ in the restructuring of recreation, they are understood as always inter-related within an emergent assemblage of recreational services and opportunities (Latham & McCormack, 2010).

As one aspect of the materialities of recreation, the design and interior structure of different recreation centers has been crucial within the involvement of various community and non-profit organizations in recreation planning. In particular, this is evidenced by the importance of the school-recreation center model within the partnership agreements developed by BCRP, the participating organization, and the city’s public school system (BCPS). As further discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation, the school-recreation center model entailed a recreation facility that was either directly attached to, or housed within, a community public school – this model was initially implemented as a specific strategy for urban recreational planning in the post-war period and continued throughout the 1970s, resulting in the construction of dozens of school-recreation centers across the city.

Within the ongoing re-assembling of recreation, the physical design and location of the school-recreation center model has had particular implications for the transfer of operations and management to both the school and a ‘partner’ organization. As the following statements illustrate, the design and locale of different school-recreation centers constitute one aspect of the materiality of recreation assemblages. For each of these actors and the organizations they were involved with, the material infrastructure of a particular school-recreation facility played an integral role within the reorganizing of the operations and management of that center.

Talib Horne, *Living Classrooms*:

“The school attached to the rec, Commodore Rodgers, is pre-K through 8th grade, so one of the things that we are trying to do – if you look at this map right here, you can see our target investment area. So when we started in 2007, and this goes until 2017 – sort of a ten year strategy of breaking the cycle of poverty in this area. So that’s what Living Classrooms does...and we try to break the cycle of poverty in three ways: one of these is education, so with the blue markers those are schools. What we want to do is work with all these schools in this particular area, to try and improve their performance, try to bring them resources when necessary.”

John Bernet, *Greater Homewood Community Corporation*:

“So a little before that we had been talking to, or you know, we had heard through the network of Baltimore City that there had been some discussion – as sort of a follow-up to the Task Force plan for the rec centers, there was some discussion about closing them or transferring them or just trying to explore what might happen. And this one in particular, there are a few in our official Greater Homewood catchment area...but this one in particular is attached to a community school, and we’ve partnered, we help operate that community school and we’ve had a partnership with them for a while.”

Shantel Thigpen, *Youth Sports Program*:

“We just needed a home base...all of the schools we operate out of, like Brehms Lane, Sinclair, Moravia, Cecil, Edison, Johnston Square, Cross Country in West Baltimore – this would be the eighth location. We just need a home base...so this is a dream come true, for us to be here, to have this building, we’re able to do what we do for the children, for the community. We’re able to serve more children, because you know...when you in these schools, you got a certain day and a certain time and you gotta get the heck outta there, you understand what I’m saying? So now we have the luxury of opening and closing when we want, opening when school is closed or whatever.”

Along with the location and structural design of these school-recreation centers, the interior and exterior conditions of recreation facilities have also demonstrated the different materialities included within the emergent forms of recreational services. While many of Baltimore’s recreation buildings are aging and reflect the declining nature of modernist planning and public architecture (as further discussed in the

second chapter of this project), each of the recreation centers that was transferred to an alternate provider has been characterized by particular conditions and features that played a role in the reorganization of the ownership and management of that facility. That is, the materialities of the building's exterior appearance, interior design and conditions, and the inclusion or lack of supplies and equipment all further evidence how these elements have been part of the re-assembling of recreation. Among the participants interviewed, these themes of structural conditions and issues, as well as the necessity of adjustments and improvements to equipment and the building itself, were emphasized as an essential part of the transferal of recreation centers to new operators and managers.

Erin O'Keefe, *Loyola University - York Road Initiative*:

“So the city and Rec and Parks sent out different people to check on the building and different parts of the facility, from leaky faucets, to ceiling tiles, to the exterior...they helped us identify what we could do and what some of the issues were with the building.”

John Bernet, *Greater Homewood Community Corporation*:

“Well yeah so they took everything out of the center, all the chairs, though they did leave the fridge for us...but I understand it's an ad hoc thing so I don't hold it against anyone. The chairs, they would have been incredibly helpful but they had to go. The slate-top pool table, they were like “Well we can either cut it in half with a chain saw, or we can leave it” – I said listen, I don't see a big use for the pool table but don't cut it in half, I'll figure out something to do with it. Frankly...the building has seen better days, and everyone was pretty aware of that when we got rolling. I walked through in June or July with someone from the fire department...and he said, you know, “We're pretty aware that some of the city buildings aren't great, and rec and parks is no exception, but a lot of the buildings are in pretty rough shape, and this rec center is one of the better that I've seen.”

Andrew Coy, *Digital Harbor Foundation*:

“In terms of design, we definitely noticed the lack of windows. It would be nice to put windows in, but you know that's a quite a cost and its probably pretty expensive. So this is the space we were given and we can make the most out of it. We definitely had some stuff donated, some furniture from IKEA, and we gave some chairs to Homewood – we tore out all the cabinets there, you can see a lot of the work we have done, its been a tremendous amount of work.”

Talib Horne, *Living Classrooms*:

“At Ralph J. Young (Recreation Center) [the BCRP staff] took everything, they kind of left it a mess...we had to call our guys to clean it up. So for example, there’s a kitchen, but right now it doesn't work! It's a mess, and we had volunteers from Transamerica come in and paint it and all but...that building is not something that Living Classrooms would want to put their brand on without some work.”

While the materialities of the objects that make up the structure and conditions of these recreation facilities are clearly imbricated in the relationships between and within different recreation assemblages, the active role of the physical structure of the centers is further underscored by the importance of maintenance and utilities in the transfer process. In this process, the agreement between any potential operating organization and the other ‘partners’ involved – including BCRP and, in some cases, BCPS as well – centered around both the responsibilities of the organization in regards to the operation and management of the center, as well as the responsibilities of all parties in relation to maintenance, structural improvements, and building utilities. In this mode, the materialities of Baltimore’s recreation centers refer not only to the objects of the facility itself and the various structural conditions of the building – from missing ceiling tiles and ill-designed windows to donated furniture and old pool tables – but also to the aspects of the physical operation of the center, including regular and necessary maintenance issues and support systems for light, water, and heating and cooling.

The presence and importance of these elements and systems within the daily operation of recreation centers, as well as the centrality of these issues within the transfer of operations and management of particular centers to non-state organizations, demonstrates that these ‘repair and maintenance’ aspects of urban

environments are also part of the re-assembling of recreation (Graham & Thrift, 2007). This analysis therefore recognizes that within the participant interviews, concerns for maintenance and utilities again emphasized how the present and future conditions of the recreation centers have been implicated within the transfer process.

Shantel Thigpen, *Youth Sports Program*:

“Anything structural with this building, Rec and Parks is responsible for. Little things like painting, a [broken] doorknob or something like that, we won’t even bother Rec and Parks with that, but...they replaced some ceiling tiles, which we would have done that as well. I do have to send an email, because that back door is coming off the hinges, I’m thinking just because of wear and tear throughout the years, and the sink in the girls bathroom is stopped up. So just stuff like that they will fix. They control the maintenance...we are in control of janitorial services, landscaping, but anything structural they are actually responsible for.”

John Bernet, *Greater Homewood Community Corporation*:

“As soon as the lease was signed...someone got the keys to City Schools, and then Schools gave them to the principal, and then we’re in. All the things I need to do with facilities stuff – like I can’t figure out how in God’s name to get this heating to work, it’s a little cold still and I’d like run the heat a bit, but there are seven thermostats in the building. I don’t know what any of them do, and I’m a reasonably bright person, so I’m talking with someone at Schools, though I wouldn’t be surprised if the guy from Schools that I’m meeting with to look at the heat says “I got no idea” and we have to call someone from Rec and Parks to come look at it and tell us what’s going on. The only other surprise was, and it was pretty good, was that [BCRP] replaced the broken AC unit for the second floor...that was like a rooftop 2,000 square foot AC unit, and they replaced it before the lease got signed.”

These statements again display the significance of the material elements of the recreation centers within the transfer of operations to non-state organizations, and in the development of emergent forms or recreational sites and services. The structural design and location of the buildings, their exterior and interior conditions, and the issues of utilities and maintenance have all been aspects of the restructuring of the

operation and management of these facilities. Further, this research describes how the materialities of different urban spaces are co-produced through the practices and interactions of actors and institutions “in the ongoing constitution of the city” (Edensor, 2011, p. 238). Thus the approach of assemblage urbanism as incorporated in this chapter means that rather than explaining how and why particular actors and organizations became involved with and in specific centers through large-scale processes of urban governance and development, this analysis instead recognizes the differentiated materialities of these facilities as an integral part of the re-assembling of recreation in Baltimore.

Associations

As assemblage urbanism re-conceptualizes the materialities of the city, it also focuses on the relations between entities that together reflect and comprise different urban realities, those ‘associations’ that constitute the bringing together of heterogeneous elements including and involving people, places and things in the re-making of urban environments. As Smith and Doel (2011) explain, this aspect of assemblage urbanism stems primarily from Latour’s emphasis on the dynamic nature of these relationships, in that “Latour’s world is composed of associations, such that existence...is a function of attachment” (p. 29). In short, rather than take for granted that different actions, individuals, groups, and physical spaces are related through ‘social context’, this perspective demands a focus on the unfinished nature of these relations, and how particular kinds of association evidence the active constitution of urban assemblages.

While not attempting to fully describe the multiplicity of different associations between the materialities, practices and actors involved in the re-assembling of recreation centers in Baltimore, this chapter does draw attention to several specific aspects of connections between individuals and organizations. In particular, each of the interview participants discussed and demonstrated how linkages between and within different organizations involved in recreation policy and planning have been instrumental in the transfer of certain centers to alternate operators. Therefore these associations between individuals and groups reflect the nature of urban restructuring as both carefully planned and ‘ad hoc’, in and through the formal and informal networks of policy formation and implementation. As McGuirk (2000) explains, the relationships between policymakers and practitioners within a specific field of public service often center on the different “resources” available to actors and institutions in that field, most often in the form of knowledges and expertise, ‘legitimated’ social positions and political connections, and sources of programmatic and financial support (p. 668). This analysis of the associations imbricated within the re-assembling of recreation therefore focuses on how linkages between particular actors and groups demonstrate how these ‘resources’ are co-produced and practiced in and through these multiple assemblages.

In short, my aim in this section is to focus on two different varieties of associations that were evident within the participant interviews, as each of these varieties constitutes an important part of the emergent forms of recreation that are actively being developed in and through the transfer of recreation centers to non-state organizations. The first of these types of associations primarily include the

connections between the actors and organizations involved in the operation of centers, and the different City agencies, City representatives and local politicians also involved in the development of recreation partnerships. Within each of the situations wherein a community or non-profit organization has been involved with the operations and management of a particular recreation center, the differentiated connections between that person and organization and other ‘public’ individuals and institutions comprise another relational element in the re-assembling of recreational services. These associations therefore evince the distinct forms of ‘resources’ that are involved in policy formation and implementation, as the contacts and ties between different groups and individuals have enabled the transfer of centers and services to the various non-state actors.

Moreover, by focusing on the connections between different actors within the assemblages of recreation, these associations draw attention to how recreation is being restructured in and through actors, practices and materialities. Following McGuirk (2000), this approach stresses that “within every collectively performed interaction, there is the possibility for realignment, transformation and redefinition” (p. 664). Thus the recognition of these associations as part of the dynamic re-making of recreational sites and services emphasizes the emergent and unfolding character of the interconnections between policy, planning and experience.

Andrew Coy, *Digital Harbor Foundation*:

“But I went to the school district and started a conversation with them, because Parks and Rec had actually approached them and asked “do you want these ones that are physically attached?” And my request was, please take them and then I’ll do programming in them...so I met with someone at Baltimore City Public Schools, and he was really the one that helped create the pathway for that, and then the special assistant to the Mayor’s Chief of Staff was the one that shepherded it through all the paperwork...it took quite a while, probably six to nine months to do all the paperwork.”

Shantel Thigpen, *Youth Sports Program*:

“So I went ahead and put [the RFP application] in, that kind of fell through and we didn't get it for whatever reason. So last summer Councilman Brandon Scott actually came to our summer camp and did a site visit, just to see how things were going, what we were doing, etc. etc. And I told him “Look, I really need that Furley center, if you all are really closing it, I need it and I really want it”. And he said okay, so he sent an email saying ‘I have an organization that is willing and able to take over Furley Recreation Center’. By that time Furley was back on the list to be closed, because they were going back and forth – its gonna be open, then its closing – and finally we met in August with Rec and Parks, Brandon and some other city officials to discuss our plans for the center.”

Erin O’Keefe, *Loyola University - York Road Initiative*:

“So it was myself, the Loyola team that works with other partnerships and grants, and six different community leaders from the Mid-Govans neighborhood...we formed and brainstormed about what we could do, we looked at the models and asked some questions of Parks and Recs, especially with the liability insurance and the costs. And we decided to go forward anyway, and we organized all the non-profit partners in the community, the Councilman’s Office, Notre Dame University next door, and Morgan State, and we had this informal agreement that we would all try and figure out a way to keep the center open.”

The second variety of associations described here focuses on the relationships between the actors and organizations that have assumed operation and management of centers, and other non-state groups, including community and non-profit entities. As this analysis demonstrates, these distinctive associations – as well as the different ‘resources’ that are made available in and through these connections – make up another important characteristic of the emergent forms of recreational services that are currently being re-made in and through the reorganization of Baltimore’s recreation centers.

Moreover, these statements evince the centrality of an increasing variety of community-based, non-profit, philanthropic, and other non-state actors and organizations in the processes of re-assembling recreation. As Swyngedouw (2005)

explains, these contemporary forms of “governance-beyond-the-state” mark out the ongoing incorporation of private and quasi-public institutions into urban policy and service provision, and the expansion of governmental administration and policy formation into various professional fields. In this mode, the associations between the organizations involved with operating and managing Baltimore’s recreation centers and other non-state actors and groups point to the importance of these connections within the emergent forms of recreational services. Again, these associations demonstrate that “resources” – both in regards to knowledges, networks, and economic support – are both shared and made available to different actors and institutions in different ways, and in relation to the assemblage of materialities and practices that constitute a particular recreation center.

Talib Horne, *Living Classrooms*:

“So we run the Carmelo Anthony Youth Development Center...Carmelo started off with a \$1.5 million gift, and that was over 5 years, and now we are in the seventh year so I’m kind of re-engaging his foundation. But we’re sustained even without the support now...we were able now to talk to CareFirst, to talk to Family League, to talk to 21st Century, to talk to all these other organizations and we were able to build it. And now I have a \$750k annual budget at Carmelo, without his support! So like, with Patterson Park – we took the lead in getting \$3.1 million from City Schools, and then Under Armour came in, the Ripken Foundation came in, so we raise close to a \$1 million for operating [the facility]. So that will be our model for Ralph J. Young [Recreation Center].”

John Bernet, *Greater Homewood Community Corporation*:

“We’re really aiming to, as best we can – though I think there will always be a need for it – we’re hoping to at some point avoid fundraising. So we have the Johns Hopkins Carey School of Business working with us to develop a business and marketing plan to help us reach that goal, because you know fundraising, just raising money for this thing. I mean say what you will about all the structural things and the budget process, but...people pay for stuff now. And you shouldn’t have to pay an arm and a leg for it, but people do – people all up and down Charles Village go to the county for classes and programs and pay for it, and they could walk three blocks and have it and probably pay less or whatever and do it here...so it’s more a question of marketing, and changing perceptions. That’s why we have the Carey School of Business helping out, because I’m not a professional with marketing.

Andrew Coy, *Digital Harbor Foundation*:

“The news and reports about the rec centers closing down was being circulated, and this was one of the spaces. I was involved with a kind of ‘hackathon’, kind of an education hack day where we made a bunch of tech tools, and one of the technologists that was there when we were presenting came up to me afterward and said he had this foundation, and if I was interested, and I said at the time that I was a teacher. But we met to talk about the app I had made, and as part of those conversations he had said that this rec center was closing down and he was doing some development – he was actually building out the Light Street 1111 development right here, so BetaMore and all that. I guess someone in the community had approached him and asked if he would be interested in taking the recreation center space over – so he talked with me and asked what I would do with it.”

Again, rather than comparatively assess how the different actors and organizations involved in operating recreation centers have been hierarchically positioned in regards to their available resources, this analysis has emphasized that the forms of political, social and economic support for the different groups involved in the re-assembling of recreation are always manifest in and through particular associations. The focus of this chapter has specifically included the associations between the non-state actors and groups that have taken over operations of a particular center, and both City representatives and public institutions, as well as other non-profit, community and philanthropic entities. The interactions and

connections between specific individuals and groups as demonstrated in the participant interviews therefore comprise another element or elements within the active making and re-making of Baltimore's recreational spaces and programming.

Practices

In the perspective of assemblage urbanism, urban environments are constituted in and through materialities and associations that are enacted through specific 'practices', referring to the actions and interactions that make up the "doing" of the city in an everyday sense. Again, within this analysis this approach incorporates the notion of assemblage in order to stress "how assemblages are being made and unmade at particular sites of practices" (Jacobs, 2012, p. 416). Following Jacobs (2012), this conceptualization of the "city-in-the-making" works to prioritize "how city places and urban technologies are assembled incrementally and contingently", and thereby focuses on how particular practices, by specific actors and in relation to different materialities, demonstrate the unfinished nature of the city (p. 417).

Therefore assemblage urbanism often places an emphasis on a "dwelling" framework for thinking about and engaging with urban assemblages, in that this concept requires a shift away from the more common "building perspective" that assumes that "worlds are made before they are lived in" (Ingold, 2000). As Farias (2011) explains,

"A dwelling perspective instead involves focusing on the dynamic and transactional unit formed by an organism-in-its-environment (we could be quoting Dewey here). Thus, instead of explaining how 'the' socio-natural environment of the city is historically constructed, the focus is rather on the multiple ways of dwelling in the city, in the understanding that these involve multiple ways of constructing the city" (p. 369).

Moreover, and in line with the previous discussion of assemblage urbanism as an approach that recognizes both the efficacy and limits of at least some aspects of

critical urban theory, this prioritization of the practicing of the city is incongruent with a perspective in which power operates through top-down hierarchies or bottom-up forms of resistance. Instead, assemblage urbanism is characterized by conceptualization of power as an immanent force within and through these associations, as “power does not derive from an exteriority, but is an immanent effect of an association of heterogeneous elements...action is assembled” (Smith & Doel, 2011, 29). Following Allen (2003), within the perspective of Deleuzian assemblages and assemblage urbanism,

“Subjects are constituted by the spacing and timing of their own activities as much as they are by those of others who seek to influence their behavior; their conduct is shaped as much by what they absorb and imagine the ‘truth’ of their circumstances to be as it is by the physical layout, distribution and organization of their surroundings” (p.83).

This means that apart from an approach that would conceptualize actors primarily as ‘relays’ along which structural relations invariably occur, assemblage urbanism asserts that “agents are transformers rather than relays...their actions *make* a difference (Smith & Doel, 2011, p. 30, original emphasis). In other words, while actors are ‘enrolled’ within particular frameworks and assumptions that govern thought and action in urban milieus, the idea that power works in and through interaction means that “the practice of power and its outcomes are shaped by the actors...outcomes cannot, then, be structurally determined as structures themselves are created by contingent and mutable social practice” (McGuirk, 2000, p. 654). This conceptualization of power is especially important in regards to the ‘resources’ that are made available and put into use through multiple associations and practices, as assemblage urbanism stresses that while different actors and groups do have

differential access to different forms of resources, this access is not a casual reflection or representation of that amount of power that an actor or institution either possesses or lacks. That is, rather than being an object or ability that is ascribed to particular actors at differing levels, power is understood to be “a relational effect of social interaction,” inflected in and through the exchanges and attachments between actors, materialities, associations and practices (Allen, 2002, p. 2).

This chapter incorporates this approach in engaging the practices of the actors and institutions that have been involved with the restructuring of Baltimore’s recreation policy and planning, by describing how the different participant interviews evidenced the range of particular actions of individuals and groups that have comprised the re-assembling of recreation. Specifically, this analysis focuses on three themes that refer to the multiple ways in which recreation centers have been re-organized in regards to emergent forms of operations and programming, or ‘practices’ of the non-state organizations involved in the transfer process. That is, the participant interviews evinced these themes as three different approaches to the purpose of recreation centers and services within the re-making of public recreation in Baltimore.

The first of these themes of practices related to recreation assemblages is in the historical model for neighborhood recreation programs, in reference to the structure and operation of public recreation centers in the city over the previous seventy years. As discussed at length in the first and second chapters of this dissertation, Baltimore’s recreation policy and planning – including the organization of recreation programs and the design of recreation facilities – was characterized as an integral public service both in the post-World War II period and throughout the urban renewal programs of

the 1960s and 1970s. The participant interviews demonstrate that this conception and model of recreation centers continues to resonate, while acknowledging that this specific form of recreational services is indeed a historical product that does not readily translate to the changing conditions and dynamics of the contemporary city. In other words, these statements describe how one particular set of recreational practices are evident, though not entirely congruent, with the re-assembling of recreation.

Mel Freeman, *Citizens Planning and Housing Association:*

“I’m not from Baltimore, I grew up on military bases...and I guess recreation centers were just something that was always there, that was the place we went to. So it was always there, and you weren’t supposed to have to pay for it – but now you do. So when I first moved to Baltimore, it was my understanding that at one point, we had a large number of recreation centers, all kinds of little buildings near schools or at the edge of parks, with a basketball court...they were in lots of neighborhoods. And in each neighborhood there was the little old guy that came and locked and unlocked the door, ran the center, and that was it. Where we are now? That’s what we are trying to figure out.”

Andrew Coy, *Digital Harbor Foundation:*

“The old model of a rec center made sense in an earlier, industrial era... because if you really boil it down to this most basic thing, you would say that factories need able-bodied people that are physically fit, and a rec center could encourage the physical fitness of a generation and that feeds right into factories really well. I mean I know that’s kind of a simplistic, basic, workforce-related view of it – but in the knowledge-based workplace, we aren’t working with or in those same conditions. We don’t have the factories anymore – and yet the rec center as a model had never been updated.”

While a more historical model of recreational practices remains evident within the restructuring of recreation policy and planning, more recently the involvement of various City and non-state actors and institutions within the operation and management of recreation centers have resulted in emergent forms of recreational services. This means that while the incorporation of community and non-profit organizations into the provision and distribution of recreational opportunities evinces

the processes of ‘governance-beyond-the-state’ (Swygedenouw 2005), the involvement of these organizations is always characterized by the multiple configurations of different material conditions, associations and resources, and differentiated programs and practices of actors and institutions. As these statements indicate, the actual actions of the different groups involved in operating and managing recreation center – including maintaining and servicing the material conditions of the building (or ‘materialities’), managing relationships with City agencies and other non-state entities (or ‘associations’), and most importantly, organizing, planning and implementing specific kinds and forms of programming – reflect and constitute the re-assembling of recreation in Baltimore.

The second theme of recreational practices evident in the participant interviews is thus marked by a particular concern for localized, community-based services. In this mode, the practices of the non-state actors involved with operating and managing centers have been primarily focused on providing recreational and social services to the neighborhoods nearest to that site. These programs and practices have therefore sought to incorporate at least some of the principles of the historical model of public recreation described above, but within the changing dynamics of contemporary recreation policy and the making and re-making of recreational opportunity and experience. That is, while these statements indicate that neighborhood-based recreation centers remain as a desired and valuable public space and service within contemporary urban communities, they also demonstrate that emergent recreational programs and sites are actively being constituted through the practices and programs of different organizations.

Shantel Thigpen, *Youth Sports Program*:

“For Youth Sports Program [operating a recreation center] is a big opportunity...an opportunity we were waiting for. Now some people, they look at it as, “I’m gonna get me a rec center cause I got a day care, I’m gonna make money”... We look at it as, we run a program, and we need a building. Now we know we can’t serve all of Baltimore City from east to west, but we can double the amount we were serving by us having this building. So to me, some non-profits are after the same vision that Rec and Parks is after. I think YSP is after that same vision. we do everything we can to keep these young people off the street...anything to keep them afloat and positive. That’s my definition of recreation.”

John Bernet, *Greater Homewood Community Corporation*:

“You have to deal with the straightforward reality that race and class are still an issue in this city, you know? And to a certain degree some of the programming strategy needs to involve having delineated times for different groups...because the behind the scenes strategy of this place is that it could be a huge place to help facilitate that dialogue, I mean it literally sits on the corner that you could see as ‘white’ and ‘black’. So the question is getting someone in the door, and once they are in then they say “oh this is a cool place”, and they realize people are like they are everywhere else, and that can change things. I think it has a lot of community-building possibility, which is sort of our Greater Homewood mission, that’s what we do...we try and promote and build and strengthen urban communities in north central Baltimore. What better way to do it than through the recreation center?”

As these statements demonstrate, the practices and programs of several of the organizations that have assumed operations of a recreation center are primarily focused on recreation, sport and physical activity opportunities, and are structured and designed to specifically serve the local neighborhoods of that center. The third theme of practices evident in the participant interviews draws some similarities these programs, while also contrasting with the general purpose and mission of the center as a site of and for recreational activities. That is, another set of particular practices within the re-assembling of recreation has focused on aspects of community and providing services to local populations, but has also worked to re-purpose the

recreation centers through the introduction and development of alternative uses and models for the facility.

Specifically, the third theme of practices described here reflects how recreation spaces and services have been either reorganized or replaced through the incorporation of other forms of social services, including education and workforce development. The alternative focus of these programs within particular centers demonstrate that rather than attempt to implement a model or structure that follows the physical activity-based design and function of other non-state organizations, several groups that have assumed control of a recreation center have instead prioritized how these spaces might be re-configured in regards to how and why they operate. Therefore the following statements serve to evince how these emergent practices and programs have emanated from the re-assembling of recreation, and the redefinition of the function of recreation centers within the contemporary city.

Talib Horne, *Living Classrooms*:

“Simple recreation – funders aren’t into that now. You’ve got to have an academic and enrichment component to it. Even 21st Century, Family League, all these out-of-school time providers, they want a more holistic approach. So I think conceptually, you have to have some niche – whether it be the music, or the technology...you gotta have a niche. But, now we’re planning to put an early childhood center there [Ralph J Young Recreation Center], which I’m excited about. The school’s gym is right next to the rec center...and the gym is in the school, so when you say a ‘rec center’, you are really saying more of a multi-purpose center. So what we are going to do is have the space, we’ll call it an early childhood center, and we’ll have a computer lab, a space for GED, and so we’ll have opportunities for community members to get trained and other services but it will mostly be adults. The recreational component we’re going to do through the gym in what the school does...and have them involved in our programs at Utz Field in Patterson Park.”

Andrew Coy, Digital Harbor Foundation:

So my solution for the building (South Baltimore Recreation Center) was “Let’s take a rec center and turn it into a ‘tech’ center, and allow kids to explore and develop their interests and passions in technology. Not to get rid of recreation, its not trying to replace it...and that’s kind of where I came up with slogan, “rec to tech” where its the spectrum, you have recreation but you’re adding this tech element. So it is a safe place in terms of both them being safe and safe from them doing other stuff, but my model of change, or theory of change, basically says you’re not going to achieve this ‘safety’ unless your proposing something better. Put another way, you don’t keep a kid off the street by telling him to stay off the street – you keep him off the street by saying look at this really cool thing you can do, and someone will pay you to do that, and here’s a career...you know, that is really fun and cool. And that approach is really empowering of students, it isn’t telling them they are a problem if they aren’t somewhere, but it is accomplishing that goal of telling kids there is something better than messing around. So instead we’re telling them you have amazing potential, check out what you can do.

In this analysis, these statements regarding the practices and programs of the actors and institutions involved in operating Baltimore’s recreation centers provide an emphasis on the changing nature of recreational sites and services – along with the historical model of neighborhood based public facilities, and the emergence of different forms of community recreational services through non-state organizations, the third theme of these practices is evident in the repurposing of recreation facilities and redefining of recreational programming as an added component of education-based services. Rather than attempt to compare these different models in regards to efficacy or in terms of the differentiated access to resources, the aim of this engagement with the actors, materialities, associations and practices of the city’s recreation assemblages has been to demonstrate the processes through which new forms of recreation are actively being made and re-made. In short, this chapter has sought to examine the ‘concrecence’ of contemporary recreational policy, planning and experience (Amin & Thrift, 2002).

Re-Creating Recreation: A 'Politics of Provision'

Through an incorporation of assemblage urbanism as a particular perspective and approach to engaging with contemporary urban environments, this chapter has focused on how the ongoing re-assembling of recreation in Baltimore is constituted in and through the relations between the heterogeneous elements of different individuals, groups, and physical spaces. Therefore, the above analysis demonstrates that while recreation policy and planning continue to reflect and shape the large-scale processes of urban governance, the emergent realities of recreation are to be found in and through the assemblages of particular actors, practices, associations, and materialities. This focus on assemblage as an approach to thinking and studying the city has served to emphasize that as an aspect of the everyday actions and interactions which comprise urban life, the forms, practices and experiences of urban recreation are “being enacted in multiple different ways at different sites and times” (Farias, 2011, p. 14).

Moreover, this insistence on the multiplicity of the city and of urban experience also has particular implications for the intellectual and scholarly contribution of this project, in that this analysis has focused on the actors and practices that have and continue to collectively configured the restructuring of recreation policy and programs. As this dissertation is framed by the ‘right to the active city’ in and through a concern for the equitable provision and distribution of recreational opportunity, it has also been focused throughout on the operations of power within the ongoing re-assembling of recreation. Yet instead of relying solely on a critical urban perspective that primarily recognizes the relative power of the state vis a vis the public,

assemblage urbanism instead seeks to characterize power as immanent within the exchanges, routines and events which comprise the urban everyday (Farias, 2011). In this conceptualization of power, “configurations are created-in-action, always in the process of becoming rather than structurally given and self-reproducing”, and this approach therefore works to “open a range of possibilities for more empowering action” (McGuirk, 2000, p. 667).

To this end, and in acknowledgement of the unfinished character of the different forms of recreational spaces and services that constitute the recreation assemblages of contemporary Baltimore, this project asserts a ‘politics of provision’ in relation to urban recreation. In short, this refers to a political and intellectual approach that seeks to both recognize and engage the multiplicity of urban recreation and physical cultures through an understanding of the dynamic relations between particular organizations, material conditions, and the multi-faceted nature of recreational programs, while also documenting and describing the differentiated conditions of recreational opportunity that often – but not always – reflect the social and economic ‘asymmetries’ of the postindustrial city (Kaminer, Robles-Duran & Sohn, 2011). Following Farias (2011), assemblage urbanism therefore argues against a conception of urban assemblages that

“would end up silencing actual asymmetries, inequalities, injustices, exclusions, hierarchies, domination, and so on. On the contrary...precisely because asymmetry is not presumed or explained structurally or contextually, the study of urban assemblages involves unveiling the actual practices, processes, socio-material orderings, reproducing asymmetries in the distribution of resources, of power and of agency capacities, opening up black-boxed arrangement and way in which actors, things or processes are made present and made absent” (p. 371).

This means that a politics of provision is situated within concerns for broader social equality as suggested by the ‘right to the active city’, but without the implication that structural conditions have always and already determined the experiences of the city in and through recreational sites and services. Therefore in practical terms, the performance of this research – both through my own experiences with in recreational planning and policy making, as well as through the participant interviews – has served as one attempt at practicing this form of politics, through my engagement with the people, places and things that continue to constitute recreation in Baltimore. Thus this chapter seeks to prioritize the ways in which urban forms and experiences, including those involving the active body, are co-produced through the exchanges and attachments between particular actors, materialities, associations, and practices – this approach in turn emphasizes that emergent, alternate and unexpected configurations of recreation and of the city itself are always being made and re-made.

Coda: Right to the Active City – Planning, Policy and Physical Cultural Studies

The sun glared through the windows as my car pulled in behind several others parked on the wrong side of the street, just outside of the Central Rosemont pool in west Baltimore. The pool, one of a dozen smaller ‘Walk To’ pools in the city, was designed and constructed in the post-war era to provide an aquatic facility for the local neighborhood, though now most were characterized by maintenance issues and a lack of any permanent shelter or restrooms. Despite the summer heat, there were only a handful of people at the pool, which stood adjacent to the community school, a school field, and the now-closed Central Rosemont Recreation Center. The recreation center had been shuttered a year earlier in August of 2012, following the implementation of the Mayor’s Recreation Center Task Force plan. This plan, emphasizing ‘quality over quantity’ in regard to recreational facilities and programming, had called for the reorganization of Baltimore’s public recreation away from a larger system of neighborhood recreation facilities, and towards a more limited network of expanded ‘community centers’ that would offer contemporary recreational activities (Recreation Center Task Force Report, 2011). As part of this shift, the Mayor’s Office and the city’s Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP) had also worked with community associations, non-profit organizations, and other city agencies to transfer the operation and management of specific centers to these various groups.

As explained in the preceding chapters of this dissertation, both the deployment of particular recreation policies and planning strategies, as well as the assemblage of

emergent forms of recreational services, demonstrate that the processes of the ongoing restructuring of recreation in Baltimore continue to have dynamic and distinct implications for different individuals, organizations, and communities. My presence at the Central Rosemont pool was actually further evidence of these changes to the provision and distribution of recreational opportunities, as my research for this project had inadvertently resulted in an internship with BCRP, specifically in the Capital Planning division and in regards to the development of a long-term plan for Baltimore's aquatic facilities and services. As part of this planning process, my supervisor and I had arranged a series of public meetings to discuss issues at the existing pools, as well as possible plans for the future of aquatics; this included 'meetings' where we would go directly to different pools, bringing along our maps, plan outlines, and notebooks for discussing the plans with pool users and staff. Overall, we had mixed results in terms of attendance and participation, but our visit to the Central Rosemont pool proved to be both memorable and especially relevant to the focus of this project.

In short, while my supervisor gave her brief presentation on the purpose of our coming to the pool and of the overall planning effort, all eyes seemed fixated on the two large maps that I was holding. One of these maps depicted the existing pool system, and the other proposed a system that followed the 'quality over quantity' strategy of the recreation center Task Force plan, with a reduced number of larger pools in place of small, neighborhood-based facilities - like the one that we were standing at, which was not included on the 'proposed' map. Through my work at BCRP to that point, I already knew that the Walk To pools – including the one at

Central Rosemont – could be considered antiquated, and even inadequate, in comparison to contemporary aquatic facilities. Not only did they lack amenities and functions that would be required in new construction by city building and health codes, such as restrooms, accessibility features for ADA compliance, or a contemporary filtration system, but these pools were also constantly facing structural and equipment issues that underscored both the age of these facilities as well as a lack of operational and infrastructural funding.

Yet for the users of the Central Rosemont pool that we were meeting with, the conditions of the pool were less about a shift towards a new strategy for aquatics, and more about the decades of disinvestment in the community, including budget cuts and downsizing in regards to recreation. In this view, the future of the pool was another aspect of the deprioritization of the neighborhood in comparison to other parts of the city, reflecting racial and class divisions that continue to characterize the relations between and within different communities in Baltimore. The overall reaction to our presentation and maps seemed to be that after the neighborhood’s recreation center had been closed, the pool would be similarly implicated within attempts to restructure the city’s recreation system and programming. As one participant asked my supervisor, “Why do you all always try to close things – why is it always about closing things for poor black kids?” As this dissertation has demonstrated, the provision of urban recreational opportunities and services has been and continues to be inter-related to the political, economic, and social dynamics and conditions of that city – it is these connections which makes this project relevant to questions about how

and why public recreation has changed and is changing, including in regards to the equitable distribution of facilities and programs.

Findings and Conclusions

In short, the preceding chapters make up my long answer to the question of why and how Baltimore's recreation policies and planning have been and are being restructured, including the implications of these changes for policymakers, planners, and city residents. Each of these chapters has therefore incorporated and constituted a concern for the 'right to the active city' as described within the introduction, specifically referring to an examination of the forms, practices, and experiences of recreation sites and services, and a concern for the equitable provision and distribution of recreational opportunity for all citizens. Again, this directive towards focusing on recreation in regards to physical activity and health opportunities – as opposed to 'outcomes' – serves as the driving impetus for and passion of this research project, in that my underlying and overarching aim has been to examine the historical and contemporary conditions of urban recreation in order to better grasp how recreational policy and planning might be enhanced and improved as part of the dynamics of urban experience and living in the city.

This means that each chapter provides a particular set of findings that are valuable for understanding the interconnections between recreation and urban governance, and how Baltimore's city planners, policymakers and citizens think about, deliver, and engage with recreational programs and spaces. The first chapter, focused primarily on the historical development of recreation policy over the duration of the late 20th century, interrogates how the 'right to the active city' was conceived, interpreted, and

implemented across and within different modalities of urban governance – this chapter asserts that ‘municipal recreation’, ‘urban recreation’, and ‘public-private recreation’ each represent and entail particular modes of policy formation that were always imbricated within the political, economic, and social changes of the city, and have resulted in specific conditions and experiences of recreation. The second chapter complements and extends this historical analysis, by examining how the ‘right to the active city’ has been manifest in and through particular spaces and scales of recreation planning, as well as the implications of these spaces for the current and future conditions of recreation policy and experience. In this chapter, the different models of recreation centers in Baltimore, including the physical design and planning rationales of these facilities, demonstrate that different approaches to urban recreation have resulted in actual buildings that reflect specific ideas about the place and purpose of recreation in the city.

In the third chapter, my focus moves to the more recent and ongoing changes to Baltimore’s recreation centers, analyzing how neoliberal policy restructuring has shaped and been shaped by the conditions of recreation spaces and services. This chapter shows how the neoliberalization of American urban centers, and in particular the development and incorporation of specific processes and strategies within urban and recreational governance, have meant that recreation has been and is being transformed through ‘roll-back’, ‘roll-out’, and ‘roll-with’ forms of recreational policy and planning. Finally, the fourth chapter links this analysis of policy changes to the complex and complicated nature of lived experience, through qualitative interviews with individual actors that are part of the emergent assemblages of

recreational materialities, associations, and practices. This section therefore provides a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of recreation policy formation and implementation, by incorporating the framework of assemblage urbanism in order to postulate a specific mode of analysis and a corresponding politics that allows for the ‘unfinished’ form of the city in-the-making, while also maintaining a primary concern for the equitable provision and distribution of recreation in and through the ‘right to the active city’.

In concluding this dissertation, my aim is to outline a framework for how this project might continue to find significance and efficacy beyond the culmination of the degree program, both in relation to public recreation in Baltimore and to other research within physical cultural studies and other relevant fields. Specifically, the three sections below each detail an aspect of the approach to engaging and analyzing contemporary urban environments that was formed in and through this project, through a description of three different ‘maxims’ or statements that were incorporated into my research and reflected in the writing of this dissertation. In short, the phrases discussed below, and the intellectual and political perspective that accompanies each of them, have both motivated and characterized the work of this project. Further, they continue to reflect my approach to researching urban physical cultures, and the purposes of and aims of intellectual engagement with and in the contemporary city.

Part I: “Following the Actors”

As initially discussed in the introduction, the theoretical and methodological impetus for this project was ‘multi-paradigmatic’, in that it drew from a diverse variety of frameworks that allowed for an analysis of the historical and current

provision of urban recreational opportunities. However, a driving force within the research process was my incorporation of an approach that would allow me to not only examine and interpret what had happened within Baltimore's recreation policy and planning, but also would give emphasis to the ongoing reorganization of recreation programs and facilities – what is referred to in the fourth chapter as the 're-assembling' of recreation. This project therefore suggests that physical cultural studies, as well as the related fields of urban studies and urban sociology, might benefit from further familiarization with, and utilization of, the types of 'assemblage thinking' that stress the heterogeneous nature of the metropolis in and through the interactions between people, places and things (Anderson, et. al., 2012).

As the fourth chapter explains, the approach to interacting with and describing the emergent character of urban environments offered by assemblage urbanism (Farias, 2011; McFarlane, 2011b) provides a necessary broadening of the focus and frameworks of critical urban theory. While a full immersion into the different conceptualizations of assemblage and the myriad ways in which the idea has been utilized within urban research is beyond the scope of this section, these approaches most often share a commitment articulated within Latour's (2005) framework for actor-network theory (or ANT) to "follow the actors" (p. 12). That is, while analyses of urban assemblages do not necessarily completely overlap with the concerns of an ANT-ian approach, the perspective of assemblage urbanism nevertheless incorporates Latour's dictum in emphasizing the engagement with the different individuals, institutions, and material conditions and objects that constitute the multiple realities of the urban everyday (Farias, 2010). Therefore this approach entails an

understanding of human and non-human actors as interdependent. and enacted only in and through relations to other actors – following Fioravanti and Velho (2010), this interdependence means that within ANT and assemblage urbanism,

“at least theoretically there is no longer separation between humans and non-humans, subject and object, big and small, micro and macro, local and global, particular and universal, activity and passivity, knowledge and power, before and after, context and content, materiality and sociality...such divisions and distinctions are seen as effects or results, not part of the state of things” (p. 3).

Within the context of this project, ‘following the actors’ had two specific implications for both the design and completion of my research. First, this approach was reflected in the initial formative stages of this study, including in my dissertation proposal, through a purposefully ‘loose’ organization to the qualitative fieldwork that constitutes the focus of the analysis in the fourth chapter. In short, this meant that rather than classify a particular population or set of subjects that would be contacted as possible participants, the research design allowed for me to navigate and explore the different connections between institutions and individuals that were and are involved in Baltimore’s recreation facilities and services, and identify and contact participants as they ‘enacted’ with and in particular assemblages through participating in different forms of recreation planning and programming. Thus on the one hand, the practical application of focusing specifically on the associations and practices of particular actors resulted in a more reflexive research method, and one that specifically acknowledges the ‘unfinished’ nature of urban conditions and environments (McFarlane, 2011a).

However, the approach expressed through Latour’s directive also entails an intellectual commitment to producing research that does not seek to ‘uncover’ some

truth about the processes of contemporary urbanization, but rather recognizes that cities come into being through the agencies of different peoples and things (Farias, 2011). In contrast to many of the theoretical frameworks within Marxist political economy and critical urban theory – both of which share many political and academic affinities with the development of cultural studies and physical cultural studies – the assemblage perspective and approach recognizes the *immanence* of power within urban social life, or how power operates in and through social relations, rather than through either large-scale processes of governance, the actions and strategies of economic and political elites and/or the contestations and resistance to governance by different aspects of the general public (Allen, 2003, p. 65). This perspective has meant that rather than casting the various actors within the changes to Baltimore’s recreation centers and programs as only ‘caught up’ within the processes of late capitalism and urban neoliberalization, this project has at least attempted to follow the actors in demonstrating how individuals and organizations actively work towards the “concrecence” of particular urban realities (Amin & Thrift, 2002). Therefore, this project suggests that others within physical cultural studies and related research on urban environments might benefit from thinking about actors, practices and materialities as part of the processes of urban governance, but also *on their own terms* within the making and re-making of the city.

Part II: “Working with the ISAs”

As explained above, my research into public recreation in Baltimore led – albeit indirectly, and in many ways unexpectedly – to positions within both the ‘state’ in the form of the city’s Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP), as well as a specific

‘non-state’ (Swyngedouw, 2005) institution involved in recreation policy and planning, in regards to the Citizens Planning and Housing Association (CPHA). In this way, and admittedly without any formal planning, my position as both a researcher and as a participant in the world of recreational policymaking and implementation reflects at least the potential for physical cultural studies to work with and in the organizations that inform and shape the forms and experiences of the active body. As Bennett (1998) explains, the possibilities for cultural studies scholars to engage with and practice in the different fields of research and pedagogy constitute a particular conception of the ‘organic intellectual’, stemming from the work of Stuart Hall and others in the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (p. 31). In this mode, the intellectual and political contribution and purpose of cultural studies – and in this project, physical cultural studies as well – is centered not only on an academic record, but also on the ways in which cultural studies practitioners can interact with, and possibly help to shape, the worlds in which they live.

In Bennett’s (1998) own perspective, cultural studies is uniquely positioned in relation to other academic and professional fields, in that researchers are asked to consider the “kinds of practical effects that cultural studies might intelligibly aspire to” (p. 32). As this dissertation has been framed as both a scholarly undertaking, as well as an intellectual and political contribution towards concerns for the equitable provision and distribution of urban recreational opportunities, my own interest is also in thinking about how physical cultural studies can have ‘effects’ in relation to policy and planning. However, and as Sterne (2002) explains, most often cultural studies has operated with a characterization of the state, both in the form of governmental

agencies and institutions and in the development of policy, as apart and disconnected from progressive, reformist, leftist and Marxist politics (p. 60).

This view of the state as primarily a detached object of analysis, rather than as a potential site for cultural studies engagement and intervention, is evident within Althusser's (1971) conceptualization of state institutions as "Ideological State Apparatuses", or 'ISAs'. As Sterne (2002) explains, while cultural studies has not always been wedded to these structural notions of power and the implications of the state, this theorization of the state institutions as the "apparatuses" that frame and govern forms of social life has nevertheless marked cultural studies' historical focus on the forms and practices of cultural 'domination' from above and 'resistance' from below (p. 70). In this mode, engaging with – and especially working within – the different ISAs, including and primarily in the form of state institutions, was generally discouraged, as these groups represented the very governing and structuring forces that were functionally responsible for the organizing of social inequality.

However, and in an effort to interrupt this divide between cultural studies and the state, Bennett (1998) argues that cultural studies should begin "talking to and working with what used to be called ISAs", rather than dismissing these aspects of the state and policy formation as sites for cultural studies inquiry (p. 32). While brief, my experiences within the 'ISAs' of Baltimore's public recreation department and other city agencies, as well as non-state organizations such as CHPA that are increasingly an integral part of 'governance-beyond-the-state' (Swyngedouw, 2005), suggest that physical cultural studies might take seriously this notion of incorporating ourselves into the policymaking bodies that inflect on and through our work. This is not to call

for a particular model or design for how researchers might take on this capacity, though at least in my own view as expressed above, this might include ‘following the actors’ within a given field or topic. In any case, the relevance and importance for physical cultural studies in “working with the ISAs” is emphasized by the recognition that our intellectual contribution need not be limited to academic forums. That is, this approach and perspective to engaging research can realize the promise of physical cultural studies as “more than a new school of criticism to replace the old and keep the ink fresh in scholarly journals...more than a scholarly moment or movement, but rather an enduring approach” (Sterne, 2002, p. 84).

Part III: “Reclaiming the ‘Right to the City’”

The introductory chapter of this chapter included a discussion of the ‘right to the city’ as a particular conception of the politics and general development of urban environments, following originally from the work of Henri Lefebvre. In Lefebvre’s (1996) framework, the right to the city might be said to contain the seeds of praxis, in that this concept becomes the essentially incessant demand for asserting and realizing the rights of each and all metropolitan ‘city-zens’. As Lefebvre states, “The *right to the city* cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*” (1996, p. 158). This means that rather than assume that the right to the city attempts to harken back to some ‘golden age’ of urban social realities, Lefebvre is only interested in transformation and intervention within the city as it currently stands, in order to create and foster the human rights of all urban residents. In this approach, there is a clear demarcation between the ‘habitat’ of the urban environment as apart

from what Lefebvre refers to as the practice of “habiting”. Habitat is “imposed from above...a requirement that ‘lived experience’ allow itself to be enclosed in boxes, cages or ‘dwelling machines’” (Lefebvre, 2003, p. 81). In this sense, habitat refers to the process whereby urban spaces and experiences are envisioned and constructed as part of the technocratic formation of urban policy and planning. The practice of habiting, however, “calls for the primacy of human needs over economic ones...the promotion of lived experiences liberated from abstract and oppressive urban imaginations” (Udvarhelyi, 2011, p. 387).

Therefore, and specifically in regards to the relevancy of this approach for physical cultural studies, it is imperative to understand the right to the city as more than the reconfiguring of the urban spaces, but as “a right to change ourselves by changing the city” (Harvey, 2003, p. 940). However, this does not mean that Lefebvre’s perspective should be applied or assumed as a doctrine for intellectual and political engagement with the contemporary city. Following Purcell (2002),

“...the promise of the right to the city must be tempered by important and unanswerable questions about what social and spatial outcomes the right to the city would have. Because it is not a completed political architecture but a door to a new and contingent urban politics, the right to the city cannot be evaluated *a priori*. Rather its effect on the social and spatial structure of cities will be determined through and complex and contingent politics (p. 106).

As explored in the third and fourth chapters of this dissertation, the contemporary restructuring of urban governance – including the policies, planning and experiences of recreational opportunity – continues to have particular implications for how cities are organized and lived. Thus as Keil asserts, within the current contexts of late capitalism and urban neoliberalization, the ‘right to the city’ has been redefined, primarily in regards to the rights of consumers for privatized urban spaces and

commodities (2009, p. 237). For Swyngedouw (2005), this re-orientation of the right to the city away from its democratic and progressive moorings is indicative of the contemporary state of ‘post-politics’, in which consensus is established through populist administration, rather than through political dissent and contestation. That is, post-politics refers to the process whereby “the ‘political’ is retreating, while social space is increasingly colonized by policies (or policing)” (Swyngedouw, 2011, p. 23).

In light of these conditions, physical cultural studies should recognize the need for new forms and practices of urban politics, while also acknowledging that cities are always ‘unfinished’ products that are perpetually in-process (McFarlane, 2011b). This means that theoretical and methodological perspectives that emphasize the open-ended nature of urban environments and prioritize practices and experiences ahead of large-scale processes – including the approach of assemblage urbanism as articulated in the fourth chapter – might allow for the apprehension of, and engagement with, particular urban actors and conditions in actively re-shaping the city. Moreover, a reclaiming of the right to the city as an approach to studying and engaging urban politics and development could therefore incorporate an ontological perspective, focused on the multiple objects and realities of the city and its citizens (Farias, 2011). Here the right to the city refers not to some idealized space or version of the city, but instead to the “right of access to participation...the right to shape or influence” (Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 142).

In reclaiming the right to the city, physical cultural studies therefore seeks to describe the inequalities and inequities of contemporary urban environments, while also never shortchanging the capacities of different actors or disclosing the

possibilities of alternative and even radical dimensions of urban life. Following Swyngedouw (2012),

“a genuine democratic political sequence starts from an axiomatic egalitarian position, recognizes conflicting socio-spatial processes and radically different possible urban futures, and struggles over the naming and trajectories of these futures” (p. 30).

For those researchers and studies that are involved and interested in the forms, practices, and experiences of urban physical cultures, an engagement with and reclaiming of the right to the city is therefore both necessary and useful in relation to the project of physical cultural studies. Therefore in the last instance, the relative value, validity and success of the various research endeavors focused on different urban physical cultures – including this dissertation – will be reflected in their engagement with and by the various actors, institutions, organizations and publics that are involved in making and re-making of the contemporary ‘active’ city.

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