

Town of Colchester
ARPA Recovery Funding Request Application

Directions: Please fill in all fields. Once completed, either print and drop off this application to the First Selectman's office located at 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT 06415, or save a copy and email to ARPA@ColchesterCT.gov. If you have questions please email ARPA@ColchesterCT.gov. Please include any additional documentation you feel would help in the application process. Submit only one project per application (submit multiple applications if you have multiple projects).

Important: Applicant must demonstrate that the funding use directly addresses a negative economic impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Applicant Background Information

Applicant Name:	Tiffany Quinn	Date Prepared:	October 15 2021
Applicant email:	tquinn@colchesterct.gov	Applicant Phone:	(860) 537-7295
Department / Business / Establishment Name:	Colchester Parks & Recreation		

Project Details

Project Title:	Strategic Master Plan	Anticipated Start Date:	Nov 2021
Total Funding Request Amount:	\$ 10,000	Anticipated Length of Time to Complete Project:	6 months
On a scale of 1 (Not Urgent) - 10 (Very Urgent), how urgent is this request? Please explain.	10- Strategic Plan development will provide public input and allow the prioritization of future decisions to be based on long range goals and community needs.		

Project Description (How will the funds be used?)

Funding will cover the employ of a consultant who will oversee the planning, gathering, creating and development of a Strategic Master Plan. The plan will address topics such as (but not limited to) field use and facility needs; community leisure and recreational needs; community needs assessment; staffing needs; Plan of Conservation and Development update information; Sustainable CT components; SWOT analysis with input from department heads, Recreation Commission and stakeholders; community meetings, surveys, and outreach to gather input from the Colchester community. The resulting plan will include information, goals and plans that pertain to several town departments including Youth and Social Services, Planning and Development, Public Works and more.

Justification (Please describe how your request addresses a negative impact to COVID-19.)

"THE IMPACT OF COVID-19: Throughout the Pandemic, public parks and trails provided many people countless opportunities to improve one's physical and mental health every day, often serving as the sole remaining respite as other services and businesses shut down. This has reaffirmed our essential nature throughout the public health crisis. Conversely, the damage the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has wreaked on the park and recreation budget is startling. According to the 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the typical park and recreation agency recovers more than 25% of its annual operating budget through registration and entry fees, rental income, sponsorships, concessions, and other earned revenues. At best, these revenues are challenged in a pandemic world, but for many, these revenues are simply nonexistent. Without major programs such as Summer Camp in full operation, Colchester's Revenue fund has taken an unprecedented hit with few options for recovery until the pandemic subsides. It is imperative that we assess current operations and how to recover and move forward."
-Real World Consulting

Briefly explain the positive impact your project will have on the community.

The Strategic Plan will allow future projects, facility use and development, programs and events to be driven by the input from the Colchester community. Understanding what the community needs, wants and already has is critical to forming a vision, goals and long term plans.

Describe the impact to your department / business / establishment if ARPA funds are NOT approved.

Without input from all stakeholders the future is decided based on a reaction to a current circumstance. With a carefully formed plan, the future is decided based on input, action and forward motion. The ability to guide future financial decisions and recommendations should be rooted in fact and research which this plan will provide.

**Budget Overview (How will the ARPA funding be spent?)
(If more room is needed, please attach additional spreadsheet)**

Budgeted item / Service	Budgeted Amount	Notes
Strategic Master Plan	\$ 10,000	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
TOTAL:	\$ 10,000	

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For Colchester Parks and Recreation Department

Overview

The Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to determine the Town of Colchester's needs and desires for park facilities and recreational services, using a Strategic Master planning process which will align the goals of the Department with that of the town's growing and changing needs.

The Process

I will utilize facilitated open dialogue, using diverse techniques to encourage public involvement and support creativity and innovation. This will provide mutual understanding, commitment and buy-in by all to the direction, principles, and goals by which the department will be managed. A high level of involvement provided by the town staff will ensure the project success. Using your resources, especially your Parks and Recreation Commission and other volunteers, this project will be a sense of accomplishment and pride for all.

OUR PROPOSAL

Rationale

***THE IMPACT OF COVID-19:** Throughout the Pandemic, public parks and trails provided many people countless opportunities to improve one's physical and mental health every day, often serving as the sole remaining respite as other services and businesses shut down. This has reaffirmed our essential nature throughout the public health crisis. Conversely, the damage the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has wreaked on the park and recreation budget is startling. According to the 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the typical park and recreation agency recovers more than 25% of its annual operating budget through registration and entry fees, rental income, sponsorships, concessions, and other earned revenues. At best, these revenues are challenged in a pandemic world, but for many, these revenues are simply nonexistent. Without major programs such as Summer Camp in full operation, Colchester's Revenue fund has taken an unprecedented hit with few options for recovery until the pandemic subsides. It is imperative that we assess current operations and how to recover and move forward.*

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Execution Strategy

Essentially, there are three phases of this planning process: gathering information, creating strategies, and developing a plan to move forward. Following is a description of our project methods, including how the project will be developed, a proposed timeline of events, and reasons for why we suggest developing the project as described.

Technical/Project Approach

- Environmental Scan – review economic, social, technological elements and their impact on citizenry.
- SWOT analysis – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- Needs Assessment - public input via survey and focus groups, community open forums
- Develop vision, mission, goals, and objectives
- Generate strategies and action plans
- Implement communication plan

It is important that the following aspects be included in the process to be addressed:

1. **Infrastructure Maintenance Backlog** as park buildings and grounds continue to age and deteriorate, and the Public Works Department is less able to provide adequate service to the town's parks. Tapping into the fund balance reserves to support maintenance is not cost effective or efficient for the long term. Preventative care needs to occur routinely. More than anything, allocating resources requires staff to take a critical look at what resources are available (fiscal, human, physical facilities, etc.) and plotting those against greatest needs for service in the community. Capital Improvement Plan needs to reflect realistic needs and priorities.
2. Ensuring **involvement of public**, equity and by in from all parties, taking adequate time to properly plan, by providing adequate opportunities for public input via open forums, surveys, and focus groups.
3. Ensure **on going presence and involvement of the arts** within the town of Colchester to foster the culture of the community and facilitate and support local artists
4. Contribute to the town's **Sustainability CT initiative**, by identifying areas of sustainability and areas where inter departmental cooperation can be implemented, such as green practices, incorporating existing programs, local arts and creative culture, agriculture friendly practices, and smoke-free and tobacco-free public spaces .
5. **Budget impact** of Covid 19, minimum wage increases, review of staffing requirements

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Resources

We will utilize best practices, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards for National Accreditation, NRPA 2021 Agency Performance Report, CIRMA best practices for risk management, National Alliance for Youth Sports recommendations for communities, and more.

Project Deliverables

Following is a complete list of all project deliverables:

Deliverable	Description
Strategic Plan final report	Compilation of all work phases (to be used to support 2025 POCD)
Strategic Plan summary	For public communication – brief overview of project
Action Plan Matrix	Action items prioritized with due dates and assignments
Communications/ Marketing Plan	Actionable strategies for increasing and improving communication with public

Timeline for Execution

Key project dates are outlined below. Dates are best-guess estimates and are subject to change until a contract is executed.

Description	Start Date	End Date	Description	Duration
Project Start - meet with Rec Commission and Strategic Planning team	11/21		2 meetings to establish parameters of the plan and schedule	4 hours
Meet with Dept Heads, staff & other key stakeholders	11/21		3-6 meetings	6 hours
Public Input	12/21		1 public forum, 2 stakeholder meetings, survey method & assignments t.b.d	6 hours
Phase 1 Complete			consultant's prep time	10 hours
SWOT analysis – needs assessment	1/22			4 hours

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Vision & Mission workshop – Saturday	1/22		3-4 hours	4 hours
Phase 2 Complete			Consultant prep time	16 hours
Establish Goals and measurements	3/22		Rec Commission & staff	2 hours
Generate strategies and next steps	3/22		Rec Commission & staff	2 hours
Communicating the Plan	4/22		Deliverable materials for public	6 hours
Project End	4/22		Final consultant prep	15 hours

Supplied Material

The following materials are to be supplied by Colchester for this project. For Real World Consulting to meet project milestones, this material must be supplied on schedule. The due dates included in the following table represent our best guess based on current proposed project dates:

Materials to be supplied by Colchester	Due Date*
Demographic information for environmental scan	1/22
Printing	On going
Other – miscellaneous (refreshments and meeting supplies)	t.b.d

**We cannot be responsible for cost overruns caused by client's failure to deliver materials by agreed-upon due dates.*

PRICING

The following table details the pricing for delivery of the services outlined in this proposal. This pricing is valid for ## days from the date of this proposal:

Services Cost Category #1	Price
Consultation time (estimate @ 75 hours total)	\$100/hour
Travel expenses @ \$.56 per mile (9.7 miles 1 way from home to town hall)	\$100-\$175
Estimated total project cost	\$7500-\$8000

Disclaimer: The prices listed in the preceding table are an estimate for the services discussed. This summary is not a warranty of final price.

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QUALIFICATIONS

Real World Consulting is continually proven to be an industry leader for high quality services; providing a wide range of quality technical assistance to municipal, non-profit and commercial parks and recreation related agencies, including strategic planning, grant writing, staff training, risk management, budget justification and development, benefits-based programming and much more.

- Having had previous experience serving as the Director of Parks and Recreation in Colchester, I have a solid base of understanding of the community's history and culture. Now retired, I have the freedom and flexibility to work with your schedules.
- With over 40 years of administrative experience and service in 5 municipalities, I bring a unique perspective to the planning and delivery of leisure services.
- As a leader in the field on local, state, and national levels, and the recipient of several awards, I have the knowledge, access and ability to help you achieve the highest level of quality.

CONCLUSION

Real World Consulting will provide you with the basic guidance needed at a reasonable cost, using my experience in a friendly, fun and professional way. I look forward to working with the Town of Colchester and its Parks and Recreation Department. I am confident that I can help you meet the challenges ahead and I stand ready to partner with you in delivering an effective Strategic Plan that can be implemented realistically.

If you have questions on this proposal, feel free to contact me at your convenience by email at wrubin24@gmail.com or by phone at 860-368-7980. I will be in touch with you next week to arrange a follow-up conversation on the proposal.

Thank you for your consideration,

Wendy Rubin, CPRP
Consultant

Wendy Rubin d.b.a. Real World Consulting
24 Mott Hill Road East Hampton CT 06424
860-368-7980 wrubin24@gmail.com

Wendy L. Rubin, CPRP, CYSA

24 Mott Hill Road, East Hampton, CT 06424 860-368-7980 wrubin24@gmail.com

Educational background: *B.S. Recreation Management, Springfield College*
Certified Parks & Recreation Professional, CPRP, Certified Youth Sports Administrator, CYSA

Professional Summary

Consultant, Ship Shape Solutions, Director of Parks & Recreation, Town of Coventry CT 6/08-6/21, Supt. of Parks & Recreation, Newington 4 years, Consultant, Leisure Lifestyles LLC, 2 years, Colchester CT Director of Parks & Recreation 11 years, Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association Executive Director, 5 years, Hebron Director of Parks & Rec 2 years, National Recreation and Park Association Assistant Regional Director, 3 years, Mashpee MA Director of Parks & Recreation 8 years

Professional affiliations:



National Recreation & Park Association member
Connecticut Parks Association, member
Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association, member
New England Park Association, member
National Alliance of Youth Sports



Leadership:

- ◆ CRPA Legislative Committee 2011- 2019
- ◆ NRPA National Congress Program Planning Committee, Chair, 2006 Seattle, WA, Committee member '94-'99, '02-'06
- ◆ Southern Connecticut State University Advisory Board 11/98 – 9/04
- ◆ Member CIRMA Sports & Recreational Liability Task Force 06-07
- ◆ New England Regional Council 1993 to '99
- ◆ American Park & Recreation Society Board of Directors '97- '00
- ◆ NRPA Certified Benefits Based Management Mentor, February '99
- ◆ NAYS Start Smart National Advisory Board Oct '01
- ◆ Springfield College Leisure Services Department Advisory Board 1989-1993
- ◆ Founder of the Cape & Islands Recreation Association 1985



- CT Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) Achievement Award for Sustained Risk Management in Youth Sports Administration 2019
- Capital Region Council of Governments Inter-town Cooperation Award 2015
- Honored as a Kaboom! National Playful City USA from 2011 to 2017
- CT Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) Achievement Award for day camp on-line staff training, 2012
- NRPA New England Region Distinguished Professional Citation Award, April 2006
- East of the River Action Against Substance Abuse- Volunteer of the Year, 2000
- NRPA Dottie Mullen Arts & Humanities National Award – Class IV, 1999
- CRPA Outstanding Professional of 1998
- NYSCA National Youth Sports Leader Award, 1988
- Young Careerist, Upper Cape Business & Professional Woman's Club, 1984
- Good Sports Hall of Fame inductee, WCVB-TV Channel 5, Boston, MA 1983

Work – Related Achievements:

Mashpee:

- ◆ secured \$100,000 CIP funding
- ◆ assisted in development of :
 - Mashpee River Woodlands Trail system
 - John's Pond 80-acre purchase and management plan
 - South Cape Beach conversion to Massachusetts State Park system
- ◆ obtained grants & constructed Walking Trail for Senior Citizens
- ◆ created R.I.P. Halloween Costume Fun Run
- ◆ created Annual Sandcastle Competition



Hebron:

- ◆ acquired \$600,000 in LWCF grants for Hebron Veteran's Memorial Park development
- ◆ assisted in purchase/construction of 2 new playscapes
- ◆ Created Annual Maple Festival 5K Sap Run
- ◆ Help establish the Parks & Recreation Director as a full-time position



Colchester:

- ◆ Established the Colchester Community Theatre and Children's Theatre Camp
- ◆ Added \$450 K in amenities to the Recreation Complex: including a Picnic Pavilion, Playscape, Water Spray Park, Skate Park, Parking Lot Renovations & Bathhouse
- ◆ Added 2 new softball fields, 1 soccer field, walking trail at Recreation Complex
- ◆ obtained \$80,000 in funding & developed 4 miles of the Airline Rail Trail
- ◆ improved Historic Town Green & Ancient Burial Grounds for 300th Birthday
- ◆ Took a Summer camp program from \$25,000 tax appropriation to a self-supporting Special Revenue Fund of over \$65,000 annually
- ◆ Instituted Park Ranger program
- ◆ Assisted in approval of bond referendum of \$500,000 for land acquisition of 111 acre *Ruby Cohen Wildlife Sanctuary* and future Environmental Education Center, with \$200,000 reimbursement from State DEP Open Space Grant program
- ◆ Created Scarecrow Contest, Town Green Holiday Lights attraction



Newington:

- Founded the Newington Greenways Alliance dedicated to trails, bikeways and pedestrian routes, with over 60 volunteers
- Secured funding, support and oversaw development of a Comprehensive Strategic Master Plan with a focus on public input that is still implemented today.
- Implemented overall enhancements of park facilities, recreation programs and services to bring the department up to speed with current trends and best practices and obtained compliance for OSHA requirements.
- Coordinated 50th Anniversary of Parks and Recreation Department



Coventry:

- Achieved NAYS Better Sports for Kids Sports Quality Program Provider status in 2019
- Secured funding and support for a Master Plan for Miller Richardson Park, resulting in a \$300,000 project to transform a landfill to multipurpose sports fields, facilitated Softball Fields Study Committee
- Chaired 300th Anniversary Parade Committee
- Obtained funding and developed Coventry Arts Strategic Plan and formation of Coventry Arts Guild
- Installed playground for ages 2-5 at Lisicke Beach, ages 2-12 at Laidlaw Park
- Reduced tax subsidy by 25% for Recreation Dept. operations by increasing revenues
- Developed trail maps and used an on-line trail app for smartphones
- Transitioned to new Parks & Recreation registration and reservation software
- Developed a thriving volunteer led Community Garden program
- Installed handicap accessible Disc Golf Course specifically designed for beginners and families
- Developed marketing campaign using mythical cartoon character mascot
- Contributed towards bronze and silver Sustainable CT achievement levels



Consulting Experience

Leisure Lifestyle Consulting, LLC, Glastonbury, CT 4/01 – 9/04

Consulting for parks and recreation specifically in programming, marketing, trends, strategic planning and organizational change. The focus of Leisure Lifestyle's most recent consulting activities has been the integration and incorporation of the benefits of parks and recreation to a health and wellness platform.

Real World Consulting 2005-present

- New England Parks Association Strategic Plan
- Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association Strategic Plan
- Greater Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Recreation Initiative
- Mobile Recreation study – California Parks & Recreation Society
- Town of Bethel Strategic plan
- Town of Newtown Strategic Plan
- Strategic Planning – Newington, Colchester, Coventry Parks & Recreation Departments

NRPA Assistant Regional Director Northeast Service Center, Rocky Hill, CT 12/88 - 9/91

responsible for providing technical assistance to members of the Northeast Region

Presentations

- What Makes A City Playful?, MA, ME & NY
- Strategic Planning – The Director's Role, Mass Rec & Park 4/11
- Connecticut Recreation & Park Association State Conference, "Social Networking for Parks & Recreation", 11/09
- NYSRPS State Conference, Long Island, NY 2009 "Dog Parks"
- NYSRPS State Conference, Saratoga Springs, NY 2008 "Strategic Master Planning"
- CRPA Quarterly - Panel presentation entitled "How to Survive an OSHA Inspection" 3/07
- Presented an education session on Mentoring CRPA State Conference 11/06
- NRPA National Congress, Reno NV – Mentoring 101, Palm is My Co-Pilot 10/04
- Connecticut Recreation & Park Association State Conference, "Are We Having Fun Yet?" 11/01
- New Hampshire Park & Recreation Association Fall Retreat, "Emergency Action Plans", 9/01
- New England Park Association Fall Conference, "Making a Powerful Point", 9/01
- New England Training Institute – "Benefits Based Management, Park Maintenance For Duh-mmies" 5/01

Publications:

- w CRPA Today, article on "Social Networking", Dec. 2011
- w Chalk It Up™ Program, S&S Worldwide, Inc. 1999, founder and author
- w P & R magazine, National Recreation & Park Association, "Count Us In, Recreation Professionals in the Day Care System" May 1991
- w CRPA TODAY, newsletter of the Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association, Managing Editor 1989 - 1993
- The Yankee Clipboard, the official publication of the National Youth Sports Coaches Association of Connecticut, Editor, 1989 – 1993