



Mayor's Council for Women

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Health Committee Fitness Group White Paper

September 2019

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I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Chattanooga has a gem in its recreation and fitness centers. One center in particular, the Chattanooga Fitness Center (CFC), has an impactful history behind the facility, its origin and the message that was communicated to our city when constructed. Today, the Center promotes inclusion and the opportunity for a diverse population to come together for health and fitness activities.

In 2017, we learned that the Chattanooga Zoo has, as part of their master plan, an expansion that includes use of the current Chattanooga Fitness Center space. This was the catalyst for the formation of a dedicated workgroup and an overall look at the availability and accessibility of a place for Chattanooga's adult residents to improve their overall physical health.

The Fitness Workgroup, under the Health Committee of the Mayor's Council for Women took a look at the creation of this space, collected national, state and local data on the status of health and evaluated survey data collected by the Fitness Center from its participants to determine the need for further policy and legislation relative to access to fitness spaces and opportunities for women in our City and the value of these opportunities to the health and well-being of our community as a whole. If women in our city achieve their best physical fitness, their families and communities benefit as well.

The following are our findings.

II. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

A. Warner Park Field House (*located at 1254 E. 3rd Street in Warner Park next to the Chattanooga Zoo*)

It was not always a fitness center, rather, it was originally constructed in March of 1953 as a temporary tabernacle for the Billy Graham Revival.

In 1952, Mayor Rudy Olgiati commented, "The city is wholeheartedly for the tabernacle and will cooperate in every way. We think it will be a fine thing for the Billy Graham meeting and for other meetings which might come to Chattanooga. There are lots of uses the building might be put to, including a year-round program for the youth of our city."

Surveying the seating area before the service began, Rev. Graham noticed that a portion of the seating area had been designated as "colored." He personally removed the ropes from the seats and instructed the ushers to let the congregation sit wherever they wanted.

While in Chattanooga, Billy Graham preached to some 300,000 people. As planned, the Warner Park Field House was turned over to the City of Chattanooga, which has used the building for various recreation programs including art classes and a skating rink.

Following the 1986 closing of the Ice Land skating rink, a figure skating club approached the city about converting the Field House to an ice rink. That idea was not pursued, but another – a fitness center – continues to appeal to those seeking a low-cost place to trim and tone.

B. Chattanooga Fitness Center aka The Powerhouse, Past, Present, Future (Report)

Established May 1990 by the City of Chattanooga Parks and Recreation Department as a community adult fitness center, the Chattanooga Fitness Center averages between 3,000 – 4,000 users per month, and has served over 2.1 million participants since inception. With a mission to provide affordable (\$1.00 entry fee, no memberships) and accessible health and fitness opportunities for underserved users of all abilities, our services seek to help improve the health and wellbeing of our citizens by addressing health risk factors including lack of physical activity, the growing rates of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease, and the rising costs of healthcare for individuals, business and industry, and the community as a whole.

We take pride in providing equipment and services that other health and fitness providers either cannot fulfill or who do not wish to pursue as their target market (i.e. individuals with limited income, disability, who are obese, etc.). Our strategy includes purchasing equipment that is accessible and at the top of the commercial grade rating. We respect the spirit of not directly competing with free enterprise, instead focusing on filling in the gaps, thereby giving everyone the opportunity to address their health and physical fitness concerns.

Our services are further enhanced by partnerships. We are closely meshed with our Therapeutic Recreation program, providing mutually beneficial and collaborative efficiencies. Outside partners include UTC, UT College of Medicine, Chattanooga Hamilton County Health Department, East Chattanooga Improvement/Health Initiative, Erlanger, Siskin, and Memorial Hospitals, City of Chattanooga WellAdvantage, PlayCore, Trust for Public Land, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and the American Heart Association.

The Chattanooga Fitness Center also provides leadership and support for YFD's Aquatics program, oversight responsibility for the East Chattanooga Wellness Program (currently programming out of Avondale & Carver YFD facilities), ongoing support for the City's WellAdvantage program, assistance with the acquisition and implementation of outdoor Fitness Zones and fitness trails (including the Main Terrain and the Warner Park Fitness Trail), and physical fitness training services for the Fire Department's New Hire Training Academies (They have provided these services since 1993, with over 500 Fire Cadets trained).

1. Timeline of events and highlights

5/2/1990 -- PowerHouse opened to the public with free admission, a full selection of exercise classes, and minimal fitness equipment

1993-98 -- focus on upgrade of PowerHouse staffing, services, equipment; began charging entry fees

1993 -- present PowerHouse began providing the physical fitness training component of the Fire Department's New Hire Academy; over 500 Fire Cadets have been trained to date

1998-99 -- renovations to PowerHouse included relocated entrance, ADA entry doors and other accessibility upgrades, new staff offices and front desk operations, and improved parking

5/15/2000 -- PowerHouse reaches its One Millionth User, Mr. Terry Gerald

8/31/2000 -- PowerHouse opens completely renovated, accessible men's and women's bathrooms

3/26/2001 -- PowerHouse reopens after an extensive fitness industry standards and accessibility-focused renovation (\$300K+); project included complete building cleanout and revamp; all new Mondo sports flooring, upgraded sound, hvac, fire and security systems; windows, doors, etc.

11/12/2001 -- the CAPER Room Grand Opening, attendees included Mayor Bob Corker. The CAPER Room was funded with a \$25,000 donation by the Chattanooga Civitan Club to help purchase accessible equipment and support the birth of our Therapeutic Recreation program. Siskin Hospital is among the partners that assisted with the planning of the CAPER Room and Therapeutic Recreation program.

11/1/2002 -- hired full-time employee to head up the Therapeutic Recreation program

2010 -- Warner Park parking lot renovation completed; ensured more than the ADA requirement for parking spaces were provided for PowerHouse user access

2011 -- helped secure and implement Safe Kids \$25,000 grant, which funded the countdown timers, crosswalks, and curb cuts to improve walk-ability to Warner Park via the Third Street and McCallie intersections with Holtzclaw Ave.

10/29/2012 -- Warner Park Fitness Trail dedication and Grand Opening; the outdoor fitness equipment was provided as a donation by PlayCore, in partnership with UTC and the City of Chattanooga. The trail originates just outside the PowerHouse and meanders through the park.

3/25/2014 -- PowerHouse reaches its 2 Millionth User, Mr. Tim Pittman

5/2/2015 -- PowerHouse celebrates its 25th Year Anniversary

2016 -- PowerHouse receives first notification of the Zoo's desire to take over its space

2017 -- PowerHouse future planning, including PowerHouse user survey, relocation, options; also, continuing to explore the vision to create the Chattanooga Abilities Center, an inclusion-focused facility

2. Customer Comments from 2014 User Survey

"I've worked out at many gyms over the years. I've been coming to the Powerhouse for 22 years. The people and equipment here are the best for my kind of workouts."

"The people and trainers are friendly and helpful. I enjoy working out here and the price is reasonable, fits into my budget."

"... Friendly atmosphere, great classes, affordable."

"My memories are how professional and willingly the staff tries to help you when asked for assistance."

"Worked out here the last 10 years and made some good friends in the process. All the staff is great!!"

"Began here to get in shape for my wedding and have been coming ever since."

"The PowerHouse changed the face of the 1990's gym; really shook things up around here! All of a sudden, "fitness" and "aerobics" were offered to the masses; regardless of social status or bank balance. The atmosphere in those classes was electric!"

"This canvas commemorates the five-year anniversary celebration of the PowerHouse Fitness Center. It represents the essence and spirit of the Power House – a melting pot of users unified in movement and experiencing the joys of physical activity. A collaborative effort, collaborators included Bobbie Brooks Crowe, a Chattanooga artist who provided her expertise and creative talents to the project, members of the Department of Park and Recreation, and the many kids and PowerHouse users who helped with the painting." May 2nd, 1995

III. RESEARCH & CURRENT STATE OF FITNESS

In this section we highlight data from federal, state and local resources on the latest research and current state of adult fitness.

A. Federal

Department of Health and Human Services Federal Guidelines:

Purpose

The Physical Activity Guidelines is an essential resource for health professionals and policy makers. It includes recommendations for Americans ages 3 years and over — including

people at increased risk of chronic disease — and provides evidence-based advice on how physical activity can help promote health and reduce the risk of chronic disease.

The Guidelines serves as the primary, authoritative voice of the federal government for evidence-based guidance on physical activity, fitness, and health for Americans.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans | Executive Summary

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Summary

Being physically active is one of the most important actions that people of all ages can take to improve their health. The evidence reviewed for this second edition of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans is clear—physical activity fosters normal growth and development and can make people feel better, function better, sleep better, and reduce the risk of a large number of chronic diseases. Health benefits start immediately after exercising, and even short episodes of physical activity are beneficial. Even better, research shows that just about everyone gains benefits: men and women of all races and ethnicities, young children to older adults, women who are pregnant or postpartum (first year after delivery), people living with a chronic condition or a disability, and people who want to reduce their risk of chronic disease. The evidence about the health benefits of regular physical activity is well established, and research continues to provide insight into what works to get people moving, both at the individual and community level. Achieving the benefits of physical activity depends on our personal efforts to increase activity in ourselves, family, friends, patients, and colleagues. Action is also required at the school, workplace, and community levels.

Aspects include discussions of:

- Additional health benefits related to brain health, additional cancer sites, and fall-related injuries;
- Immediate and longer term benefits for how people feel, function, and sleep;
- Further benefits among older adults and people with additional chronic conditions;
- Risks of sedentary behavior and their relationship with physical activity;
- Guidance for preschool children (ages 3 through 5 years);
- Elimination of the requirement for physical activity of adults to occur in bouts of at least 10 minutes; and
- Tested strategies that can be used to get the population more active.

Key Guidelines

Below are the key guidelines for adults included in the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. The guidelines also offer additional recommendations specific to older adults, women during pregnancy and postpartum periods and adults with chronic health conditions and disabilities in addition to safety guidelines to reduce risk of injuries and other adverse events during physical activity. To review the full guidelines:

https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/pdf/PAG_ExecutiveSummary.pdf

Key Guidelines for Adults

- Adults should move more and sit less throughout the day.
- Adults should do 2 hours and 30 minutes to 5 hours a week of moderate-intensity, or 1 hour and 15 minutes 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity.
- Additional health benefits are gained by engaging in physical activity beyond the equivalent of 5 hours of moderate-intensity physical activity a week.
- Adults should also do muscle-strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity and that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.

B. State of Tennessee

Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness 2018 Annual Report:

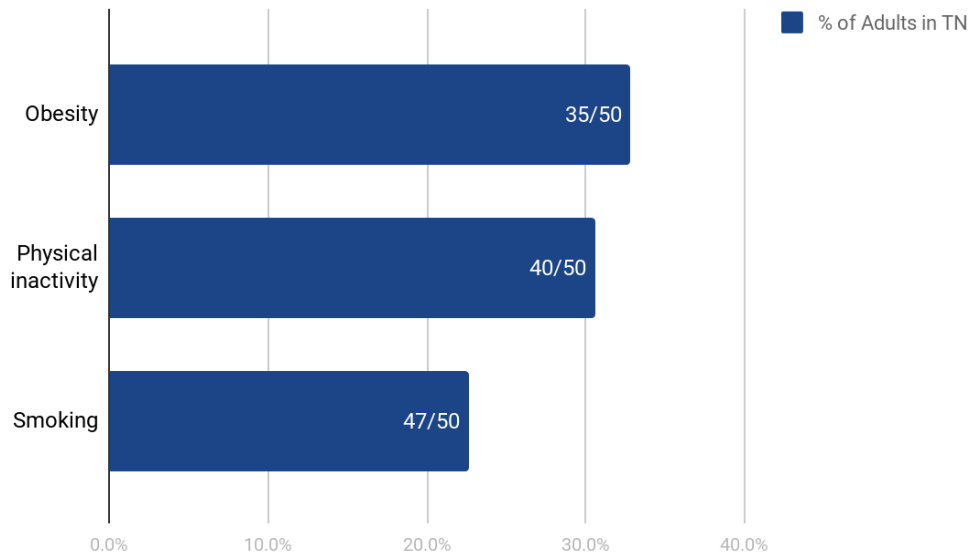
<https://healthiarn.com/cms/resources/gfhw-ar-2018-web.pdf>

The Governor's Foundation for Health and Wellness is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation, formed in 2013 and dedicated to enabling and encouraging Tennesseans to lead healthier lives. It brings together a statewide coalition of stakeholders from community organizations, business and industry, school systems, state and local government, faith communities, citizen leaders and volunteers to effect positive, measurable change.

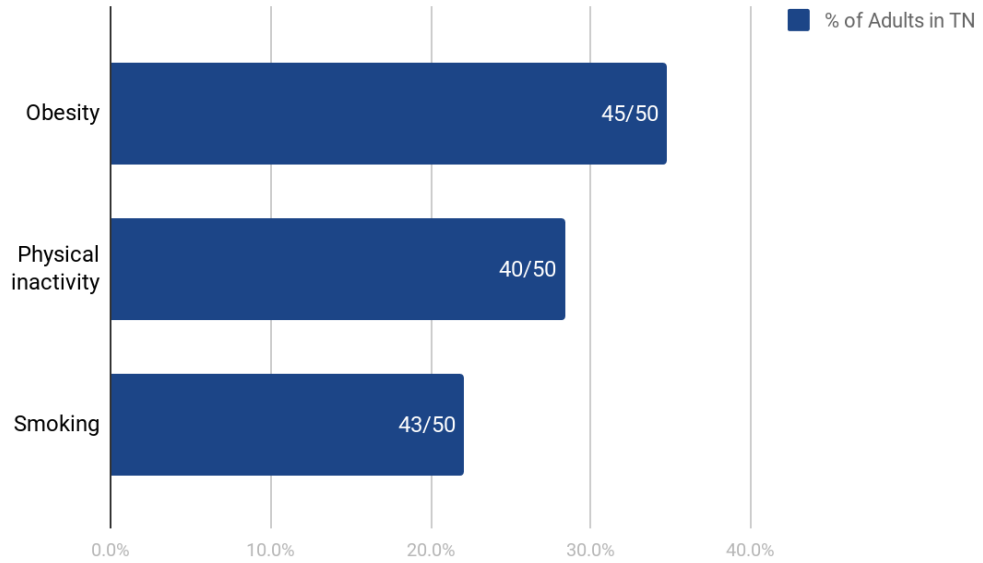
Health-Related Behavior

Tennessee's place in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Data Metric Percent Rank

2017

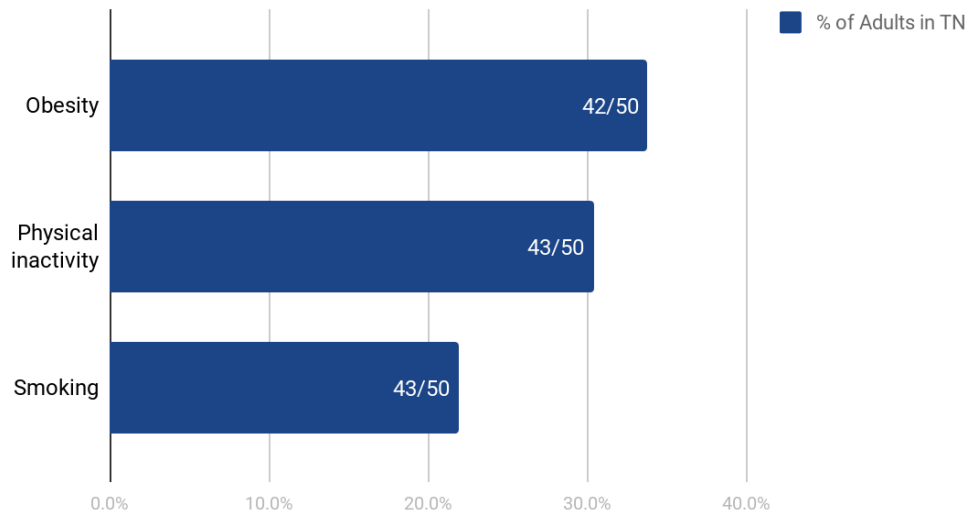


2016



2015

Including TN/US Rankings



Since March 2015, citizen volunteers in rural counties, towns, neighborhoods, and on college campuses have worked to get the places where they live officially designated as Healthier Tennessee Communities. Today, there are nearly 100 locations across the state that are working for that designation, and more than half of them have achieved it. It has expanded to include a health-and-wellness committee in nearly every one of the 95

counties in the state, and communities now include metro neighborhoods and college and university campuses. Each community sets measurable goals for increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, and lowering tobacco use and develops a plan and a way to track and report progress. Citizen leaders then get to work, recruiting volunteers across the community, staging events, improving the built environment, teaching, engaging, and changing the culture of health in their hometown or neighborhood or on their campus.

In the Chattanooga area, the following communities have engaged in this programming: Belleau Woods, Belvoir, Boyce Station, Glass Farms, Shepherd Community, Southside and Southern Adventist University.

C. Local

1. Health Department Stats: Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department, Office of Assessment and Planning. Picture of Our Health, Hamilton County, Tennessee; March 2019.

(<http://health.hamiltontn.org/Portals/14/DataPublications/Docs/2019%20Report%20Final%202019-02-28.docx.pdf>)

Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases are defined broadly as conditions that last 1 year or more and require ongoing medical attention or limit activities of daily living or both. Chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, stroke, chronic lower respiratory disease (CLRD), and diabetes are the leading causes of death and disability in the United States. In Hamilton County, eight of the 10 leading causes of death in 2016 were chronic diseases. Two chronic diseases— heart disease and cancer—together accounted for 43% of all deaths. Chronic diseases affect a disproportionate number of Tennesseans compared to the nation. A 2017 Sycamore Institute study comparing Tennessee and national prevalence rates of three chronic diseases—diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease—found that these conditions affect an additional 460,000 Tennesseans than if prevalence were the same as the nation, resulting in an excess burden of nearly \$5.3 billion in direct medical care, lost productivity, and premature death. A 2016 Centers for Disease Control report found that up to 43% of premature deaths (before age 80) from each of the five leading US causes are preventable. The analysis looked at the states with the lowest rates of premature deaths by cause and calculated the number of deaths that could be avoided if all states had the death rates equal to the states with the lowest rates.

The study showed that if all states had the same mortality rates as the lowest states, it would be possible to prevent:

- 30% of premature deaths from heart disease
- 15% of all cancer deaths
- 36% of deaths from chronic lower respiratory diseases
- 28% of all stroke deaths, and

- 43% of deaths for unintentional injuries

52 Risk Factors for Chronic Diseases

Modifiable risk factors are largely responsible for many premature deaths and disability. According to the Centers for Disease Control, most chronic diseases are caused by a short list of risk behaviors: tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke; poor nutrition, including diets low in fruits and vegetables and high in sodium and saturated fats, lack of physical activity, and excessive alcohol use.

Overweight and Obesity

Having and maintaining a healthy weight is a goal to reduce the burden of chronic illness and loss of quality of life. Overweight and obesity are conditions linked to increased risk for heart disease, stroke, several types of cancer, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, osteoarthritis, and other chronic conditions. Obesity is implicated in as many as 1 in 5 cancer deaths and is quickly overtaking tobacco as the leading cause of cancer, according to the American Society of Clinical Oncology. The prevalence of obesity continues to increase across the nation. In 2016, the prevalence of obesity exceeded 20% in all 50 states. Obesity rates were highest in the South.

The estimated annual cost of obesity in the United States was \$147 billion in 2008 dollars. Per capita medical spending, was \$1,429 higher for obese individuals than for individuals who were not obese. When applied to the estimated number of obese adults in Hamilton County, this translates to an additional \$122.6 million in annual costs related to direct medical expenses.

Adult Obesity

In 2016, 31% of Hamilton County adults aged 18 years or older were obese, according to self-reported height and weight, compared to 32% in Tennessee and 28% nationwide. Tennessee had the 6th highest obesity rate among the 50 states in 2016.

Overweight and Obesity Among Public School Students

During the 2016-2017 school year, 33% of Hamilton County public school students were overweight or obese, according to height and weight measures collected by Coordinated School Health, compared to 39% statewide. There is no comparable national measure. *Sources: 2018 County Health Rankings and Coordinated School Health. Overweight and obesity are based on Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is based on a person's weight in kilograms divided by his or her height in meters squared. Adult Obesity is defined as a body mass index of 30 or greater. Among children, a BMI between the 85th and 94th percentile is defined as overweight and a BMI at the 95th or higher percentile is defined as obese.*

Physical Inactivity

Regular physical activity and exercise can help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and osteoporosis. Physical activity strengthens bones and muscles, improves mental health and mood, improves ability to do daily activities, and helps prevent falls among older adults. Despite the proven benefits of physical activity, the CDC reports that more than 50% of American adults do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits, and one-quarter of adults are not active at all in their leisure time.

No Leisure Time Physical Activity among Adults

In 2016, 28% of Hamilton County adults were not active in their leisure time, compared to 30% in Tennessee and 23% nationwide. *Source: 2018 County Health Rankings (2016 data)*

Diabetes Prevalence

Diabetes is the eighth leading cause of death in Hamilton County and the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. Diabetes is a serious public health risk because it increases the risk of heart disease and stroke and can cause complications such as kidney failure, blindness, amputations, nerve damage, and premature death. Diabetes is one of the costliest of all chronic diseases. In 2017, diabetes costs the nation an estimated \$327 billion, which includes \$237 billion in direct medical costs and \$90 billion in indirect costs associated with disability, work loss, and premature death. People with diagnosed diabetes incur average medical expenditures of \$16,752 per year, which is approximately 2.3 times higher than people without diabetes. In 2013, an estimated 12% (32,394) of Hamilton County residents 20 years and older had ever received a diabetes diagnosis (excluding those who only had diabetes during pregnancy). Tennessee had the fifth highest prevalence rate in 2014 and the 19th highest mortality rate in 2015.

2. Chattanooga Health and Wellness: A New Engine of Innovation, Growth and Opportunity on the 3rd & 4th Street Corridor, April 2019

With so much already happening in the area, as described below, it is a natural fit to place a collaborative, community fitness center in the midst.

CHATTANOOGA A REGIONAL HUB FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS

Much of the region's growth is attributable to the success and expansion of the city's major medical and educational institutions. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC) is one of the fastest growing campuses in Tennessee, with more than 12,000 students enrolled. UTC is exploring opening a four-year medical school program that will round out the school's existing two-year stream. The medical school will sit within a new consolidated Health Sciences building, adjacent to Erlanger Health

System's expanding campus. In addition to Erlanger's growing presence, Memorial and Parkridge are major employers on the eastern edge of the city's core. Overall, the corridor supports approximately 34,500 direct jobs (20% of the City total), grants more than 4,100 postsecondary degrees and certificates annually, and provides essential services including specialized clinical care at Erlanger, Memorial, Parkridge, and Siskin, in the hospitals' national Centers of Excellence, public health services at the County Health Department, education at all levels, including at Chattanooga School for the Arts & Sciences, Chattanooga State Community College and UTC, and increasingly space for R&D and commercialization, particularly within the Innovation District.

3. 2016-17 Chattanooga Fitness Center Survey

Summary: This survey was conducted in response to the Chattanooga Zoo's takeover plans for the space that has been occupied by the Chattanooga Fitness Center, also known as the PowerHouse, since May 2nd, 1990. The survey was administered to Fitness and Therapeutic Recreation participants, within the fitness center, and was designed to help determine the aspects of the program and facility that make it unique and special to our city-wide community.

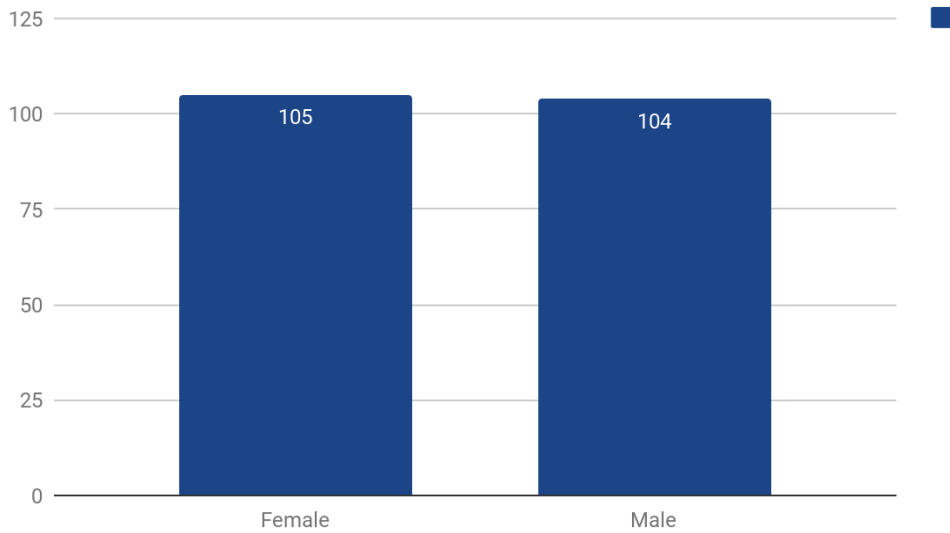
Two hundred twelve (212) surveys were collected, April 1st – May 2nd, 2017. The highlights are below:

General Information

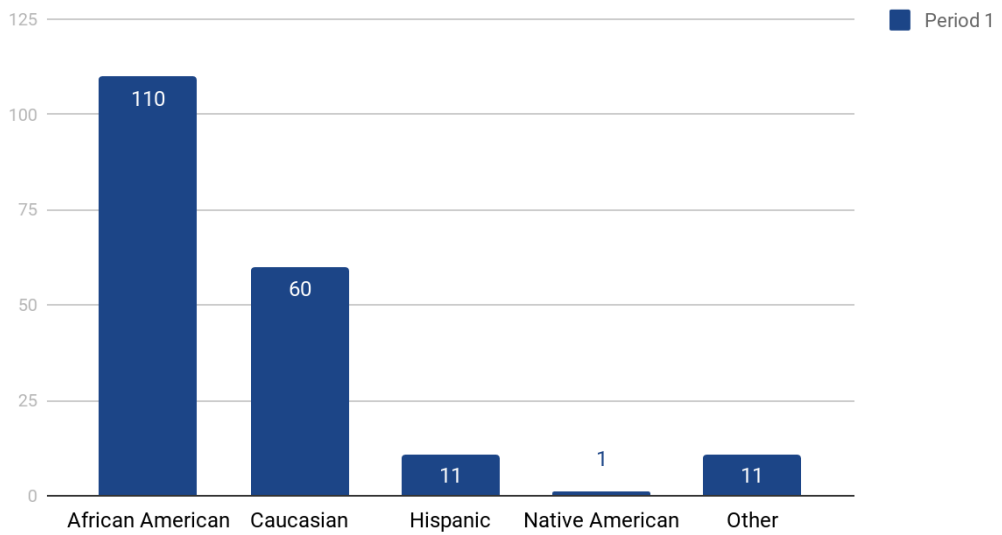
- 29 Years & 2.1 Million User Visits Strong!
- Low cost
- ADA accessible
- Diverse population
- Centrally located in a family-friendly park
- access to an outdoor fitness trail and pool
- adequate parking
- on City bus routes and walkable to nearby communities.
- houses Therapeutic Recreation Services

SURVEY DATA

Gender

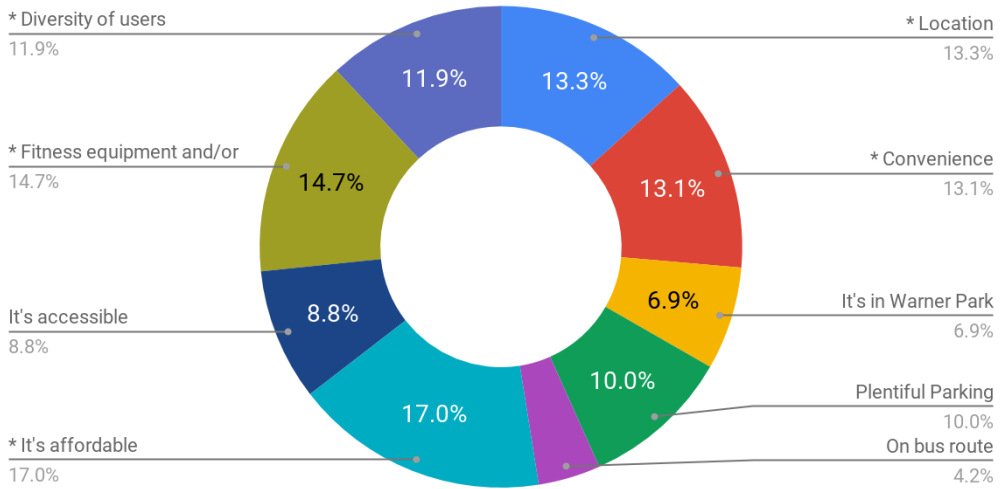


Race



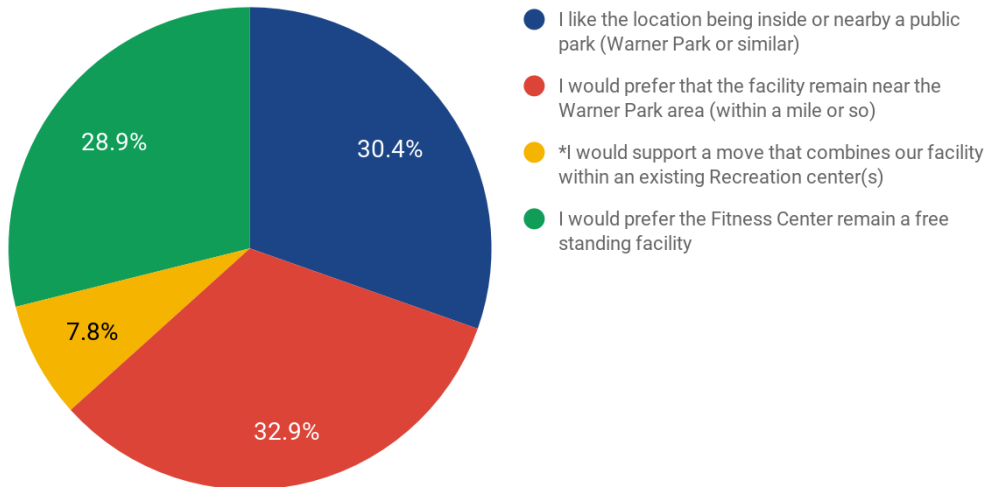
Why have you chosen to work out at this facility?

* Top 5 responses (based on highest # of respondents)

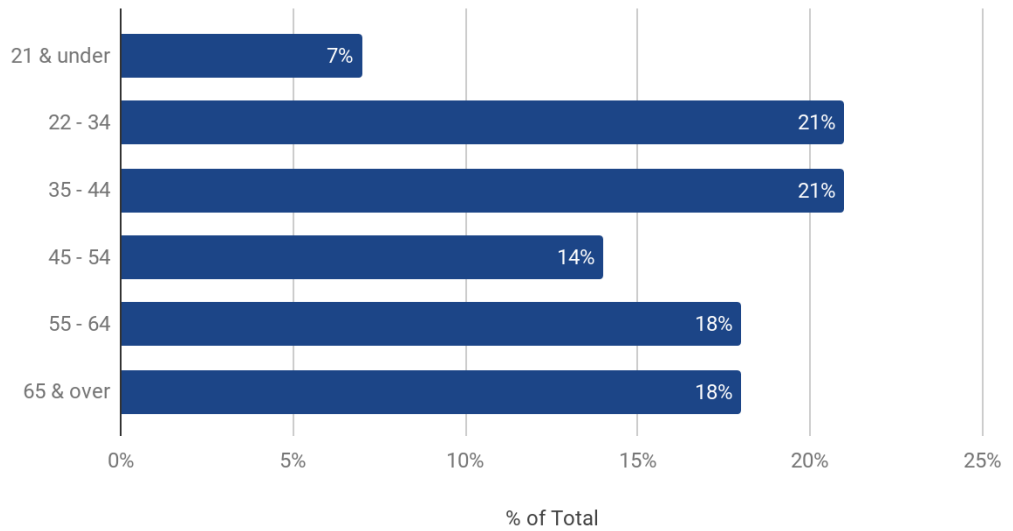


Relocation considerations

Respondents would prefer not to have the facility blended into one or more YFD recreation

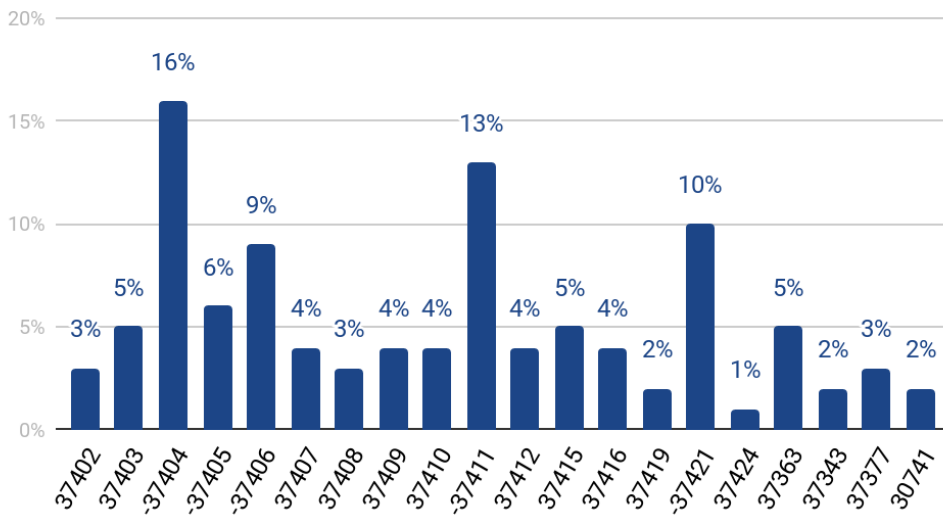


Age Range of Respondents



Location by Zip Code

"-" Top 5 listed Zip Codes; combined with over half (54%) of the respondents



Why is this facility important to our City? (= why should the City fund these services?)

(Sample of responses)

“Health is important to our community. I have been coming here 12 years. Some people cannot afford other local gyms. Since there is no contract and very affordable it makes a gym accessible to those who may not otherwise be able to go to a gym.”

"Because all types of people from different backgrounds come together and workout and enjoy one another."

"It has a lot of history wrapped up in it. Both for me personally with my family and the city as a whole. It is the first and only place many people can connect locally with pride in health & fitness."

"Central location to serve many communities in providing exercise options to promote healthy lifestyles. Also offers opportunities for interacting with a diverse demographic."

"As a local Olympian I have been coming here for years and believe that an affordable & accessible gym is important for the community. Health & fitness should not be exclusive due to cost."

"It's a great clean place to come & workout with family or friends & helps fight health problems."

"In a good location and my ADA classes are very good for me. Please don't close."

"The place gives people (who otherwise could not afford it) a place to workout & improve their health, which is an issue with lower income."

"It's open to everyone and it's affordable to everyone."

"Affordable and accessible facilities offering diverse exercise equipment & exercise."

"Appeals to the affluent & underserved communities. Here everyone is equal!"

"So that low income people can afford to stay healthy!"

"This facility is available to all people. The affordability allows for a diversity of users."

"It is important because there is no excuse for people with low income to not to have a place to get healthy."

"Without this gym I know I could not afford to attend another comparable facility."

"I'm a City taxpayer, I'm a senior, I love not being obligated, come on your own."

"Because I have been coming here since I was a kid (currently 41 years of age)."

"I use this facility to exercise because I can't afford a gym membership. I feel safe here."

"And, I think there are plenty of people who want to exercise but are on a budget. For people like me with mobility issues, being able to park near the building & not pay for parking is important. I also don't want to work out at a rec center where there are lots of kids around, because they make fun."

"It is sad to lose such a historic Chattanooga landmark. The Zoo is wonderful, too!"

"Somehow we need to all co-exist."

D. Making the Case for Women's Health

2. Why women do physical activity

Women who exercise regularly say they do so to:

- improve their physical fitness
- have fun
- manage their weight
- have some time just 'for them'.

3. Barriers to physical activity for women

Common exercise barriers for women include:

- lack of time
- lack of motivation
- parenting demands
- lack of energy
- health conditions
- lack of money
- gender stereotyping.

4. Know the Facts

- More than 60 percent of U.S. women do not engage in the recommended amount of physical activity.
- More than 25 percent of U.S. women are not active at all.
- Physical inactivity is more common among women than men.
- Social support from family and friends has been consistently and positively related to regular physical activity.
- Exercise helps counteract hormonally-driven mood swings.
- Exercise prevents bone loss and osteoporosis and muscle loss.

IV. EXISTING ADULT-FOCUSED FITNESS FACILITIES

A. Public Sector

Chattanooga Fitness Center: Provides affordable and accessible health and fitness opportunities for adults of all abilities. The facility is ADA accessible and offers a variety of strength and cardiovascular machines, free weights, and exercise classes. There is no entry fee for City employees and \$1.00 per visit for all others, plus youth 14 years or older when accompanied by an adult.

Eastgate Senior Center: Is located inside the Eastgate Town Center and is operated by the City of Chattanooga. The center strives to provide quality educational and recreational programs for area seniors, as well as opportunities to socialize. It also offers recreational opportunities including: Billiards, Table Tennis, Board games and Puzzles, Knitting, Arts & Crafts, Walking Club, Fitness Equipment, Wii Sports Games, Library, Computer Lab and more. The entry to the center is free. Exercise classes are \$1.00.

Other City-operated youth and adult activity centers and programs include:

Therapeutic Recreation: Seeks to provide leisure and recreation opportunities for citizens of all abilities. We serve both youth and adults with physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disabilities. Through our programs, education and advocacy, individuals can build confidence, improve physical and cognitive abilities, expand support and social networks; and enhance overall quality of life.

Youth and Family Development Centers: 18 Youth and Family Development Centers, city-wide, offering a variety of education, activities, rental space and more. Each center is listed below with a list of amenities, pictures, and schedule of ongoing activities for youth and adults. There is no entry fee. Some specialty programs or classes may require a fee.

Outdoor Chattanooga: Role is to connect people to Chattanooga's outdoor scene. Activities are free or fee based depending on the program.

Swimming Pools: Two indoor and two outdoor pools that require a \$2.00 per visit / per person entry fee. Each includes activities and classes for adults and youth.

And Summer Youth Camps, Baseball and Softball leagues, Skate Park and Hockey and Tennis Courts.

B. Private Sector

The offerings are extremely diverse from private personal trainers to small fitness centers to multi-purpose wellness facilities. Most, if not all, require a wide-range of regular monthly and annual membership fees.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Chattanooga set a foundation when it opened the Chattanooga Fitness Center 28 years ago in a space that is dedicated to the fitness needs of adults. It is recognized for being welcoming, affordable, centrally located, accessible and diverse. Similar to the Adult Family Workplace initiative adopted by the City, the City of Chattanooga should adopt a strategy to maintain and grow adult-focused ability centers that contribute to the overall well-being of its citizens.

Our recommendations to the City of Chattanooga are as follows:

- A. Adopt the Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans into recreation and fitness center programming.
- B. Establish a Health and Wellness Board, similar to the Beer Board or Zoning Board that serves as advisory to the City on initiatives to health and fitness for all residents.
- C. Support the effort to create a Health and Wellness District that includes and advocates for a Community Fitness Center facility as a major component for providing direct access to programming and services from our local community partners in public health.
- D. The Chattanooga Fitness Center is a model facility that should be maintained and replicated. In addition, we recommend the following opportunities:
 - 1. Access**
 - a. Provide a wide variety of accessible equipment for people of all abilities.
 - b. Partner with transportation providers to help remove barriers to access.
 - c. Focus on maintaining affordability.
 - 2. Outreach & Programming**
 - a. Additional area studies, surveys, etc... to monitor the physical activity needs of citizens.
 - b. Build in positions for internships in partnership with the local colleges and universities so they may gain experience working closely with the public and the public benefits from the latest research and practices for physical activity.
 - c. Supplemental activities like cooking classes, meditation, and outdoor activities.
 - d. Engage Fitness Center participants in special events to include field days, clean up days, free workout and fitness expo days.
 - e. Work with existing health-related programs, instructors and neighborhood organizations to host/partner with the Chattanooga Fitness Center.
 - 3. Marketing & PR**
 - a. Create a general information / fact sheet about the Chattanooga Fitness Center.
 - b. Create a logo and style guide that instills pride in affiliating with a City fitness program. This could be used at other facilities and with other City fitness programs.
 - c. Develop a flyer to be distributed at designated locations to promote special programs and events.
 - d. Increase Social Media presence and activity. Encourage more participant 'likes'. Secure a student intern to assist with posting, sharing and creating events.

As it is our understanding that the space the Chattanooga Fitness Center occupies will eventually be taken over by the Chattanooga Zoo, we recommend the City of Chattanooga build upon the concept of rebranding this facility in its new location as an "Abilities Center" - a place

where individuals of all abilities have opportunities to experience health & fitness through physical activity, play, and leisure. In addition to continuing the current CFC model of affordability and accessibility, the proposed Center will provide multipurpose indoor space featuring accessible exercise equipment, a track for walking/ running/ wheeling, rooms and floor space for a variety of fitness and physical activity classes, a challenge course designed to encourage multi-generational fitness and performance, equipment for users who are actively aging, physically rehabbing, and with bariatric needs, and a variety of inclusive educational classes and social activities.

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