

**COMMUNITY RECREATION:
SUGGESTIONS FOR RECREATION
BOARDS, SUPERINTENDENTS OF
RECREATION AND COMMUNITY
RECREATION WORKERS**

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PLAYGROUND AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

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National Recreation Council

Community Recreation

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Superintendents of Recreation *and*
Community Recreation Workers

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Introduction

DEVELOPMENT OF THE RECREATION MOVEMENT

DURING the past twenty years the subject of play and recreation and the proper use of leisure time as one of the most potent forces in the building up of citizenship and of widespread democracy in American cities has had a very important place in the thinking of men and women throughout the country, who have seen in this movement for wholesome public recreation the biggest single factor in the constructive social program of the day.

Development of the Movement

In 1886, Boston established the first organized and supervised outdoor playground in America under private auspices, and other cities here and there throughout the country, feeling the need for play space for little children, made possible through the efforts of interested groups of people playgrounds and play centers. Then came the realization, growing slowly but surely, that the support and administration of playground work should be a municipal func-

tion, and pressure was brought to bear upon city governments to carry on the work. Gradually, city after city assumed this responsibility. Soon the broader needs of the recreation movement began to make themselves felt and the opening of schools as social centers and the development of recreation for adults and of playgrounds and play centers open throughout the year became the important factors in the movement. A number of states passed legislation making possible recreation commissions and departments and the work began to assume the proportions of a national movement.

With the formation in June, 1906, of the Playground and Recreation Association of America, there began an organized, systematic effort to help cities throughout the country establish year-round recreation systems on a permanent basis, supported by funds raised through taxation and administered by municipal departments under the direction of paid superintendents of recreation. Statistics on the recreation movement compiled by the Playground and Recreation Association of America for the year 1918 show that there were 129 cities having year-round recreation systems with over sixteen hundred workers employed the year round. In the great majority

of instances the work was publicly supported.

Thus has grown up in American cities a movement which, though comparatively young and still in the making, has so gripped the imagination of hundreds of communities that the men and women who have the vision of recreation dare to hope that out of it shall some day emerge the democracy of which the world is dreaming. It is worth while, then, to take time to consider some of the practical phases of such a movement. And since it is the municipal, year-round recreation system on which the permanency and democratization of the work as a whole must be built, this will form the basis of the discussion.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Municipal Year-Round Recreation System

ANY effort to define a year-round recreation system must take into account the needs and conditions of the individual community and cannot, therefore, set forth rigid requirements to which all communities must conform if they are to be considered as having year-round recreation systems. Generally, and very broadly speaking, however, a year-round system is one involving a program of activities which, through the utilization under a coordinated administration of all available facilities and the creation of necessary new ones, directed by a trained worker employed to organize and conduct work throughout the entire year, provides opportunities for wholesome recreation and for self-expression for all the people of a community, both children and adults, throughout the entire community for three hundred and sixty-five days of the year. A year-round system should be supported by

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