

WELCOME TO



AMHERST, *NEW HAMPSHIRE*



October 2013

# AMHERST RECREATION 2015-18 STRATEGIC PLAN

# TOPICS

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- ✕ Mission
- ✕ Vision Statement
- ✕ Historical Trends
- ✕ SWOT Analysis
- ✕ Strategic Goals
- ✕ Strategic Initiatives
- ✕ Annual operating plans & budgets
- ✕ Conclusion



# MISSION

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To enhance the quality of life for all Amherst residents:

- ✕ Offer diverse activities; health, fitness, educational, and cultural
- ✕ Offer an array of informational services of leisure activities to residents and organizations
- ✕ Provide environmental education and leisure opportunities
- ✕ Provide professional department assistance to community groups
- ✕ Provide quality programs and services in a safe and healthy atmosphere
- ✕ Provide a well maintained park(s) and recreational facilities in an optimal, fair and equitable manner
- ✕ Provide a comprehensive master plan for growth and development

# VISION

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## “Creating Community through People, Parks and Programs”

### Values

- ✕ Strengthen relationships and sense of community
- ✕ Provide accessible, safe and welcoming spaces for all
- ✕ Deliver outstanding customer service
- ✕ Enhance sustainability-environmental, social and economic
- ✕ Encourage health and fitness for individuals and families
- ✕ Provide creativity and learning for individuals and families
- ✕ Provide opportunities for lifelong recreation



# HISTORICAL TRENDS-GROWTH

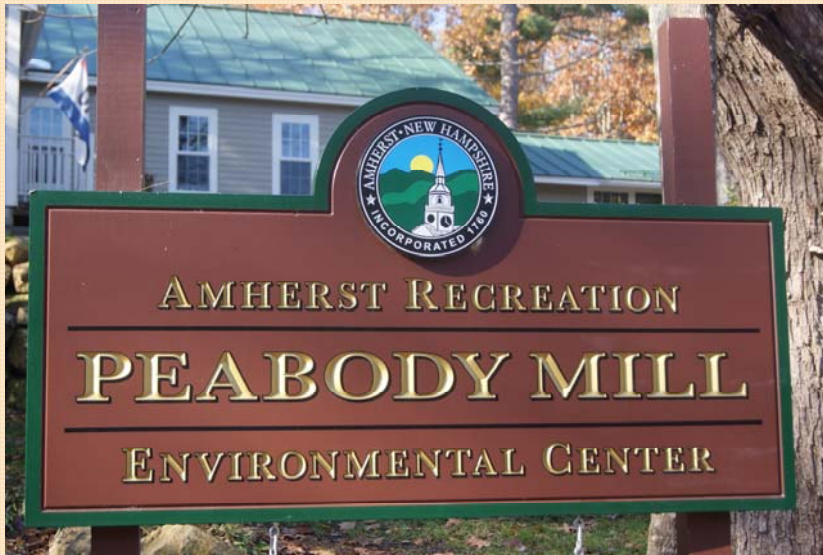
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- ✗ Program and services grew from volunteer initiatives
- ✗ Demand outgrew volunteer capability
- ✗ Board of Selectmen appointed advisory Recreation Commission and created the Amherst Recreation Department



# HISTORICAL TRENDS- GROWTH

- ✕ Peabody Mill Environmental Center absorbed by Amherst Recreation-2008





# HISTORICAL TRENDS-STAFFING

- ✗ Administrative staffing has not kept pace with growth
- ✗ Ways and Means Committee recognized deficiency- FY 13

Director	Full Time
Park Foreman	Full Time
Grounds Keeper	Part Time (8 months at Rec.) 4 months at DPW
Office Administrator Rec. and P MEC	Part Time
Program Coordinator	Part Time
P MEC Environmental Educators	Part Time
Baboosic Lake Aquatic/Camp Dir.	Part Time
Program Instructors	Part Time 80-85 per year
Volunteers	100+ per year

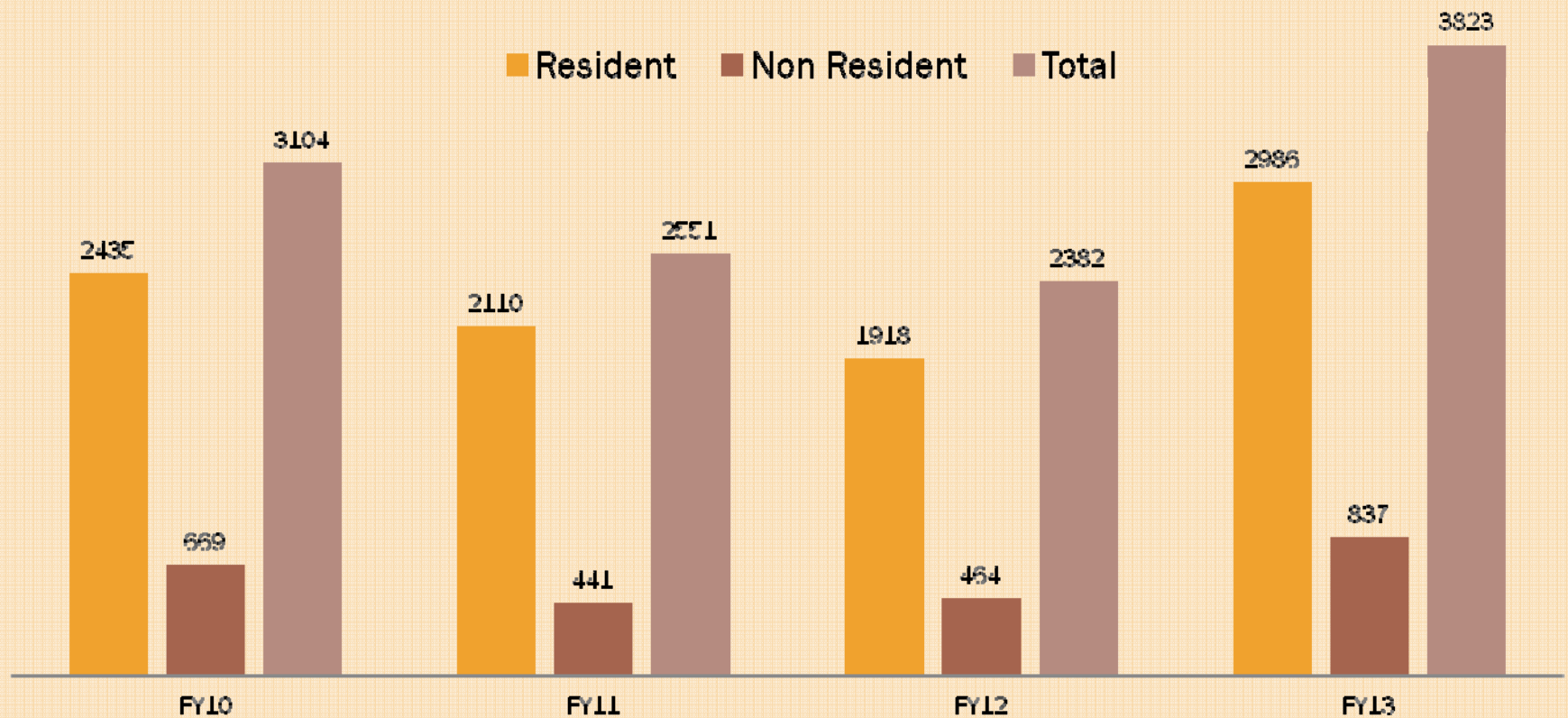
# HISTORICAL TRENDS-TECHNOLOGY

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- ✖ Web based program registration-2010-2013
  - + 3,445 *household accounts*
  - + 8,836 *Members*
  - + 11,860 *Programs*



# HISTORICAL TRENDS - PROGRAM REGISTRATION



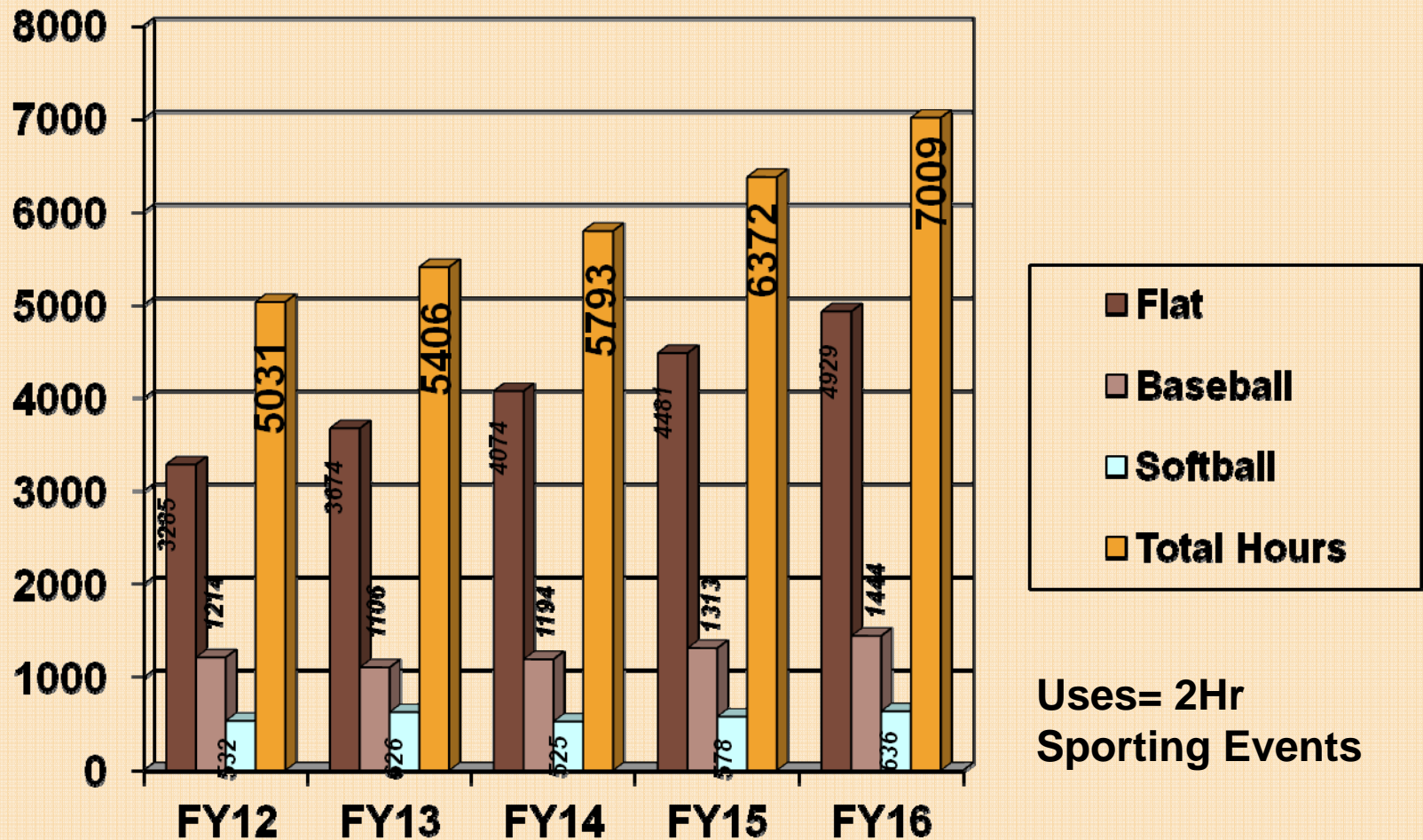
# HISTORICAL TRENDS - FIELDS

- ✖ Active recreation space is leased

Fields	Owner
Amherst Middle School-3	Amherst School District
Bean-3	Amherst School District
Cemetery-3	Town of Amherst Use Controlled: Cemetery Trustees
Spaulding-2	Amherst School District
Wilkins-Lower-1	Amherst School District
Wilkins-Upper-1	Amherst School District

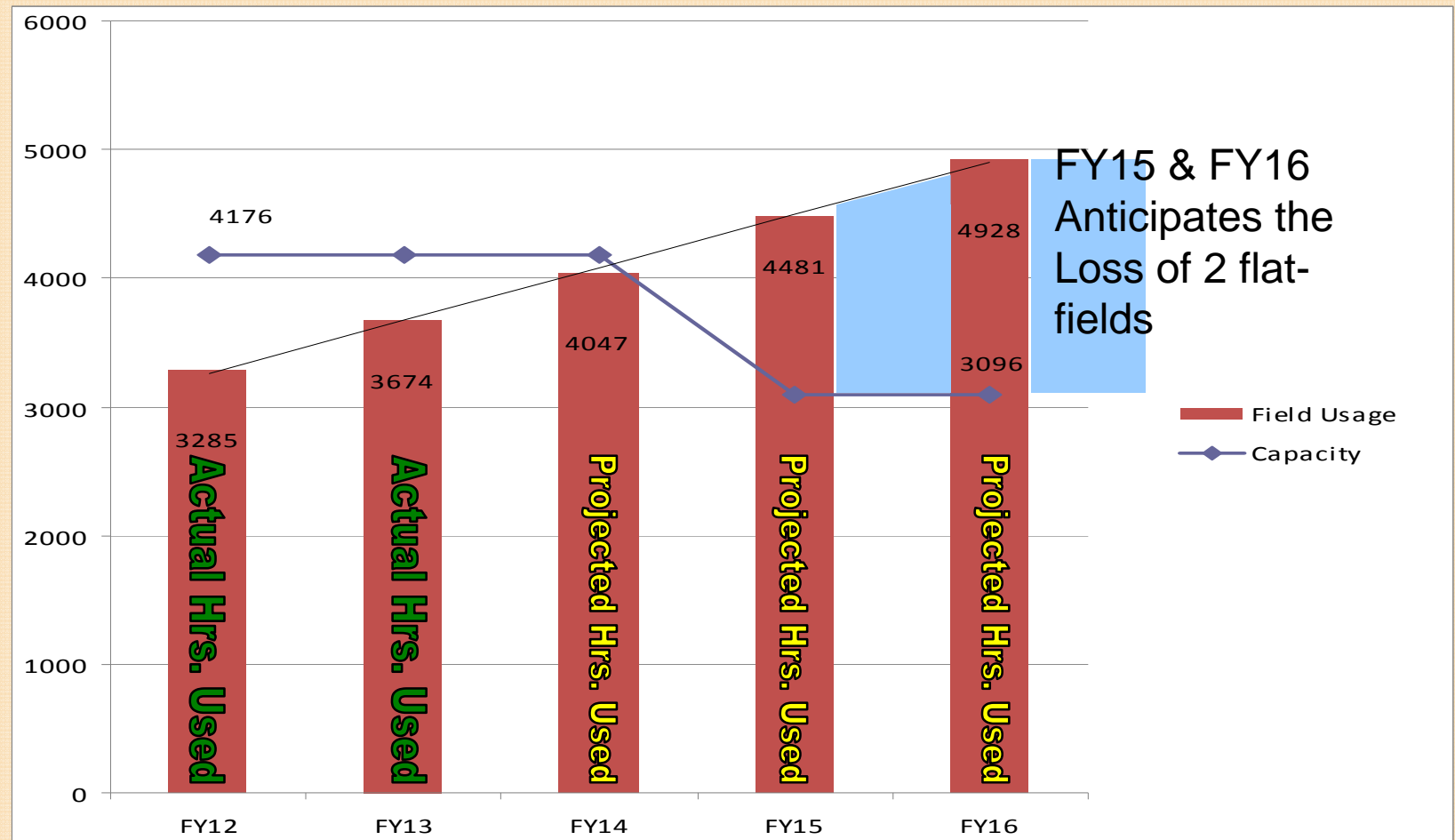


# HISTORICAL TRENDS: FIELD USE IN HOURS



Total projected demand continues to increase

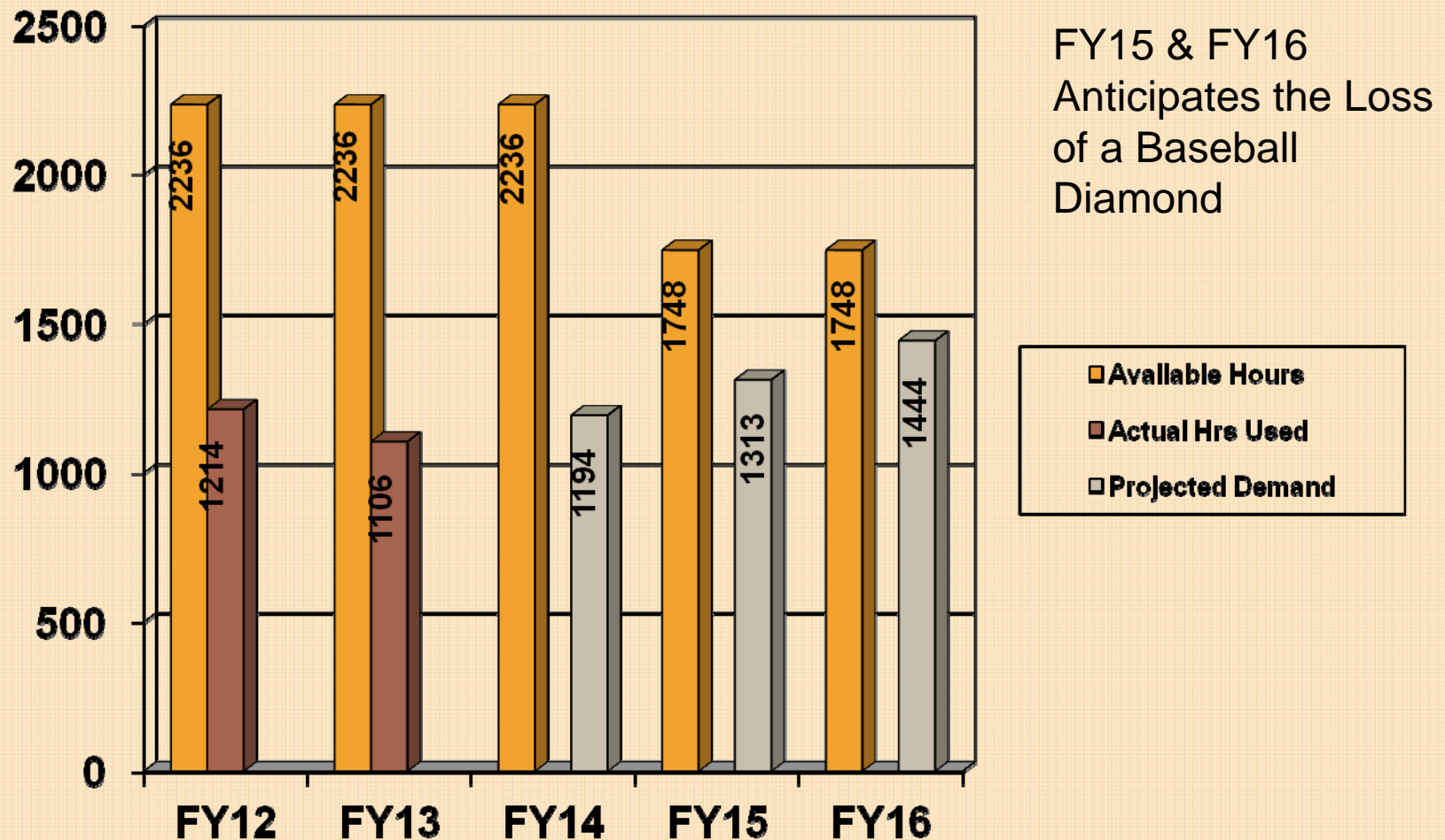
# HISTORICAL TRENDS: FLAT FIELD USE IN HOURS



Projected flat-field demand continues to increase. Beginning in FY15 available flat-field hours decline.

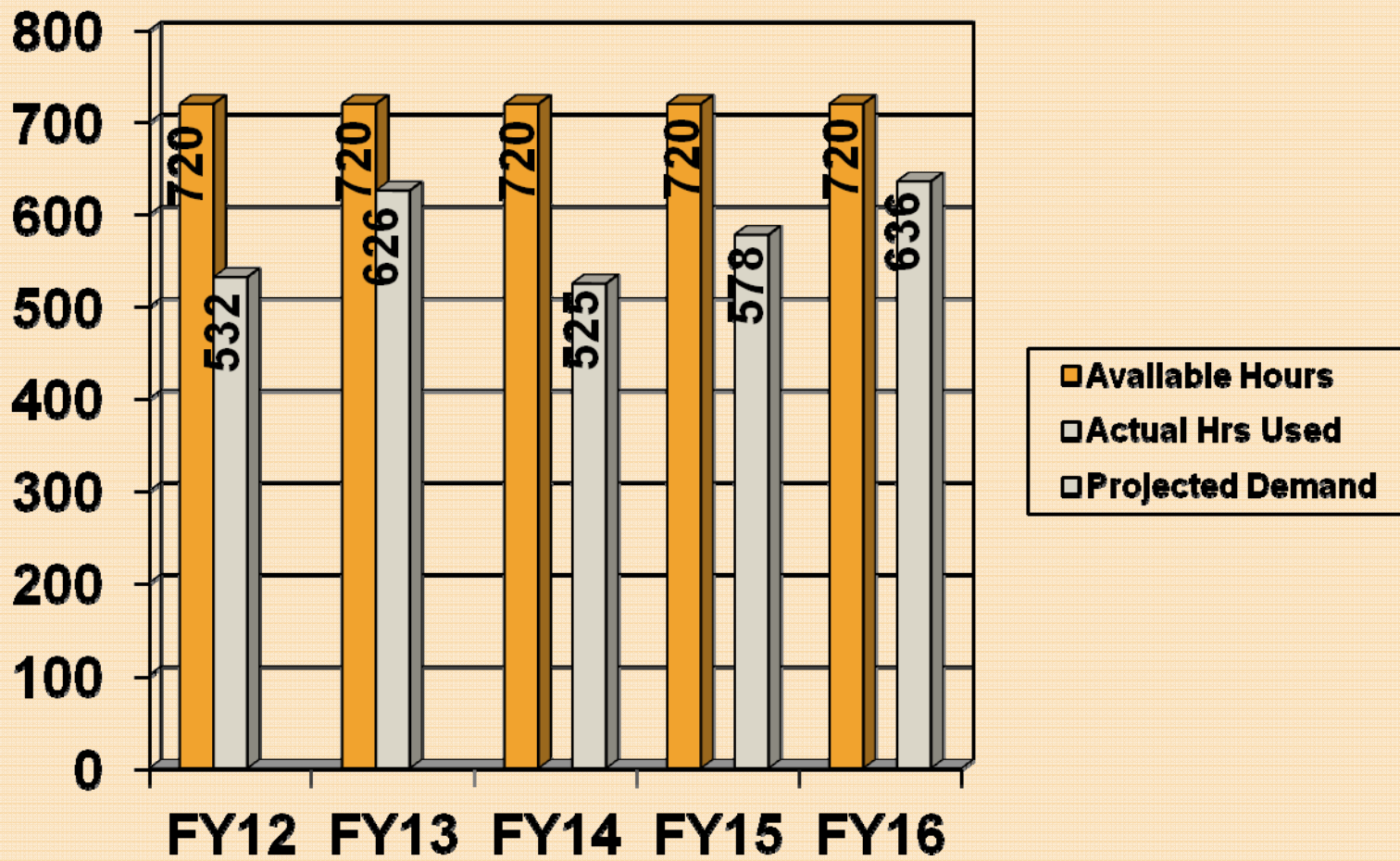


# HISTORICAL TRENDS: BASEBALL IN HOURS



Projected demand for baseball hours can be met even with the loss of a diamond beginning in FY15.

# HISTORICAL TRENDS- SOFTBALL-IN HOURS



Projected softball hours can be met as existing resources are sufficient.

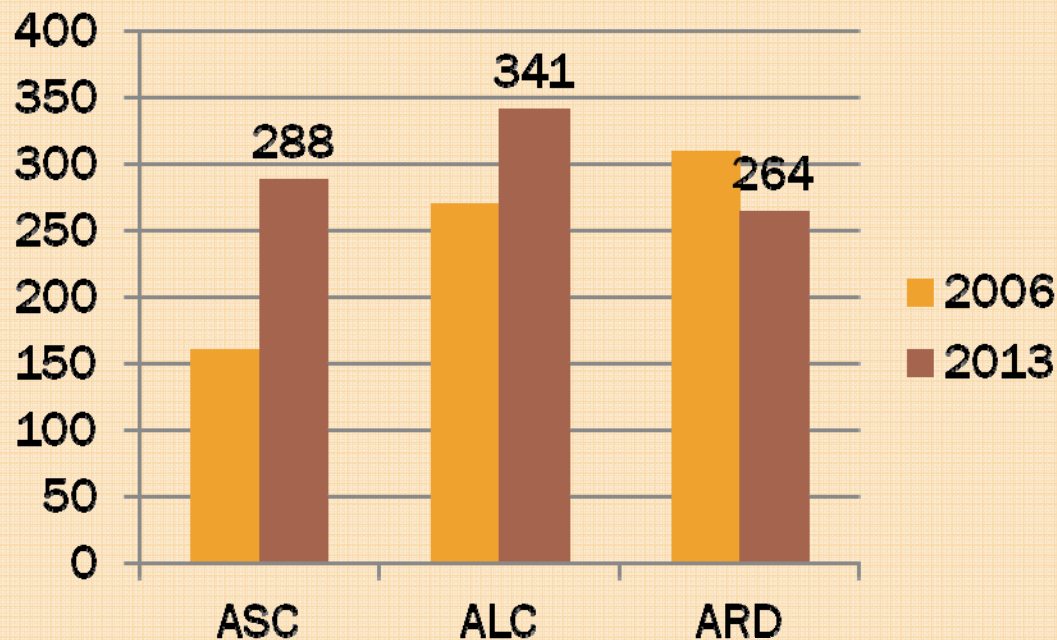


# HISTORICAL TRENDS: BEAN FIELD DEVELOPMENT

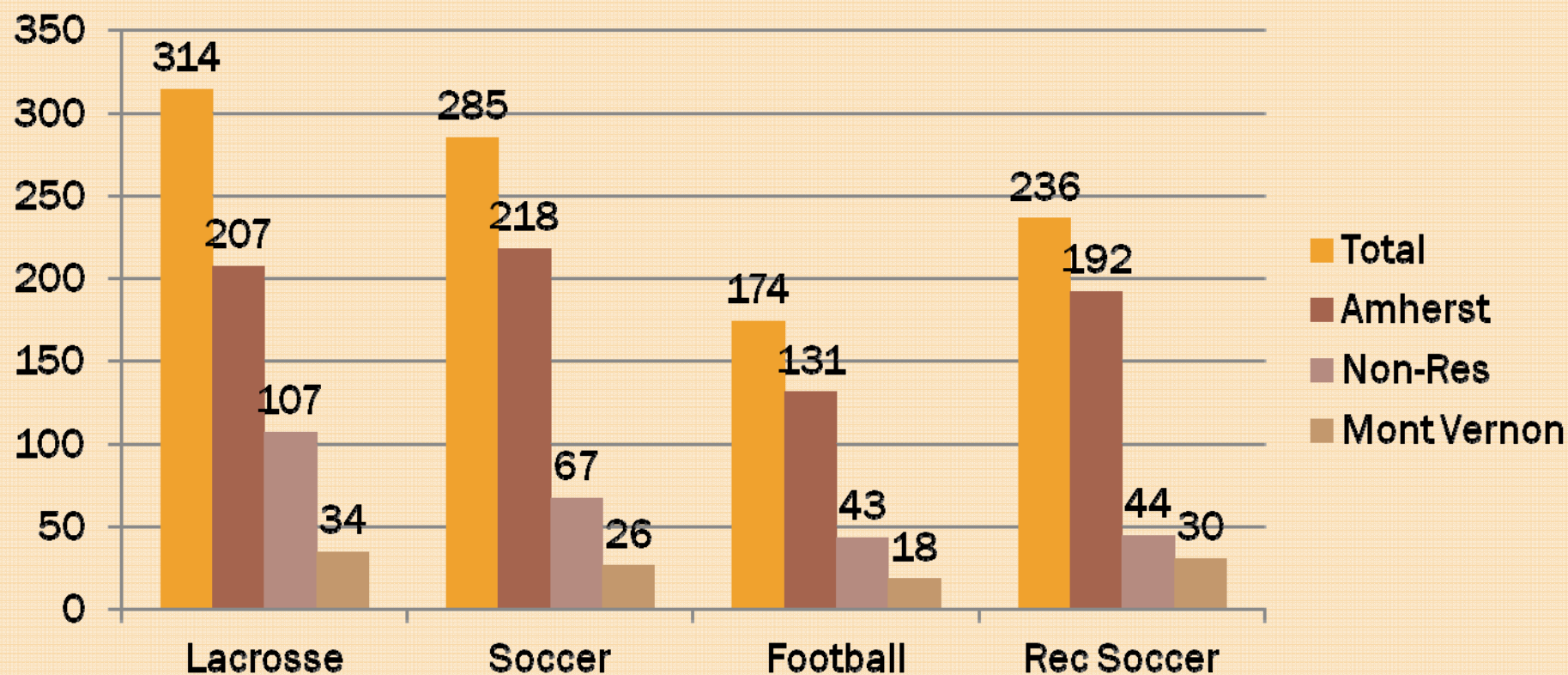
## ✕ Since Bean Field (2008) development:

### + Enrollment Growth/Decline-2013

- ✕ Amherst Soccer Club: 288 players (138 players: 92% increase)
- ✕ Amherst Lacrosse Club: 341 players (71 players: 26% increase)
- ✕ Amherst Recreation: 264 players (-45 players: 14.5% decrease)



# HISTORICAL TRENDS - SPORT PARTICIPANTS



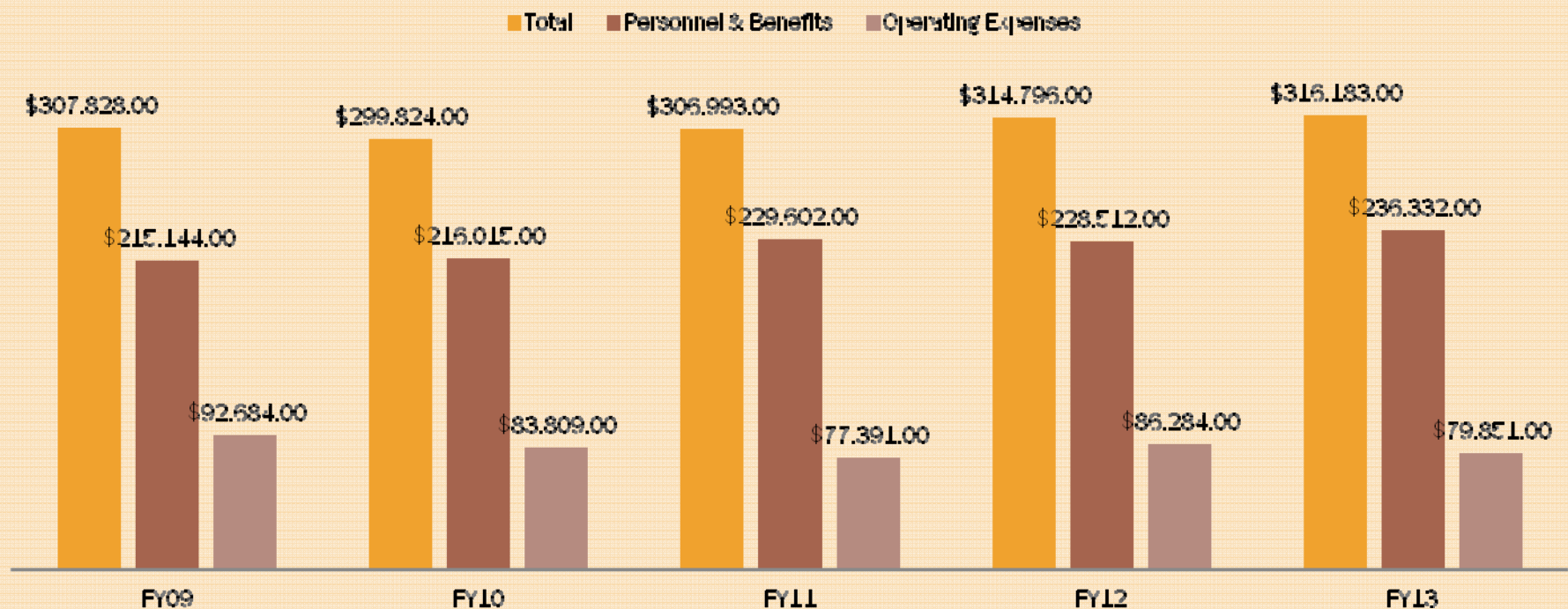


# HISTORICAL TRENDS-SPORT PARTICIPANTS

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- ✖ 1,009 participants in 2013
- ✖ 748 or 74% are Amherst Residents
- ✖ 261 or 26% are Non Residents
- ✖ 108 or 43% of non residents live in Mont Vernon

# HISTORICAL TRENDS - BUDGET



## FY 2009-2013 Appropriations

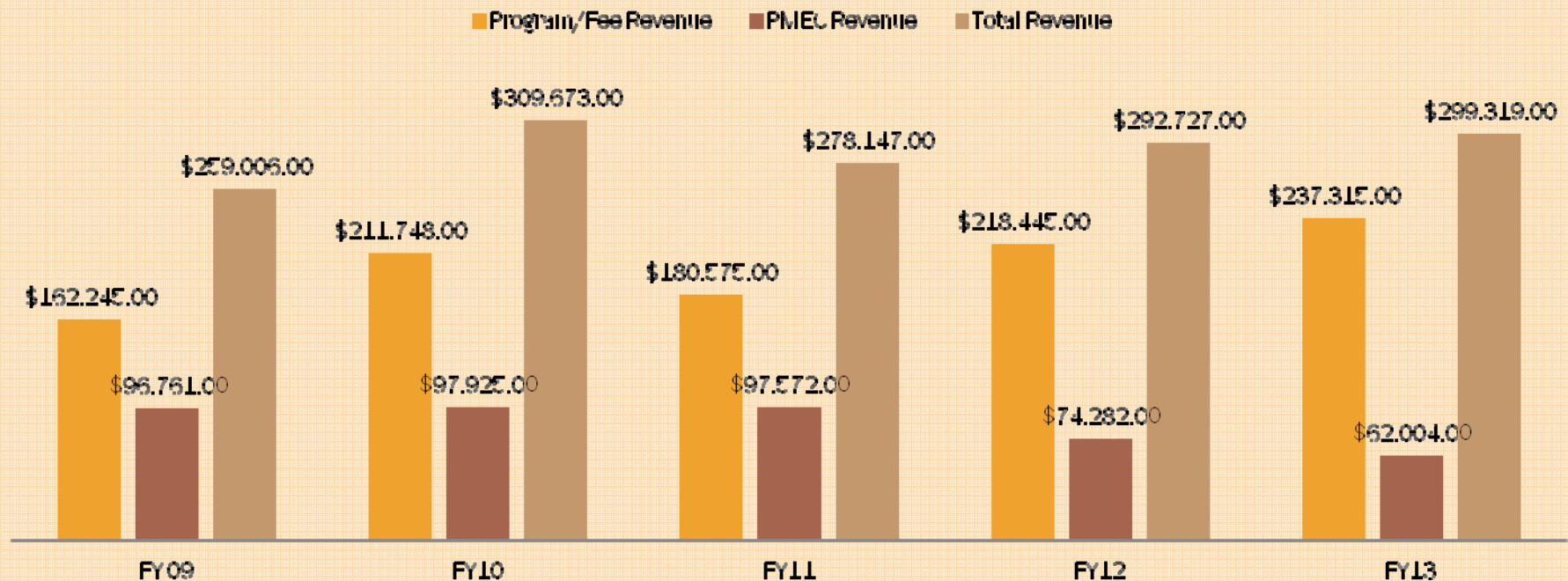
Increased 2.6% or \$8355 (\$1671 per year)

Personnel & benefits greater share of appropriations (72%)

Remaining 28% to operate day to day functions



# HISTORICAL TRENDS - REVOLVING FUNDS



## Revenue Factors

FY09 Amherst Baseball Club privatizes; ABC retains revenue generating divisions

FY09 Recreation Field Use Fee Policy takes effect

FY 12&13 Amherst School District chooses alternative programming to PMEC

FY12 Amherst Baseball Club folds; Recreation absorbs program again

FY 13 PMEC initiates Home School program

# SWOT ANALYSIS

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- ✖ Analysis of the Recreation Department's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were compiled by staff, program participants, residents and from 2010 Recreation Master Plan.
- ✖ Goals were established with a focus on maintaining and enhancing the strengths, reducing weaknesses, taking advantage of opportunities and remaining aware of conditions and threats.



# STRENGTHS

- ✖ Varsity, creativity & affordability of programs
- ✖ Sense of community
- ✖ Screening of volunteers
- ✖ Recreation Commission
- ✖ Well maintained amenities & athletic fields
- ✖ Use of athletic facilities and associated fees
- ✖ PMEC and proximity of trails
- ✖ Friendly, competent & helpful staff; experienced leadership
- ✖ Program enrollment and associated fees
- ✖ Registration convenience
- ✖ Recreation Master Plan
- ✖ Baboosic Lake

# WEAKNESSES

- ✖ Communication/website
- ✖ Insufficient administrative staff
- ✖ Two program revolving funds
- ✖ Pressure to generate revenue
- ✖ Unwilling to adequately fund potential growth
- ✖ NIMBY attitude
- ✖ Lack of gym space & outdoor basketball courts
- ✖ Lack of Community Center
- ✖ Loss of playing fields
- ✖ Blending of passive and active recreation
- ✖ Failing infrastructures

# OPPORTUNITIES

- ✖ Economic instability; residents take advantage of local programs and amenities
- ✖ Nature center to serve as a recreational model for small towns
- ✖ Capitalize on sense of community; work together to create balance of programs, amenities and funding
- ✖ Partnerships with adjacent towns, local organizations
- ✖ Recruitment & training volunteers
- ✖ Grants
- ✖ Private funding
- ✖ Conservation Commission
- ✖ Master Plan Revisions
- ✖ Health & Wellness
- ✖ Trail Network

# THREATS

- ✖ Political environment may be a potential impediment to growth; unwillingness to fund projects
- ✖ Privatization of recreational services
- ✖ Failed warrant articles to fund land purchase
- ✖ Failed warrant articles to fund improvements to failing structures
- ✖ NH aging demographics
- ✖ Declining school enrollment
- ✖ Neighboring towns
- ✖ Technology
- ✖ Volunteer overuse
- ✖ Aging vehicles & equipment



# STRATEGIC GOALS

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- ✘ Goal 1: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipated demand
- ✘ Goal 2: Provide a system of parks, trails and recreational facilities
- ✘ Goal 3: Evaluate and optimize administrative tasks and hours for recreation programs to include PMEC
- ✘ Goal 4: Develop programs to increase participation in targeted areas: Senior & Young Adults
- ✘ Goal 5: Enhance public outreach and use technology as a tool
- ✘ Goal 6: Establish a vehicle/equipment replacement plan

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOR GOAL #1

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Goal: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipated demand

FY 15

- ✖ Purchase land (8-10 acres) to ensure there is enough athletic field space to retain current use and projected demand.
- ✖ Define and develop funding source for projected cost: \$140,000-\$180,000



# ALTERNATIVE TO GOAL # 1

Goal: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipated demand

## Eliminate Non-Resident Use

- ✖ 1,009 participants in Spring/Fall 2013
- ✖ 748 Amherst Residents or 74%
- ✖ 261 Non Residents or 26%
- ✖ 108 Non residents are Mont Vernon residents
- ✖ 261 Non-Residents Represents 17 teams
  - + 17 teams participate x 2 hours/week x 10 weeks for 2 seasons= 680 hours
  - + 680 hours is 16% of 4176 total available hours
  - + By eliminating 261 non residents there is an 16% gain in “available” field hours.
- ✖ Non-residents are dispersed across all teams. By simply removing non-resident players from a team doesn't eliminate the team or increase “available” hours.
- ✖ By removing the non-residents, there is a risk that resident players will no longer have a team and may be forced to relocate to another community to play.
- ✖ It is unlikely for clubs to eliminate non-residents from participation, which may result in the club seeking alternative field space for all their players

# 2<sup>ND</sup> ALTERNATIVE TO GOAL #1

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Goal: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipated demand

## ✕ One sport per season

✕ 4176 flat field available hours

✕ 60% of those hours are in the spring-2506 hours

✕ 40% of those hours are in the fall-1670

Based on these numbers, if there is only one sport per season, the field space will accommodate all participants: resident & non-resident.

Fall-soccer, football Spring-lacrosse

✕ Impact of reducing use of fields to one season

- + Traditional seasons no longer exist
- + Organizations offer “their” sport 4 seasons to meet demand
- + Unfair to single out one sport
- + Higher soccer enrollment in spring vs. fall
- + Bad public relations



# 3<sup>RD</sup> ALTERNATE TO GOAL #1- LIGHTING

Goal: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipated demand

## ✕ Recommend temporary lighting

- + Seasonal
- + Limited in hours
- + More affordable (\$7,200)
- + Initiate 2015 (estimated cost)

## ✕ No support for permanent lighting

- + Not in my neighborhood
- + Cost (estimated cost \$250,000)
- + Ownership of athletic fields is held or controlled by others
- + Plan for permanent lighting with new development of athletic fields

# 4TH ALTERNATE TO GOAL #1-COMPROMISE

Goal: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipated demand

✖ What if community doesn't adopt Goal #1?

✖ IN FY15

- + Continue to share available reduced space among recreation and private recreation clubs for practices and games
- + Limit growth-keep enrollment at 2013 level
- + Increase number of teams per practice event
- + Reduce practice hours from 2 hours per event to 1.5 or 1 hour
- + Seek alternatives to traditional "Saturday or Sunday" game schedules
- + Seek support for temporary lighting
- + Upgrade/improve fields to accommodate additional uses (events)
- + Do the best we can with the resources available



# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR GOAL #2

Goal: Provide a system of parks, trails and recreational facilities

- ✖ Purchase land for a public park-FY 15 (estimated cost \$335,000-\$782,700)
- ✖ Develop park-FY 18 (estimated cost \$600,000-\$1,900,000)
- ✖ Develop a system with Conservation Commission to improve and enhance trails
- ✖ Establish a community group to complete a feasibility study for a Recreation Center
- ✖ Complete a detailed assessment of the Baboosic Lake complex and define a program of improvements to make it more functional and attractive FY 16 (estimated cost \$5000)
- ✖ Develop and execute a plan to refurbish the Davis Lane and Amherst Middle School tennis courts-FY 15 (estimated cost \$125,000-\$130,000)
- ✖ Develop and execute a marketing plan to promote PMEC FY 15-FY 18 (estimated \$1000-3000)
- ✖ Repair deteriorating infrastructure-Spalding Field FY15 (estimated cost \$12,000)

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR GOAL #3

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Goal: Evaluate and optimize administrative tasks and hours for recreation programs to include PMEC

- ✖ Restore full time administrative position-FY15  
(estimated cost \$53,500)
- ✖ Investigate ability to combine revolving funds-FY15



# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR GOAL #4

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Goal: Develop programs to increase participation in targeted areas: Senior & Young Adults

FY 15-18

- ✕ Conduct outreach to targeted population via local newspaper, electronic, newsletters, community groups, high school organizations, adult fitness and sporting organizations

# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR GOAL #5

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Goal: Enhance public outreach and use technology as a tool

FY15-18

- ✖ Participate in community events such as business expos, PTA, and civic group events-(estimated cost \$900 over 3 years)
- ✖ Increase exposure with mobile apps, social media
- ✖ Offer incentives for referrals; word-of-mouth/friend to friend(estimated cost \$1,500 over 3 years)
- ✖ Grow repeat customers/program registrants
- ✖ Enhance online registration for search, access and ease of registration- FY 15 (estimated cost \$1,000)



# STRATEGIC INITIATIVES FOR GOAL #6

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Goal: Establish a vehicle/equipment replacement plan

- ✖ Replace Park Foreman's 2001 two wheel drive truck
  - + FY16 & FY 17
  - + (estimated cost of \$16,000 per year)
  
- ✖ Develop a plan to routinely replace field maintenance equipment to reduce operating and maintenance costs; mowers, trimmers, aerators, slice seeder
  - + FY15-18
  - + (estimated cost of \$5,000 per year)

# BUDGET IMPACT SUMMARY

Goals and Initiatives-Budget impact years	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY 18	
<b>Goal 1: Provide athletic field space to retain current and anticipate demand</b>					
Purchase land (8-10 acres) to provide for current and projected needs	180,000				Warrant Article
Temporary Lighting	7,200	7,416	7,632	7,848	
<b>Goal 2-Provide a system of parks, trails, &amp; recreational facilities</b>					
Purchase land for a public park	782,700				Warrant Article
Develop Park				1,900,000	
Complete a detailed assessment of Baboosic Lake complex		5,000			
Develop a plan and execute to refurbish Davis Lane and AMS tennis courts	125,000			\$127,250	Warrant Articles
Develop and execute a marketing plan to enhance use of PMEC	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Repair Spalding retention wall	12,000				
<b>Goal 3-Evaluate and optimize administrative tasks and hours for recreation programs to include PMEC</b>					
Restore FTE	53,500	55,105	56,758	58,510	
Investigate ability to combine revolving funds					
<b>Goal 4-Develop programs to increase participation in targeted areas: seniors &amp; young adults</b>					
Conduct outreach to targeted populations					
<b>Goal 5-Enhance public outreach and use of technology</b>					
Participate in community events, business expos, PTA, civic groups	300	300	300		
Offer incentives-word-of-mouth/friend-to-friend	500	500	500		
Enhance online registration for search, access and ease of registration		1,000			
<b>Goal 6 Establish a vehicle/equipment replacement plan</b>					
Replace Maintenance 2001 Vehicle		16,000	16,000		
Routinely replace maintenance equipment	5000	5000	5000	5000	
<b>Total (Budget Impact Initiative)</b>	<b>81,500</b>	<b>91321</b>	<b>87,190</b>	<b>72,358</b>	
<b>Proposed Operating Budget</b>	<b>347,436</b>	<b>357,945</b>	<b>368,893</b>	<b>380,303</b>	
<b>Total (Initiative and Operating Budget)</b>	<b>428,936</b>	<b>449,266</b>	<b>456,083</b>	<b>452,661</b>	



# CONCLUSION

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- ✖ The six goals outlined in this strategic plan provide a guideline for the Recreation Department over the next four fiscal years. Hopefully it is a balance between what citizens need and desire and the investment they are willing to make.

# DISCUSSION

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