



# National Recreation and Park Association

Dear Mr. Corliss:

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) was contacted on Wednesday, Feb. 13 by reporter Chad Lawhorn of the *Lawrence Journal-World* regarding the proposed recreation center in Lawrence, KS.

NRPA was asked about national standards for indoor basketball courts and was asked to confirm a standard of one court per 5,000 population. NRPA, as is our practice when asked about “standards,” informed the reporter that we no longer use the term “standard,” but rather “guideline” to account for the varying needs of communities. However, this guideline is frequently used at the discretion of communities across the country.

We shared with Mr. Lawhorn our view that each park and recreation agency has different level of service requirements based on their community demographics and that agencies are responsible to conduct analysis and assessments to determine the best fit for their community when it comes to facilities, programs and services.

We provided Mr. Lawhorn information from the NRPA’s online database PRORAGIS which demonstrates a national aggregate of park and recreation data. PRORAGIS represents data on existing service levels provided by peers and is not a standard, as was explained to Mr. Lawhorn.

Additionally, PRORAGIS does not provide data on indoor basketball courts, rather data on frequency of gyms owned and/or maintained by a park and recreation agency which includes one or more basketball courts. The median population per gym is 28,091. Because this median number represents only those gyms that are owned and/or maintained by a park and recreation agency, the total number of gyms across a given community may be much higher when non-park and recreation agency gyms are factored in therefore this median is not reflective of all the gyms a community may be able to access.

We believe that the City of Lawrence Parks and Recreation as well as the planning firm that conducted the studies for the recreation center correctly used the term “guideline” in their description of the project. With PRORAGIS data, what is not reflected is the level of need for a community which is an important factor in parks and recreation planning.

We understand that it is possible that the information we provided to Mr. Lawhorn could be misconstrued in his article planned for Saturday. We have prepared and sent a written statement to Mr. Lawhorn to clarify our comments, enclosed below. Should the article use NRPA’s PRORAGIS data inaccurately, we will prepare a response to the reporter to request correction of the errors.

I am happy to further speak with you about this issue at your convenience should you have questions.

Sincerely,

Tara Fitzpatrick-Navarro

Vice President of Membership & Professional Development

*Enclosure below*