

SYSTEMWIDE PARKS MASTER PLAN: 2017-2026

TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE



Adopted
February 24, 2017

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	EX-1 - EX-6
SECTION 1 INVENTORY.....	1-1 - 1-7
SECTION 2 THE PEOPLE OF WAYNESVILLE.....	2-1 - 2-8
SECTION 3 RECREATION STANDARDS & NEEDS ASSESSMENT.....	3-1 - 3-12
SECTION 4 PROPOSALS & RECOMMENDATIONS.....	4-1 - 4-11
SECTION 5 ACTION PLAN.....	5-1 - 5-12

Appendices

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY: SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

APPENDIX C: CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND GREENWAYS



Recreation programs and special events contribute to the quality of life for Waynesville residents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Residents of Waynesville enjoy a wonderful quality of life. Abundant natural resources, scenic mountain landscapes, and friendly people make this area a wonderful place to live and visit. Parks and recreation facilities and programs are an important aspect of this quality lifestyle.

Recognizing the value that parks and recreation facilities play in the community, elected officials in Waynesville have historically supported the development and operations of parks. Throughout the years the Town has constructed several very nice parks and recreation facilities. In addition to its parks, the Town's indoor recreation facilities (Waynesville Recreation Center and Old Armory Recreation Center) provide a wide variety of indoor recreation programs.

In 2007, the County developed a Comprehensive System-wide Parks and Recreation Plan. This plan provided a number of recommendations for park improvements for the Town. Many changes have occurred in the area since the completion of the 2007 plan. The Town and County have accomplished some of the recommendations of the 2007 plan, but there are still improvements needed for parks and recreation facilities in the community.

The purpose of this master plan is to identify changes that have occurred in the years since the previous plan, work with citizens to develop a recreational needs analysis for the town and provide recommendations on park and recreation facility needs based on those needs.

The most important aspect of this planning study is identifying the public's desire for park and recreational facilities. The public was offered the opportunity to participate in the planning effort through:

- Three public workshops to discuss community recreational needs
- Interviews with park and recreation stakeholders
- Input from a Master Plan Steering Committee
- A community survey

Based on this input, standards for future park development, which were utilized in the 2007 plan, have been reviewed and updated.

With the public's desires for park and recreation facilities identified, demographic and population data is reviewed. Based on planning/census projections, the service area population for the Department has been determined to be 10,000, with a small increase in population over the next ten years (10,500).

By overlaying the standards for park development with the current and expected population growth, a needs assessment has been developed.

Park & Recreation Facility Needs

As described in Appendix C and discussed in *Section Four: Recreation Standards and Needs Assessment*, a park system is typically comprised of eight park types. These park types include:

- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- District Parks
- Regional Parks
- Greenways
- School Parks
- Unique/Special Facilities

Each of these park types provide recreation opportunities that are needed by residents. A variety of public and private agencies often play a role in providing a well-rounded compliment of park and recreation facilities.

As a small municipal Department, the Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department holds responsibility for providing Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks.

Elected officials have significantly improved the facilities and programs offered by the Department over the past ten years. However, there are still improvements to be made; as identified in this study's needs assessment. These needs are identified based on the following park types:

Mini Parks

Mini Parks are the smallest of park types. They typically range in size from one-half to three acres and provide a limited range of activities (playgrounds, picnic shelters, benches, etc.). Mini Parks are usually found in municipal settings. Currently the Department does not provide any parks in this park classification. However, the Town does have several small civic spaces in the Downtown area that could be considered Mini Parks.

The national trend has moved away from the development of mini parks. Their small size and limited facilities often limit their recreational value. Likewise, their small size and geographic distribution often make maintenance expensive. Most agencies do not focus park development dollars on Mini Parks, but instead focus on the development of Neighborhood and Community Parks.

While the national trend has been away from development of these smaller parks, there are opportunities where Mini Parks could provide important civic space throughout the community. One opportunity for building a Mini Park would be the development of a small County owned property on Calvary Street. Other opportunities for development of Mini Parks could be achieved by requiring developers of residential communities to provide these small parks in new communities. The Town's Zoning Ordinance currently has provisions for park development as part of the permitting process.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks play an important role in providing both active and passive recreation in a community. Preferably in the 5-7 acre range, these parks are large enough to provide program space (ballfields, play courts, playgrounds, etc.) and still provide some areas for open space (wooded or open).



Sulphur Springs Park is one of the Town's Neighborhood Parks

Currently the Department provides three Neighborhood Parks (Chestnut Park, East Street Park, and Sulphur Springs Park). These existing parks are small by typical Neighborhood Park standards and two of these parks (Chestnut and Sulphur Springs) have very limited facilities.

In order to meet current and future demand, at least one additional neighborhood park should be constructed in the next ten years. Future parks should be located to serve residential neighborhoods that are not currently being served by a Neighborhood Park, and should be large enough (at least five acres) to allow a variety of park activities.

In addition to building new Neighborhood Parks, the Town should renovate East Street Park and add recreation facilities to Sulphur Springs Park and Chestnut Park. Any improvements planned for Sulphur Springs Park should take into consideration the unique historical aspects of this park.

Community Parks

Community Parks are the foundation of most park systems. With a desired size of thirty to fifty acres, Community Parks provide league play athletic facilities, while maintaining enough open space for passive recreation. Currently the Department offers three Community Parks (Hazelwood Park, Recreation Park and Vance Street Park). Hazelwood Park is extremely small for a Community Park and provides very limited recreation facilities. Vance Street Park and Recreation Park are much better examples of Community Parks; although, they are relatively small by Community Park standards.

Based on a standard of 5 acres of Community Park land for every 1,000 people, there is a need for an additional 8-12 acres of Community Park land in the town. This need for additional Community Park land does not indicate a need for a new Community Park, but does indicate the need to acquire additional property (if opportunities arise) to expand existing Community Parks.

In addition to potentially expanding existing Community Parks, there is a need to make renovations at all three of the Town's existing Community Parks. Site Specific Master Plans should be developed prior to making park improvements.

District Parks

District Parks are one of the largest park types. Typically in the 100 acre range, these parks provide a wide variety of both active and passive recreation opportunities. These parks are usually provided by large municipal agencies or county agencies. Haywood County developed a District Park just south of Waynesville several years ago. While the development of Allens Creek Park is a big step for the County and meets many recreational needs in the surrounding community, it is extremely small and has very

limited recreational facilities by District Park standards. The County also acquired property on Jonathan Creek Road for development of another District Park in the Waynesville area. While a master plan has been developed for the site, it is unclear when park development will occur.

It is highly unlikely the Town will develop a District Park on its own, but it should be open to future opportunities to partner with Haywood County to develop a District Park to serve Waynesville residents.

Regional Parks

Regional Parks are large parks that have a service area that cover an entire county or several counties. These large parks are predominately passive and are typically provided by large municipalities, counties, or state agencies.

Currently the State of North Carolina offers residents of Waynesville three state parks within an easy drive. These parks include:

- Gorges State Park
- Chimney Rock State Park
- Mount Mitchell State Park

In addition to these state parks, the U.S. Department of Interior offers visitor opportunities in the Nantahala National Forest. Recreation activities include hiking, biking, nature photography, wildlife observation, hunting, fishing, and boating. With the availability of these large Regional Parks, the Town should not focus their financial and administrative resources on the development of Regional Parks.

Special Use Facilities

In addition to these basic park types, well developed park systems also provide their constituents with a variety of specialized facilities. During the public input process, much attention was given to the importance (and need) of several special use facilities. These facilities include:

Greenways

Greenways are natural corridors often associated with stream ways that provide trails for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Town currently has a greenway trail that connects Vance Street Park with Lake Junaluska. This trail is a great start to a town wide greenway system. The community's desire for the development of walking trails, as well as the preservation of public open space, was expressed in the survey and at the public workshops. Based on this need for walking trails and greenways,

a greenway master plan should be developed and opportunities for greenway development should be sought.

Waynesville Recreation Center

Waynesville Recreation Center is an outstanding indoor recreation facility and is the Department's most heavily used recreation facility. While most everyone is pleased with the facilities and programs offered at the Center, the public engagement process identified several areas where citizens would like to see expansion of facilities. The following improvements were identified by the public:

- Expansion of the weight room
- Expansion of aerobics and exercise areas
- Development of an outdoor splash pad and sun decks
- Construction of a therapy pool

Renovations to Existing Parks

Many of the Department's parks are older facilities and need up fitting. Likewise, several of the Neighborhood Parks have very limited facilities. Each of the existing parks should be assessed to see how these facilities can be expanded and/or updated to maximize use. As noted above, the majority of the park sites are well developed and well maintained, but every park has some need for up-fit or expansion. There are some areas of infrastructure improvements (ADA improvements, playground improvements, etc.) that should be considered. As part of this planning process, Site Specific Master Plans were developed for Recreation Park and Vance Street Park. Similar plans should be developed for each of the Town's other existing parks in the future. The Capital Improvements Plan on Table 5-1 includes budgets for renovations to existing parks.

Community Partners

Haywood County Schools

While the Town has historically worked collaboratively with the school system, there is no joint use agreement in place to provide public use of school facilities outside of the school curriculum. In the future, if needed, the Town should consider working with the school system to develop joint use agreements to allow recreational use of the schools located throughout the service area.

Haywood County Recreation and Parks Department

Haywood County reinstated its Recreation and Parks Department in 2000 and currently works to provide parks and recreation service to all county resident. The two departments have historically worked together to

meet park and recreational needs for citizens. While each Department has its own mission in providing parks and services, they should continue to communicate and work cooperatively together; seeking partnership opportunities where feasible.

Role of the Private Sector

The private sector provides recreation facilities and programs that the Department and public sector are unable to offer. These facilities include golf courses, private swim clubs, tennis clubs, and private athletic associations and complexes. When supplied by the private sector, the demand for public development of these facilities is significantly reduced.

Land development is another area in which the private sector can assist in the provision of parks and recreation facilities. Land developers should be responsible for the dedication of open space as required by land development codes. The land development process provides an excellent opportunity to gain additional land for natural area preservation and greenway development.

Capital Improvement Program

An important component of the planning process is to identify the recreational needs of the community and then establish a budget for developing the facilities to meet those needs.

The Capital Improvement Plan for the acquisition, renovation, and development of parks for the planning period was prepared with input from department staff, the Parks and Recreation Steering Committee, and public involvement. All of the proposed costs are shown in 2017 dollar values. The capital improvement costs include funds for land acquisition, building construction, site preparation, site utilities, access, and parking along with renovation and significant maintenance improvements. The Capital Improvement Plan also includes estimated planning and design fees. It should be noted the capital cost shown in this plan are order of magnitude cost. The budget figures are not based on detailed plans, but instead are based on typical cost for the recreational facilities listed.

Table 5-1: Capital Improvement Plan shows the costs associated with the capital improvement program for the ten year planning period. The table reflects the proposals and recommendations as outlined in Section Four of this Master Plan.

Recognizing the significance of this capital improvements program to the Department's budget, Section Five reviews key funding/revenue sources that can be used to finance some of the capital improvements.

The following document identifies current and future park and recreation facility needs, and offers recommendations for meeting those needs. Like any planning document, this report is intended as a general guide to elected officials and department staff. It is anticipated that this document will be tweaked and changed to meet community needs/circumstances. Likewise, acceptance of this document by elected officials does not imply an approval of funding for any improvements. Instead, acceptance of this plan simply acknowledges the report and the hope that recommendations from this report will be used in incremental decisions regarding parks and recreation improvements in the future.

Table 5-1
Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Capital Improvement and Land Acquisition	10 Year Total	2017-2021	2022-2026
Existing Parks Renovation/Improvements			
Vance Street Park	\$750,000	\$750,000	
Recreation Park	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	
Hazelwood Park	\$250,000		250,000
Chestnut Park	\$500,000		500,000
East Street park	\$500,000		500,000
Sulphur Springs Park	\$250,000		250,000
Planning & Design (10%)	\$475,000	\$325,000	\$150,000
Renovation Total	\$5,225,000	\$3,575,000	\$1,650,000
Land Acquisition			
Mini Park			
Neighborhood & Community Park Expansion (20 Acres)	\$250,000		\$250,000
Land Acquisition Total	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000
Park Development			
New Mini Park	\$250,000		\$250,000
New Neighborhood Park	\$750,000		\$750,000
Planning and Design (10%)	\$100,000		\$100,000
Park Development Total	\$1,100,000	\$0	\$1,100,000
Waynesville Recreation Center Improvements			
Weightroom/Aerobics Expansion	\$650,000	\$650,000	
Therapy pool	\$750,000	\$750,000	
Planning and Design (10%)	\$140,000	\$140,000	
Waynesville Recreation Center Total	\$1,540,000	\$1,540,000	\$0
Special Use Facilities			
Greenway Trail Development	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000
Sprayground	\$550,000	\$550,000	
Planning & Design (10%)	\$155,000	\$55,000	\$100,000
Special Use Facilities Total	\$1,705,000	\$605,000	\$1,100,000
Total Capital Improvement Budget Cost	\$9,820,000	\$5,720,000	\$4,100,000



The Waynesville Recreation Center provides a wide variety of indoor recreation activities to area residents

SECTION ONE INVENTORY

Introduction

The first step in the master planning process is to inventory and assess the parks and recreation facilities that are currently serving the citizens of Waynesville. In this time of economic challenge and limited budgets, it is extremely important to utilize existing facilities to their fullest potential. This section identifies the existing parks found in the town, categorizes each park into a classification based on size/function, and inventories the existing facilities found in each park. In *Section Three: Recreation Standards & Needs Assessment*, this existing facility information will be used to establish an assessment for future park and recreation needs.

Waynesville is somewhat unique for a municipality of its size. For a relatively small town, it has a very good parks and recreation department and offers recreation facilities that are not often found in communities its size. Very few towns with less than 10,000 residents offer their citizens facilities like a full-service recreation center, an indoor pool, or state of the art skate board facilities. The citizens of Waynesville enjoy a very high standard of parks and recreational programs. Likewise, residents living outside of Waynesville are benefiting from these outstanding facilities. With these type facilities, it is obvious that the Town's Parks and Recreation Department is also serving citizens that live outside the town limits.

Conversely, Haywood County offers very limited facilities that currently serve Waynesville residents. While the County's Recreation and Parks Department provides valuable facilities and programs to many of the county's unincorporated areas, few of these programs and facilities are focused on citizens of Waynesville. While many smaller communities in North Carolina can rely on their County agencies to provide larger parks (sports complexes or large passive parks), Waynesville must rely primarily on its own resources as it provides its citizens with parks and recreation facilities.

In addition to municipal and county parks and recreation facilities, Haywood County Schools has several school campuses (one high school, two middle schools and three elementary schools) in Waynesville. These school campuses offer indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that are also used for public recreation. While joint use agreements for these schools are not currently in place, it is important to recognize the potential value of these facilities for public recreation.

Finally, the private sector offers recreational activities throughout the town. These private sector options include golf courses, private swim clubs and residential amenity areas operated by homeowners' associations. These private recreation opportunities are an important component in meeting recreational needs of town residents.

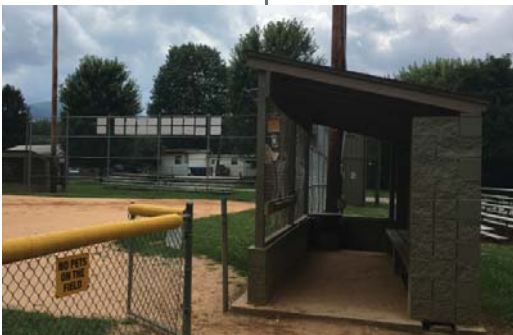
This section identifies the existing parks and recreation facilities currently serving the citizens of Waynesville.



East Street Park



Sulphur Springs Park



Hazelwood Park

Neighborhood Parks

Chestnut Park 4 acres

One of Waynesville's newest park acquisitions, Chestnut Park is a 4 acre linear greenspace surrounded by single family residences. Currently the only recreation facilities at the park include a concrete pad and picnic shelter. Previously the concrete pad was used as an outdoor basketball court. The Town recently developed a concept plan for developing a small parking area on this park.

East Street Park 3 acres

Located on Howell Street, the park is fairly typical for a neighborhood park. Facilities include a playground, a basketball court, and a picnic shelter. Several large trees provide shade and offer a nice "park" setting. A paved driveway surrounds recreation facilities, but is not wide enough to provide good parking. ADA improvements are needed to provide access to recreation facilities. East Street Park is one of Waynesville's older parks. Existing facilities need updating and renovations.

Sulphur Springs Park 1 acre

Sulphur Springs Park is a small (1 acre) green space located among single family residences on Timothy Lane. The park is a nice greenspace with open lawn and scattered trees. The site has historical significance from the Confederate War and as the site of the Sulphur Springs Hotel. The only facility located on this park is a small gazebo located at the rear of the property, which was once part of the hotel. A nice white fence runs along the street edge. Informational signage on Sulphur Springs is located at the front of the park. This property has potential for historical introspection and passive recreation.

Community Parks

Hazelwood Park 3 acres

As a 3 acre park, Hazelwood Park is too small to be considered a Community Park, but because of the Women's Softball Field, it serves citizens beyond the neighborhood. The softball field is in good condition and provides valuable field space for the Town's softball program. The park's softball field dominates this small park and most all of the other facilities/amenities (restrooms/concession building, parking, picnic shelter, bleachers, batting cages, etc.) in the park service the field. Existing facilities are old and in need of updating. ADA improvements are needed. Potential facility expansion opportunities include adding a playground, outdoor basketball courts, and ADA accessible fishing pier.



Recreation Park Playground



Recreation Park Restroom/Shelter

Recreation Park 18.28 acres

Recreation Park is Waynesville's second largest park. It provides a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities. Located immediately adjacent to Vance Street Park, the two parks function as one larger park. Several recreational facilities (walking trail and disc golf course) and Richland Creek actually connect the two parks.

Recreation Park is a linear park that runs along Richland Creek. The park is divided into several activity nodes. The largest activity node is located along West Marshall Street just north of Walnut Street (Business 23). This activity node includes 6 tennis courts (and tennis gazebo), 2 basketball courts, men's softball field, playground and shelter. A mobile restroom serves this activity node. A paved walking trail runs through this activity node and connects to other nodes within the park. A large parking lot (paved and gravel) take up a significant portion of this activity node. The gravel portion of this parking lot was previously the location for the Town's swimming pool. This area has potential for development of additional recreation facilities. In addition to the recreational facilities, this area of the park also contains a maintenance facility (small maintenance building and outdoor storage area). The maintenance facility is located on park property adjacent to the railroad track. Truck and maintenance vehicles from this maintenance facility must travel through the park, potentially conflicting with park users. Relocating the maintenance area could eliminate these potential conflicts.

A second, smaller node is located north of the tennis courts. This activity node includes a small playground with gravel parking lot and restroom building. This activity node serves as a trail head to the greenway along Richland Creek and provides access to the dog park. Unfortunately, this activity node is separated from the main activity node by the railroad track.

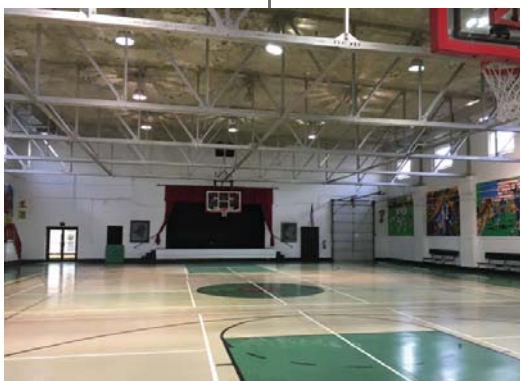
The third activity node at Recreation Park is the Skateboard Park. A relatively new addition to the Town's recreational facility offerings, the skate park is a state of the art skateboard facility that is extremely popular with area youth, and attracts skaters from throughout the region. In addition to the skating structure, this activity node contains parking for approximately 30 cars. Unfortunately there are no support facilities (restrooms, water fountains, shelters) to support the skating activities.

There are a number of improvements that need to be made at Recreation Park:

- The tennis courts are in poor condition. They should be demolished and rebuilt.
- The softball field is in poor condition and is not heavily used. Removing the softball field would allow better utilization of that area and allow the creation of some open space in the park.
- ADA improvements are needed throughout the park; especially to the playground and restroom north of the railroad track.
- The existing mobile restroom should be removed and a permanent restroom constructed.
- Lighting and support facility should be added to the skateboard park.
- Amenities (shelter, seating, etc.) should be added to the dog park area.
- Improvements are needed at the dog park.



Vance Street Park Softball



Old Armory Recreation Center Gymnasium



Waynesville Recreation Center Pool

Vance Street Park 23 acres

The center of Waynesville's indoor and outdoor recreation programs, Vance Street Park provides a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The focal point of the park is the 64,000 square foot Waynesville Recreation Center, an outstanding indoor recreation facility that offers gymnasium space, indoor aquatics, weight room, exercise/aerobics space and meeting/classroom space. See Indoor Recreation Facilities for additional information on the Waynesville Recreation Center.

In addition to the indoor recreation facilities found in the recreation center, Vance Street Park offers both active and passive outdoor recreation facilities including Men's Softball, Soccer/Multi-purpose Field, 2 Sand Volleyball Courts, Picnic Shelter, Disc Golf, Track, Walking Trails, and outdoor restrooms. Most existing facilities are in good condition, but the outdoor track is in poor condition and needs resurfacing. Other needed improvements include lighting the soccer fields, providing ADA access to all facilities, possibly relocating the disc golf course. Potential expansion opportunities include development of a spray ground, adding a therapy pool to the recreation center, expanding the weight room, and adding storage areas in the recreation center.

Both Vance Street Park and Recreation Park are small by Community Park standards. Typically Community Parks are 20 to 50 acres. Facilities in both parks are extremely congested. The Town should consider acquiring land adjacent to either of these parks if land (appropriate for park use) becomes available.

Indoor Special Use Facilities

Old Armory Recreation Center

The Old Armory Recreation Center (OARC) represents a strong community vision that established a new use for an outdated building; utilizing a community asset to its fullest potential. Built in 1936, this 11,600 SF building offers a wide range of indoor recreation activities. It contains a gymnasium with basketball court, stage, pottery rooms, cafeteria and kitchen. In addition to the indoor spaces, the facility also contains a greenhouse.

Programs offered at the OARC include indoor walking, corn hole, pottery, pickle ball, quilting, karate, square dancing, bridge, flea market, and community garden.

The building is in very good condition for an 80 year old building. The Town has done an excellent job in renovating and maintaining the building.



Waynesville Recreation Center Weight Room

Waynesville Recreation Center

Perhaps the most outstanding facility offered by the Department is the Waynesville Recreation Center (WRC). The WRC is an excellent indoor facility offering a wide range of indoor recreation activities. The center offers a full gymnasium (10,630 SF) with 2 courts and elevated walking track. A fitness center area(s) with 12,000 SF provides weight room, cardio exercise room, a separate stretch room, and 2 racquetball courts. In addition to the active recreation areas, the center offers 2 classrooms/meeting rooms and kitchen.

This is truly an outstanding facility for a town with a population of less than 10,000.

On the aquatics side of the building, the center contains a 15,900 SF indoor aquatics area with 25 meter pool and indoor children's water play area. Locker rooms (3400 SF) and lobby/gathering area (1550 SF) support the main recreation areas.

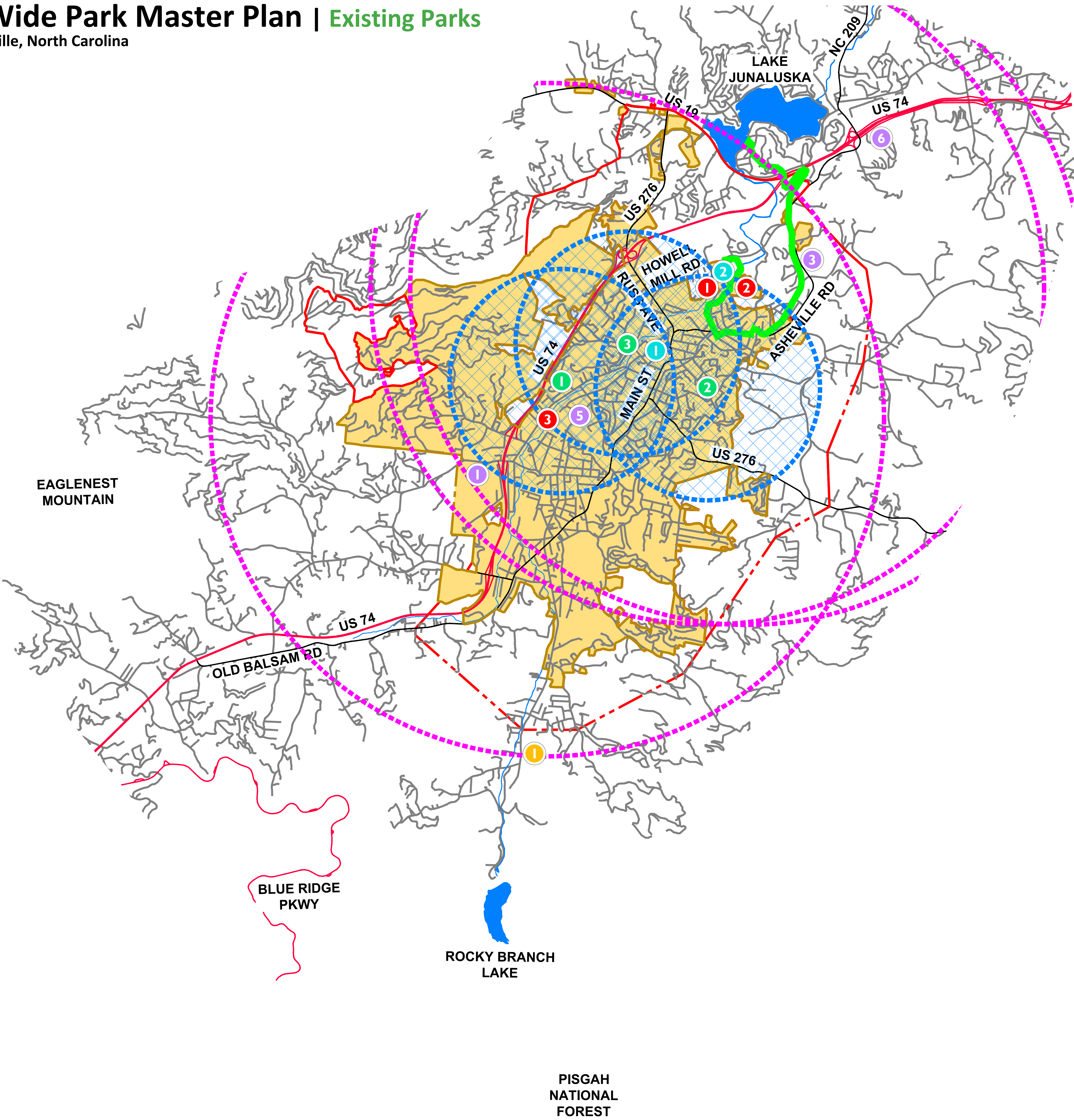
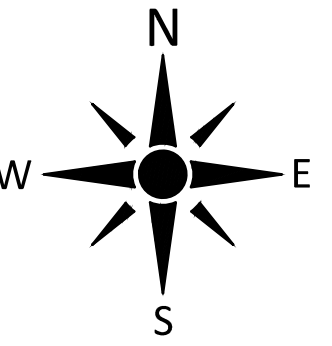
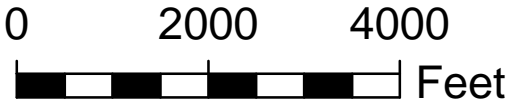
In addition to free play/use of the building, the Department offers programs in water aerobics, land aerobics, swim lessons, swim teams, dance classes, judo, Pilates, Zumba, Silver Sneakers, and many more.

Demand/use for this facility is extremely strong; creating some needed expansion to existing facilities in the building. The following building improvements that have been suggested by the public:

- Expand weight room
- Expand aerobic area
- Building outdoor splashpad and sun deck
- Expand storage space
- Expand aquatics area to include a therapy pool

Waynesville Preliminary Inventory of Existing Facilities

Type	Name	Acreage	Adult Baseball Fields	Youth Baseball Fields	Men's Softball Fields	Women's Softball Fields	Soccer Fields	Football Fields	Multi-purpose Fields	Basketball Courts (Outdoors)	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Shuffleboard Courts	Horseshoe Pits	Bocce Ball Courts	Playgrounds	Picnic Shelters	Gazebo	Trail/Greenway (Miles)	Mountain Bike Trail (Miles)	Water Access	Community Garden	Swimming Pool/Splash Pad	Dog Park	Skate Park	Grass Area/Open Space	Gardens/Passive Areas	Golf Course	Disc Golf Course	Gymnasium	Classroom	Fitness Equipment	Senior Center	Pottery Studio		
Neighborhood Parks																																				
	Chestnut Park	4															1										1									
	East Street Park	3								1						1	1																			
	Sulphur Springs Park	1																1									1									
			8	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Community Parks																																				
	Hazelwood Park	3				1											1																			
	Recreation Park	18.28		1	1					2	6					2	1	1		0.4					1	1				1						
	Vance Street Park	23			1		1		1			2					1			0.4		1								1						
			44.28	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	2	6	2	0	0	0	2	3	1		0.8	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
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Indoor Special Use Facilities																																				
	Old Armory Recreation Center																					1								1	1		1	1		
	Waynesville Recreation Center																					1	2							1	1	1				
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Waynesville Parks and Recreation Totals			52.28	0	1	2	1	1	0	1	3	6	2	0	0	0	3	5	2		0.8	0	1	2	2	1	1	2	0	0	2	2	2	1	1	1



COMMUNITY PARKS

- 1 Recreation Park
- 2 Vance Street Park
- 3 Hazelwood Park

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

- 1 Sulphur Springs Park
- 2 East Street Park
- 3 Chestnut Park

COUNTY PARKS

- 1 Allen's Creek Park

TOWN RECREATION CENTERS

- 1 Old Armory Recreation Center
- 2 Waynesville Recreation Center

SCHOOLS

- 1 Hazelwood Elementary School
- 2 Jonathan Valley Elementary School- outside limits
- 3 Junaluska Elementary School
- 4 Bethel Middle School-outside of limits
- 5 Waynesville Middle School
- 6 Tuscola High School

- Existing Community Park (3 mi Service Radius)
- Existing Neighborhood Park (1 mi Service Radius)

- Greenway
- Roads
- Town Limits
- Waynesville ETJ





Richland Creek is a wonderful outdoor recreational resource

SECTION TWO THE PEOPLE OF WAYNESVILLE

Introduction

An important step in understanding the park and recreational needs of Waynesville residents is to develop an understanding of the people that make up the community. *Section Two The People of Waynesville* includes an assessment of the town's population and demographics and looks at changes that are occurring in the community.

In addition to reviewing the town's projected growth and demographic changes, the Needs Assessment included several initiatives to engage the public to gather information on public demand/expectations for future parks. These initiatives included:

- Community Survey
- Steering Committee comprised of Town Staff and Community Stakeholders
- Public Workshops

Through these efforts, considerable insight was gained regarding the public's desire for parks and recreation programs and facilities. This section discusses the information gathered in preparation of this Systemwide Parks Master Plan.

Town History and Context

Located approximately 30 miles southwest of Asheville, between the Great Smokey and Blue Ridge Mountains, Waynesville is Haywood County's largest town and serves as the county seat. Waynesville enjoys a wonderful mountainous location; just outside the Pisgah National Forest and in close proximity to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. This ideal location, along with its scenic landscape and friendly people, make Waynesville a favorite tourist destination and desirable place to live.



Waynesville is surrounded by many natural resources

As part of the four county Asheville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Waynesville and Haywood County are included in the 5th largest metropolitan area in the state. Waynesville represents the third largest municipality (behind Asheville and Hendersonville) within this MSA.

Waynesville was founded in 1810 by Colonel Robert Love, an American Revolutionary War soldier. The town was named for General "Mad" Anthony Wayne, Colonel Love's former Commander during the war. The town was incorporated in 1871. Over 100 years later, in 1995, the town merged with Hazelwood to create Haywood County's largest town.

Waynesville has over a dozen properties (homes, businesses, etc.) listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The town was also the site of the "Battle of Waynesville", which was the last skirmish of the eastern

theater of the American Civil War. The battle occurred in May of 1865. The skirmish occurred when the Union Mounted Infantry (who were raiding and pillaging homes in White Sulphur Springs) was confronted by a detachment of rebels from the Thomas Legion of Highlanders. As part of this skirmish, soldiers from the Thomas Legion fired "The Last Shot" of the Civil War East of the Mississippi at White Sulphur Springs. Ultimately the disoriented Union Soldiers retreated to Waynesville and were surrounded by the Thomas Legion. Recognizing that Generals Lee and Johnston had already surrendered, the Confederate Commanders negotiated a peaceful surrender of this local skirmish; ending hostilities and minimizing loss of life.

Following the Civil War, Waynesville began to grow with the arrival of the railroad in 1884. The railroad helped connect Waynesville and Haywood County with the west and created opportunities for agriculture, forestry and tourism. The area of Waynesville located along Richland Creek was where the railroad tracks were constructed. This area was given the name Frog Level because it was low lying and sometimes flooded. With the construction of the Train Depot, commercial development expanded in this area. The Downtown area, and the nearby Frog Level commercial area of Waynesville, became the center of social life, transportation, wholesale and retail businesses through the 1940s. As the automobile (and ultimately trucks) became more prevalent, the railroad declined in importance, and town development extended beyond Frog Level. By 1950, passenger train service to Waynesville was terminated although freight trains continued to pass through Frog Level on their way on to Sylva. In 2014, Watco Companies purchased all of the railroad tracks running through Waynesville for its Blue Ridge Southern Railroad Short Line. This line connects Waynesville to Sylva to the west and Asheville to the east.

Today, Waynesville's connections to Interstate 40 is more important than its connection to the railroad. Through the interstate highway and the Great Smokey Expressway, Waynesville is connected to Asheville and Knoxville, Tennessee; making it a very convenient location.

The People of Waynesville

An important aspect of this planning process is understanding the people who make up the Department's Service Population. To better understand the park and recreational needs of the community, a review of data from the 2010 US Census provides valuable information on the demographic makeup of the community. This section identifies some of the community's unique demographics.

Waynesville has a relatively high percentage of female residents. While North Carolina's female population represents just over 51% of the state's total population, females comprise 53.4 % of the town's population.



Seniors utilize computers at the Town's indoor recreation center

Waynesville's population is also older than the state's population. Almost a quarter (24.6%) of Waynesville's population is 65 years and over. The senior population represents only 12.9% of the state's population. Likewise, the town's youth (persons under 18 years of age) represents a relatively small percentage of the overall population. Less than a fifth (17.8%) of the town's population are under eighteen, while almost a fourth (23.9%) of the state's population is made up of youth. This smaller percentage of youth is also reflected in the smaller household size found in Waynesville. While the state's average household contains 2.4 persons, the average household in Waynesville is comprised of only 2.01 persons; indicating many households without children or single parent households.

Waynesville is very homogeneous. Whites comprise 92.4% of the town's population. Whites make up 72.4% of the state's population. Conversely, Waynesville has a much lower percentage of Blacks or African Americans (2.4%) or Hispanics (5.7%) than the state; 21.5% and 8.4% respectively.

Economically, Waynesville residents lag behind the state with regard to median household income. Waynesville's median household income was \$35,708, while the state's median income was \$46,693. However, the town's per capita income (\$26,154) is slightly greater than the state's per capita income (\$25,608). Just over half (50.7%) of the town's population 16 years and older were in the civilian workforce. This is significantly lower than the state's percentage of population in the workforce (62.1%). This

lower participation in the work force may be a result of the Town's higher senior (retirement) population.

Understandably, the median value of an owner occupied home in Waynesville is slightly less than the median value of an owner occupied home from across the state (\$149,400 versus \$153,000).

Finally, the town has a relatively high percentage of residents under 65 years of age with a disability. Almost 15% (14.8%) of the town's population has a disability, while less than one tenth (9.5%) of North Carolinians have a disability. Likewise, almost one fourth (24%) of the town's population under the age of 65 reported not having health insurance, while only 13.1% of North Carolinians indicated a lack of health insurance.

These demographic statistics on the town's population provide some valuable information to consider in determining park and recreational needs for the community. Several characteristics that could affect park and recreation facility needs include:

- It is obvious from the age demographics, that the town has a very high percentage of residents that are seniors (65 and older). The town should continue to provide facilities and programs that meet the desires and interest of this senior population. Likewise, facilities and programs should be aimed at aiding the senior population in living active and healthier lifestyles.
- While the senior segment of the population is important, the Department should also be sensitive to the needs of its younger citizens, recognizing that almost one fifth of the population are youth.
- Another important finding from this review is the relatively large segment of the town's population that has some form of disability. With almost 15 % of the population under 65 years of age indicating a disability, the Town should move to make all of its parks and recreation facilities accessible to everyone and removing any ADA barriers that would keep the disabled from having access to Town facilities.
- Finally, with a relatively low median household income, many residents are living on limited budgets. Recreational facilities and programs should be made available to citizens of all economic levels.

Service Population

An important aspect of developing a comprehensive plan for parks and recreation facilities is determining the service population of the study. Ultimately, it is impossible to determine the acres of park land or the number of ball fields a community needs unless you know the number of people you are planning to serve.

Based on US Census data, Waynesville's 2015 (July) population was 9,809. This population figure was slightly less than the town's 2010 (April) census number of 9,859; indicating a very slight decline in population. While this small decrease in population should be noted, the town seems to be very a vibrant community with a wonderful quality of life; indicating a future with positive economic activity and a reasonable expectation of future growth. Further, population projection data from North Carolina's Office of Budget and Management (NCOBM) indicates that Haywood County's population will grow over the next 10 years by approximately 4%; projecting a 2026 County population of just over 63,000 people.

Based on Census data from NCOBM, this report will use the town's current population of 9,809 as the service population for this study. For ease of calculations, the report will slightly round up this population figure to 10,000.

As a ten year plan, recommendations in this report will be designed to meet the need of the town's population in 2026. For planning purposes, it is assumed the town will increase in population similarly to the projected population of the county's population; approximately 4%. Again, for ease of discussion and calculation, the projected population for the town (the projected service population) has been rounded up to 10,500.

There are two other factors that influence the community's need for parks and recreation facilities and indirectly impact the Service Population. First, it is important to realize that many users of the Town's parks and recreation facilities are not Waynesville residents. Waynesville's existing parks and recreation facilities are heavily used by Haywood County residents living outside the town limits of Waynesville. The demand for parks and facilities by citizens living outside the town places greater demand on the Town's existing facilities. Currently, non-residents are using parks and recreation facilities without paying higher fees.

A second factor that impacts the need for parks and recreation facilities is the number of residents that live in the community seasonally. Waynesville has a relatively high percentage of residents that spend their winters in warmer climates; primarily Florida. While these residents are fully invested in funding parks and recreation facilities through property taxes, they only utilize facilities during the spring and summer months. This seasonal change in park/facility use impacts facility needs and operational cost.



Many of those attending the public workshop were families with children

Public Input

Public Workshop

A community workshop to receive input on park and recreation needs was held from 4 – 7 PM on September 22, 2016 at the Waynesville Recreation Center. The workshop was held as an informal drop-in. Sixty-five citizens participated in the event; which represents a very good turnout for a public workshop to discuss comprehensive needs. A large number of those attending the workshop were youth.

After signing in, attendees were invited to review several display boards that identified existing parks within the Town, provided information on existing recreation opportunities typically found in municipal parks and offered images of recreation facilities/activities typically found in a town's park system. Following the information sharing displays, attendees were invited to share their opinions on existing parks, recreational needs, and ideas for improving parks and recreation facilities in Waynesville. Many of the questions asked were very similar to the questions asked on the community survey.

It should be noted that while 65 people signed up as attending this public workshop, not every attendee answered every question. Many of those in attendance were focused on voicing opinions on one or two specific issues or facilities and did not take the time and effort to respond to all questions.

The following is the public's responses:

Are you currently using park and recreation facilities in Waynesville?

Almost everyone responding to this question (39 of 40) indicated they use the Town's parks and recreation facilities. When asked what parks and facilities are being used, Recreation Park (31 responses) was the park most often listed; followed by Vance Street Park (14 responses). The most used recreation facility was Waynesville Recreation Center. Thirty-five attendees said they are using the recreation center.

How satisfied are you with existing public parks and recreation facilities in the Town?

Over three-fourths (78%) of those responding to this question said they were satisfied with existing parks and facilities. Fifteen percent indicated they were very satisfied. Only seven percent of those responding to this question indicated they were dissatisfied.

Do you feel the existing parks and recreation facilities in Waynesville are meeting your needs?

The majority of those responding to this question (21 of 35 or 60%) indicated that existing parks are partially (a write-in option) meeting their needs. Nine of the 35 respondents (26%) said existing facilities were not meeting their needs. Only 5 people responding to the question (14%) said existing facilities are currently meeting all of their needs.

Are additional parks and recreational facilities needed?

Everyone responding to this question (34) said additional parks and recreation facilities are needed.

When asked what facilities are needed, participants provided a list of over 25 different recreation facilities or programs.

The facilities/improvements that received the most responses included:

- Tennis court improvements (16)
- Restrooms (14)
- 50 meter pool (12)
- Therapy pool (11)
- Water fountain at skate park (9)
- Indoor playground (8)
- Clay tennis courts (7)
- Bike trails (7)
- Expand skate park (7)

Attendees were given a list of 26 indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and asked to identify the facilities they are currently using.

The following are the most used recreation facilities based on those that responded:

- Tennis courts (30)
- Swimming pool (19)
- Skateboard park (19)
- Walking trails (15)
- Water access (14)
- Soccer fields (13)
- Exercise equipment (10)
- Dog park (10)
- Open space / natural areas (7)
- Weights (7)

Attendees were then asked to identify facilities they would like to see added to the park system or expanded within the park system.

The facilities most often listed included:

- Swimming pool (67)
- Skateboard park (63)
- Tennis courts (60)
- Weight room (23)
- Walking trails (15)
- Water access (15)
- Playgrounds (13)
- Soccer fields (13)
- Bike trails (11)
- Pickleball courts (10)



Many public workshop attendees recommended improvements to the skateboard park

Attendees were asked if they would support additional taxes and/or higher user fees to support park and recreation facility improvements.

Almost three quarters (73%) of those responding to this question said yes, they would support additional taxes and/

or fees to improve parks and recreation facilities. Only 1 respondent said they would oppose additional taxes or fees. Almost one-fourth (23%) of those responding said it would depend on the circumstances. It should be noted that many of those attending the workshop appeared to be school (high school and middle school) age youth, and are not personally responsible for paying property taxes.

Before leaving the workshop, attendees were invited to leave comments on their park and recreational needs or anything they wanted to share as the plan is developed. Almost 60 comments were posted on the boards. Many of the comments had similar themes. The following issues/ comments were mentioned most often:

Improvements to tennis courts

- Repair/improve existing courts
- Provide restrooms at tennis courts
- Consider clay courts

Improvements to skateboard park

- Install water fountain
- Install lights

Improvements to swimming facilities

- 50 meter pool

Improvements to Waynesville Recreation Center

- Weight room expansion



Attendees were invited to share their opinions on park needs

Community Survey

To better understand the public's perception of existing parks and recreation facilities, and to gather input of recreational needs, the Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department staff conducted a community survey. The survey was distributed in hard copy at the Waynesville Recreation Center and the Old Armory Recreation Center.

It was also made public on the Town's website (www.waynesvillenc.gov) as an interactive survey. The website was marketed through local papers (The Mountaineer and the Smokey Mountain News) and through Haywood County Schools.

The following questions were asked:

1. Have you or other members of your household visited Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department facilities during the past 12 months?

2a. How would you rate the overall quality of Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities which you or members of your household have visited? (if your answer is yes then 2b; no then 3)

2b. Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use the scale of 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent:

3. Please check all the reasons you or other members of your household have chosen NOT to use the Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities:

4a. Please circle YES or NO if the current Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities are meeting your needs. If your answer is NO please add what is needed:

4b. For the following list of POTENTIAL parks and facilities in Waynesville please indicate if you and your household have a desire / want for these facilities YES or NO:

** Please list any other ideas that you may have for this question:*

5. Of the recreational facilities listed above that you have an interest in having in Waynesville which FOUR are the most important to you and your household?

6. Would you willing to pay additional taxes and / or higher user fees to support park and recreation facility improvements in Waynesville?

7. Including yourself, how many permanent residents live in your household?

8. Including yourself, please note the number of people in your household in each of the following age categories:

9. What is your age?

10. How many years have you lived in the Town of Waynesville?

11. Which of the following best describes your race / ethnicity?

12. Please tell us your gender.

The following is a summary of responses from the questions. Detailed responses can be found in Appendix B.

Have you or others of your household visited Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department facilities in the past 12 months?

The existing parks and recreation facilities offered by the Town are extremely heavily used by those responding to the survey. Almost 98% of respondents reported using facilities within the past 12 months.

How would you rate the over-all quality of Waynesville's parks and recreation facilities which you and members of your household have visited?

Citizens of Waynesville believe they have a very good park system. The vast majority of respondents (92%) rated existing facilities as Good or better. Over three quarters of the respondents rated existing parks and facilities as Excellent or Very Good. Only 8 % of respondents rated facilities as less than Good (Fair or Poor). Only 3% indicated the facilities as Poor.



Existing recreation facilities, like Waynesville Recreation Center, are heavily used by citizens

Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use a scale of 1=Poor,

2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Very Good, and 5=Excellent.

This question listed 21 recreation facilities or parks and allowed respondents to rate them on a five (5) scale scoring platform from Excellent to Poor. Most all facilities associated with Recreation Park and Vance Street Park received very favorable (Excellent or Very Good) ratings. The highest rated facilities included the Skate Park, Vance Street Walking Track, Disc Golf Course, Waynesville Recreation Center, Vance Street Greenway, and Recreation Park Greenway. While no facilities received significant low ratings (Fair or Poor), the Town's smaller parks (those other than Recreation Park and Vance Street Park) received more moderate ratings (Good/Fair). Parks with these lower ratings included Hazelwood Park, Sulphur Springs Park, Chestnut Park and East Street Park.

Please check all of the reasons you or other members of your household have chosen NOT to use the Waynesville parks and recreation facilities.

Participants were given 13 options for why they had not used parks or facilities. The reasons most often listed were 1) "Activity times are not convenient" and 2) "Fees are too high". Each of these reasons received 38 responses. The next most listed reasons (both receiving 33 responses) were 1) "Facilities are not well maintained" and 2) "We use services other than Waynesville Parks and Recreation". One other reason listed by many respondents (28) was "Facility I want are not offered".

Please circle YES or NO if the current Waynesville parks and recreation facilities are meeting your needs. If your answer is NO, please add what is needed.

Of the 23 recreation facilities or parks that were listed, the majority of respondents that indicated a desires for those facilities or parks indicated their needs were currently being met. The level of met needs for each of the listings varied from a high of 87% (Landscaping in Parks) to a low of 55% (East Street Park).

Facilities that reported the highest levels of met needs (80% or greater) included Greenways, Waynesville Recreation Center, Disc Golf Course, Greenspace, Walking Trails, Picnic Areas, Fishing Pier, Softball fields, and Landscaping in Parks). Facilities and parks receiving the lowest levels of met needs (less than 60%) included East Street Park, Hazelwood Park, Sulphur Springs Park, and outdoor basketball courts.

The second part of this question allowed respondents to list improvements to existing facilities they felt were

needed. Over 140 response were made to this question. Improvements that received significant multiple responses included:

- Weight room needs to be expanded (13)
- Greenway needs to be expanded (10)
- Skateboard park needs light and water fountain (9)
- Dog park needs shade and grass (9)
- Aerobics room needs to be expanded (7)
- Need a baseball/softball complex (7)

Of the recreational facilities listed above, that you have an interest in having in Waynesville, which four are the most important to you or your household?

The facilities that received the highest number of votes (top ten) to be considered in the four most important facilities to receive improvements included:

- Expansion of Weight room at WRC (67)
- Expansion of aerobics room at WRC (55)
- Extend greenway (54)
- Therapy pool at WRC (46)
- Outdoor event/performance area (34)
- Additional Tennis Courts (31)
- Ropes Challenge Course (29)
- Community garden (26)
- Nature Study/Environmental education area (26)
- Pickleball Courts (25)

improvements in Waynesville?

Respondents to the survey expressed a willingness to pay for park improvements. Almost three quarters (72%) indicated they would be willing to pay higher taxes or user fees to support park improvements.

Overall the responses from the survey provide very good information from the public regarding their views on existing facilities and needs for future improvements. While the results from this survey is valuable, it should not be considered statistically valid or attributable to the town's entire population. The survey was not based on a random sample and the demographics of those responding to the survey (while mimicking many of the town's demographics), do not completely reflect census data information on the town's citizenry. The high number of surveys filled out by participants at the Waynesville Recreation Center should also be taken into consideration as survey results are considered.



The need for expanding the facilities in the Waynesville Recreation Center ranked high in the community survey

Would you be willing to pay additional taxes and/or higher user fees to support park and recreation facility



The indoor sprayground at the Waynesville Recreation Center is one of the Town's most popular recreation facilities

SECTION THREE RECREATION STANDARDS & NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

This section contains the analysis and assessment on which the recommendations of this Systemwide Parks Master Plan are based. It begins with a brief look at the two parks Departments currently serving area residents. This review is followed by a summary of previous community planning efforts relevant to the parks in the community. Next, we look at standards other communities of similar size are using as they build their park systems. This review is based on a description of park types as identified by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) (Appendix C). Using these park types as a backdrop, we develop standards for parks and recreation facilities specifically for Waynesville. These standards are then used as a basis for establishing a park and recreation facility Needs Assessment for the Town.

It should be noted that the NRPA, in its 1995 report “Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines”, determined there are no “national standards” for park development. Instead, the latest NRPA study recommends that each community is unique, and that standards reflecting the local “uniqueness” should be established. Developing standards for parks and recreation facilities specifically for the citizens of Waynesville is the focus of this section.

This study looks at two types of development standards. The first analysis looks at total acreage of park land within the system and how this acreage is broken into park types. From this study it is possible to see how Waynesville’s existing parks compare with other communities, both in overall park acreage and park types within this overall acreage.

The second analysis looks at recreation activities and the facilities required to program these activities. By establishing a population-based standard for various recreation activities, this study establishes the type and quantity of facilities the Town should develop in the future.

The design standards used in this study were guided by citizen input. The development of these standards is perhaps the most important step in this planning process.

Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department

The Town of Waynesville has long recognized the value of parks and recreation to the quality of life in a community. The Department began as a development commission in 1956. It developed its first master plan in 1970. In 1975 the Town took over Parks and Recreation by establishing a Department. Today, the Department offers citizens of Waynesville indoor and outdoor recreation facilities at six Neighborhood and Community Parks covering over 50 acres of land. Existing facilities provide a wide variety of recreational experiences (see inventory sheet) including many indoor recreation activities at 2 outstanding indoor facilities (Waynesville Recreation Center and Old Armory Recreation Center).

The Department operates under the following Mission Statement:

To provide quality recreation opportunities for all citizens of the greater Waynesville area by providing indoor and outdoor facilities and to be a resource for those who seek to improve their quality of life through recreation.

The Department has over 30 full and part time employees, led by a Director, Athletic Supervisor, Aquatic Supervisor, Program Specialist, Fitness Supervisor and Administrative Assistant. A nine person Advisory Commission, comprised of Mayor/Board appointed citizens provides valuable guidance to Department staff on matters of parks and recreational programs.

Indoor recreation programs include a wide variety of Fitness Programs (Stretch and Walk, Cardio Fit, Zumba, Yoga, etc.), Dance Classes, Cooking/Nutrition Classes, Quilting Classes, Karate/Judo Classes, Indoor Pickle Ball, Pottery Classes, and many others. Aquatics programs include Aqua Aerobics, Swim lessons, Smokey Mountain Aquatic Club (S.M.A.C.), Red Cross training, free swim and Indoor Water Park.

Outdoor recreation programs include a wide range of "Base Camp" programming including hiking, paddle trips and outdoor adventure, as well as sports camps for soccer and basketball.

Haywood County Recreation and Parks Department

In April of 2000, the Haywood County Board of Commissioners reinstated the Haywood County

Recreation and Park Department. The Department offers a variety of active recreation programs including adult soccer, youth basketball, Special Olympics, and senior programs including Senior Games and the Happy Wanders program.



The County Department offers programs through park and recreational facilities at eight facilities. The County's largest park is Allens Creek Park, a 58 acre park that provides 4 multi-purpose fields, paved walking trail, playground and picnic pavilion. This park is located just south of Waynesville. Other County recreation facilities include Iron Duff, Fines Creek, Cruso, and Pigeon Community Centers, the Haywood County Agricultural Building, the Waynesville Library, and the Haywood County Agricultural and Activities Center. The Pigeons and Fines Creek Community Centers are leased to the Community Development Clubs and are operated and managed by them. The Cruso Center has been deeded to that club. The Haywood County Agricultural Building provides meeting space and a small outdoor amphitheater. The Agricultural and Activities Center provides a covered multi-purpose area, activities building and a livestock barn.

In addition to the County's existing park facilities, the County purchased 22 acres of property at Jonathan Creek for a second county park. In 2007 the County developed a master plan for this park that includes a baseball/softball complex, multi-purpose field, walking trails, picnic shelters, playground and 2 tennis courts. To date, no work has begun on this park.

The County and Town work collaboratively to coordinate efforts on programs and facilities whenever possible. While the County's move back into recreation and parks was an important step in providing facilities and programs for Haywood County residents, these facilities have limited impact on meeting the recreational needs of Waynesville citizens.

Previous Planning Efforts

Countywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan

In 2007 Haywood County completed a Comprehensive Systemwide Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The plan

looked at park and recreational needs for all county residents. Plan recommendations were divided into regions that included the unincorporated areas of the county and several of the county's towns. Under this structure, the master plan looked specifically at Waynesville and developed recommendations specifically for the Town. While it must be noted that the plan is almost a decade old, it is helpful to look at the findings and conclusions from this plan to see what relevance those recommendations have today.

The 2007 master plan established standards for parkland and recreation facilities. The countywide standards that were established back in 2007 are listed in the tables provided in this section for reference and for helping to determine the standards for this report.

The 2007 master plan also made recommendations for improvements to Waynesville's parks. As part of the 2007 plan, the following park improvements were recommended:

Waynesville Recreation Center/Vance Street Park

- 1,700 sf addition to Recreation Center for weights
- Renovations to existing softball field and restrooms

Recreation Park

- Demolish pool
- Renovate T-ball fields& softball field
- New restrooms
- Expand parking
- Putt-Putt Golf Course
- Splash Pad
- Indoor Tennis Courts (2)
- Skate park

Dutch Fisher Park

- Parking expansion on new park property
- New dugouts
- ADA improvements
- New Playground

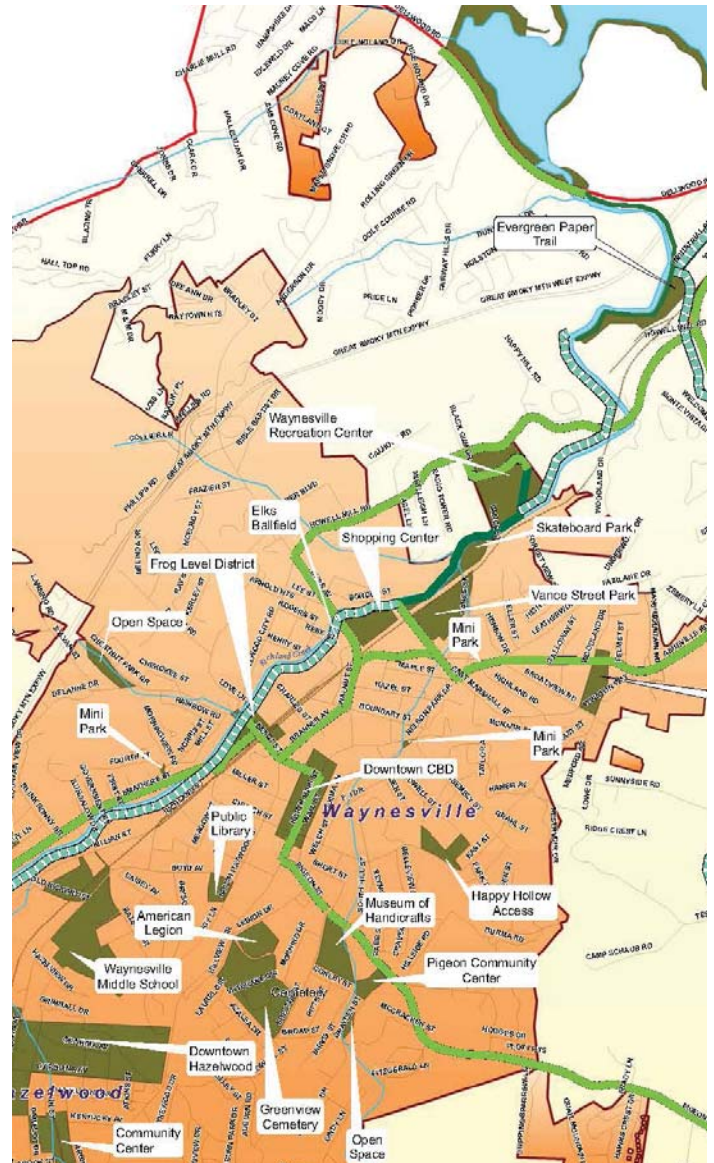
East Street Park

- Parking (20 spaces)
- ADA improvements
- Small restroom
- Replace playground

Sulphur Springs Park

- Parking (10 spaces)
- Walkways
- Improvements to gazebo

As part of the master planning process, order of magnitude cost were established for all improvements. The 2007 plan included approximately \$6.5 million in park and recreation improvements for the town. Unfortunately, very few of the proposed recommendation from this plan have been implemented.



Recommendations from the 2010 Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan include development of greenways

2010 Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

In 2010, the Town completed a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan. The planning process included an inventory and assessment of the Town's existing sidewalks and greenways, public engagement similar to the process used for this planning report, and recommendations for sidewalk and greenway improvements. The Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan recognized the value of greenways and identified the Town's existing greenway and recommended

extension of the Richland Greenway and development of a greenway along Raccoon Creek. The following recommendations regarding greenways were made:

- Extend the greenway system along Richland Creek and Raccoon Creek.
- Acquire ownership interest in properties, especially those within floodways, along corridors designated for greenway expansion.
- Post highly visible signage along the greenway and surrounding roads to inform residents and visitors of greenway access points.
- Provide more distinguished wayfinding signage along the greenway system.

In addition to the site specific recommendations (see proposed plan), the planning document provided very helpful information on the development of greenways and multi-use paths. While not a comprehensive greenway plan, the planning document provides very good information with regard to the value of greenways, pedestrian access to parks and improvements to make Waynesville a more walkable community.



Waynesville's existing greenway includes local art

2020 Land Development Plan

In 1999, the Waynesville Board of Alderman embarked upon a process to develop a 10 year vision for land development for the community. The guiding principle of the plan was to preserve the community's "small town atmosphere, open space, abundant resources, and easy/safe transportation access". The plan was titled "Waynesville: Our heritage, Our Future". The planning process was guided by a Steering Committee of local stakeholders and include public engagement. The plan was guided by Smart Growth Principles and incorporated all aspects of community development, including Parks and Recreation.

As part of the community wide planning process, the planning consultant developed a general inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities. Under Goals and

Objectives, the plan identified the following Objectives for Recreation and Cultural Resources that are directly related to parks and recreation:

Goal: Provide the resources needed for high quality recreation, cultural and economic activities.

Objective: Create a comprehensive and diverse mix of community facilities and public spaces to serve residents of and visitors to Waynesville.

- Design municipal and other governmental buildings to be more aesthetically pleasing and in keeping with the surrounding areas.
- Work with County and other interested entities to convert the Materials Center (old school on Pigeon Street) into a cultural/neighborhood center with surrounding park.
- Work with the School Board, the County and other interested groups to convert the Old Hazelwood School into a community center for arts/recreation/public meetings, etc. Maintain athletic fields for recreational use.
- Seek funding for incorporating cultural resources into public structures.
- Identify and maintain an inventory of outstanding scenic landscapes, roads and views, important street trees and other features which define the character of the Waynesville area.

Objective: Develop and maintain a recreation plan that provides programming and facilities to meet the active and passive recreational needs of the Waynesville community.

- Work with Haywood Waterways and the Richland Creek Action Committee to develop a comprehensive greenway plan for Waynesville building from the Richland Creek Greenway Plan. Develop the greenway in phases as proposed in the plan.
- Expand the number and size of community parks by utilizing land in flood prone areas and other lands of similar development restraints.
- Require open space and park dedication in larger residential developments.
- Encourage the County to explore recreational use of the landfill property on Francis Farm Road.
- Encourage the County and cooperate with other community partners to establish a complex of soccer fields on Haywood County property on Allen's Creek Road.
- Conduct a survey of park, programing and open space needs. Following the survey, begin to develop parks to address needs identified through the survey. Work with the Recreation Board and Staff to assure that

programs provided meet the recreation needs of the Waynesville Community.

- Apply for funding for the acquisition and development of park and recreation areas.

It should be noted that the 2020 Land Use Plan was developed sixteen years ago. Many of the site specific proposed objectives listed in the plan are not relevant today. What is relevant is the recommendations that indicate the importance of parks and greenways to the community's fabric and the desire to provide a wide variety of active and passive recreational opportunities to the citizens of Waynesville.

Standards for Development

The first step in developing a recreation and park needs assessment is to establish standards for park and facility development. Tables 3A-Park Acreage on page 3-9 and 3A-Facilities on page 3-10 provide an overview of standards used for both park acreage and facilities. Each of these tables provide standards used by other North Carolina municipalities (as well as standards used in the County's 2007 Comprehensive Plan) in establishing park and recreation needs. The final column on each of these tables indicates the standard of development recommended specifically for Waynesville. These recommended standards are based on input received from the survey, public workshop and stakeholder interviews.

It should be noted that the standards for development established for the Town of Waynesville are (in most cases) similar to other communities in North Carolina. Likewise, the needs that are identified in the plan will lead the Town to develop parks and facilities comparable to many other communities of similar size.

Park Needs

The description of park needs identified in this Master Plan are based on park types identified in Appendix C and as defined by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Mini Parks

Currently the Town has no Mini Parks, although there are several small civic parks located in the downtown area. While the national trend in park development has moved away from Mini Parks because of their limited play value and higher maintenance cost, there are some situations where Mini Parks provide important recreational value.

Based on a fairly common standard of development for

Mini Parks (.25 acres per 1,000 people), there is a need for 2.5 acres of Mini Parks in Waynesville. While the Town currently has several small civic spaces, there is a need for at least one Mini Park in the Department's park inventory.

One opportunity for meeting this need would be acquisition of County property on Calvary Street. Preliminary discussion between the Town and County indicate the possibility of the Town acquiring a ± 1 acre site for development of a small park.

It is also understood that in the future there may be situations/opportunities that may warrant the development of Mini Parks by the Town, or private entities may choose to develop small "Pocket Parks" as part of residential or mixed use development.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks are typically an important component of a municipal park system. Currently there are 3 existing Neighborhood Parks in the town covering approximately 8 acres of park land. All of the Town's existing Neighborhood Parks are small by NRPA Standards. Typically Neighborhood Parks are a minimum of 5 - 7 acres. The Town's Neighborhood Parks are all 4 acres or less. Likewise, all of the Town's existing parks are either underdeveloped (offering only minimal facilities) or they are in need of renovations.



Chestnut Park is Waynesville's newest Neighborhood Park

Based on the Town's existing population of 10,000, and a supply of only 8 acres of Neighborhood Parks, Waynesville residents have access to Neighborhood Parks at a ratio of less than one acre of Neighborhood Park land for every 1,000 people. This is a low parkland/user ratio. Most municipal departments strive to provide Neighborhood Parks at a ratio of 2.0-2.5 acres of park land per 1,000 people. While there was little demand for developing additional Neighborhood Parks expressed in the public

workshop or the community survey, based on this low ratio of Neighborhood Parks, there is a need for additional park acreage for Neighborhood Parks.

This planning report recommends a relatively conservative standard for Neighborhood Park development of 2.0 acres of park land for 1,000 people. This standard is greater than the standard established in the Haywood County Comprehensive Plan, but reflects the standard used by most municipalities throughout North Carolina. Based on a standard of 2 acre/1000 people, there is a need for 12 to 13 additional acres of Neighborhood Park land in Waynesville. Based on this assessment, there is a need for one additional Neighborhood Park, and possibly the expansion of one (or more) of the existing Town's Neighborhood Parks.

In addition to acquiring land for an additional Neighborhood Park, there is a need to make improvements to each of the Town's existing Neighborhood Parks. See *Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations* for recommendations for park improvements.



Vance Street Park is a good example of a Community Park

Community Parks

Currently the Town has three Community Parks on approximately 40 acres of park land serving local residents. One of the Town's Community Parks is extremely small by Community Park standards. Hazelwood Park is categorized as a Community park, because the ball field activities draw people from throughout the community. While the park functions as a Community Park from that standpoint, the park's size and limited facility offerings greatly restrict its recreational offerings. Likewise, Waynesville's two larger Community Parks (Vance Street Park and Recreation Park) are small by Community Park standards.

Utilizing a Level of Service (LOS) standard of 5 acres of

Community Park land for every 1,000 people, the citizens of Waynesville need approximately 6 - 8 additional acres in the Community Park category to meet current needs. As seen in Table 3A-Park Acreage, 5 acres/1,000 people is a relatively common standard of development for Community Parks. It is also a higher standard of development than the standard recommended in the County's previous Comprehensive Plan (2 acres/1000 people).

The need for additional park acreage within this classification does not indicate the need for an additional Community Park, but instead indicates a need for possibly acquiring property adjacent to the Town's existing Community Parks to increase their acreage.

In addition to expanding park acreage of Community Parks, all of the existing Community Parks have facilities that need renovation and/or expansion. See the inventory section and *Section Four* for additional recommendations for existing park improvements.

While the overall number of Community Parks has been met by the Town's existing Community Parks, it is important to realize that there are unmet recreational needs that could be met by making improvements to existing facilities at Vance Street Park and Recreation Park. See *Section Four* for more specific recommendations on existing park needs.

District Parks and Regional Parks

District Parks and Regional Parks are typically developed by larger municipal departments and/or county agencies. Most small to mid-size municipalities do not develop these larger park types.

Haywood County currently has one District Park; Allens Creek Park. It is extremely small by District Park standards, and has relatively limited facility offerings. While this park is located very close to the citizens of Waynesville, based on its small size and limited facility offerings, it is not fully meeting the needs of Waynesville citizens for a District Park.

The County also recently purchased a 22 acre park site on Jonathan Creek Road just northwest of the Town. While a Master Plan has been developed for the site, the County has not moved forward with development of the property.

While the development of a District Park may be outside the focus of the Town, the need for a larger District Park seems apparent; however, the development of a District Park should be the responsibility of the County. The

Town might consider partnering with the County in the development of a future District Park, if the program of development would include facilities that will benefit Waynesville residents.

With regard to Regional Parks, the citizens of Waynesville are very fortunate because of the abundant resources of the State and Federal governments in the region. Three North Carolina State Parks (Gorges State Park, Chimney Rock State Park, and Mount Mitchell State Park) are with relatively easy driving distance of the town. In addition to these State Parks, the US Department of the Interior offers several outstanding nature based resources in the area (Blue Ridge Parkway, Great Smoky Mountain National Park, and the Pisgah National Forest).

With these and many other natural resources found in the area, the need to develop a Regional Park should not a priority for the Town.



Rainbow Falls at Gorges State Park is one of the many natural areas available to Waynesville residents

Countywide Park Needs

Reviewing or assessing countywide needs is beyond the scope of this planning report, but one thing seems obvious from this study. Haywood County offers very limited parks and recreation facilities, and most of the facilities that are offered as not serving Waynesville residents. While the County reinstated the Recreation and Parks Department in the early nineties, very few new parks have been developed since the Department was reestablished. This situation results in a large number of county citizens not well served by existing county parks. Residents living in the unincorporated areas of the county have little access to typical park amenities like playgrounds, picnic facilities, ballfields, and walking trails. From the Town’s perspective this lack of parks and recreation facilities in rural areas

places even greater demand on the Town’s parks and recreation facilities.

Facility Needs

Minimum standards for recreational facilities (i.e., ballfields, courts, picnic shelters, etc.) proposed for the Town were developed from a review of standards used by other communities similar to Waynesville, and from input gained during the public input process. These standards, identified in *Table 3A-Facility Standards* and discussed in greater detail in *Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations*, are the minimum recreation facility standards for the Town’s park system.

Based on these standards, the number of public facilities needed in the park system are identified in *Table 3B-Facility Needs* and summarized in the following chart.

The “Existing Facilities” column indicates the number of existing recreation facilities Waynesville residents currently have available. The “Facility Need” column identifies the number of new facilities currently needed by town residents. Based on the relatively low projected 10 year growth for the Town, current recreations needs are also the 10 year projected need.

As an example of how the needs assessment is presented; consider playgrounds. Currently there are 3 existing playgrounds serving community residents. Based on the Standards for Facility Development that have been recommended for the town (one playground for every 2,000 people in the service population), there is a current demand for 5 playgrounds ($10,000 \div 2,000 = 5$); there is a need to construct 2 additional playgrounds (demand of 5-3 existing playgrounds) to meet the current demand.

	Existing Facilities	Facility Need
Ballfields	4	-
Football Fields	0	-
Soccer Fields	2	-
Basketball Courts	3	-
Tennis Courts	6	-
Volleyball Courts	2	-
Horseshoe	3	-
Shuffleboard Courts	0	1
Playground	3	2
Picnic Shelters	5	-
Hiking/Jogging Trails (miles)	2	4.3
Amphitheater	0	1
Community Garden	0	1

Indoor Swimming Pool	1	
Recreation Center w/Gym	2	-
Community Building	1	-
Dog Park	1	-
Skate Park	1	-
Disc Golf	1	-

Based on the standards established through the public input process, the primary recreation facility needs for Waynesville residents includes playgrounds, amphitheater, and walking trails. Sports facilities do not seem to be a priority. Unique recreation facilities (spraygrounds and community gardens) should also be considered. While there is not a need for a new Recreation Center, there are several improvements needed at the Waynesville Recreation Center. Likewise, there was demand for improving several of the Town’s existing parks. See *Section Four Proposals and Recommendations* for additional recommendations.

Table 3B-Facility Needs includes a summary of facility needs.

**Table 3-A Park Acreage
Town of Waynesville
Standards for Park Acreage
By Park Classification**

NRPA Guidelines & Communities of Similar Size

Park Types	NRPA Guidelines	Haywood County	Matthews	Mount Holly	Archdale	Belmont	Waynesville
Mini Parks	1-3 acres .25 acres/1,000	1-2 acres .25 acres/1,000	1-3 acres .25 acres/1,000	1-3 acres .25 acres/1,000	1-3 acres .25 acres/1,000	1-2 acres 0.5 acres/1,000	1-2 acres .25 acres/1,000
Neighborhood Parks	7-15 acres 2 acres/1,000	7-15 acres 1 acres/1,000	7-15 acres 2.5 acres/1,000	7-15 acres 2 acres/1,000	7-15 acres 2.5 acres/1,000	10-15 acres 2 acres/1,000	7-15 acres 2 acres/1,000
Community Parks	40-100 acres 5 acres/1,000	20-30 acres 2 acres/1,000	40-100 acres 5 acres/1,000	30-50 acres 4 acres/1,000	50-100 acres 5.0 acres/1,000	20-30 acres 2.5 acres/1,000	20-30 acres 5 acres/1,000
District Parks		200 acres 3 acres/1,000	± 200 acres 5 acres/1,000	200-400 acres 10 acres/1,000	± 200 acres 5 acres/1,000	200 acres 5 acres/1,000	200 acres 2.5 acres/1,000
Regional Parks*	100-250 acres 10 acres/1,000		100-250 acres 10 acres/1,000	+1,000 acres 10 acres/1,000	100-250 acres 10 acres/1,000	1,000 acres 10 acres/1,000	1,000 acres 10 acres/1,000

Park Type/Typical Acreage (Acres per 1,000 Population)

* Regional Parks are typically provided by state or federal agencies.

Table 3A – Facility Standards
Town of Waynesville
Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Recreation Facility Standards for Development

Facilities	National Recreation and Park Association	N.C. Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources	Haywood County	Matthews	Mount Holly	Archdale	Belmont	Waynesville
Fields								
Adult Baseball	1/12,000	1/5,000		1/15,000	1/15,000	1/15,000	1/10,000	1/20,000
Youth Baseball	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/2,000	1/10,000
Softball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Football	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/20,000
Soccer	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/7,500	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Courts								
Basketball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/4,000	1/4,000	1/2,500	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/2,000
Volleyball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Shuffleboard	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000
Horseshoe	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000
Outdoor Areas								
Picnic Shelter	N/A	1/3,000	1/5,000	1/3,000	1/2,500	1/3,000	1/3,000	1/2,000
Playground Activities*	N/A	1/1,000	1/5,000	1/1,000	1/2,000	1/3,000	1/1,000	1/2,000
Trails								
Walking	1/region	.4 mile/1,000	1/5,000	.4 mile/1,000	.8 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	.6 mile/ 1,000
Equestrian				.4 mile/1,000		.4 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	.4 mile/ 1,000
Specialized								
Community Center	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/30,000	1/20,000	1/15,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Gymnasium	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/60,000					1/10,000
Swimming Pool	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Golf Course	1/25,000	1/25,000		N/A	N/A	1/25,000	1/25,000	1/25,000
Bicycling/Urban	N/A	1 mile/1,000		1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	N/A
Camping				1 site/1,000		2.5 sites/1,000		N/A
Archery Area	1/50,000	1/50,000		1/50,000	N/A	1/50,000		N/A
Stream/Lake Mileage	N/A	.2 mile/1,000		.2 mile/1,000	.8 mile/1,000	.2 mile/1,000	.2 mile/1,000	.2 mile/ 1,000
Stream/Lake Access	N/A	1/10 miles		1/10 miles	1/10 miles	1/10 miles	1/10 miles	1/10 miles

**Table 3B – Park Needs
Town of Waynesville
Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Park Needs Assessment**

Park Types	Waynesville Standards	Existing Parks	2017 Demand 10,000 Population	2017 Need	2026 Demand 10,500 Population	2026 Need
Mini Parks	1-2 acres .25 acres/1,000	--	1-2 parks 2.5 acres	1-2 parks	1-2 parks 2.65 acres	1-2 parks 2.65 acres
Neighborhood Parks	7-15 acres 2 acres/1,000	3 parks 8 acres	3-4 parks 20 acres	1 additional park 12 Acres	3-4 parks 21 acres	1 Additional Park 13 Acres
Community Parks*	20-30 acres 5 acres/1,000	2 parks 44 acres	2-3 parks 50 acres	6 acres*	2 park 52.5 acres	8.25 acres*
District Park**	200 acres 2.5 acres/1,000	N/A		Responsibility of County		Responsibility of County
Regional Parks***	1,000 acres 10 acres/1,000	N/A		Needs met by State Parks		Needs met by State Parks

*Community Park: While there is not a need for a new Community Park, expanding property at the Town's existing Community Parks is desirable.

**District Park needs are typically met by county agencies. Small municipal agencies rarely provide District Parks.

***Regional Park needs are typically met by state parks. Small municipal agencies rarely provide Regional Park facilities.

Table 3B - Facility Needs
Town of Waynesville
Parks and Recreation Master Plan
Recreation Facility Needs Assessment

Based on a Benchmarking Analysis of national, state, and other similar agencies standards, and with input from the community, the following table reflects the recreational facility needs of Waynesville.

Facilities	Existing Facilities	2017 Standards	2017 Demand Population 10,000	2017 Need	2026 Demand Population 10,500	2026 Need
Fields						
Adult Baseball	0	1/20,000	0	0	0	0
Youth Baseball	1	1/10,000	1	0	1	0
Softball	3	1/5,000	2	0	2	0
Football	0	1/20,000	0	0	1	0
Soccer/Multi-Purpose	2	1/5,000	2	0	2	0
Courts						
Basketball	3	1/5,000	2	0	2	0
Tennis	6	1/2,000	5	0	5	0
Volleyball	2	1/5,000	2	0	2	0
Shuffleboard	0	1/10,000	1	1	1	1
Horseshoe	0	1/10,000	1	1	1	1
Outdoor Areas						
Picnic Shelter	5	1/2,000	5	0	5	0
Playground	3	1/2,000	5	2	5	2
Trails						
Walking	2.0	.6 mile/ 1,000	6	4	6.3	4.3
Specialized						
Community Center	1	1/10,000	1	0	1	0
Gymnasium	1	1/10,000	1	0	1	0
Swimming Pool (indoor)	1	1/20,000	1	0	1	0
Stream/Lake Mileage	2	.2 mile/ 1,000	2	0	2.1	0
Stream/Lake Access	1	1/10 miles	1	0	1	0
Skate Board	1	1/10,000	1	0	1	0
Disc Golf	1	1/7,500	1	0	1	0
Dog Park	1	1/7,500	1	0	1	0
Splash Pad	0	1/10,000	1	1	1	1
Community Garden	0	1/10,000	1	1	1	1
Amphitheater	0	1/10,000	1	1	1	1



Bocce is a rapidly growing recreational activity in the southeast

SECTION FOUR PROPOSALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Community leaders in Waynesville have long recognized the importance of parks and recreation facilities in the quality of life in a community and have historically invested in parks. Overall the Town has some excellent parks, and certainly, the Waynesville Recreation Center is an example of the commitment town leaders have made to recreation.

Currently there are just over 52 acres of municipal park land serving Waynesville residents. The majority of this park acreage is found in the Town's two largest parks; Vance Street Park and Recreation Park. Based on a population of almost 10,000 people, there is a need for additional parkland (in Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks). In addition, there are deficiencies in some recreational facilities and many of the town's parks are old (or underdeveloped) and need renovation. Finally, there is a need to expand walking trails and greenway connections throughout the community.

Identification of these recreational needs/opportunities comes at a time when Waynesville (like most communities in North Carolina) continues to grow out of the nation's worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. It is very important for the Town to invest the resources allocated for park improvements wisely.

Waynesville is not alone in its mission to provide parks and recreational facilities to its citizens. There are a number of public and private agencies and organizations in the community that could share in that role.

The Haywood County Recreation and Parks Department is also a provider of parks and recreation programs to Waynesville residents. While the County Department does an excellent job providing facilities and programs on a very limited budget, as this report indicates, the facilities and parks they offer are limited. There is a need for additional parks and facilities in the County's park system. Wherever possible, the Town and County should work collaboratively to improve park and recreation opportunities.

Another major player with the mission of improving community health and quality of life in Waynesville is Haywood Regional Medical Center. The Town should look for opportunities to partner with the hospital in the promotion of healthy lifestyles through the development of recreation facilities and programs that keep people active.

Haywood County Schools offer its students a wide range of athletic facilities. Some of those facilities are currently being used for non-school recreational purposes. While there is currently some joint use of facilities, the exploration and expansion of joint use opportunities would benefit taxpayers.

Finally, the private sector plays an important role in providing recreational opportunities in the community. A number of fitness clubs, neighborhood swim clubs, churches, and other private or quasi-private organizations provide valuable recreation opportunities to the citizens of Waynesville. The facilities and programs these private sector organizations provide should be considered as Waynesville plans development of future facilities.

To determine specific park and recreation recommendations for Waynesville, it is essential to clearly understand how the Town will partner with the other recreational providers in the community. This cooperative effort will eliminate duplication of facilities and services. The proposals in this Master Plan are based on what each recreational provider is anticipated to offer through the ten year planning period (2017-2026).



Mount Mitchell State Park

State of North Carolina

Several state parks (Gorges State Park, Mount Mitchell State Park and Chimney Rock State Park) are within a relatively short drive of Waynesville. It is anticipated that the State of North Carolina will continue to maintain and operate all state parks within the region. Waynesville,

along with other regional government agencies, should express their interest in seeing these parks enhanced to their utmost potential. This may include the expansion of facilities and recreational opportunities. The State should continue to offer a variety of recreational facilities and programs on a regional basis. In addition, the State should be the provider of regional state parks that include opportunities for camping, fishing, biking, and special facilities of regional and statewide interest.

Haywood County Recreation & Parks Department

As noted throughout this report, Haywood County Recreation and Parks Department is the primary provider of parks and recreation facilities to all citizens of the county. Since the early nineties, when the County chose to reinstate its Recreation and Parks Department, Haywood County has been responsible for maintaining parks and providing recreation programs to all county residents; including those living in Waynesville.

Unfortunately the County's park system is limited in the parks and recreation facilities it offers (See *Section Three: Recreation Standards and Needs Assessment*). A quick review of the County's existing facilities indicates very few facilities offered by the County actually serve Waynesville residents.

As the Town moves to expand its parks and improve its existing parks and greenways these improvements will enhance Waynesville residents, and will also benefit county residents as well. It is important that the Town and the County communicate (and work together) as they both strive to provide parks and recreation services to their citizens.

Haywood County School System

The Town has collaborated with other agencies and organizations in the community in the delivery of quality leisure experiences and the development and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The Parks and Recreation Department should seek opportunities to collaborate with Haywood County Schools.

With six school campuses located in the town, there are many opportunities for joint use of school facilities. The Department should look for ways to work with school officials to joint use school facilities. In return, the Department should be open to offering assistance with operation and maintenance of those facilities that are used.

Haywood Regional Medical Center

Citizens of Waynesville have access to an outstanding medical facility in Haywood Regional Medical Center. This facility provides residents of Waynesville and the surrounding area with excellent health care. Recent studies on obesity and healthy lifestyles have made it apparent that a community's health is linked to regular physical activity. Many of these activities are offered by the Town's Parks and Recreation Department.

The hospital and Town should explore opportunities to work together to assist citizens in achieving a more active lifestyle.

HAYWOOD
REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

A Duke LifePoint Hospital

Waynesville Parks & Recreation Department

Proposals & Recommendations

As previously discussed, the Town of Waynesville is the primary provider of parks and recreation programs to community residents. Starting as a Recreation Commission, back in the 50s, the Department has continuously worked to provide quality facilities and programs to local residents.

Existing parks in the town are primarily oriented toward smaller parks (Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks). While the existing municipal parks provide a foundation of recreational facilities and green space, there are several recreational needs that are not adequately being met, and several of the existing parks are old and need some improvements.

While the Town is the primary provider of parks to Waynesville residents, it should work with other agencies in the community to provide the park land and facilities whenever possible. This collaborative effort should include working with the County's Recreation and Parks Department. Likewise, the Town should work with Haywood County Schools by developing and maintaining joint use agreements on school facilities wherever possible.

Through the planning and public involvement process, standards for community park acreage and recreation facilities have been developed. These standards were defined in *Section Three: Standards and Needs Assessment* and identified in *Table 3A-Park Acreage and Table 3A-Facility Standards*.

Utilizing the standards for development and applying them to the Town's current and projected population, a needs assessment for both parks and recreation facilities was developed. The summary of this needs assessment is found in the tables at the end of Section Three.

While the tables provide "the numbers" of the needs assessment, this section will define the reasoning behind the numbers and a description of how the numbers are used to provide recommendations that will ultimately guide the Town in the coming decade.

We begin with an overview of the different park types and how these parks will be developed in the future.

Regional Parks

Regional Parks are typically large, passive oriented parks that highlight, utilize and protect a unique natural features. These parks, as the name implies, serve people from across a region; therefore, most people have to travel to enjoy these park types. As noted in Section Three, Regional Parks are typically offered by national, state, or county agencies. Occasionally larger municipalities will provide a Regional Park.

The citizens of Waynesville are currently served by three State Parks that are within an easy drive. These three parks provide a wide range of low impact recreation opportunities including hiking, biking, camping, environmental education, wildlife/bird observation, etc. In addition to these outdoor recreation opportunities, these State Parks also offer visitor and nature centers for nature study and wildlife appreciation.

The region's three State Parks provide excellent large scale parks for Waynesville residents. In addition to the State Parks, the Nantahala National Forest, which covers more than a half million acres of protected forest is within an easy drive of the town. Visitors to the National Forest can enjoy a wide variety of low impact outdoor recreational experience.

Based on the abundant natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities offered at the area's State Parks

and National Forests, the need for large Regional Parks for Waynesville residents has been met.

District Park

District Parks are another large park type often provided by county agencies or larger municipalities. These parks are typically in the 100 acre range, and provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities.

The development of this type facility often falls to county agencies. Allens Creek Park, the county's park just south of Waynesville, is classified as a District Park. In addition to Allens Creek Park, the County has acquired 22 acres on Jonathan Creek Road for a new District Park. While a Master Plan has been developed for the property, there is no schedule for park development. Unfortunately, both of these parks are more geared toward a Community Park.

With the build out of both of these county parks, Waynesville's citizens should have adequate access to larger parks without the need of constructing a District Park on their own. The Town should be open to collaborating with Haywood County in the development of a District Park if that opportunity should present itself in the future.

Community Parks

Community Parks are an important component in most municipal park systems. These parks are usually large enough (30-50 acres) to provide both valuable active recreation opportunities and preservation of undeveloped open space and passive recreation areas.

There are three parks in Waynesville that are currently serving as Community Parks. All of the Town's existing Community Parks are small by Community Park standards; especially Haywood Park. Even the Town's larger parks (Vance Street Park and Recreation Park) are small by Community Park standards. Some of the existing recreation facilities in these two parks create conflicts between users, and there is a lack of open space in both parks.

Based on input received during the public engagement process, there appears to be a need for expansion of existing Community Parks. Utilizing a standard of 5 acres of Community Parkland for every 1,000 people in the service population, there is a need for 6 - 8 additional acres of Community Parkland. Based on this need, the Town should look for opportunities to expand park acreage at its existing Community Parks.

Likewise the Town's two most popular Community Parks (Vance Street and Recreation Park) could provide

significantly more recreational value if facilities were renovated or expanded. Site Specific Master Plans should be developed for both these parks.



Major renovations are needed at Recreation Park

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks play an important role in providing both active and passive recreation in most municipal park systems. These parks, usually in the 5-10 acre range, are large enough to include both active and passive recreation opportunities. Most Community Parks also serve as a Neighborhood Park to those citizens living within a mile radius.

The citizens of Waynesville are currently being served by three Neighborhood Parks on only 8 acres of parkland. Unfortunately, all three of these neighborhood parks are small by typical Neighborhood Park standards, and two of the parks (Sulphur Springs Park and Chestnut Park) have very limited recreational facilities. Since Neighborhood Parks typically serve as the primary building block of most municipal park systems, eight acres of neighborhood parkland is not adequate to serve the 10,000 people living in Waynesville.

Utilizing a relatively conservative level of service standard for Neighborhood Parks (2 acres per 1,000 people), there is a need for an additional ± 12 -13 acres of Neighborhood Parkland in Waynesville. Typically Neighborhood Parks are 5-10 acres; preferably in the 6-8 acre range. That would indicate a need for at least one additional Neighborhood Park, and possibly the expansion of existing neighborhood parks (where feasible). Based on the service radius of the Town's existing parks, there are several neighborhoods that are underserved by Neighborhood Parks.

In the future, the Town should develop Site Specific Master Plans for each of its existing Neighborhood Parks with an emphasis on improving existing facilities at East Street

Park and expanding facilities at Chestnut Park.

Perhaps the most unusual opportunity with regard to parks in the Neighborhood Park classification is Sulphur Springs Park. This unique park has a strong link to history; going back to the Civil War. Special care and planning should be given to this unique site to ensure its historical integrity is maintained; possibly moving to have the site placed on the National Historical Register.

Mini Parks

Mini Parks are the smallest of the park types. These parks typically are less than an acre and provide a limited range of activities (playground, picnic shelter, benches, etc.). The Town does not currently have any Mini Parks, although there are several small civic sites in the downtown area.

Utilizing a fairly common standard of development for Mini Parks (.25 acres of Parkland per 1,000 people), there is a need for approximately 2.5 acres on Mini Parks within the Town. Since most Mini Parks are in the 1-2 acres size, this would indicate the need for 1 or 2 new parks in the Town.

One opportunity for Mini Park development could be acquisition of a one acre property on Calvary Street, just off Pidgeon Street. The property, which is currently owned by the County, could be sold to the Town at a minimal cost. This property could then be developed as a Mini Park; possibly as a memorial to Martin Luther King, Jr.

In the future, the Town may also encourage private developers to construct small amenity areas (playgrounds, shelters, etc.) when building single family residential developments.

Civic Parks

Civic Parks are community spaces that often provide a sense of place for a town or city. The size and form of Civic Parks may vary considerably. Likewise, how the spaces are used and programed vary. Civic Parks may include urban plazas, community green spaces and lawns, memorials, etc.

Waynesville already has several small civic places in its downtown area. There may be other opportunities for the development of civic parks as part of downtown or neighborhood improvements.

Greenways

The most popular form of outdoor recreation in the nation is walking. This popularity was reflected in the survey that was conducted as part of this planning study

and in comments made during the public workshops. Greenway trails are typically off-road trails that meander through neighborhoods and natural areas providing transportation corridors and recreational opportunities for walkers, joggers, roller bladders, and cyclists. The trail surface can either be natural or paved. Paved trails are normally eight to ten feet in width. Natural surface trail widths can vary based on conditions. In addition to providing environmental protection and recreation opportunities, greenways and bike trails can produce economic development. The North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation conducted a study on a bicycle trail constructed along the northern Outer Banks region. This study determined that a \$6.7 million investment in off-road bike paths and shoulder improvements produced an estimated \$60 million annually in economic benefit.

In addition, the study found that Greenways also offer a valuable alternative to automotive transportation. A greenway trail often provides a linkage between communities, schools, churches, businesses, and parks.



The trail at Vance Street Park is part of the Town's existing greenway system

The Town has completed a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan. A significant focus of this planning effort addressed the need for greenways along several of the town's creeks. The report recommended the development of a greenway trails along Richland Creek and Raccoon Creek that would improve access to existing parks.

Recommendations from this valuable study should be used to guide implementation of a community-wide greenway system.

Greenways should be developed in conjunction with other park and recreation providers in the area to ensure they are coordinated with other planning efforts and that there is continuity between plans.

Off Road Bikeways

The need for bikeable roads and the development of greenways for biking was mentioned in many of the stakeholder discussions and in the public meetings. With the focus on healthy lifestyles, the environment, and alternative transportation, there is a great need to develop and implement a bike plan.



Off road bikeways and greenways provide safe places for families to ride

The Town should encourage the State to include bike lanes whenever roadway improvements are made or new roads constructed. The Town should also address their subdivision process to ensure developers provide bicycle (and pedestrian) routes in the roadway improvements they construct as part of the development process.

The Town should consider applying for federal SAFETEA program non-vehicular transportation funds that encourage alternative means of transportation. These funds have been used to construct bike lanes and greenway trails in communities throughout North Carolina.

Bicycle facilities in the area could serve as an important attraction to the many tourists visiting the region. Investments in bicycle facilities could improve the safety of the area's transportation system. Bicycle activities provide benefits of health, fitness, quality of life, and the environment.



Restrooms at Recreation Park are one of several facilities that need ADA improvements

Renovation & Expansion of Existing Parks

There is a need to improve and expand facilities at several of the Town's existing parks. Important renovation projects which should be considered include:

- Improvements to Recreation Park
- Improvements to Vance Street Park
- Improvements to Waynesville Recreation Center
- Improvements to Chestnut Park
- Improvements to Hazelwood Park

As noted in previous sections, master plans should be developed for several of the existing parks and future parks serving Town residents. Site Specific Master Plans should be developed for each of the Town's existing parks. Priority should be placed on the following parks:

- Recreation Park
- Vance Street Park
- Communitywide Greenway Master Plan

Facility Proposals & Recommendations

This report recommends the Town construct several new neighborhood parks, expand greenways, and make improvements to existing parks and facilities by the year 2026. The improvements that will be made as part of these renovations and expansions will add many new facilities to the parks inventory. The Town should consider the list of facility needs established in *Section Three* and described in greater detail in this section as it makes park improvements:

Softball

Men's adult softball has traditionally been a popular sport in North Carolina. NRPA and NCDENR standards (one field per 5,000 people) reflect that popularity. While the sport is still popular in some areas, there has been a shift in demand of men's adult softball in many communities. This plan recommends a general standard of development of one ball field per 5,000 people (comparable to other North Carolina communities). Based on this standard, the Town does not currently have a need for three ball fields, and should consider removal of the existing softball field in Recreation Park.

It should also be noted that changes in demand have now placed additional emphasis on women's softball. In the future, softball fields should be designed to accommodate this new area of play, or some of the existing fields may need to be retrofitted to allow for women's play.

Football

Football's popularity as a community based youth sport has been reduced by the emergence of soccer and (most recently) lacrosse. The standard for development of football fields is one field for every 20,000 people within the service community (a standard used by many municipal agencies). This standard indicates there is not a need for a designated football field.

Soccer

Soccer is one of the fastest growing sports in America. This master plan reflects this demand by establishing a standard of one field for every 5,000 people within the service population. The Town currently has a multipurpose field and soccer field at Vance Street Park. Utilizing this standard for development, the Town does not need additional soccer fields.



Lighting soccer fields effectively doubles their use. Likewise, the development of synthetic turf fields could greatly increase playing time on existing fields and reduce the number of fields needed. Lighting and turf improvements to existing fields could help offset any future need for additional fields.

A final note on soccer, the demand for multi-purpose fields will be made more intense by the new interest in lacrosse. Played on a field very similar to a soccer field (they are slightly larger than soccer fields), lacrosse will likely increase in popularity and should be considered as the Department reviews its soccer field needs. This new sport should be taken into consideration since play for both sports can be programmed on similar fields. One method to accommodate the variety of field games (soccer, lacrosse, rugby, football) is to develop larger multi-use fields that can be used for a variety of field games.

Basketball

Basketball remains an extremely popular sport in the United States. Played by a variety of ages, and increasingly by females, this sport can be played either indoors or out. Currently the Town provides two gymnasiums with indoor basketball courts and two outdoor courts. Based on national and state standards of development of one outdoor basketball court per 5,000 people, there is currently not a need for additional courts.

The existing courts at Recreation Park should be improved by resurfacing and possibly adding player amenities (benches, restrooms, etc.).

See the section on Community Centers and Gymnasiums for the community's need for indoor courts.

Tennis

Based on input received in the public workshops, tennis is a very popular sport in Waynesville. While there was much discussion about the need for improvements to existing court, there does not appear to be demand for additional courts. Instead, the focus was on making improvements to the existing courts. Many people complained that the courts are cracked and lack amenities (seating areas, good restrooms, etc.). Several people also requested courts be replaced with clay courts and several people suggested having a part time tennis pro.



Tennis is a very popular recreational activity in Waynesville

Currently the Town's six courts give the community a Level of Service (LOS) for tennis of 1 court for every 1,666 people; slightly above the typical 1 court per 2000 people that many communities use as a LOS for tennis. While there does not appear to be strong demand for adding courts, it is obvious there is a need to make major improvements to the existing courts and add player amenities.

Volleyball

There are currently two outdoor volleyball courts at Vance Street Park. These courts are meeting current demand. The Town's existing courts at Vance Street Park are isolated from the remainder of the park and lack amenities (shade, seating, restrooms, etc). Several people suggested relocating them to another park.

Shuffleboard

There has been no expressed demand for outdoor shuffleboard courts from citizens; therefore, the Town does not have any courts. This activity provides a recreational outlet and opportunities for social interaction, particularly for older citizens, but until there is demand, shuffleboard courts should not be a priority.

The Town may consider building shuffleboard courts in parks if there is a demand for this activity in the future. Like volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts are relatively small and can easily be added to existing parks.

Horseshoes

There has been no demand for horseshoe pits in the community; therefore, the Town has not developed

Horseshoe facilities in its park system. This activity provides a recreation outlet for social interaction, particularly for older citizens. The Town may consider building horseshoe pits if there is demand for this activity in the future. Like shuffleboard courts, horseshoe pits are relatively small and can easily be added to existing parks.

Picnic Shelters

Picnicking was one of the most popular recreational activities listed by respondents in the survey and from responses at the public workshop. There are currently seven shelters (2 gazebos, 5 picnic shelters) in its park system. Based on a standard of one shelter per 2,000 people, there is not a need for additional shelters; however, existing shelters (and the amenities serving the shelters) should be improved.

Playgrounds

There are three playgrounds in parks throughout the Town's parks. As parks are improved, existing playgrounds should be improved and the Department should look for locations for additional playgrounds. Larger parks may warrant more than one playground and all Neighborhood Parks should have a playground. Safety inspections and ADA accessibility audits should be conducted at all existing playgrounds.

A popular trend in playground development is natural play areas. These relatively new play areas are designed on the concept of providing opportunities for children to interact with the natural environment when playing. Instead of relying on plastic and steel play structures, these play areas use natural features (creeks, rocks, trees, dirt, etc.) to provide play opportunities. Inspired by the book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children*, this new trend in playground development seeks to re-introduce our youth to the natural environment.



Natural materials are being frequently used in new playgrounds

As new playgrounds are completed and existing playgrounds renovated, the Town should replace wood fiber and sand surfaces with poured in place (PIP) safety surfacing. PIP surfaces provide wheelchair accessibility and reduces maintenance and lifecycle costs of the playgrounds.

Pedestrian Trails

Walking is the number one outdoor recreational activity in the United States. Walking or biking trail use scored high in the public survey and at the public workshops.

With this level of public demand, the development of walking trails should be a priority for future park development. A priority should be placed on walking trail development in all existing and future parks. A paved walking trail is an important component of all park types, and should be provided in all Neighborhood and Community Parks.

The concept of connecting parks and other points of interest with walking trails utilizing underdeveloped property along the Town's creeks was discussed in the public workshop and stakeholder meetings. Perhaps the highest priority for trail development is extension of the Greenway along Richland Creek.

The Town developed a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan. This plan provides valuable information about community connectivity and can serve as a beginning step in developing a community-wide greenway system.

Biking Trails

As noted above, the Town has completed a pedestrian plan. This plan provides valuable recommendations on improving bike routes within the Town.

Biking is a rapidly growing outdoor recreational activity. The Town should expand opportunities for biking through the development of a greenway trail system, including paths suitable for biking in existing and future parks, and through encouraging NCDOT to develop roads with bike lanes or wider shoulders to accommodate bikers. The Town should work with other stakeholders to help promote and facilitate new bikeways throughout the community.

Amphitheaters and Neighborhood Performing Areas

Currently there are no amphitheaters or outdoor performance areas serving residents. Several stakeholders identified the desire for creating economic impact through festivals and community events. The expansion and improvement of these outdoor performing arts areas could support this recommendation.



A amphitheater could provide opportunities for communitywide events

Special Use Facilities

Community Centers and Gymnasiums

The Town currently offers indoor recreation programs at two gymnasiums; Waynesville Recreation Center (WRC) and the Old Armory Gymnasium. These two indoor recreation facilities offer outstanding indoor recreation opportunities to the citizens of Waynesville. While these indoor facilities are meeting the need for many indoor recreational programs, there appears to be an unmet need for some recreation activities; especially at the WRC. Many people attending the public workshops indicated a strong need to expand the weight room and aerobics areas of the existing facility. In addition, interviews with recreation center staff indicated a need for additional storage at the WRC. There were also many comments made about improving the aquatics area of the WRC. Proposed improvements included adding a 50 meter pool, adding a therapy pool and constructing an outdoor splash pad adjacent to the indoor spray pool.

A therapy pool would allow the expansion of aquatics programs at the Waynesville Recreation Center. Likewise, an outdoor splashpad would greatly expand deck space and create outdoor use areas.

Swimming Pools and Spraygrounds

In the past, NRPA and NCDENR provided a standard for pool development of one pool for every 20,000 people. This standard was based on the concept of multi neighborhood or community pools. Today, with the high cost of operation and construction of swimming pools, very few agencies develop neighborhood/community pools to that old standard. Instead municipalities typically provide more centralized facilities where one pool may serve a greater population.



Many people attending the public workshop suggested adding a therapy pool at WRC

Waynesville residents have an outstanding aquatic facility. It is most unusual for a community of 10,000 people to have such a well-developed and operated aquatics program. With that said, as noted above, there appears to be considerable public demand for making improvements to existing facilities.



An outdoor splashpad would greatly expand seasonal use of the existing aquatics facilities

Based on the Town's population (10,000), the one public pool at WRC should be adequate in meeting swimming pool needs; however, based on public input, improvements to existing facilities should be considered. Among the facility improvement recommendations made from the public, the development of an outdoor splashpad and the addition of a therapy pool should be considered as priorities.

Spraygrounds are growing in popularity across the country. In addition to offering a water-based play experience, the play structures, sprays, etc. afford children of all ages a total play environment and are much more economical to operate than a standard swimming pool. A properly

designed, large water park sprayground can serve as a regional draw, provide revenue, and provide a beneficial economic impact to the surrounding areas.

Trends in Park & Recreation Facilities

The list of recreational activities developed for this Comprehensive Plan is based on national and state standards that have been used in park planning for decades. As noted earlier in this section, these standards are used as a point of reference, with the understanding that every community should develop standards that are unique to their specific needs.

One of the downsides of the national and state guidelines is that they are not updated often and fail to incorporate newer trends and activities. In the past decade, several new activities have been growing in popularity and should be considered in future park development. These activities include:

Skateboard Parks and Extreme Sports

Skateboarding has been popular for several decades. In the past decade, many communities have recognized its popularity and have tried to provide a safe and vandal resistant setting for this creative sport. Many municipal agencies have developed skateboard parks to provide a recreational outlet for preteens and teens. Waynesville recently invested significantly in a skateboard park to meet local demand.

Citizens supporting skating heavily attended the public workshops. While there was very positive support for the new skateboard facility, there was very strong support for adding lights and amenities (water fountain, shade structure, etc.) to this area. Several people suggested expanding skating facilities to add a half pipe to the skate park.

Based on this strong public support for skateboard park improvements, the Town should consider lighting the existing skateboard area and providing other site amenities (restroom, seating, etc.).

Disc Golf

Disc golf received strong support in the survey, and nationally the popularity of the sport continues to grow. The Town has one disc golf course that stretches between Recreation Park and Vance Street Park. This course is very popular and heavily used. Unfortunately, the course layout is very restricted and in some places comes into conflict with other recreation activities. The Town should look for opportunities to expand parkland (either adjacent to

Recreation Park/Vance Street Park or at a new park site) to allow the disc golf to expand.



Disc golf is a very popular activity in Waynesville

Off-leash Dog Areas

Off-leash dog areas are one of the newest trends in park development. The popularity of these facilities (also known as dog parks), is a response to the nation's love of pets. Communities throughout North Carolina are now constructing dog parks.

Dog parks take many forms, but are primarily a place within a park where park users can bring their dogs to run, walk, and recreate. They usually include a fenced open area where dogs, accompanied by their owner, are allowed to run free. Often the off-leash dog area is divided into sections for large and small dogs.

The Town recently constructed a dog park in Recreation Park. The new dog park seems to be very popular. Based on comments made at the public workshops, there are some improvements needed at the new dog park. These improvements include providing amenities (seating, shade, water, etc.) and concerns over existing surfacing.

Community Gardens

Community gardens provide a wide variety of community enhancements. They offer health benefits by providing local gardeners with fresh vegetables and increased exercise as they tend the gardens. They also provide environmental benefits by reducing transportation cost for food production and providing more plant cover, which reduces urbanization impacts on climate change. In addition, community gardens provide a venue for social interaction that reduces isolation and supports community involvement.

Several people attending the public workshops indicated a desire of having a community garden incorporated into one of the Town's parks and possibly working with Town officials to expand opportunities for edible gardens throughout the community.

With the many benefits provided by community gardens, many parks and recreation agencies are implementing community garden programs. The Town may consider the development of a community garden in the future. Should this initial garden prove successful, other garden locations should be considered.

In addition to developing community gardens to grow vegetables, etc., several local garden clubs have expressed interest in developing public garden areas in public parks. This public garden space could provide ornamental beauty in the Town's parks and could provide educational opportunities. A wonderful example of incorporating horticulture and education into parks is the Arboretum Trail that has been developed in Vance Street Park. The arboretum trail is a wonderful idea and should be expanded and enhanced as part of park improvements.



SECTION FIVE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

In the previous sections, the Department's needs for parks and recreational facilities have been identified. Careful planning and strategic thinking will be required if these needs are to be met. This section will identify funding sources for implementing some of the recommendations of this plan and identify possible strategies for funding the proposed recommendations.

Instrumental to the implementation of the Master Plan is the identification of adequate funding for facility development and improvements. Finding adequate funding is particularly difficult in this time of lower tax base and limited budgets as the economy slowly recovers from the 2008 Recession. Limited budgets place even greater importance on careful planning to meet projected needs.

While much of the focus of previous sections has been on capital needs and facility improvements, physical improvements are only part of the needs if the Department is to offer its citizens parks and recreation services. As civic leaders plan for the future, they should also consider a number of operational and management issues that will position them to meet community needs. This section reviews some of those issues.

This section will look at a Capital Improvement Plan for addressing recommendations found in Section Four and provide a strategy for raising funds to construct the proposed improvements and new facilities.

Implementing the recommendations made in this Master Plan will result in meeting the future needs for parks and recreation services. If the needs identified in this report are to be met, the Town must establish adequate budgets for projected staffing, operations and maintenance costs, and for capital improvements for parks and recreation facilities. This Action Plan is designed to give Town staff and elected officials viable options to help finance the proposals and recommendations of this Master Plan.

Revenue Plan

Upon adoption of the Master Plan, Town staff should consider the establishment of a Revenue Plan for the Department. A Revenue Plan incorporates all available funding resources, prioritizes them, and puts each option into a funding strategy. In a Revenue Plan, the following funding alternatives are evaluated for their appropriate use in funding capital improvements and programs:



Key Funding/Revenue Sources

There seems to be strong public support for the Department to improve parks and expand recreation facilities, but innovative measures will be required to meet the needs identified in this plan. The proposed new facilities and expanded operations will require dollars from a variety of sources. The following funding sources are provided to help the Department evaluate funding options:

General Tax Revenues (operational & capital)

General tax revenues traditionally provide the principle source of funds for general operations and maintenance of municipal and county parks. Recreation, as a public service, is scheduled along with health, public safety, schools, etc. in annual budgets established by the governing authority. Assessed valuation of real and personal property provides the framework for this major portion of the tax base. This tax base is then used to fund the majority of municipal and county services. Historically, elected officials in Waynesville have adequately supported budgeting for parks and recreation services. If the Town wishes to enhance the quality of life and healthy lifestyle opportunities for its residents, the current level of funding for parks and recreation services must be maintained and funds for important capital improvements allocated.

Park Foundation (operational & capital)

A park foundation can be instrumental in assisting the Department in acquiring land, developing facilities, sponsoring programs, and buying equipment for park and recreation needs. Park foundations typically create strategies for generating funds to support park projects. These include foundation membership fees, individual gifts, grants from other regional and national foundations, long term endowments, and a land trust for future acquisitions.

General Foundations (operational & capital)

Another source of revenue is the direct contribution of money from state and national General Foundations. Foundation funds should be sought for both development and construction of facilities as well as providing programs. Funding sources should include general-purpose foundations that have relatively few restrictions, special program foundations for specific activities, and corporate foundations with local connections.

Foundations with Emphasis on Conservation, Healthy Lifestyles & Parks

The Department is in a position to receive grant funding from a wide variety of public foundations and trusts. Below is a list of funding sources that are particularly applicable. Some of these funding/trusts are currently at work in the region:

- The Conservation Trust of North Carolina is actively engaged in preserving the Blue Ridge parkway and working with 23 local land trust throughout North Carolina. They have been instrumental in providing financial and technical assistance for open space conservation and development of greenways in North Carolina. In Haywood County they are working with the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy on projects directly related to the Waynesville region.
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is the nation's largest philanthropic organization devoted specifically to the public's health. RWJF promotes change through partnerships and collaboration, with the goal of building a culture of health for all Americans. RWJF generally supports public agencies, universities, and public charities that are tax-exempt.
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation places optimal development of children at the center of all of their grants. They concentrate on early childhood development within the context of families and communities. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation's areas of focus are: educated kids, healthy kids, secure families, community and civic engagement, and racial equity.
- KaBOOM! is a national non-profit dedicated to safe

play for America's children. They envision a place to play within walking distance of every child. KaBOOM! works with communities, volunteers and funding partners to build playgrounds throughout the country.

- BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation has invested millions of dollars in communities across the state. They support opportunities that impact the health of our state. Their areas of focus are health of vulnerable populations, healthy active communities, and community impact through non-profit excellence.
- Playworks Grants Database is a good resource for grants. Examples found within this database are:
 - The philanthropic arm of Safeway Groceries has established the Safeway Foundation to support non-profits whose mission is aligned with the company's priority areas; hunger relief, education, health and human services and assisting people with disabilities. Safeway Foundation offers grants up to \$25,000.
 - Cigna Health through its Cigna Foundation supports organizations that enhance health in individuals, families and communities. They offer grants up to \$5,000.
 - Home Depot, through its Community Impact Grants Program, offers grants up to \$5,000 to non-profits that use volunteers to improve community health.
 - People For Bikes provides a community grant program that provides grants up to \$10,000 to improve infrastructure and programs that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to bike.

Another source of local assistance may be large corporations with foundations established to provide grants for public projects. Companies such as Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Walmart, and Duke Energy may have available funding through existing grant programs, or they may be interested in creating a program or partnership for specific projects.

The Department should actively pursue grants from foundation and trust sources on a regional and national level. Information on trusts and foundations can be found through the Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003-3076 (<http://foundationcenter.org/>) and the Non-Profit Gateway to Federal Government agencies (<http://www.usa.gov/index.shtml>).

General Obligation Bonds (capital)

General tax revenue for parks and recreation are usually devoted to current operations and maintenance of

existing facilities. General obligation bonds are often used to finance capital improvements in parks. The State of North Carolina gives municipal and county governments the authority to accomplish this borrowing of funds for parks and recreation through the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). For purposes of paying the debt service on the sale of these bonds, government bodies are often required to increase property taxes. Total bonding capacities for these government agencies are limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

Waynesville has not used this method of financing park improvements in the past. In view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, borrowing of funds to acquire new land and develop facilities could be a consideration.

An added value of a governing agency's bonding authority and capacity is its ability to use those funds to leverage other funding opportunities. Bonding enables government agencies to utilize funds to match federal grant-in-aids monies or state funds. General obligation bonds are still the greatest source utilized to fund park projects in North Carolina. Through a well thought out and publicly presented bond campaign, voters would be given the opportunity to choose to support park improvements through the sale of bonds.

Revenue Bonds (capital)

Revenue bonds are used for financing high use specialty facilities like golf courses, aquatic centers, tennis centers, and complexes for softball and soccer. The users, and other revenue sources, pay for operations and sometimes repay the bonds. This revenue source would only be of use to the Town if they choose to change their tax subsidy policy for using this type of funding. The Town is not likely to seek out this option.

The legal requirements for utilizing these funding mechanisms are extremely complicated and can require approval from the state legislature. Use of revenue bonds seems to be unlikely at this time.

Limited Option or Special Use Tax (capital)

Limited option or special use taxes can be established in various ways. A municipality or county can establish the tax by determining the source, such as property valuation, real estate transfer taxes, or sales tax. This option requires legislative approval. Typically, special use taxes are structured on sales tax or transfer taxes and are earmarked for a specific project. A governing body can approve a

tax that is identified or earmarked on property valuation; however, other sources may require state approval. The idea behind a special option or limited option tax is that the tax is identified or limited for a special purpose or projects and the duration can also be limited to accomplishing the projects.

Many travel and tourism authorities throughout North Carolina utilize this funding source to make improvements to recreation facilities that attract tourists. This funding source could be considered in the development of athletic fields, trails and river access that might enhance tourism.

Federal and State Assistance (capital)

Federal funding sources are available to assist financing capital improvement recommendations found in this plan. One of the oldest park funding sources has been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Several of the Town's existing parks were funded with monies from this funding source. Unfortunately, funding through this program has been sporadic over the past decade.

Other potential federal funding sources are the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The North Carolina General Assembly passed a bill in 1994 creating a consistent source of funds for parks and recreation in the state. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) provides money for capital improvements, repairs, renovations, and land acquisition of state and local parks. Revenues from the state's portion of the real estate deed transfer tax support the fund. Revenues vary from year to year. Since 2007, funds from real estate taxes have been significantly lower; although the past few years have seen funding increase.

Of the funds allocated, 65% go to the state parks system, 30% provide matching grants to local governments, and the remaining 5% go to the Coastal and Estuarine Water Beach Access Program. The maximum matching grant is limited to \$500,000 for a single project. The PARTF system allows an agency to apply for a 50/50 cost-sharing grant to develop or acquire park land and facilities.

PARTF and LWCF funds have been used by the Town and County Departments to build parks. In the future, the Department should consider applying for funds through this program on a regular basis.

The structure of this funding source has recently gone through changes based on legislative action. While the

funding structure for this fund has changed, it appears PARTF will continue to fund park and recreation facilities in North Carolina.

Additionally, the State can fund projects such as bikeways and pedestrian walks through the federally funded SAFTEA [formerly known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)]. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) administers the funds and the local government agency can use these funds for developing portions of any proposed Greenway system. Local communities can also apply for assistance with pedestrian, bikeway, and greenway projects by applying for "NCDOT Enhancement Funds."

Another source of state administered funding is through the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF). These funds are set aside for the acquisition of riparian properties, financing of innovative wastewater management initiatives, storm water mitigation and stream bank restoration projects, support for greenways, and some planning programs. The acquired or purchased property can be used for recreation while protecting valuable water resources from the effects of urban encroachment. Money from this grant is particularly applicable to the preservation of open space, greenway development, and water access.

Unfortunately, since the economic downturn that started in 2008, all of these funding sources have been greatly reduced.

An excellent source to find government grants is on the website www.grants.gov. This website clearing house provides information for all federal grants. Grant opportunities exist in the following categories:

- Community Development
- Environment
- Health
- Natural Resources
- Transportation

Any of these categories could have grants that could be used to develop programs and facilities for parks.

User Fees (operational)

User fees are often charged by departments to offset operational cost, and (occasionally) provide funding for the construction of facilities. Every agency must establish its philosophy with regard to cost recovery through the use of fees. The Department has historically charged fees for some facilities and programs, but these fees have typically not been set to cover the total operational cost of the program and have never been used to finance construction

of facilities. More importantly, the Town's recreational fee structure does not require a higher charge for users that live outside the town limits.

Ultimately, the Department may consider a change in user fees that will help offset more of the cost of some activities; including charging higher fees to nonresidents. Based on elected officials' direction, the revenue generated by increased fees could then be used to offset impacts on the general fund and possibly be used for capital improvement funding to help make park improvements.

Many of the proposed improvements in this Master Plan are outdoor facilities (playgrounds, open space, trails, etc.) and offer only limited opportunity for cost recovery. There may be some areas where greater cost recovery could be achieved. Examples may include rental fees for shelters, fields, etc. or for requiring permits for dog parks, disc golf, etc. Likewise, improvements to the Waynesville Recreation Center may warrant increases to existing user fees.



Picnic shelter rental fees are one potential source for revenue generation

Revenue Opportunities

User fees are not the only means of generating revenue. The Department should explore additional opportunities for generating income. Some of these opportunities include:

- Sponsorships from local private businesses. Sponsorships typically come in the form of products, events, programs, cause-related, and in-kind. Sponsorships can also take the form of naming rights for a facility or program. Sponsorship or naming agreements should include very specific details related to sponsorship cost, duration, use of promotional materials, etc. The Department already uses sponsorships and naming rights to generate income.
- Grant applications from local foundations, state and

federal agencies, or individuals are typically created by staff. Most grants take time to prepare and require coordination effort with other agencies or departments from within the community to create a quality submittal. Grants also require tracking of expenditures and outcomes for attaining future funding.

- Partnerships are a relatively new method of sharing funding resources to provide services. These partnerships can be formed with a wide variety of other public or private agencies. Many times the partners are two or more government agencies. Through these partnerships, the Department receives direct benefit in either facility use, programming assistance, or volunteer man hours. All of these benefits add value and help offset cost; thus creating earned income. This earned income requires both agencies to have common visions, values, and goals for the partnership to be successful. Examples of partnerships include:
 - Church facilities for recreation services. Several churches or religious organizations in the area provide recreation facilities and programs.
 - Youth sports associations are an important partner in organizing and programming many youth sports in the region.
 - Trail sponsors can adopt sections of trails for maintenance and cleanup.
 - Adopt-a-park partners that help maintain park lands. These sponsors are typically in the form of neighborhood associations and businesses that are in proximity to parks.
 - School partnerships, where both partners invest in the development of facilities and programs based on shared use of facilities and staff. These investments may be financial, or may include other means of support.
 - Special event partners that assist with the development of community-wide events.
 - Program partners who assist in providing services to the community.
 - Advertising and licensing in programs, facilities, and events sponsored by the Department. The Department could leverage highly exposed advertising space to businesses willing to pay a fee for the right to advertise.
- Volunteer development programs can reduce staff costs. Volunteers can create advocacy and bring down the cost of programs and services.
- Privatizing the development of facilities or services is an opportunity that is used by some departments when they are unable to control the cost of labor and are unable to find the needed capital to develop a recreational facility or a concession operation. This gives the government agency a management tool to

create an asset or improve a service without tapping into their own resources. Facilities that are typically considered for privatization may include golf courses, marinas, camping and RV facilities, boat rentals, bike rentals, equipment rentals, and other forms of concessions.

- Marketing strategies are an important component in developing untapped revenue opportunities. Promotional activities improve awareness of the activities provided by the Department and assist in bringing more revenue to the system by filling programs and facilities.



Unique special events and tournaments can create opportunities for revenue generation

Methods for Land Acquisition & Dedication

In order to meet the needs identified in this report, the Department will need to expand its park and recreational lands. Development of a new Mini Park and Neighborhood Park and potential expansion of some of its existing parks will require several land acquisitions. Methods available for acquiring land include:

Fee Simple Purchase

Outright purchase is perhaps the most widely used method of obtaining land. Fee simple purchase has the advantage of being relatively simple to administer and to explain to the general public to justify a particular public expenditure. Unfortunately, fee simple purchase often is the most expensive means of obtaining and utilizing a property.

Fee Simple Purchase with Lease-Back or Resale

This technique of land acquisition enables the Town to purchase land to lease or sell to a prospective user with

deed restrictions that would protect the land from abuse or development. This method is used by governments who impose development restrictions severe enough that the owner considers himself to have lost the major portion of the property's value and it is more economical for him to sell with a lease-back option.

Long-Term Option

A long-term option is frequently used when a property is considered to have potential future value though it is not desired, or affordable, at the time. Under the terms of a long-term option, the Department agrees with the landowner on a selling price for the property and a time period over which the Department has the right to exercise its option. The first benefit of this protective method is that the option may stabilize escalating land cost and establishes land use for the property. Secondly, the Department does not have to expend large sums of money until the land is purchased. Thirdly, the purchase price of the land is established. The disadvantage of this method is that a price must be paid for every right given by the property owner. In this case, the cost of land use stabilization and a price commitment comes in the form of the cost of securing the option.

First Right of Purchase

This approach to acquiring land eliminates the need for fixing the selling price of a parcel of land, yet alerts the Department of any impending purchase which might disrupt the land acquisition goals. The Department would be notified that a purchase is pending and would have the right to purchase the property before it is sold to the party requesting the purchase.

Land Trust

The role and responsibility of a Land Trust is to acquire park land and open space while maintaining a well-balanced system of park resources representing outstanding ecological, scenic, recreational, and historical features. A Land Trust is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation made up of key knowledgeable leaders in the area who represent a cross section of interest and experience in recreation, historic properties, conservation, preservation, land development, and environmental issues. Their goals and responsibilities are to work with landowners to acquire park land for current and future generations. The individuals appointed to the Land Trust must have knowledge of land acquisition methods and tools used to entice land owners to sell, donate, provide easements, life estates, irrevocable trusts, or a combination of all. This includes seeking out a knowledgeable land acquisition attorney who is trained in these areas to

provide the most efficient and effective processes to achieve the balance of types of land to meet the goals of this Master Plan.



A land trust can be instrumental in preserving and protecting natural resources

The Department does not have to go through the time and expense of setting up a land trust to utilize this vehicle for land donation or conservation. There are several established land Trusts operating in the area. The Department could partner with one of these trusts to provide protection of valuable open space without creating a new entity.

Donations

A significant, and yet often untapped, source for funding acquisition and development of public park projects is through a well-organized local gifts program. Donations of land, money, or labor can have a meaningful impact on the development of existing facilities and the acquisition of new parks.

The most frequently used type of gift involves the giving of land to be used for a park. The timing of such a donation can correspond with a PARTF grant application, thereby providing all or a significant portion of the local matching requirement associated with this fund. A similar use of gifts involves donated labor or materials, which become part of an improvement project and help to reduce project costs. The value of the services or materials can, in some cases, also be used to match non-local grant funds.

Some agencies have developed a gift catalog as a tool for promoting a gifts program. Such a publication should explain the role and importance of the gifts program, describe its advantages, define the tax advantages that may occur to the donor, and identify various gifts (land,

labor, play equipment, materials, trees, etc.) that are needed to meet program needs. The gifts catalog should be prepared in a format that can be distributed effectively and inexpensively and should provide a clear statement of needs, typical costs associated with various gifts, and be made readily available to the public.

To aid this type of gift program, a strategy for contacting potential donors (individuals, businesses, foundations, service clubs, etc.) should be developed. An important part of this strategy should include contacting the local Bar Association, trust departments of lending institutions, and the Probate Court. Communicating with these groups regularly will make them aware of the potential for individuals to include a gift to the Department as part of their tax and estate planning.

Life Estate

A life estate is a deferred gift. Under this plan, a donor retains use of his land during his lifetime and relinquishes title to such land upon his death. In return for this gift, the owner is usually relieved of the property tax burden on the donated land.

Easement

The most common type of less-than-fee interest in land is an easement. Property ownership may be viewed as a combination of rights. With this understanding, it is possible to purchase any one or several of these rights. An easement seeks either to compensate the landholder for the right to use his land in some manner or to compensate him for the loss of one of his privileges to use the land. One advantage of this less-than-fee interest in the land is the private citizen continues to use the land while the land remains on the tax records; continuing as a source of revenue for the Town. Perhaps the greatest benefit lies in the fact that the community purchases only those rights that it specifically needs to execute its park land objectives. By purchasing only rights that are needed, the Department is making more selective and efficient use of its limited financial resources.

Zoning/Subdivision Regulations

Many communities in North Carolina have zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations that require a developer to donate a portion of the property they are developing to the government agency to be used for public park land. Through these regulations (zoning ordinances, subdivision regulation, and mandatory dedications) developers may be required to provide new park land at no cost to the Department. Regulations can require land to be dedicated and/or compensation made to the Town for the

development of park land.

The Town currently has a provision in their subdivision regulation that requires developers to dedicate land for open space or to pay a recreation fee for each residential lot developed. This fee applies only to larger subdivisions and does not impact infill sites. Funds from this fee are then used for park improvements. This is a very valuable tool to expand parks and/or fund facility expansion.

Park Facilities as Economic Developers

John L. Crompton, in his publication “Parks and Economic Development”, determined there are four economic development benefits that a community may derive from park and recreation services. These benefits include:

- **Attracting Tourists:** The features and programs that attract tourist to a community include parks, beaches, historic sites, museums, special events and festivals, and athletic tournaments. The majority of these features are provided by public agencies (national, state, local park agencies, etc.).
- **Enhancing Real Estate Values:** Research shows people will pay more to live close to natural park areas. These higher property values result in owners paying higher property taxes, which in turn offsets some of the cost for the development of parks and preservation of open space.
- **Attracting Business:** Quality of life issues influence where businesses locate. Parks, recreation, open space, and senior services are an important component of the quality of life equation. Good parks help cities attract and retain businesses.
- **Attracting Retirees:** A new growth industry for American communities is the retirement population. The decision to relocate by this segment of our population is primarily governed by climate and recreation opportunities. This segment of the population is extremely attractive to local governments because retirees are unlikely to have children enrolled in the local school system and therefore are less of a burden on the community’s tax base.



Providing programs and facilities that attract seniors creates economic impact

Through investing in parks and recreation facilities, elected officials can ensure that Waynesville offers the quality of life that helps attract new businesses, enhances real estate values, and provides an attractive option to the retirement community.

There are many opportunities for economic impact in the Waynesville region through tourism. Community leaders have recognized the potential for this economic impact by establishing the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority (HCTDA) and Downtown Waynesville Association. These organizations are actively engaged in bringing visitors to Waynesville and the surrounding region.

John Crompton lists the following opportunities for tourist attractions:

Tournament Sports

- Softball
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Basketball

Arts

- Theaters
- Art Galleries
- Museums
- Performing groups, Music
- Concerts

Heritage Places

- Ethnic cultural places
- Shrines/churches
- Historical sites and structures
- Educational institutions
- Industry factory tours

Parks

- National
- State
- Regional
- Local
- Beaches
- Theme parks
- Recreation
- Events and festivals
- Aquatic and coastal areas
- Outdoor recreation (e.g., camping, fishing, hunting)

Arenas

- College sports
- Professional franchises
- Concerts and exhibitions

Some of these activities and facilities are already found in the area. Many of these potential tourism attractions are in the public realm or are a public/private venture.

Operational Recommendations

Town leadership must also address some of the operational issues that will arise as the result of making facility improvements over the next decade. These issues relate to the manpower and organizational changes that will be required as new parks/facilities are added. These recommendations address some of the critical operational issues the Town needs to identify as it expands the facilities and services it provides.

An important aspect of these planning recommendations is to develop a vision for the Department to improve park and recreational opportunities for residents. Ultimately, the provision of better parks and recreational programs includes both facility improvements and establishing a method of delivery of services. Historically elected officials in Waynesville have supported parks and recreation in the community and have allocated resources for the Department as it works to meet its mission. If the Department is to continue to thrive and improve the quality of parks, facilities and the programs offered, additional funding will be required to add staff to manage/operate facilities and provide services.

Staff Needs

Action on the recommendations found in this Master Plan will expand parks and facilities. The development of several new parks, expansion of trails and outdoor recreation facilities, as well as the expansion of the recreation center will require additional staff to maintain, operate and program these new facilities. While the development of a true operation and maintenance program for these future facilities is beyond the scope of this Master Plan, the Town should plan to add the following positions to effectively operate the future facilities:

- Program staff
- New grounds maintenance staff
- Additional Recreation/Aquatics center staff

It is important that the Town plan and budget for adequate staff positions for any new facilities that are constructed. Likewise, as these new facilities come on line, the Town should actively seek the highest level of programming staff with strong educational experience in the various areas of park and recreation administration.

Operational Costs

As noted above, the development of new recreation facilities will require additional staff. These new staff positions will add to the annual operational budget in both staff and equipment costs. The expansion of recreational facilities will also add to the energy and utility cost of recreation facilities. The recommended facility improvements included in this Plan will increase the Department's facilities 10-15%. Expansion of this magnitude will have implications on the operational budget. The Town's management staff and elected officials must carefully consider the financial impact of each major capital improvement project as projects are considered. No capital improvement project should be undertaken without the commitment of support for adequate ongoing operational funding. Likewise, consideration should be given to the positive economic impacts that some facilities may have on the area's economy, and if applicable, the potential for revenue generation.



Promoting recycling is one initiative to reduce waste

Greener Operation

As the world’s population expands and environmental concerns over global warming, conservation of resources, and preservation of our fragile natural systems become more apparent, greater environmental responsibility by public and private agencies has become critical. As a government agency, particularly one that is involved with the management of public open space and the improvement of the public’s health, the Department’s operation should make a concerted effort to minimize its environmental impact.

With this understanding, the Town should evaluate its maintenance and operational procedures with an intent to minimize waste and environmental impact. Where economically feasible, the Town should look to implement operational procedures that emphasize conservation, recycling, and sustainability. Likewise, as the Town looks to build new facilities, it should consider constructing facilities that minimize environmental impacts, conserve energy, and reuse building materials where possible.

As a starting point for this conversion to a “greener” operation, the Town should establish a committee of operation, maintenance, and construction stakeholders to study the options available and develop a plan for becoming “greener”.

Capital Improvement Plan

The Capital Improvement Plan for the acquisition, renovation, and development of parks for the planning

period was prepared with input from Department staff and public involvement. All of the proposed costs are shown in current dollar values. The capital improvement costs include funds for land acquisition, site preparation, site utilities, and facility development as well as estimated planning and design fees.

The Capital Improvement Plan can be summarized into the following components:

Existing Park Renovations	\$5,225,000
Land Acquisition	\$250,000
New Park Development	\$1,110,000
Waynesville Recreation Center	
Improvements	\$1,540,000
<u>Special Use Facilities</u>	<u>\$1,705,000</u>
Total Capital Improvement Budget	\$9,820,000

Table 5-1 “Capital Improvements Plan” shows the costs associated with the capital improvement program. The table reflects the proposals and recommendations as outlined in Section Four of this Master Plan.

Five Year Priority Projects

Recognizing that this is a vision plan for a community-wide park system, Department staff and elected officials must prioritize the recommendations in this document based on the public’s input and staff review. The following park development initiatives should be considered as priorities in the next five years:

- Renovation to Recreation Park
- Renovations to Vance Street Park
- Expansion of Waynesville Recreation Center
- Development of Splash pad

Master Plan Funding Strategy

This Master Plan identifies a Vision Plan for park development for the Town’s Parks and Recreation Department. It is understood that not all of the recommendations will be acted upon over the next decade. Elected officials will ultimately have to prioritize the steps they will take to meet some of these park and recreation needs. It will require a combination of revenue sources to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. There are numerous combinations of funding strategies that can be explored and implemented. Upon careful analysis of past budget documents, current practices, available resources, and national trends, an example of a funding strategy is presented as one possible strategy.

General Funds

Allocations from the General Fund will need to increase to pay for operation of future facilities and programs. As noted previously in this section, the proposed facility improvements will require a number of added staff positions. As new staff positions are required, the annual operating budget must be increased. This additional per capita funding could fund the majority of future operational costs, but will not provide the funding required for capital improvements.

In addition to this increased operational spending, the Department should begin budgeting for capital improvements projects on an annual basis. Annual allocations of \$500,000 to capital improvements over the next ten years could provide \$5 million in funds for capital projects and provide valuable matching funds for grants.

General Obligation Bonds

General Obligation Bonds could be used for major renovations and to acquire and develop new parks and recreation facilities. A successful bond campaign for park improvements in the next ten years could generate \$3-5 million for construction and acquisitions. This would represent a significant portion of funds needed for the proposed capital improvements budget. These funds can be dedicated to funding the larger park development and making major park improvements. As noted earlier in this section (General Obligation Bonds, page 5-3), this level of bond sales will likely result in the need for additional tax revenues to pay for the debt service created by the sale of these bonds.

Revenues & User Charges

As noted previously, user fees are currently charged for use of indoor facilities and many of the programs (indoor and outdoor) currently offered by the Department. These charges help offset operational cost.

Currently, revenues and user charges account for a portion of the operating budget. As new facilities are developed, the Department should consider a fee structure that will allow greater net revenue to be realized and possibly charging nonresidents a slightly higher fee for facility use. Assuming the level of funding can increase, an additional \$35,000 to \$50,000 could be generated annually, providing as much as a half million dollars in increased income over the next ten years that can be used for operating new facilities developed as recommended in this plan.

Partnerships & Gifts

The Department should work to develop a park foundation to help raise sponsorships and gifts. A non-profit foundation can engage private citizens and corporations to donate money and in-kind services for use for parks and recreational services. Through active involvement with a park foundation, the Department may be able to raise \$25,000 - \$50,000 in funds annually. This could result in donations of as much as half a million dollars over the next ten years. This level of funding would require the park foundation to become an active organization within the community.

Sponsorships & Naming Rights

Another excellent source of development capital is through project sponsorship/underwriting by corporations throughout the community. Quality facilities, properly marketed, provide an excellent venue for raising development funds. Naming rights for athletic fields, shelters, playgrounds, etc. can be used to raise tens of thousands of dollars.

Grants

As noted previously, grant funding has been an important resource for funding parks throughout the North Carolina. The Department should continue to explore grants such as LWCF, PARTF, SAFTEA, Clean Water Grants, etc. In addition to the grants focused on typical park development, the Department should explore grants offered by foundations listed previously in this Section, Active pursuit of these funding sources could provide several million dollars in funds for capital improvements over the next ten years..

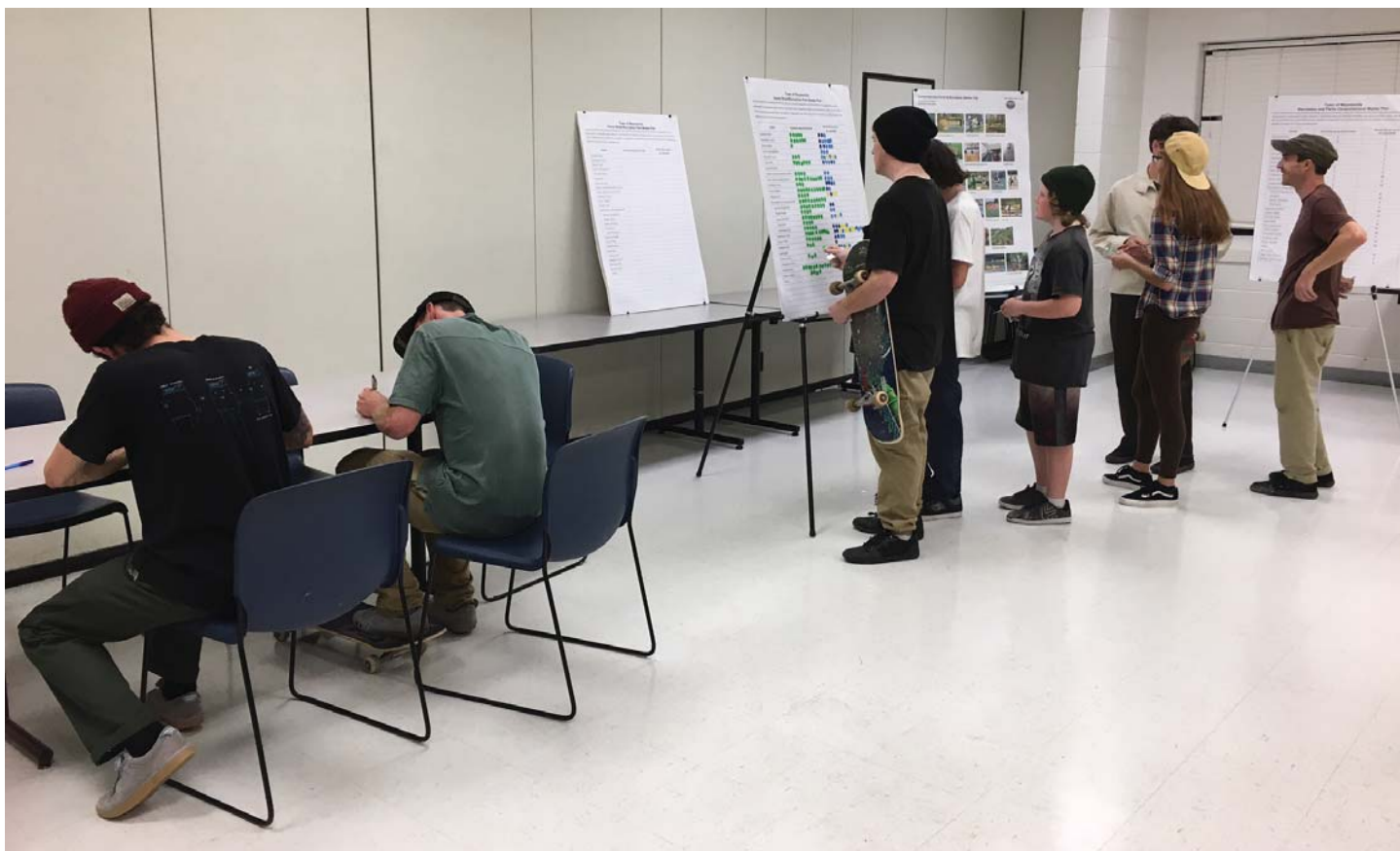
Overview

Together, these funding options could be used to raise millions of dollars of development capital over the next decade. It may be unrealistic to assume the Department can fund almost \$10 million of park improvements in the next ten years especially during these still challenging economic times. Actively pursuing the options that are available should provide funding for many of the needs listed in this Master Plan. Through the continued use of this document, Department staff and elected officials can identify and prioritize community needs and actively seek funds to meet those needs over the next ten (or more) years.

Table 5-1
Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department
PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY DEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Capital Improvement and Land Acquisition	10 Year Total	2017-2021	2022-2026
Existing Parks Renovation/Improvements			
Vance Street Park	\$750,000	\$750,000	
Recreation Park	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	
Hazelwood Park	\$250,000		250,000
Chestnut Park	\$500,000		500,000
East Street park	\$500,000		500,000
Sulphur Springs Park	\$250,000		250,000
Planning & Design (10%)	\$475,000	\$325,000	\$150,000
Renovation Total	\$5,225,000	\$3,575,000	\$1,650,000
Land Acquisition			
Mini Park			
Neighborhood & Community Park Expansion (20 Acres)	\$250,000		\$250,000
Land Acquisition Total	\$250,000	\$0	\$250,000
Park Development			
New Mini Park	\$250,000		\$250,000
New Neighborhood Park	\$750,000		\$750,000
Planning and Design (10%)	\$100,000		\$100,000
Park Development Total	\$1,100,000	\$0	\$1,100,000
Waynesville Recreation Center Improvements			
Weightroom/Aerobics Expansion	\$650,000	\$650,000	
Therapy pool	\$750,000	\$750,000	
Planning and Design (10%)	\$140,000	\$140,000	
Waynesville Recreation Center Total	\$1,540,000	\$1,540,000	\$0
Special Use Facilities			
Greenway Trail Development	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000
Sprayground	\$550,000	\$550,000	
Planning & Design (10%)	\$155,000	\$55,000	\$100,000
Special Use Facilities Total	\$1,705,000	\$605,000	\$1,100,000
Total Capital Improvement Budget Cost	\$9,820,000	\$5,720,000	\$4,100,000

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A: PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY: SEPTEMBER 22, 2016

Town of Waynesville Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan

Are you currently using park and recreation facilities in Waynesville? If so, please list the names of those facilities.

Yes	39
No	1

Name	
Recreation Park	31
Vance Street Park	14
Sulpher Springs Park	1
Chestnut Park	
Hazelwood Park	1
East Street Park	
Old Armory	7
Waynesville Recreation Center	35

How satisfied are you with the existing public parks and recreation facilities in the Town of Waynesville?

Very Satisfied	7
Satisfied	36
Very Dissatisfied	
Dissatisfied	3

Town of Waynesville Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan

Do you feel the existing parks and recreation facilities in Waynesville are meeting your needs?

Yes	5
No	9
Partially	21

Are additional parks and recreation facilities needed?

Yes	34
No	

If yes, what facilities are needed?

Improve/repair Tennis Courts (16)

Improve restrooms (14)

50 meter Pool (12)

Therapy Pool (11)

Water Fountain at Skatepark (9)

Expand Skatepark (8)

Indoor Playground (8)

Bike Trails (7)

Clay Tennis Courts (7)

Indoor Soccer (7)

Would you support additional taxes and/or pay higher user fees to support park and recreation facility improvements in Waynesville?

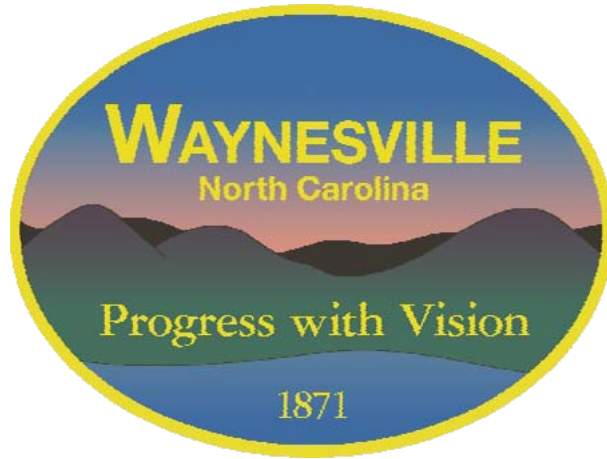
Support	19
Oppose	1
Depends on Circumstances	6

Town of Waynesville

Recreation and Parks Comprehensive Master Plan

Please identify the recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). Use Green Dots to identify facilities you are currently using. Use Blue Dots (4) for facilities you would like to see added or expanded. Use Yellow Dot (1) for the facility you think should be the highest priority for future development.

Facility	Currently using (Green Dots)	Would like to use or see expanded
Baseball fields	3	1
Basketball courts	3	2
Bocce courts		3
Community gardens	2	7
Disc golf course	4	3
Dog parks	10	6
Horseshoe pits		1
Nature study/observation areas	4	6
Open space or natural areas	7	9
Pickleball courts	5	10
Picnic shelters	7	4
Playgrounds	5	13
Recreation Center/gymnasium	6	
Exercise Equipment	10	8
Weights	7	23
Senior Activities	3	4
Classroom		1
Skateboard park	19	63
Soccer fields	13	13
Softball fields		1
Splashpad	3	6
Swimming Pool	19	67
Tennis courts	30	60
Volleyball courts	5	1
Walking trails	15	15
Water access	14	15
Other:		
Bike Trails	2	11
Yoga Class/Room	2	3
Indoor Tennis Court		2



2016 Comprehensive Master Plan

Survey Results

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS



2016 Comprehensive Master Plan

Survey Results

Total: 442

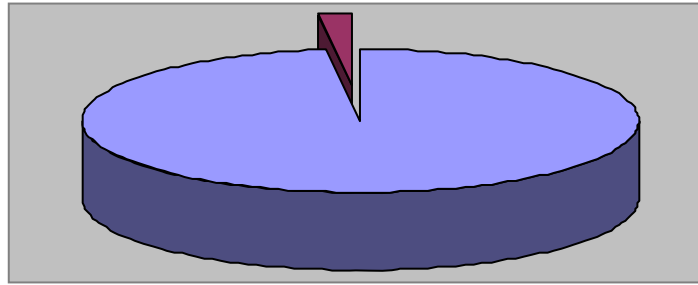
Table of Contents

The 2016 Comprehensive Master Plan for the Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department received 442 responses from various ages, sexes and racial background. The survey was distributed in hard copy at the Waynesville Recreation Center and the Old Armory Recreation Center. It was also made public on the website www.waynesvillenc.gov as an interactive survey. This website was marketing through The Mountaineer and the Smoky Mountain News. It was also marketing through grades K—5 (3,500 students).

The following questions were asked:

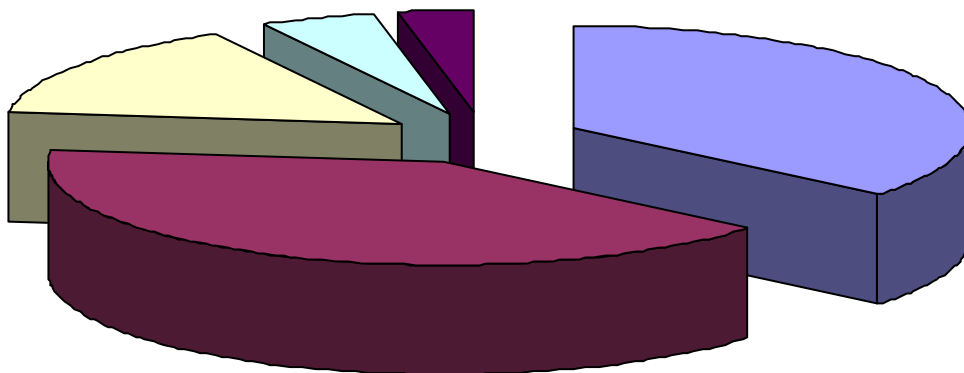
1. Have you or other members of your household visited Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department facilities during the past 12 months?
- 2a. How would you rate the overall quality of Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities which you or members of your household have visited? (if your answer is yes then 2b; no then 3)
- 2b. Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use the scale of 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent:
3. Please check all the reasons you or other members of your household have chosen NOT to use the Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities:
- 4a. Please circle YES or NO if the current Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities are meeting your needs. If your answer is NO please add what is needed:
* If your answer is NO then what is needed?
- 4b. For the following list of POTENTIAL parks and facilities in Waynesville please indicate if you and your household have a desire / want for these facilities YES or NO:
* Please list any other ideas that you may have for this question:
5. Of the recreational facilities listed above that you have an interest in having in Waynesville which FOUR are the most important to you and your household?
6. Would you willing to pay additional taxes and / or higher user fees to support park and recreation facility improvements in Waynesville?
7. Including yourself, how many permanent residents live in your household?
8. Including yourself, please note the number of people in your household in each of the following age categories:
9. What is your age?
10. How many years have you lived in the Town of Waynesville?
11. Which of the following best describes your race / ethnicity?
12. Please tell us your gender:

1. Have you or other members of your household visited Waynesville Parks and Recreation Department facilities during the past 12 months?



■ Yes - 427 ■ No - 9

- 2a. How would you rate the overall quality of Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities which you or members of your household have visited?



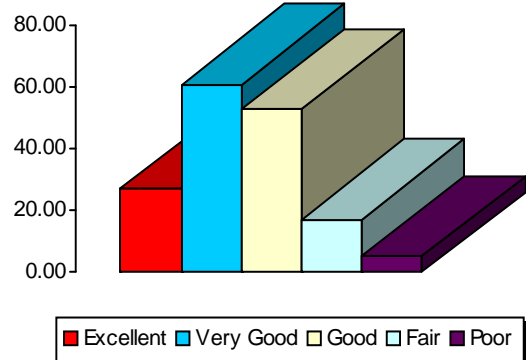
■ Excellent - 155 ■ Very Good - 174 ■ Good - 66 ■ Fair - 20 ■ Poor - 13

2b. Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use the scale of 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent:

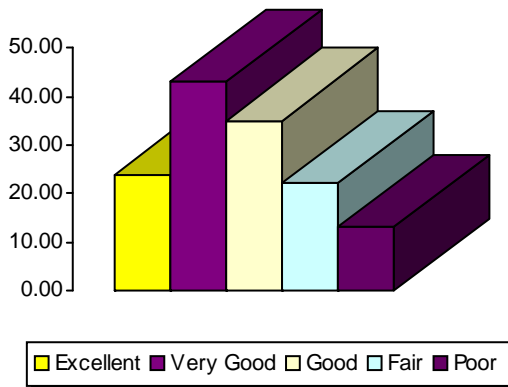
Recreation Park—Playground



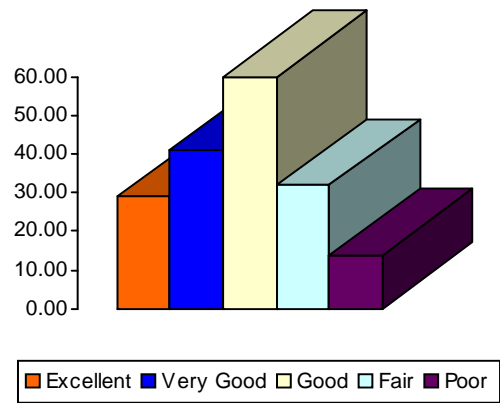
Recreation Park—Tennis Courts



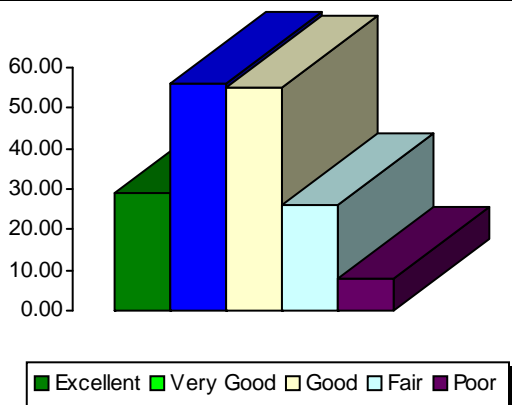
Recreation Park—Softball Field



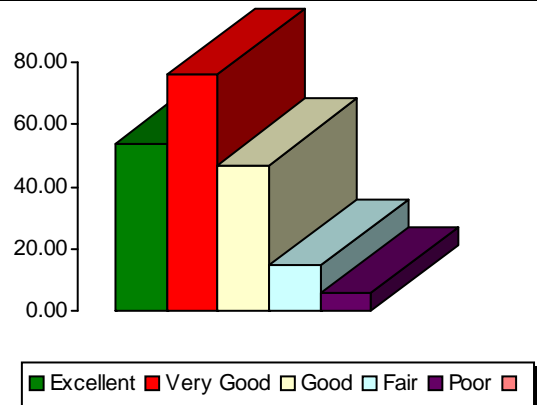
Recreation Park—Dog Park



Recreation Park—Shelter

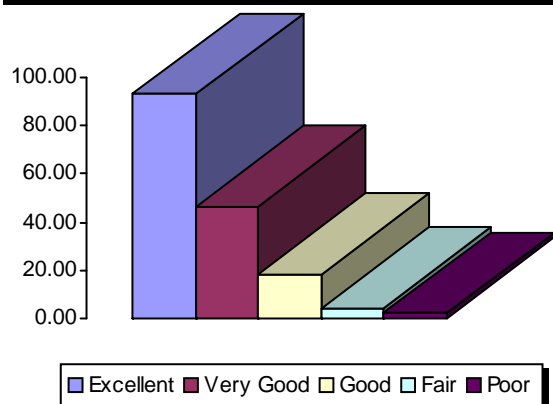


Recreation Park—Greenway

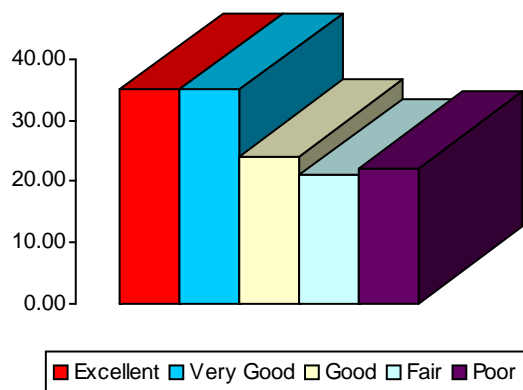


2b. Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use the scale of 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent:

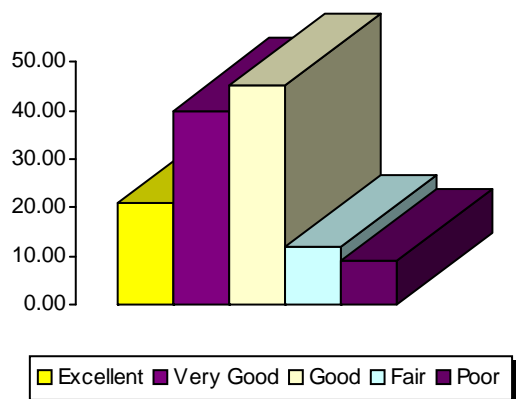
Recreation Park—Skate Park



Recreation Park—Basketball Courts



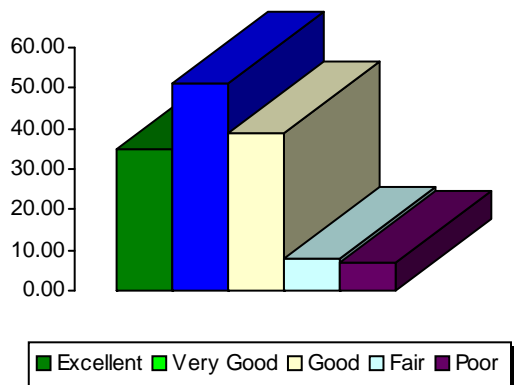
Vance Street Park—Softball Field



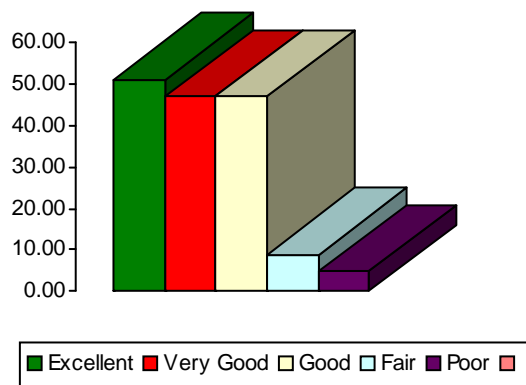
Vance Street Park—Shelter



Vance Street Park—Soccer Field

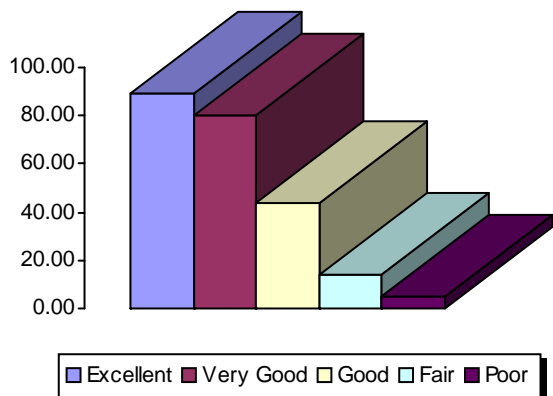


Vance Street Park—Greenway

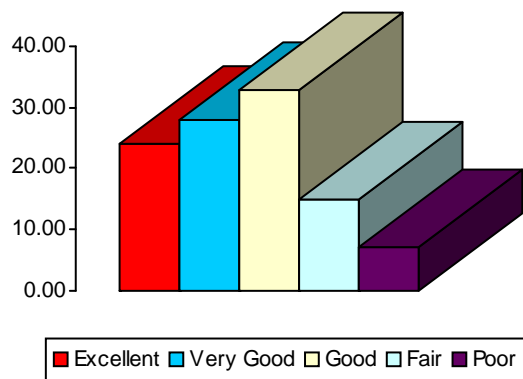


2b. Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use the scale of 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent:

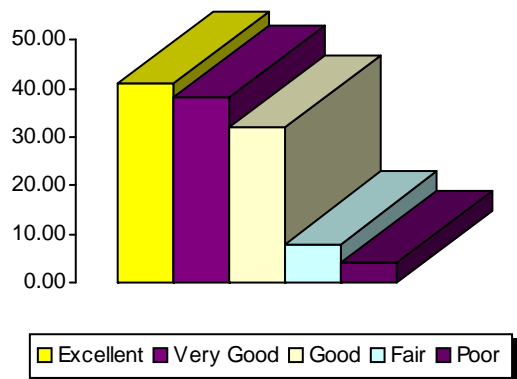
Vance Street Park—Walking Track



Vance Street Park—Volleyball Cts



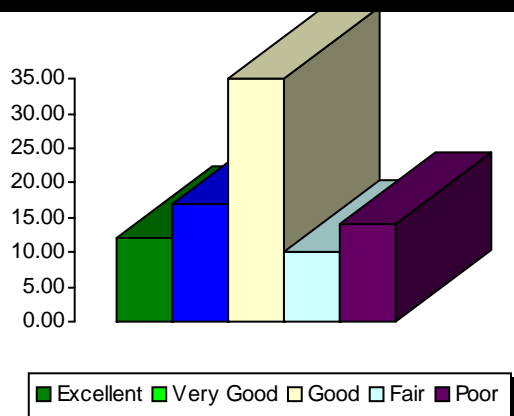
Vance Street Park—Disc Golf Crse



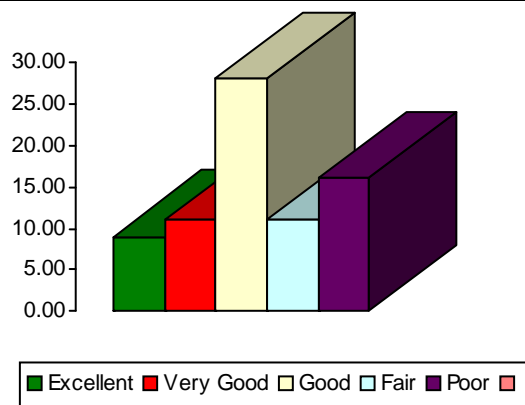
Sulphur Springs Park



Hazelwood Park



Chestnut Park

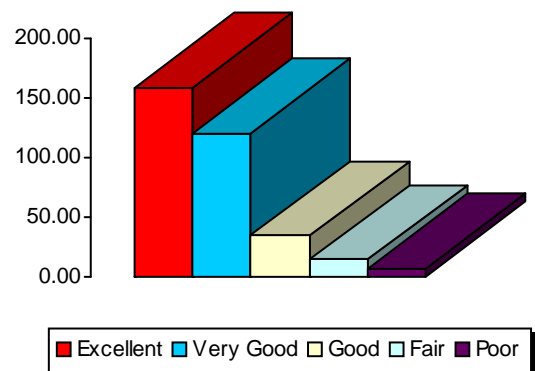


2b. Please rate the physical condition of the following facilities that you or members of your household have used in the past 12 months. Please use the scale of 1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3 = good; 4 = very good; and 5 = excellent:

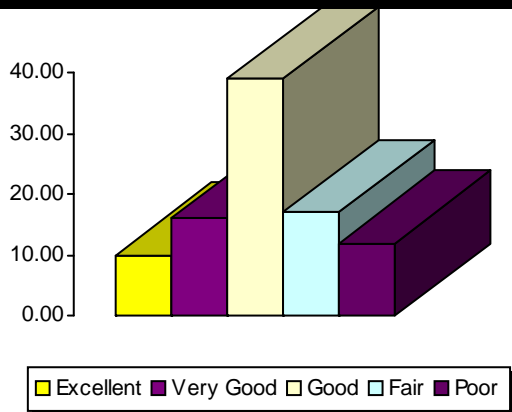
Old Armory Recreation Center



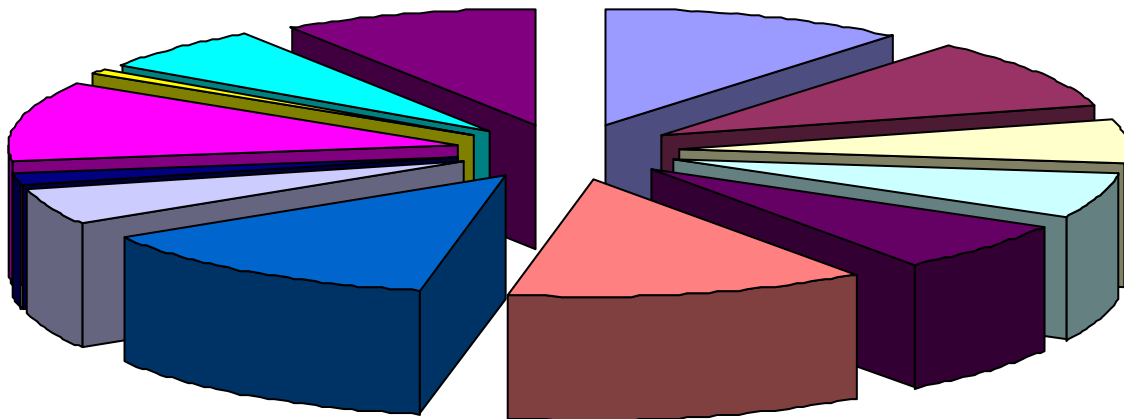
Waynesville Recreation Center



East Street Park



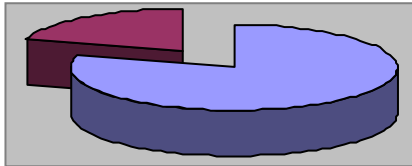
3. Please check all the reasons you or other members of your household have chosen NOT to use the Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities:



Facility(s) are not well maintained	- 33
Facility(s) I want are not offered	- 28
Safety concerns	- 18
Concerns about the quality of the facility(s)	- 18
Too far from home	- 21
Activity times are not convenient	- 38
Fees are too high	- 38
Unhelpful employees	- 15
Not accessible for people with disabilities	- 5
We use services other than Waynesville Parks and Recreation	- 33
Registration for activities is difficult	- 2
Inadequate information / signage	- 18
Just not interested	- 27

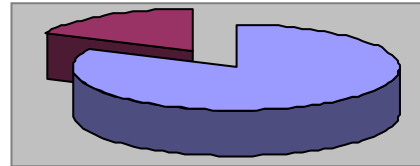
4a. Please circle YES or NO if the current Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities are meeting your needs. If your answer is NO please add what is needed:

Greenway



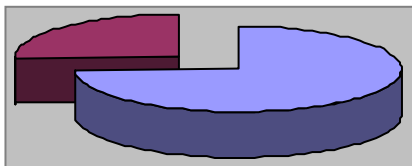
■ Yes - 149 ■ No - 38

Waynesville Recreation Center



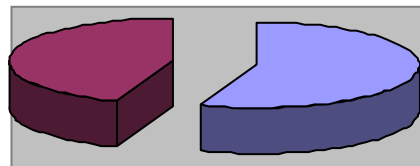
■ Yes - 279 ■ No - 60

Old Armory Recreation Center



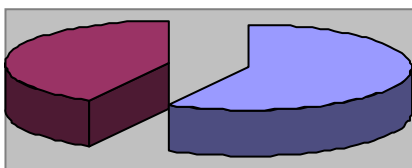
■ Yes - 98 ■ No - 33

East Street Park



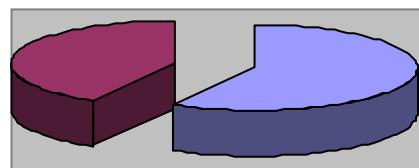
■ Yes - 49 ■ No - 39

Hazelwood Park



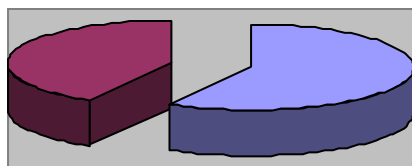
■ Yes - 51 ■ No - 37

Sulphur Springs Park



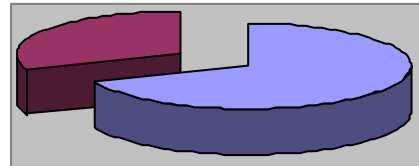
■ Yes - 46 ■ No - 33

Chestnut Park



■ Yes - 46 ■ No - 33

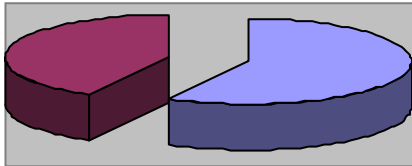
Kiwanis Community Playground



■ Yes - 73 ■ No - 32

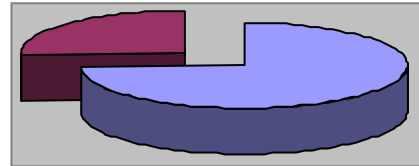
4a. Please circle YES or NO if the current Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities are meeting your needs. If your answer is NO please add what is needed:

Outdoor basketball courts



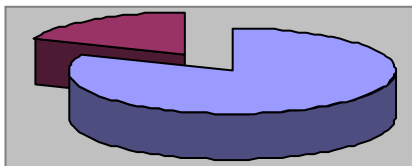
■ Yes - 54 ■ No - 39

Skate park



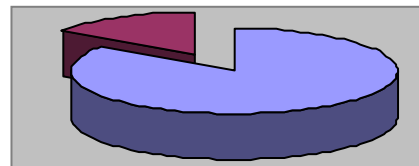
■ Yes - 86 ■ No - 30

Disc golf course



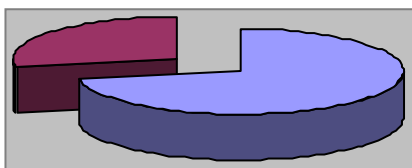
■ Yes - 88 ■ No - 20

Greenspace



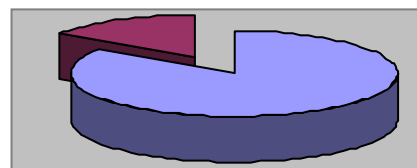
■ Yes - 107 ■ No - 19

Dog park



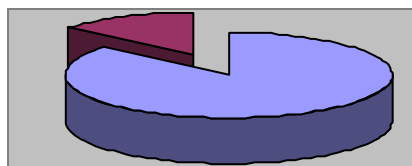
■ Yes - 92 ■ No - 36

Walking trail



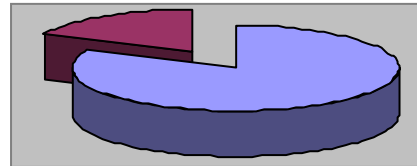
■ Yes - 180 ■ No - 33

Picnic areas



■ Yes - 129 ■ No - 21

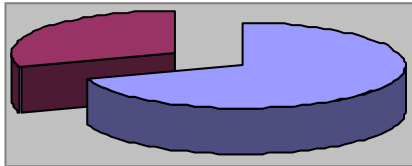
Fishing pier at Richland Creek



■ Yes - 77 ■ No - 17

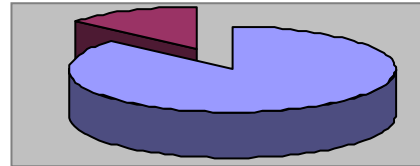
4a. Please circle YES or NO if the current Waynesville Parks and Recreation facilities are meeting your needs. If your answer is NO please add what is needed:

Public art in the parks



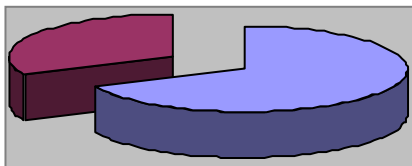
■ Yes - 76 ■ No - 33

Landscaping in the parks



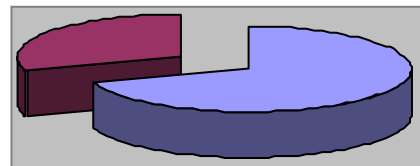
■ Yes - 130 ■ No - 20

T-ball field



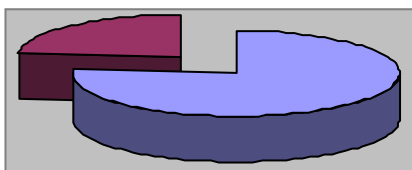
■ Yes - 60 ■ No - 28

Outdoor volleyball courts



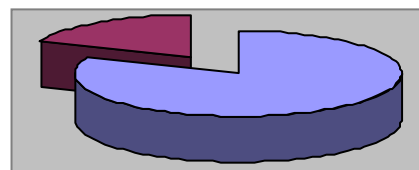
■ Yes - 62 ■ No - 27

Tennis courts



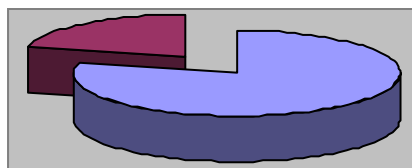
■ Yes - 102 ■ No - 31

Softball fields



■ Yes - 66 ■ No - 15

Soccer field



■ Yes - 84 ■ No - 22

If no then what is needed:

Skate Park (9 total responses)

- Needs water fountain and lights—9 responses

Old Armory (3 total responses)

- Needs better light—1 response
- Wires need to be removed when not in use—1 response
- Nothing to do if you're under age 65—1 response

Waynesville Recreation Center (37 total responses)

- Weight room needs to be expanded—13 responses
- Looks like a 1970s YMCA—1 response
- Too expensive—2 responses
- Need a therapy hot tub—1 response
- Needs more classes—4 responses
- WRC classes have too many people—1 response
- Needs smaller rooms—1 response
- Aerobics room needs to be expanded—7 responses
- Better ventilation in pool area—1 response
- Pool water needs to be warmer—1 response
- We need an outdoor pool—3 responses
- Need more swim lanes—1 response
- Need later swim time for adults—1 response

Greenway (13 total responses)

- Needs to be extended—10 responses
- Better signage—2 responses
- Needs to be paved—1 response

Restrooms (5 total responses)

- Needs updating—2 responses
- Need restrooms at East Street Park—1 response
- Need restrooms upstairs at WRC—1 response
- Need restrooms closer to facilities—1 response

If no then what is needed (con't...):

Dog Park (15 total responses)

- Needs improving—2 responses
- Needs more shade and grass—9 responses
- Needs agility obstacles—1 response
- Needs big dog /small dog lots—2 responses
- Needs more mulch more often—1 response

Tennis Courts (11 total responses)

- Needs to be resurfaced—6 responses
- Need more tennis courts—1 response
- Needs to be clay—4 responses

Parks

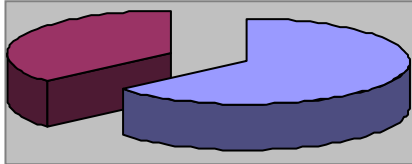
- Soccer fields need to be better maintained—4 responses
- Soccer fields needs better grass or synthetic turf—4 responses
- Need more shelters—1 response
- Need more grills in the pars—1 response
- Hazelwood Park needs improvements (i.e. playground and walking trail) - 4 responses
- Kiwanis Playground needs improving—4 responses
- Better disc golf map—1 response
- More natural environments for children—1 response
- Vance Street Park too congestive—1 response
- East Street Park needs improving—2 responses
- Current volleyball courts are in a bad location—1 response
- Need better softball fields—2 responses
- Volleyball courts need improving—1 response
- Look at Falls Park in Greenville, SC—1 response
- Better accessibility for special needs—1 response
- Need security guards—1 response
- Need parks near the water shed—1 response
- More art in the parks—4 responses

If no then what is needed (con't...):

- Need a baseball / softball complex—7 responses
- Dogs need to be restrained—1 response
- Maintain landscaping better—1 response
- Outdoor basketball needs updating—2 responses
- Picnic areas are dirty—1 response

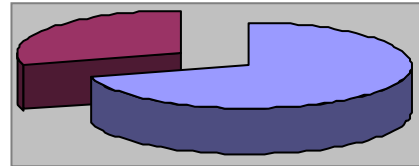
4b. For the following list of **POTENTIAL** parks and facilities in Waynesville please indicate if you and your household have a desire / want for these facilities **YES** or **NO**:

Splash pad at the WRC



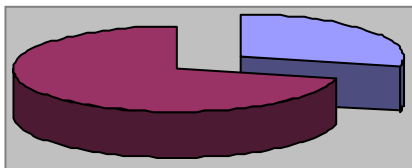
■ Yes - 159 ■ No - 91

Therapy pool at the WRC



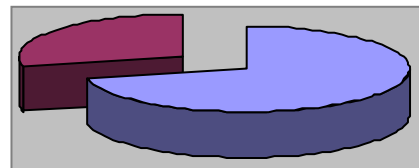
■ Yes - 180 ■ No - 74

BMX park



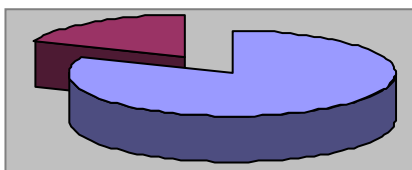
■ Yes - 56 ■ No - 142

Play area/children with disabilities



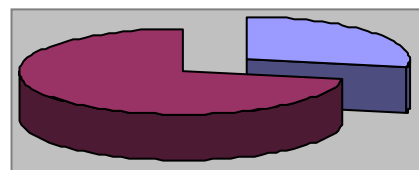
■ Yes - 159 ■ No - 63

Outdoor event/performance arena



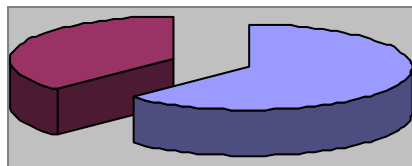
■ Yes - 202 ■ No - 46

Football fields



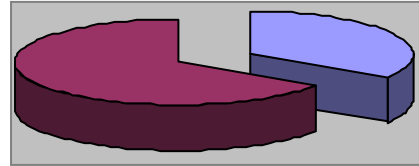
■ Yes - 53 ■ No - 136

Expansion of WRC weight room



■ Yes - 155 ■ No - 93

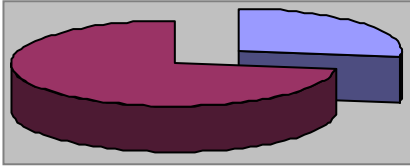
Additional tennis courts



■ Yes - 71 ■ No - 136

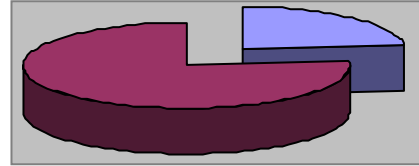
4b. For the following list of **POTENTIAL** parks and facilities in Waynesville please indicate if you and your household have a desire / want for these facilities **YES** or **NO**:

Additional soccer fields



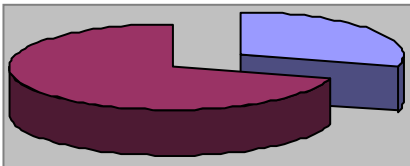
■ Yes - 48 ■ No - 128

Additional softball fields



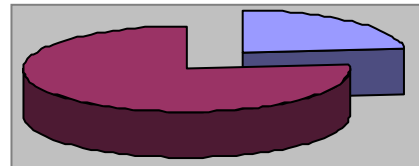
■ Yes - 41 ■ No - 137

Additional outdoor basketball cts



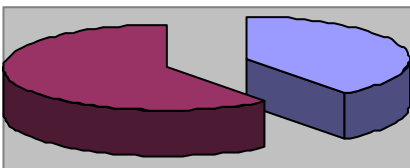
■ Yes - 53 ■ No - 128

Additional outdoor volleyball cts



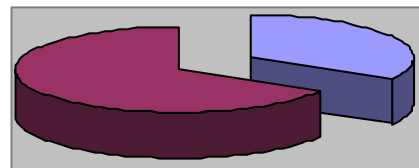
■ Yes - 41 ■ No - 136

Pickleball courts



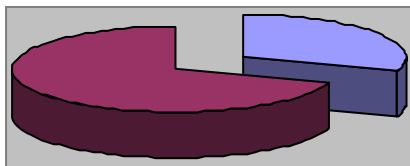
■ Yes - 80 ■ No - 122

Bocce courts



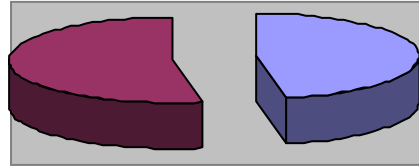
■ Yes - 62 ■ No - 125

Croquet courts



■ Yes - 54 ■ No - 124

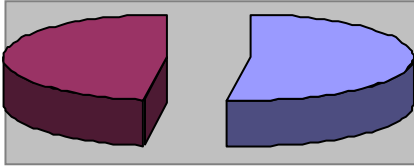
Horseshoe pits



■ Yes - 88 ■ No - 100

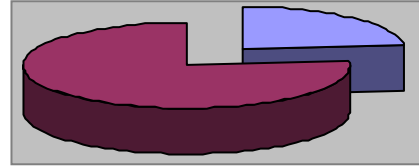
4b. For the following list of POTENTIAL parks and facilities in Waynesville please indicate if you and your household have a desire / want for these facilities YES or NO:

Additional playgrounds



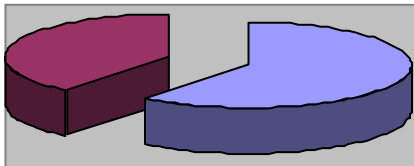
■ Yes - 102 ■ No - 93

Additional disc golf course



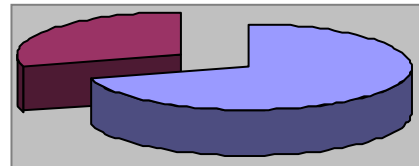
■ Yes - 39 ■ No - 128

Expansion of WRC aerobics room



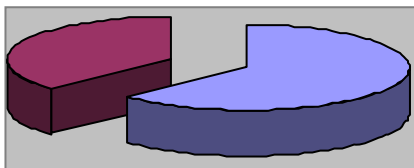
■ Yes - 145 ■ No - 93

Nature study/envir. ed area



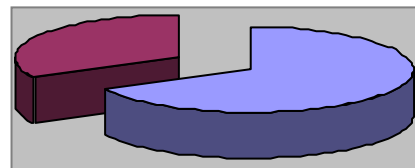
■ Yes - 153 ■ No - 63

Ropes challenge course



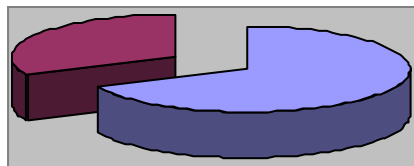
■ Yes - 136 ■ No - 80

Climbing wall



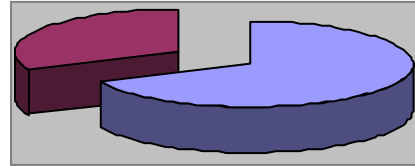
■ Yes - 149 ■ No - 73

Extended greenway



■ Yes - 157 ■ No - 74

Community garden



■ Yes - 145 ■ No - 67

Other:

Skate Park (8 total responses)

- Needs water fountain and lights—7 responses
- Skate park addition—1 response

Waynesville Recreation Center (10 total responses)

- Weight room needs to be expanded—1 response
- We need an outdoor pool—6 responses
- Spray ground—3 responses

Greenway (16 total responses)

- Needs to be extended—9 responses
- Open greenway to watershed for mountain bike trails—5 responses
- Safer greenway—1 response
- Fitness stations along greenway—1 response

Restrooms (5 total responses)

- Needs updating—5 responses

Dog Park (2 total responses)

- Maintenance needs improving—2 responses

Tennis Courts (2 total responses)

- Needs to be clay—2 responses

Parks (28 responses)

- Need soccer complex—1 response
- Indoor soccer center—2 response
- More landscaping in the parks—1 response
- Need baseball / softball complex—11 responses
- More lighting—1 response
- Natural play themed play areas—2 response
- New outdoor volleyball courts—1 response
- Topiary Maze—1 response
- More waterfountains—1 response
- Pollinator gardens—1 response

Other (con't...):

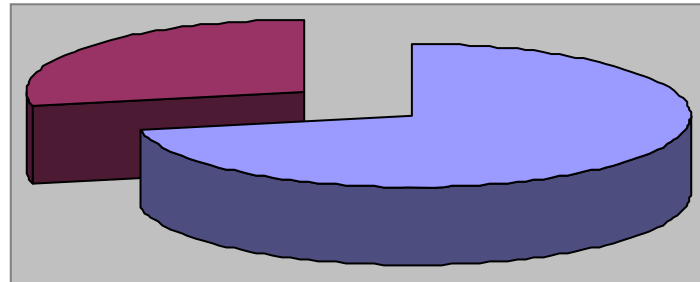
- More shade areas—1 response
- More art in the parks—2 responses
- Dirt BMX Course—1 response
- Climbing Wall—1 response
- Purchase Southern Concrete property and develop picnic area—1 response

5. Of the recreational facilities listed above that you have an interest in having in Waynesville which FOUR are the most important to you and your household?

Expansion of weight room at the WRC	67
Expansion of aerobics room at WRC	55
Extend greenway	54
Therapy pool at the Waynesville Rec Center	46
Outdoor event / performance arena	34
Additional tennis courts	31
Ropes challenge course	29
Community garden	28
Climbing wall	26
Nature study / environmental ed area	26
Pickleball courts	25
Additional playgrounds	23
Splash pad at the Waynesville Rec Center	16
Play area for children with disabilities	14
Additional outdoor basketball courts	8
BMX Park	8
Horseshoe pits	8
Additional soccer fields	7
Bocce courts	6
Croquet courts	6
Football fields	5
Additional disc golf course	4
Additional outdoor volleyball courts	4
Additional softball fields	2

Other responses included: Indoor soccer (2); soccer complex (3); baseball / softball complex (10); New restrooms (2); Outdoor pool (6); More picnic shelters (4); Indoor tennis (1); Fishing piers (1); Skate park addition (3); Soft running track (1)

6. **Would you willing to pay additional taxes and / or higher user fees to support park and recreation facility improvements in Waynesville?**



■ Yes - 280 ■ No - 111

7. **Including yourself, how many permanent residents live in your household?**

Average = 2.60 people per household

(992 total people divided by 381 households = 2.60)

8. **Including yourself, please note the number of people in your household in each of the following age categories:**

Under 5:	89	5—9:	85
10—14:	85	15—19:	43
20—24:	47	25—34:	85
35—44:	156	45—54:	95
55—64:	151	65 +:	293

9. What is your age?

Average—54.19 years of age

(21,078 = number of total years divided by 389 people)

10. How many years have you lived in the Town of Waynesville?

Average—15.40 years per person

(5,360 = number of total years divided by 348 people)

* 67 people did not indicate that they lived in the Town of Waynesville. These people were not included in the above calculation.

11. Which of the following best describes your race / ethnicity?

- 402 White / Caucasian
- 4 Hispanic / Latino
- 2 African American / Black
- 2 Native American
- 3 Asian
- 6 Other

12. Please tell us your gender:

Male: 170

Female: 241



APPENDIX C: CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PARKS, OPEN SPACE & GREENWAYS

A well balanced park system is made up of several park types that range from very large Regional Parks (often encompassing hundreds of acres) to very small Mini Parks (sometimes less than one acre). The descriptions on the following pages define the parks that typically comprise a community's park system. Numerous agencies (federal, state, county, and municipal) play a role in providing this system. Looking at the entire system helps identify the roles of the various agencies.

The following park descriptions are based on park classifications outlined in the 1995 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) publication "Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines". They are not intended to serve as park standards, but instead are used as a framework for describing the components found in a park system. Communities should structure their park types based on individual community needs. Sections Three and Four discuss the specific park needs for the Town of Waynesville. The NRPA standards described in this section have been modified slightly to reflect Waynesville's park system.

Regional Park

Regional Parks are typically very large sites, encompassing unique qualities that exemplify the natural features, diverse land formations, and the variety of vegetation and wildlife found in the region. Examples of the types of facilities provided in a Nature Preserve/Passive Park include environmental centers, camping, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. Open fields for non-structured activities, such as frisbee throwing or kite flying, are also generally found in these parks.

Land chosen for future preserves or the expansion of existing sites should contain the previously mentioned characteristics accompanied with natural water features such as beach areas, rivers, and creeks. The majority of the site should be reserved for passive recreation, or undeveloped green space.

NRPA’s guidelines for developing Regional Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire county
Acreage/Population Ratio:	Varies
Typical Size:	Sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed. Typically a minimum of 200 acres; up to 1,000 acres.
Typical Facilities:	
Environmental Center	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Equestrian Center	Restrooms/Vending
Primitive Camping	Beach
Group Camping	Swimming
Recreational Vehicles Camping	Boating
Nature Trails	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks
Observation Deck	Parking
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Caretaker’s House

Development of **Regional Parks** typically falls within the responsibility of federal, state and/or county agencies.



Typical Regional Park

200 + Acres

District Parks

A District Park provides more diverse recreational opportunities than the Regional Park. The District Park contains passive recreational opportunities that are similar to the Passive Park, but often includes significantly active recreational facilities. It is easily accessible by the population (typically 40,000) it serves and maintains a 2.5-5 mile service radius. The park contains a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000 population and should be a minimum of 100 acres in size.

An indoor recreation building/community center may be included in a Regional Park. These facilities typically reflect the character of the park with a historic, natural, or urban theme. Active recreational facilities located in a District Park include play areas, ball fields, hard surface courts, multi-purpose play fields, picnicking locations, and various types of trails.

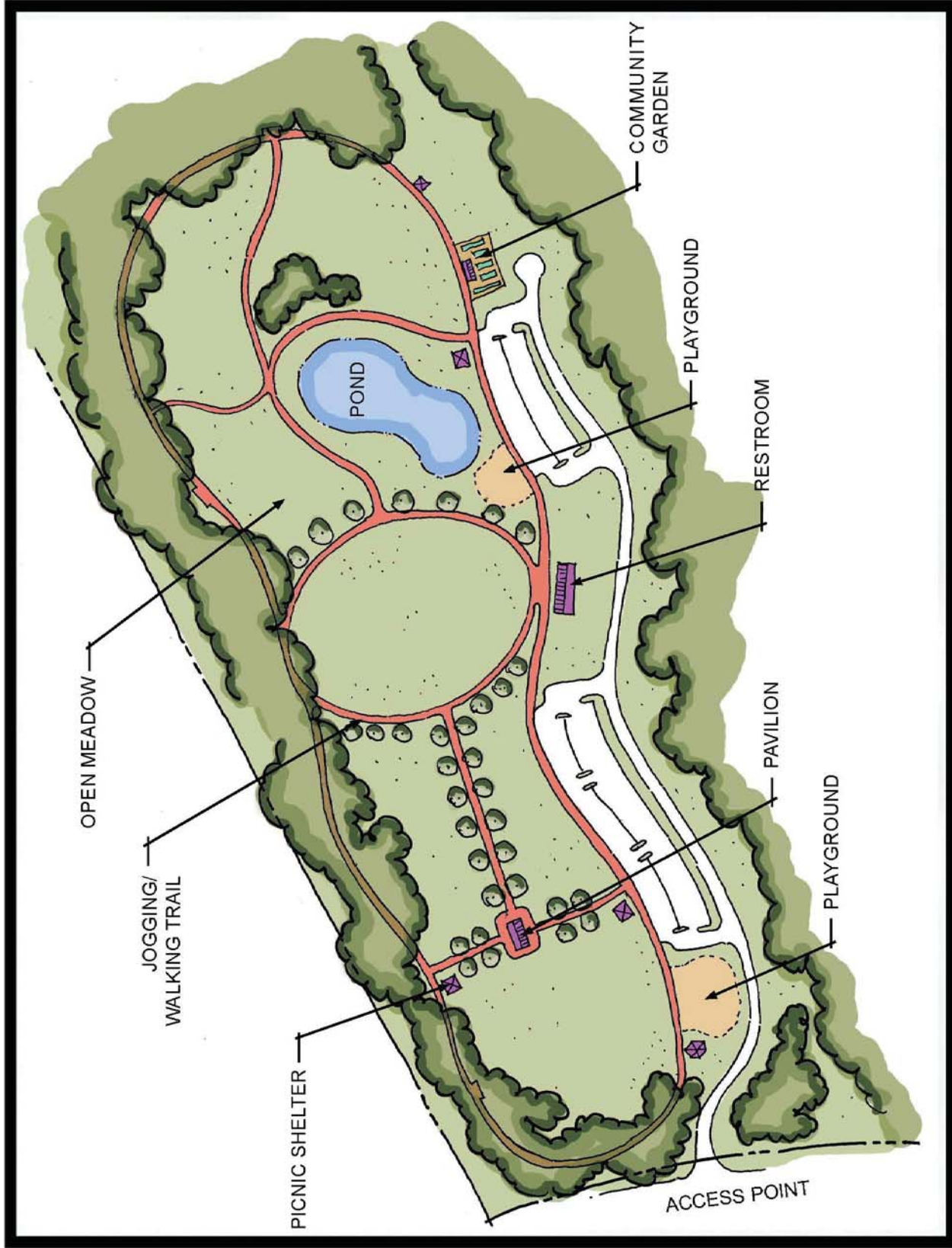
Listed below are NRPA’s guidelines for developing Regional Parks:

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire community
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5.0 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	40 acres minimum, 80-150 acres optimal

Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Shelter with Grills
Basketball Courts	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Tennis Courts (lighted)	Nature Trail
Tournament Level Tennis Facilities	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball Courts	Restroom/Concessions
Multi-purpose Fields	Parking
Tournament Level Soccer Fields	Service Yard
Tournament Level Baseball/Softball Fields	

Alternate Facilities:	
Recreation Center	Amphitheater
Tennis Center	Observation Decks
Running Track	

Development of **District Parks** typically falls within the responsibility of county or large municipal agencies.



Typical District Park

80-150 Acres

Community Parks

Community Parks provide for the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community. A range of facilities is typically provided and may support tournament competition for athletic and league sports or passive recreation. These parks also present opportunities for nontraditional types of recreation. Fifty percent of Community Park sites should be developed for passive recreation. These relatively undisturbed areas may serve as buffers around the park and/or act as buffers between active facilities.

Community Park sites should have varying topography and vegetation. Forested areas should have a variety of tree species. Cleared areas should be present for siting active recreational facilities. One or more natural water feature(s), such as a lake, river, or creek, are desirable. Park land should be contiguous and strategically located in order to be accessible to all users within the neighborhoods it serves.

Listed below are NRPA’s guidelines for developing Community Parks:

Service Area:	.5 - 3 mile radius
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5.0 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	30-50 acres

Typical Facilities:

Recreation Center	Picnic Tables with Grills
Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Tennis Court (lighted)	Nature Trails
Baseball/Softball Fields (lighted)	Restroom/Concessions
Multipurpose Fields (lighted)	Parking
Soccer Fields (lighted)	Playgrounds
Swimming Pool	Volleyball Courts
Amphitheater	Disc Golf
Observations Decks	
Picnic Shelters	
Picnic Shelters with Grills	

Specialty facilities may be added to or substituted for other facilities depending on community need or special site characteristics.

Development of **Community Parks** may fall within the responsibility of municipality or county agencies.



Typical Community Park

30 - 50 Acres

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks provide the basic unit of most municipal park systems. These parks are usually located within walking distance of the area serviced and provide a variety of activities of interest to all age groups. While their small size requires intense development, fifty percent of each site should remain undisturbed, if possible, to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent land users.

The NRPA guidelines for Neighborhood Park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 to .75 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	5-10 acres
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Shelters with Grills
Court Games	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Informal Play Field	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball	50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped
Trails/Walkways	Parking (7-10 spaces)

Neighborhood Parks are typically developed by municipalities.



Typical Neighborhood Park 5 - 10 Acres

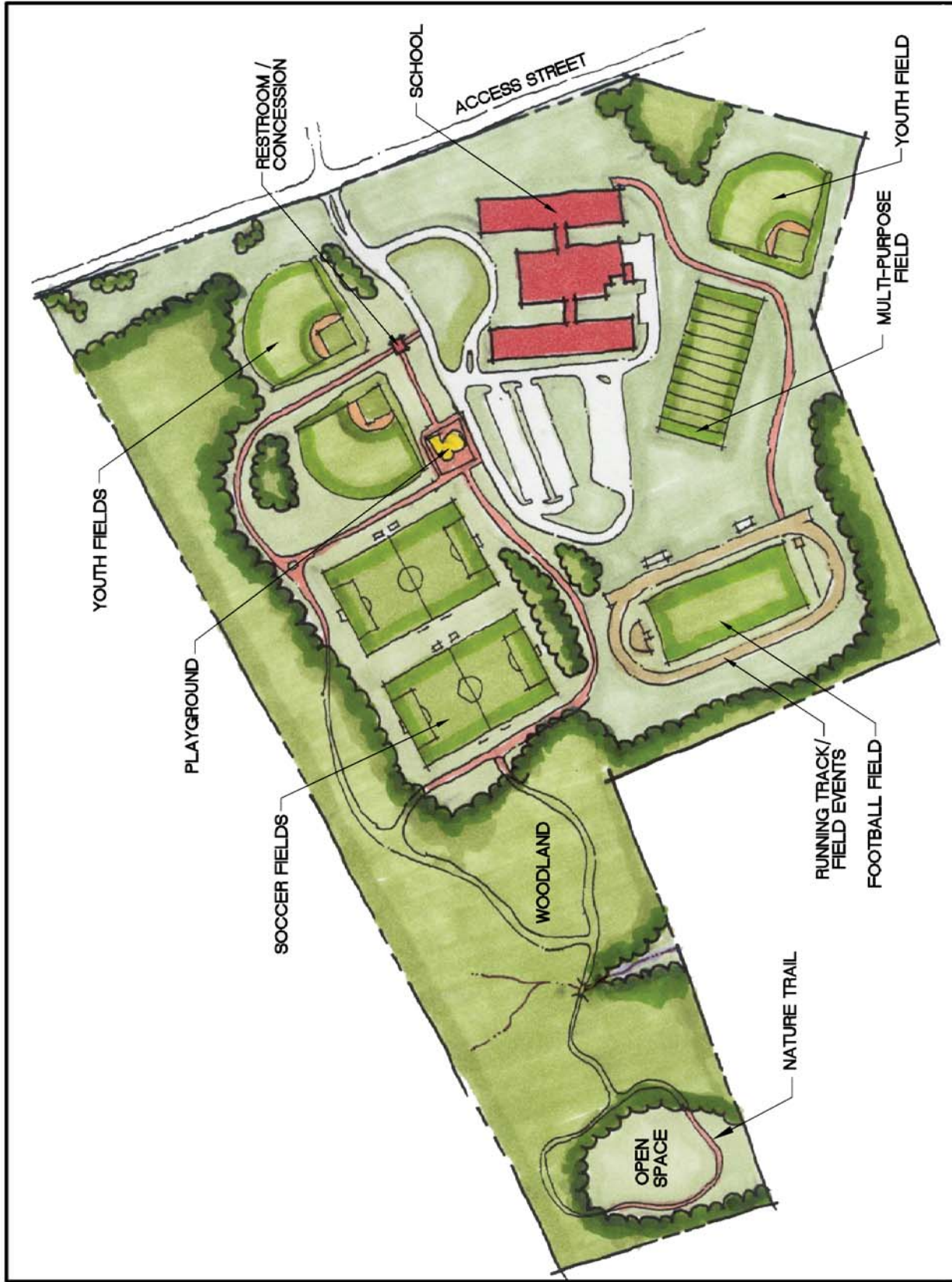
School Parks

Joint use is a mechanism that public agencies use to maximize resources. Through joint use, both the school system and the parks and recreation department benefit from shared use of facilities and valuable land resources. School Park facilities typically go beyond the simple joint use of school facilities. The parks and recreation agency will become a partner in the development of a school site and fund recreational facilities beyond those typically built with a stand-alone school. These facilities may be indoor spaces (gymnasiums, classrooms, meeting rooms, etc.) or outdoor recreation facilities (ballfields, playgrounds, picnic shelters, etc.). The cost of developing and operating these additional facilities is minimized when constructing them in partnership with school development. Savings are also found in shared infrastructure (parking, restrooms, etc.) and shared maintenance and operational cost.

The School Park concept maximizes the joint use objective and provides a planned facility that maximizes public funds. The School Park concept typically varies depending on the school. Elementary and middle schools provide the ideal setting for a Neighborhood Park, while middle and high schools follow the function of a Community Park or sports complex. Access to school sports facilities at high schools and middle schools can be difficult based on team sports needs. This concept only works if there is a mutually agreed upon joint use agreement to define roles, responsibilities, and use of facilities.

Service Area:	Varies depending on school type and park type
Desirable Size:	Varies depending on school type and park type
Typical Facilities:	Varies depending on school type and park type

Development of **School Parks** usually fall within the responsibility of municipalities, county agencies, or school districts.



Typical School Park

± 50 Acres

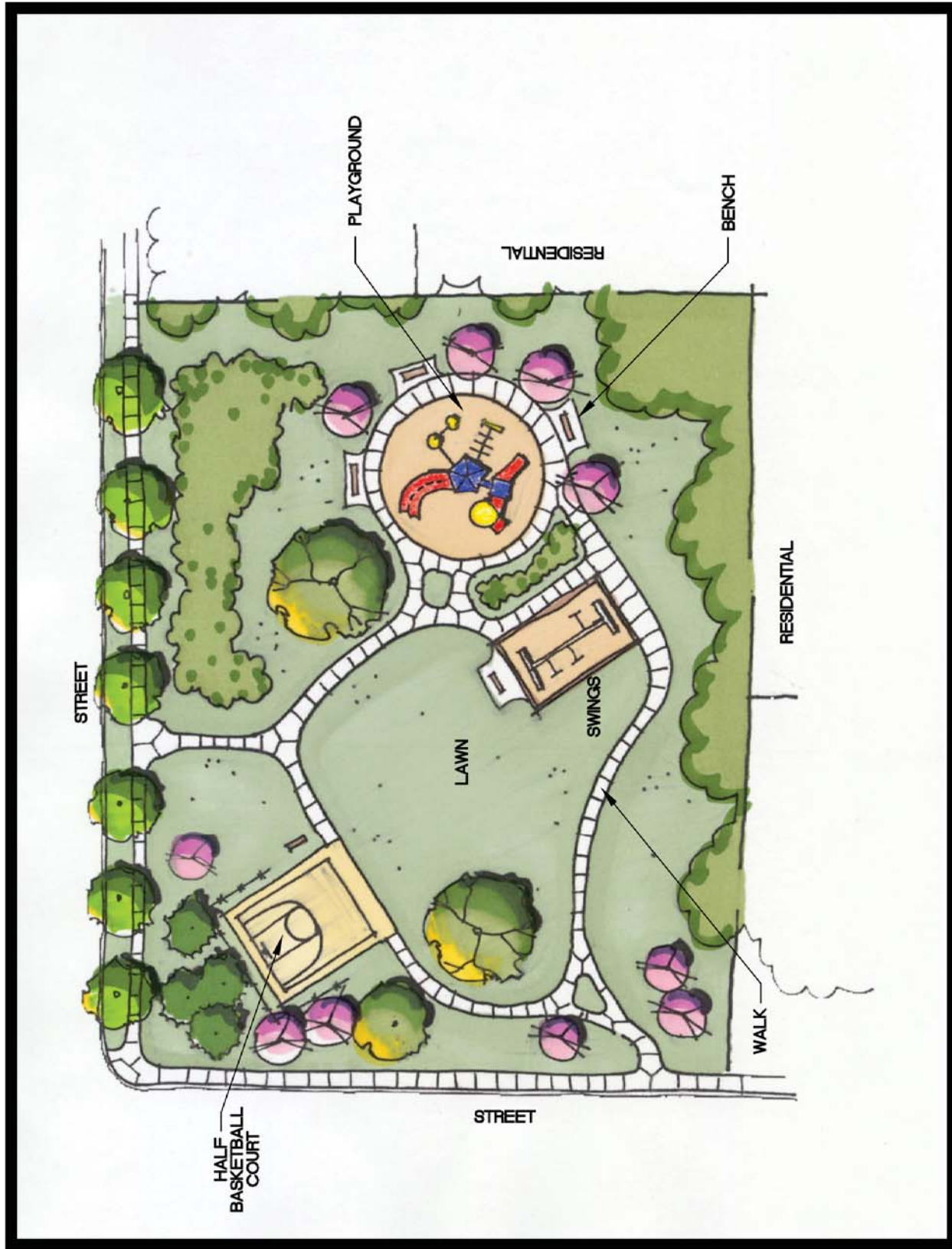
Mini Parks

Mini Parks are the smallest park classification. These parks are located within walking distance of the area serviced, and they provide limited recreational needs. The small amount of land associated with Mini Parks usually results in intense development with little to no buffer between the park and adjacent properties.

NRPA’s guidelines for Mini Park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	.25 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	.25 - 1 acres
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
½ Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Open Play Area	Landscaped Public Use Area

Mini Parks are typically developed by municipalities.



Typical Mini Park

.25 - 1 Acres

Greenway Trails

Greenways provide an important component of the overall park system. They:

- Serve as alternative non-motorized transportation facilities.
- Provide links between parks, schools, neighborhoods, and commercial areas.
- Emphasize harmony with the natural environment.
- Provide safe pedestrian movement.
- Provide resource based outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Enhance adjacent property values.
- Provide linear parks and open spaces.

Greenways are very similar to natural resource sites; the primary difference is the emphasis on pedestrian trails found in the greenway system.

Desirable Size: Greenways form corridors that vary considerably in length and width.
A 50' width is generally considered a minimum.

