



Winterville
Parks & Recreation
ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

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Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan 2025 – 2035

Adopted On 2/10/2025

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Acknowledgments

The Town of Winterville wishes to express its sincere appreciation to those entities and individuals, who, in any way, contributed to the creation of the Winterville Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan — some of which are identified below. Without the knowledge and expertise of these persons, in both individual and team settings, this document would not be possible.

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01 | Introduction

The most recent comprehensive parks and recreation master plan for the Town of Winterville was created in 2016. This plan noted the need for updating the existing parks as well as dramatically improving walkability in the Town. The Town has addressed the park updates, but there is still a need for more trail development. Over the past few years, the Town has seen an increase in population and development, and they have experienced the change in recreation trends. This plan will consider the previous plan and the publicly expressed recreation needs for 2024.

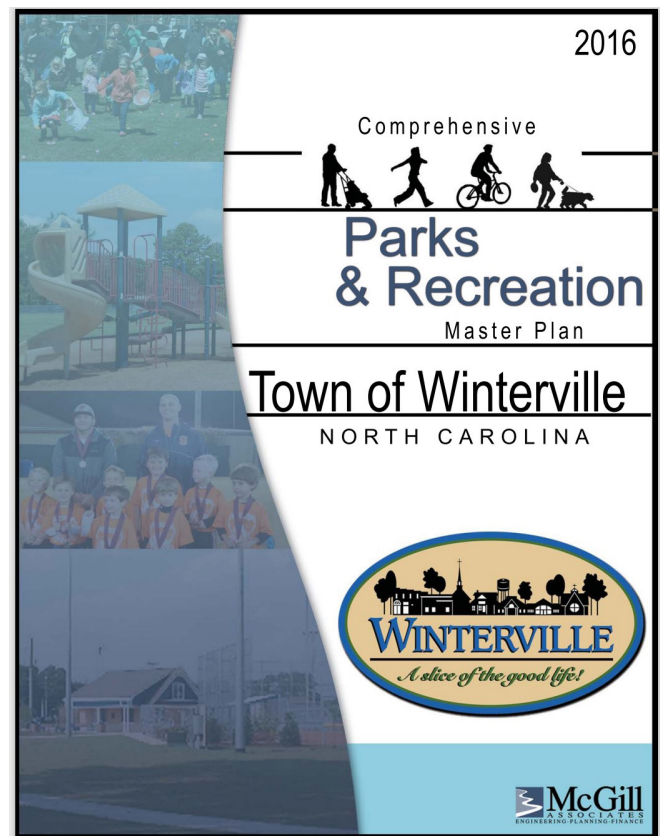
Based on US Census estimates, Winterville has grown approximately 16% since 2014. NCOSBM growth rates put the Town on pace to approach 15,000 residents in the next 10 years. North Carolina continues to be one of the fastest-growing states, and Winterville is positioning itself to capture its share of this growth. Industry development and the potential for private sports destination development would further accelerate this growth and add to impact parks and recreation has on the local economy.

This 2025-2035 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan provides the framework for the Town's Council and staff. The framework is based on an inventory of the existing park system, site observations, discussing the needs as explained by Town staff, and evaluating public comments received through community engagement efforts. In addition, state and national benchmarks were used to support the recommendations for recreation facilities. The assessment of the existing park system identifies immediate needs in the community and assists in predicting possible future needs.

The continued development of Winterville and the surrounding areas will require upgrades to and expansion of existing recreational facilities.

Expansion requires acquiring Town-owned property; grant funding, like through the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), Great Trails State Funding, Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF), and other leveraging resources, will help mitigate these costs. This master plan will help the Town be competitive in seeking funding assistance.

This master plan will also analyze and recommend the addition or renovation of parks, programs, and recreational facilities. It prioritizes certain projects, like recommended park upgrades or possible expansion, by considering the needs of the population, community input, and recreational standards. The plan is action-oriented and will provide Winterville with a practical guide for enhancing facilities and programs while also fostering community spirit, community growth, recreation-based economic development, and bonding between local citizens.





02 | Influencing Factor

Natural Features and Landscape

In 1897, Winterville was incorporated as a destination along the Atlantic Coastline Railroad. The Town was the highest point in Pitt County, which provided it with excellent mineral water and bolstered the effort of protecting the health of the Town’s residents. In addition to being the highest point in Pitt County, Winterville is also known for having one of the only banks in North Carolina that could stay open during the Great Depression. After the national economic disaster, the Town’s industry began to grow. Winterville was the first town in Pitt County with electrical current, which meant it could have company buildings with lights. The Town held the Winterville Cotton Oil Company, a cigar factory, an automobile dealership, a buggy company, and Mrs. Braxton’s Millinery shop. Currently, the largest employer is the Robert’s Company, and the Town is gaining around 150 new residents each year.

Median Income

\$38,652

Per capita income

about 20 percent higher than the amount in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: \$32,224

a little higher than the amount in North Carolina: \$37,641

\$82,969

Median household income

about 1.5 times the amount in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: \$54,915

about 25 percent higher than the amount in North Carolina: \$66,186

Social and Economic Factors

Winterville is an attractive place to live, work, and play, and while it is close to Greenville, NC, the Town stands apart both demographically and with its own vibrant identity. Data based on the US Census show that Town’s per capita income and median household income levels are higher than the Greenville Metro area. Relatedly, compared to the Greenville Metro area, the Town has lower than average poverty rates and higher than average home values.

Compared to the Greenville Metro area and the state of North Carolina, Winterville has lower geographic mobility. Additionally, most of the migration in the Town is from another county or other states. This information presents a population that is drawing residents in from outside the County and retaining them.

Poverty

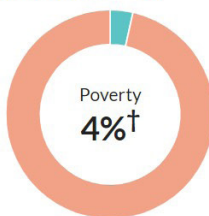
7.1%

Persons below poverty line

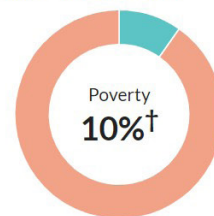
about one-third of the rate in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: 20%

about half the rate in North Carolina: 13.3%

Children (Under 18)



Seniors (65 and over)



Home Values

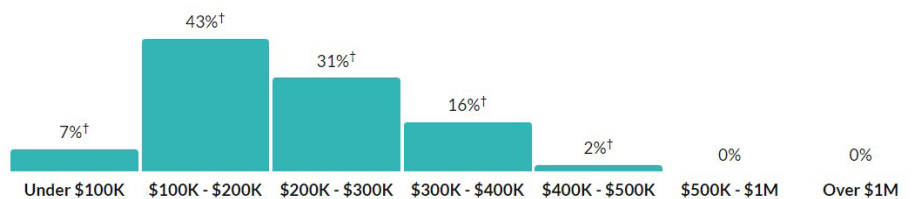
\$198,600

Median value of owner-occupied housing units

about 10 percent higher than the amount in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: \$178,700

about 80 percent of the amount in North Carolina:

Value of owner-occupied housing units



Attracting Young Adults

With Eastern Carolina University (ECU) nearby, it is important for the Town to understand its educational make-up. Compared to the Greenville Metro area and the state of North Carolina, Winterville has a higher proportion of residents with college degrees. Some of the state's fastest growing and most affluent communities around the state, such as Harrisburg, Apex, and Cary, North Carolina, capitalize on their proximity to a university by offering a high quality of life that is attractive to recent graduates. Winterville is poised to make a similar offering since ECU is 6 miles from the Town.

A Destination for the Retired

US Census based data presents that Town's median age is significantly higher than the Greenville metro area. According to the North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2020-2025, senior citizens are the fastest growing age group. The senior population is expected to have significant impacts on society because of income levels, population, and unique needs. NC OSBM projects that by 2030, 1 in 5 North Carolinians will be 65 or older. Approximately 30% of Winterville's population is over the age of 50.

Geographic Mobility

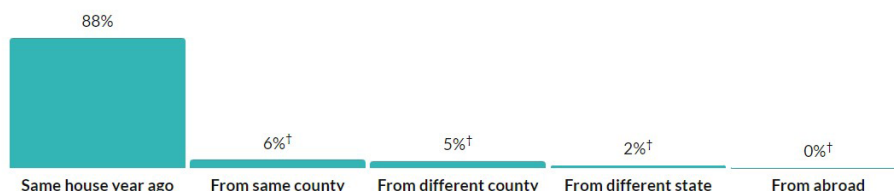
12.2%

Moved since previous year

about three-fifths of the rate in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: 19.9%

about 90 percent of the rate in North Carolina: 13.8%

Population migration since previous year



Education

91.3%

High school grad or higher

about the same as the rate in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: 90.2%

about the same as the rate in North Carolina: 89.4%

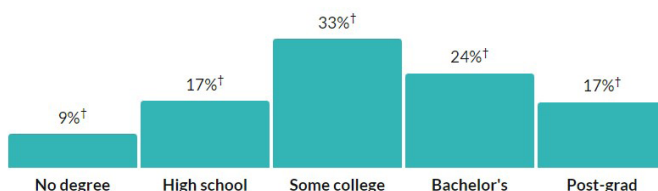
41.1%

Bachelor's degree or higher

about 25 percent higher than the rate in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: 33.1%

about 20 percent higher than the rate in North Carolina: 33.9%

Population by highest level of education



* Universe: Population 25 years and over

[Show data / Embed](#)

Median Age

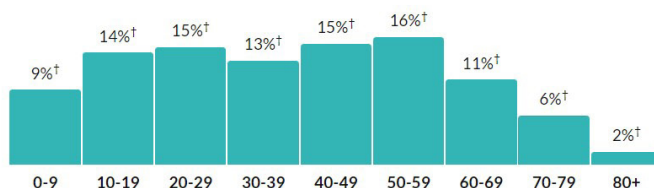
39.6

Median age

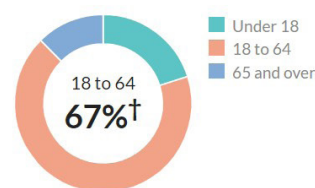
about 20 percent higher than the figure in the Greenville, NC Metro Area: 33.2

about the same as the figure in North Carolina: 39.1

Population by age range



Population by age category



Valuing Racial and Cultural Diversity

Winterville’s demographic is comparable to the rest of the region, with White residents making up the majority of the population, followed by the African American and Hispanic populations. This high level of diversity helps provide a strength of culture and identity for the community.

The minimum categories for data on race and the Town for federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below:

Race and Ethnicity



American Indian

This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian

This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent (for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam).

Black / African American

This includes a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

Hispanic / Latino

This ethnic distinction is a subset of a race as defined by the federal government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander

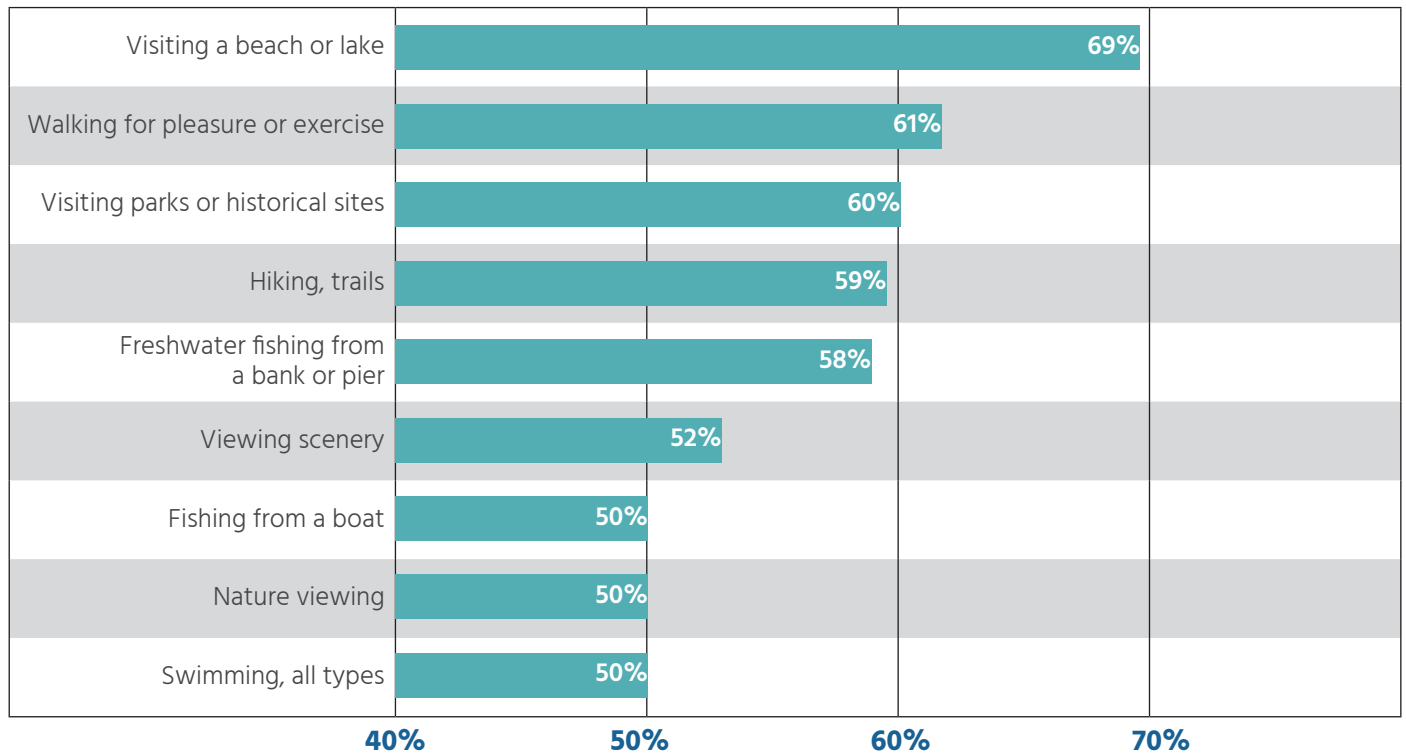
This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

White

This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

The top 9 most popular outdoor activities in North Carolina based on the North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan for 2020-2025 (SCORP) produced by the Division of Parks and Recreation are:

Top 9 Most Popular Outdoor Activities in North Carolina



Outdoor activities data as provided by the 2020-2025 SCORP is available by request to North Carolina State Parks.

Winterville is for people who love outdoor recreation and want a lively, small-town feel. With continued multi-faceted economic growth, the Town's development is expected to have long-term sustainability. This plan can help Winterville grow its local culture and set itself apart from other area municipalities while also capturing the attention of visitors. The Town's proximity to Goose Creek State Park and downtown Greenville, as well as being only a drive away from the North Carolina coast, makes Winterville an even more appealing place to live, work, and play.

Winterville's 2019 Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Winterville's 2019 comprehensive land use plan makes several critical points about investing in the Town's parks and recreation offerings.

Some of the key related points are:

- Winterville implemented a golf cart ordinance to encourage downtown area growth in 2010
- The Highway 11 bypass will likely spur growth to the west of the Town center

Noted park needs:

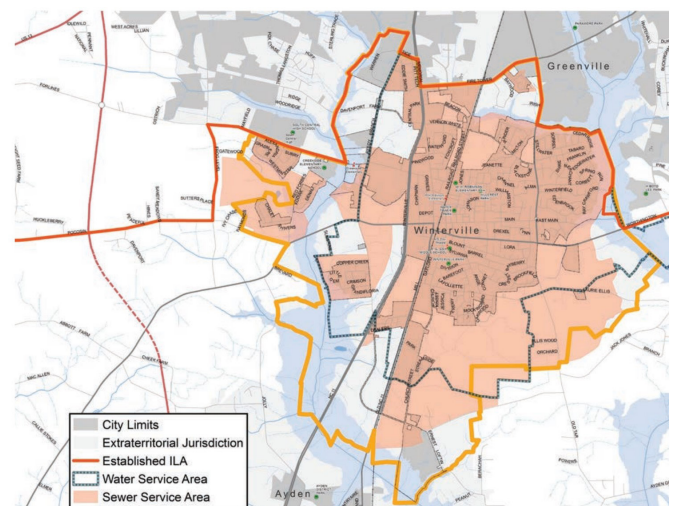
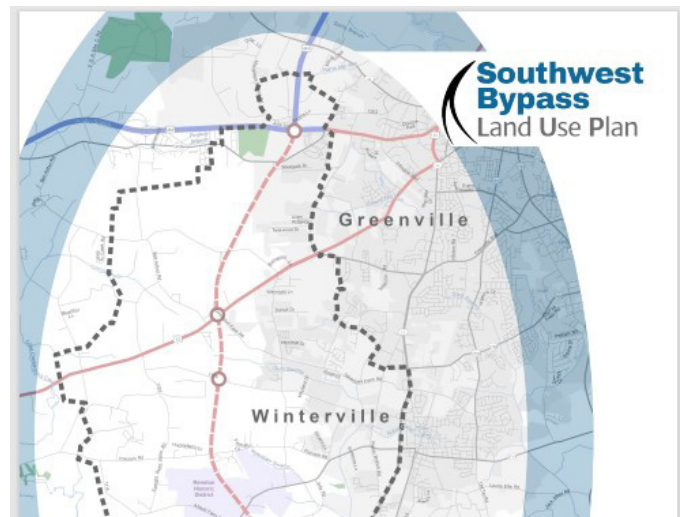
- 90 additional acres of parkland (10 per 1,000 people is standard)
- Indoor recreation facility
- Park facilities in eastern and western parts of Town
- Pedestrian and bike connections including sidewalks, trails, and greenways
- Facility upgrades
- Downtown public space improvements

Infrastructure leads development, and Winterville's water and sewer infrastructure suggests that the areas south and west of Town center are the key areas where development is likely to take place.

Economic Development

Studies have shown that economies are positively impacted when recreation is promoted, active transportation tourism is fostered, and there are investments in parks and recreation. One way to measure the quality of life in an area is to observe the number of people who feel comfortable walking or riding bicycles. Research has substantiated a connection between economic growth and the existence of parks and open spaces in communities and municipalities around the country. This growth

includes increased property values in residential, urban, and industrial communities, which brings increased tourist revenue.



The Two Views of Recreation Offerings

Local governments generally fall somewhere along this spectrum

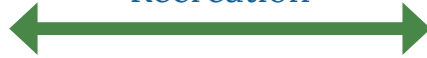
This spectrum generally gauges how leadership views parks and recreation



Expense

- Similar to police and fire department
- Money goes in and services come out
- Nothing more, no significant impact on bottom line

Parks and Recreation

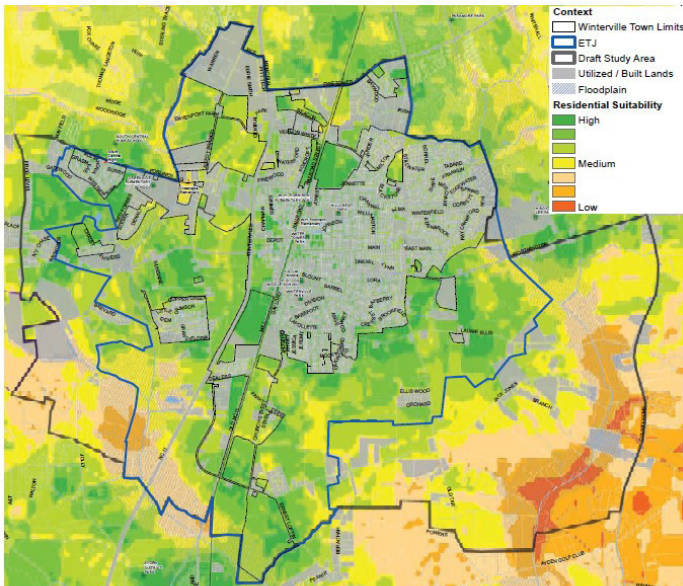


Investment

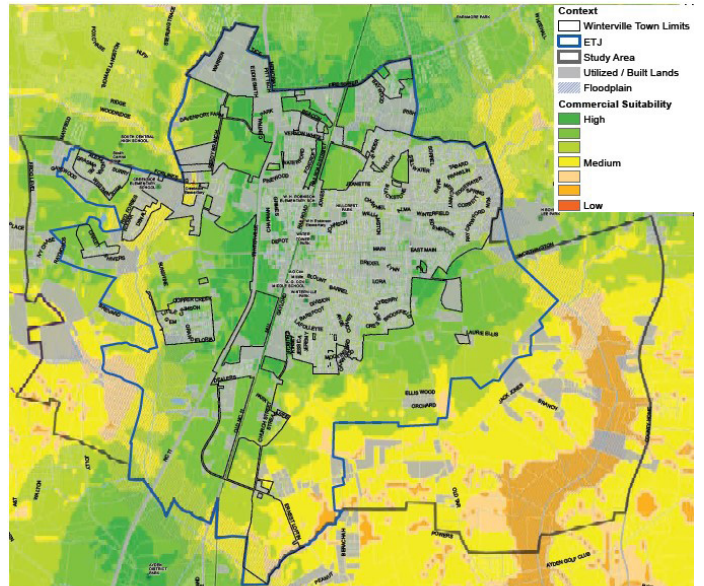


- You get the service, but you also get the economic dividends of your investment
- Money goes in and services come out
- Additional ROI comes from this investment

This map present a development pattern that shows strong growth opportunities to the south of the Town as well as and the area between Davenport Road and Pocasin Road leading west of the Town until you reach the Highway 11 bypass. This, in a way, creates a critical corridor where demand will be high and opportunity for greenspace will become more and more limited.



The map above shows Residential Suitability based on a GIS analysis of economic and environmental factors.



The map above shows Commercial/Retail Suitability based on a GIS analysis of economic and environmental factors.

Research Shows that Parks and Recreation are an Investment



Property Values Increase

Economic research has demonstrated consistently that homes and properties located near parklands have higher values than those located farther away. Higher home values not only benefit the owners of these properties but also add to the tax base of local governments.¹

8-20% Average property value increase²

Economic Development

Parks and recreation improves the quality of life in communities and benefits the local economic development of a region. Eighty-seven percent of corporate executives responding to a 2023 Area Development survey rated quality of life features as an important factor for a headquarters, factory, or other company facility.¹

87% Average % of executives who seek quality of life when locating facilities

Visitor Spending

Many local park and recreation agency amenities spur tourism to their respective locales, generating significant economic activity, including but not limited to increased sales for local restaurants, bars, and hotels.¹

Economic impact of patron spending = # of visits X Average spending per visit X Multiplier

Special events such as cultural, educational/history or even sporting events have an impact. It is not a matter of IF an event will have an impact, but how much of an impact it will have.³

The multiplier is determined on a case-by-case basis using proprietary software. Impacts vary and the rate changes. A typical tool for calculating a multiplier is IMPLAN. For more information, check out the website: www.IMPLAN.com.

Sources:

1. "The Economic Impacts of Parks: An Examination of the Fiscal Effects of Operations and Capital Spending by Local Park and Recreation Agencies on the US Economy."
2. Crompton, J.L. 2001. *Parks and Economic Development*. PAS Report No. 502. American Planning Association, Chicago, Illinois.
3. Center for Economic Studies: Michigan State University: 2007 *Quantifying the Economic Impacts of Community Events*



The 2024 Watermelon Festival drew huge crowds to Winterville. Parks and recreation are the foundational piece of the local economic engine component. Many local governments facilitate wide reaching concert series and actively seek to develop new special events to attract visitors, businesses, and residents.

Trail Development

Multiuse trails are popular amenities for vacationing bicyclists and pedestrians. Tourists and visitors often return to communities that provide walking and biking areas that are safely removed from busy roads. Multiuse trails offer scenic recreation suitable for various ages and abilities. Lodging located near popular trails helps increase occupancy for the owner. For residents in these locales, investments in trails and greenways can increase property values, improve the overall livability of a community, and attract, retain, and expand tourism and the associated revenues.

Beyond the revenue benefits, multiuse trails have vegetated buffers adjacent to waterways that act as filters to clean the water, trapping non-point source pollutants. These pollutants, including sediment, pesticides, fertilizers, oil, gas, and other chemicals, are transported into streams, rivers, and lakes by stormwater when rain events occur.



In 2019, the Town completed the Winterville Greenway Master Plan. This plan thoroughly outlined the walkability needs for the Town as well as connectivity concerns to other area trail and greenway systems. While the plan was developed in 2019, little to none of the outlined trail and greenway needs have been developed.

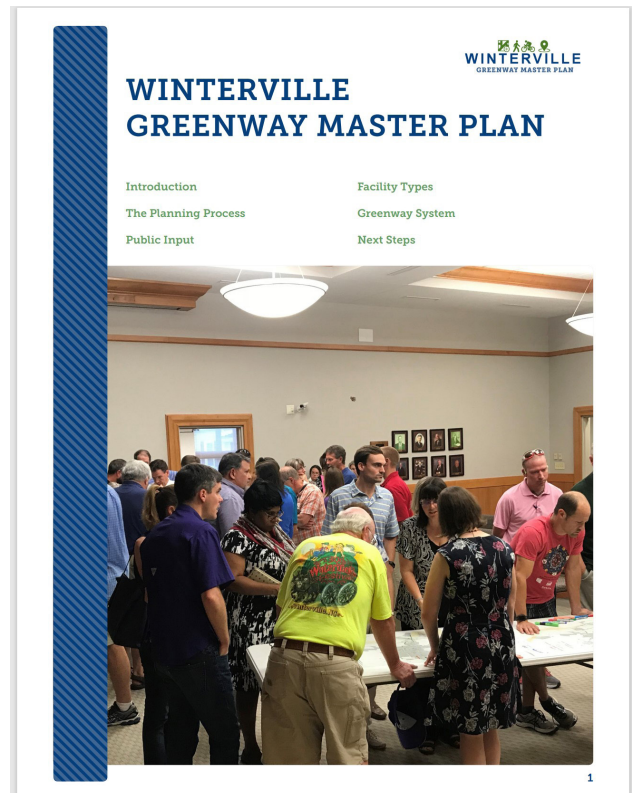
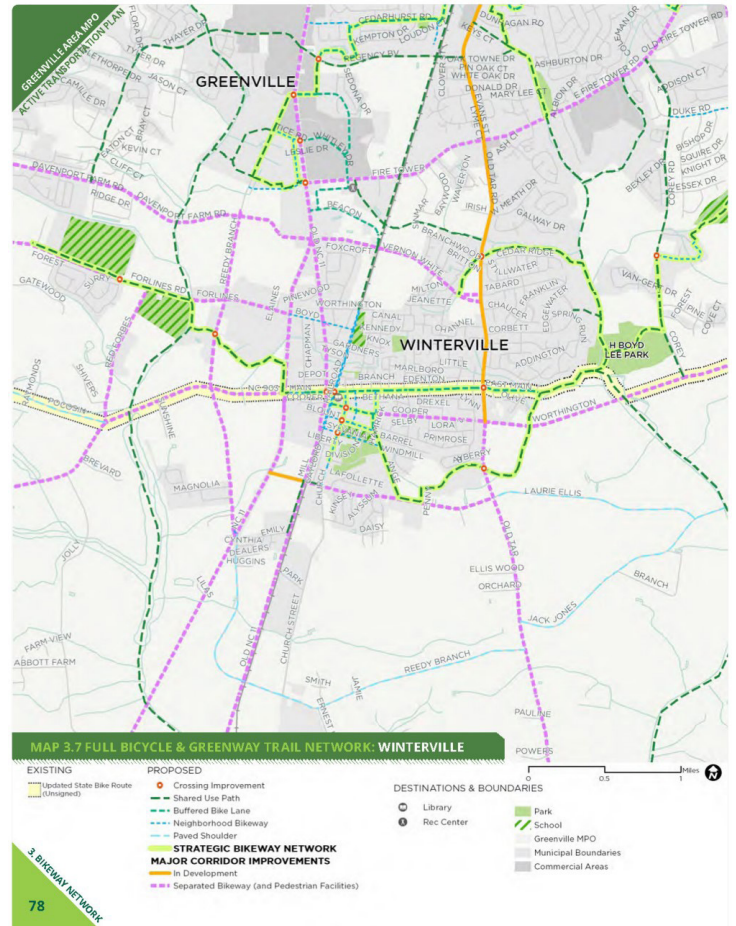
Are Greenways Safe? Yes!

You cannot build a trail or greenway in many places without a concerned citizen showing up at a Town Hall or County Commission meeting and expressing their fears of what will happen if a greenway is developed their backyard. But what does the research say?

A 2014 National Recreation and Parks Association addresses “The Perception and the Reality” of Trail safety. An excerpt of the study is noted here. (ADD LINK TO HERE)

“The RTC study included major crimes such as assault and minor crimes against property including graffiti and sign damage. Overall, the results from the study indicated that trails are safe places to be. Of the 372 trails surveyed in the study, only 3 percent experienced any type of major crime. “The RTC study found the crime rate on urban trails surveyed was very low compared to the national crime rate for urban areas.”

A separate article from NRPA presents that failure to develop parks, greenways, and trails may limit physical activity and overall community health. The full article can be found here. (INSERT LINK)



Biking is a popular pastime for transportation and exploration. The connectivity of popular destination points makes biking an optional method to explore Winterville and broader Pitt County. The East Coast Greenway (ECG), is a 3,000-mile bicycling / walking route that is planned to pass through Pitt County on its journey from Maine to Florida. The should consider long-term connectivity to this because of the health, recreation, and economic benefits that connections could bring.

Increased Property Value

The real estate market consistently demonstrates that residents throughout the country are willing to invest larger amounts of money in properties that are located close to parks and open space areas. The higher values of these homes produce higher property taxes in the affected area. In some instances, additional property taxes are sufficient to recoup the annual debt charges on bonds initially used to finance park acquisition and development.

Studies have shown that property values typically increase when parks or outdoor programs, such as outdoor festivals, movies, and restaurants, are in the immediate locale.

Attracting New Businesses

Research has demonstrated that quality of life is a significant factor in businesses deciding where to locate. As parks and recreation directly impact the growth and revitalization of businesses, they should be considered closely correlated. Adding parks and recreational activities in urban, small-town, or rural areas may be the deciding factor for businesses contemplating Winterville versus other area municipalities. People want to live and work in a place where they can go for a stroll, walk the dog, or enjoy the outdoors. Parks and greenways play a critical role in creating a sense of place, which attracts residents and helps businesses become more sustainable.

Tourism

A park often becomes a community's signature attraction and is used as a marketing tool to attract residents, tourists, conventions, and businesses. Parks usually shape the area's identity and give residents a sense of pride.

Organized events held in public parks, such as art festivals, athletic events, food festivals, concerts, and plays, often bring substantial positive economic impacts to their communities by filling hotel rooms, restaurants, and local businesses.



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03 | Master Plan Process

Overview

The degree of need for parks, recreation, and open space is most directly influenced by the quality of life that Winterville residents and visitors expect. This plan addresses, as its first priority, what the Town's residents and visitors envision for the future of the its parks and recreation.

The Town of Winterville's Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan 2025-2035 provides a framework for the Town's board and staff. This plan is based on an inventory of the existing park system, recorded site observations, discussions of needs with the Town staff, and public comments gathered through community engagement efforts. Additionally, we used NRPA metrics to guide the recommendations for the Town recreation facilities.

Methodology

With assistance from Town staff and team site visits, this study documents the existing Town-owned facilities, current programming arrangements, and growth projects. We also provide a listing of the recreation opportunities available through local municipalities, Pitt County, state land, and other recreation facilities in the area.

Town of Winterville Mission Statement

The mission of the Town of Winterville Parks and Recreation Department is to effectively and efficiently meet the recreation needs and interests of residents of all ages. Efforts to fulfill our mission focuses on updating the present facilities and playgrounds, planning for the acquisition of future facilities, and providing a wide range of year-round recreation activities that utilize traditional and innovative programming ideas.



The Winterville Recreation Advisory Board represented at the Christmas Parade | Source: Sandra Harvey Photography

Plan

While recommendations lay a solid foundation for improvement, staffing and roll-out strategy are critical for meaningful progress. In this plan, we provide high-level strategic and staffing considerations that guide the Town as it manages the improvements and changes outlined in the recommendations section.

Process

Discovery + Data Collection

Understanding the community requires examining current demographics and identifying Town-owned recreation facilities and Town-led programs. Inventory and analysis of this information are used to improve the current parks and recreation system. Whom the Town serves correlates with what improvements may be appropriate.

Assessment

The future of the Town's parks and recreation system is determined by listening and understanding what has worked in the past and what should be improved in the future. After discovering who the community is and what facilities and programs exist, the needs of Town residents and staff are considered. Through analysis of open conversations with residents, public survey input, staff input, and typical standards, a picture of how to move forward develops. We also evaluated recreation trends and provided information on what could be possible for Winterville's future. We designed surveys to determine the demand for outdoor recreation and facilities, which were conducted on the federal and state levels by private, nonprofit, and governmental agencies. This information is important because it sets a precedent for what activities the typical park user would expect.

Recommendations

Resident and staff input identified in the discovery phase and needs assessment are evaluated and analyzed to identify actions that will benefit the County in the future. Based on community needs and desires and departmental and consulting team experience, recommendations for improvements are made. These recommendations are presented and prioritized based on immediate needs (0–5 years), short-term needs (5–10 years), and long-term future needs (10 years and beyond).

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04 | Inventory Assessment

Inventory Assessment

Recreation is a necessary part of any community to provide places to play, opportunities to improve health and wellness, and to conserve and protect natural resources. This section will look at the typical parks and recreation facilities in a community. An inventory of all the facilities offered is also provided to understand the recreational opportunities that the Town of Winterville has full access to. These recreational facilities are derived from many different sources, including the following:

Examples of parks inventoried and included in service consideration:

- Publicly owned local, state, and national parks; trails; and open space
- County / municipal or school facilities with joint-use or interlocal agreements
- Privately owned parks that are managed for full public use
- Cemeteries maintained by the parks and recreation

Privately owned parks that are managed for full public use:

- Parks in gated communities
- Private golf courses
- School or municipal facilities with joint-use agreements
 - The County Parks and Recreation is not the primary facility manager
- Zoos, museums, professional sports stadiums

Types of Parks and Recreation Facilities

A comprehensive park system comprises various park types ranging from small neighborhood playgrounds to larger parks with athletic fields, playgrounds, community centers, and open spaces. This type of park reflects the facility's scale and the diverse patrons' differing recreational preferences. Park models are guidelines for fulfilling communities' future recreational needs. Only some of these types of parks are the responsibility of the local government; several agencies (federal, state, county, other local municipalities, and private organizations) also provide recreational opportunities. To further understand the Town's role in providing recreation services to its citizens, it is necessary to understand the elements of a comprehensive park system.



Cliffs of the Neuse | Source: North Carolina State Parks

Regional Parks

Per NRPA resources, regional parks are typically very large sites. Cliffs of the Neuse, in the coastal plains of North Carolina, is an example of a regional park that provides recreational open space and historical education opportunities for its patrons. Regional parks preserve the unique qualities that exemplify the natural features found there, such as diverse land formations, vegetation, and wildlife. Most regional park facilities contain environmental centers, campsites, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. In addition, open fields for non-structured activities, such as frisbee throwing or kite flying, are generally found there.

Specific standards/criteria for developing regional parks are as follows:

Acreage / Population Ratio

10 acres per 1,000 persons

Service Area

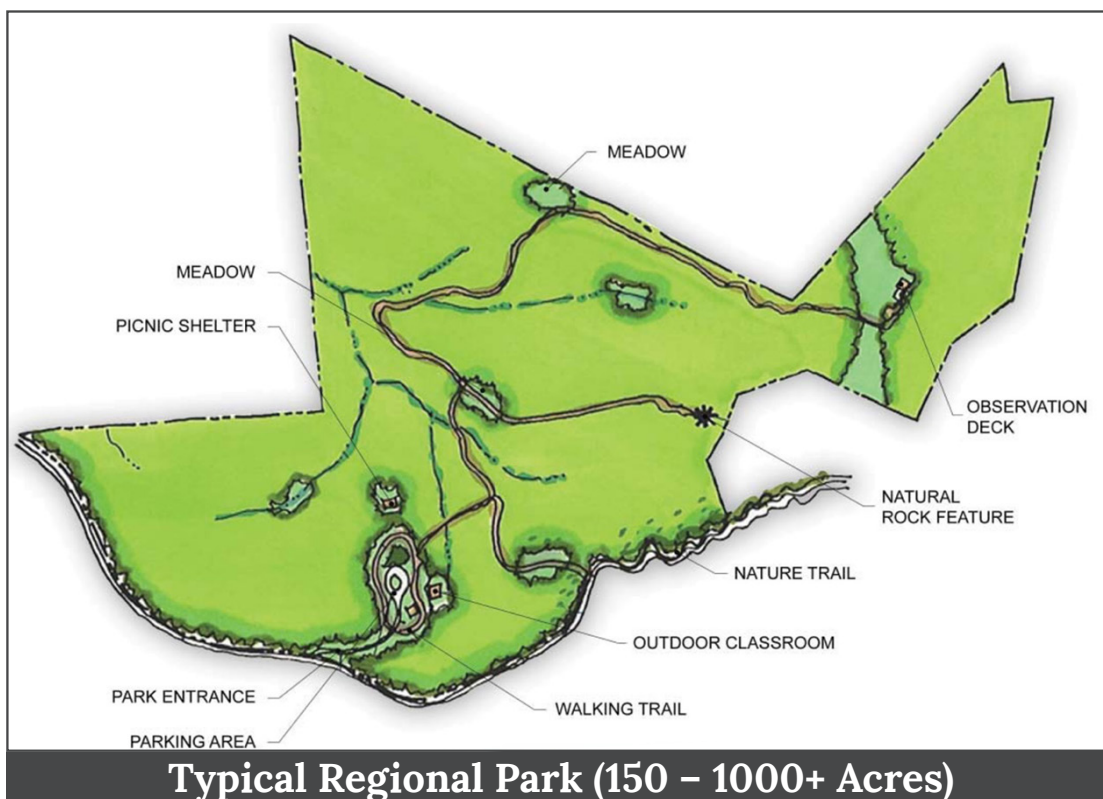
Region wide

Desirable Range

150 – 1,000 + acres with sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed (10% of the site may be developed with facilities found in community parks.)

Typical Facilities

- Environmental center
- Caretaker's house
- Equestrian center
- Primitive camping
- Group camping
- Recreational vehicle camping
- Nature trails
- Observation deck
- Picnic shelters and grills
- Picnic tables with grills (not under shelter)
- Boating
- Parking
- Fishing piers
- Boat docks
- Restrooms
- Vending
- Swimming



Typical Regional Park (150 – 1000+ Acres)

District Parks

District parks function as the major source of active recreation for several neighborhoods within a community. District parks are intensely developed, offering a multitude of facilities to serve their intended geographic user area, and activities are balanced between active and passive recreation. District parks are typically developed to accommodate athletic league sporting events and tournament competitions. Passive recreation opportunities, such as walking for pleasure, wildlife observation, and picnicking, are found in undisturbed areas, preferably within surrounding buffers. District parks present great opportunities for non-traditional types of recreation.

Sites for district parks should be relatively level to alleviate excessive grading. When possible, there should be an equal balance of wooded and cleared areas. If a natural water feature is present, the adjoining land should be developed primarily as passive recreation. Accessibility to neighborhoods should be an important consideration when choosing sites. Developing district parks is typically the responsibility of county or municipal agencies.

Specific standards / criteria for developing district parks are as follows:

Acreage / Population Ratio

5 acres per 1,000 persons

Service Area

1 to 2 ½-mile radius

Desirable Range

75 – 200 acres

Typical Facilities

- Playgrounds
- Full- or half-size basketball courts
- Volleyball courts
- Baseball / softball / multipurpose field
- Soccer / football field
- Soccer practice field (movable goals)
- Tennis courts (lighted)
- Nature trails
- Picnic tables with grill (with or without shelter)
- Restrooms / concessions
- Benches or bench swings
- Parking / service yard
- 50% of the site remains undeveloped
- Tennis courts (lighted)

Alternate Facilities*

- Tennis center
- Amphitheater
- Observation decks
- Fishing piers / boating / boat dock
- Recreation center

* Alternate facilities may be added or substituted



Typical District Park



Oakview Park: A historic district park in Wake County, NC.

Community Parks

Community parks focus on meeting community-based recreational needs and preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. Compared to district parks, community parks have a smaller range of recreation facilities. They may host athletic league sports events and provide passive recreation. Fifty percent of the community park property should be developed for only passive recreation, with these relatively undisturbed areas serving as buffers around the park and / or acting as buffers between active facilities.

Community park sites should have varying topography and vegetation, and several different tree species should be present in forested areas. Community parks should contain cleared areas to locate active recreational facilities. At least one natural water feature (lake, river, or creek) is desirable in community parks. The land acquired for use as a community park should be contiguous in nature and strategically located to serve all users within the designated community. The development of community parks typically falls within the realm of municipal responsibilities.

*Park type acreage varies based on site limitations and amenity types

Specific standards/criteria for developing community parks are as follows:

Acreage / Population Ratio

2 – 5 acres per 1,000 persons

Service Area

1 to 2-mile radius

Desirable Range

15 – 50 acres

Typical Facilities

- Playgrounds
- Full-size or half-size basketball courts
- Swimming pool
- Tennis / volleyball courts
- Soccer / multipurpose fields
- Baseball / softball fields
- Nature trails
- Restrooms / concessions
- Benches or bench swings
- Parking
- Picnic tables / shelter (with or without grills)
- 50% of the site to remain undeveloped

Alternate Facilities*

- Recreation center
- Natural water features
- Disc golf
- Amphitheater
- Observation decks
- Pickleball

* Alternate facilities may be added or substituted



Typical Community Park (15 – 50 Acres)



Example of a community park | Source: Town of Harrisburg, NC

Nighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks offer the public a convenient recreation source and serve as the social focus point of neighborhoods. Usually located within walking distance of the service area, neighborhood parks provide both active and passive recreation opportunities for all age groups. The smaller size of neighborhood parks, as compared to those previously mentioned, requires intense development. 50% of each site should remain undisturbed to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent property owners.

Specific standards / criteria for developing neighborhood parks are as follows:

Service Area

¾- to 1-mile radius to serve walking

Acreage / Population Ratio

2 acres per 1,000 persons

Desirable Range

7 – 15 acres



Neighborhood Park

Typical Facilities

- Softball or baseball field
- Multipurpose field
- Half-size basketball courts
- Picnic shelter with grills
- Picnic tables with grills (not under shelter)
- Benches or bench swings
- Playground
- 50% of the site to remain undeveloped

Alternate Facilities*

- Nature trails
- Tennis / pickleball courts

* Alternate facilities may be added or substituted.



Typical Neighborhood Park (7 - 15 Acres)

Mini-parks

Mini-parks are small places typically located in urban areas or associated with residential or institutional developments. These facilities can bring communities together with events, promote local history, or be a source of beauty. The mini-park should provide very limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs. They are typically located within walking distance of the area served.

Specific standards/criteria for developing mini-parks are as follows:

Service Area

¼- to ½-mile radius to serve walking

Acreage / Population Ratio

½ acre per 1,000 persons

Desirable Range

One acre or more

Typical Facilities

- Half-size basketball courts
- Picnic tables with grills (not under shelter)
- Benches or bench swings
- Open play area playground

Alternate Facilities*

- Nature trails
- Tennis / pickleball courts

*Alternate facilities may be added or substituted.



Example of a mini park



Typical Mini-park

Linear Parks and Greenways

Linear parks and greenways are areas developed for various modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, walking, and running. Linear parks are developed for several reasons:

- To connect existing recreational facilities
- To facilitate public rights-of-way
- To connect destination points
- For scenic views and leisure touring

The length and size of linear parks vary, depending on their intended use, the terrain of the parkland, and the distance between entities to be connected, such as parks, schools, cultural/historical resources, residential areas, and businesses. These linear parks are often developed within a large land area designated for protecting and managing the natural environment, with recreation opportunities as a secondary objective.

Unique or Special-Use Facilities

Unique or special-use facilities exist to enhance or utilize a unique artificial or natural feature. These can be civic spaces, parkways, historical sites, sites of archaeological significance, swimming pools, conservation easements, floodplains, etc. Minimum standards relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry for this park category. A size that is sufficient to protect and interpret the resource, while providing optimum use, is considered desirable. Winterville has a community pool, which is a special-use facility.



Linear parks and greenways offer recreation and connectivity



Splashpad in Davie County

Public Open Space

While adopting population-based standards for parkland and facilities is realistic and appropriate, it is not realistic to establish open space standards. The more reasonable method of establishing appropriate standards for open space is to determine the criteria necessary to protect significant natural areas contained therein.

Public open space is defined as any land acquired to be kept primarily undeveloped and used for non-programmed activities. The functions of open space include:

- Preservation of drainage areas for water supplies (watersheds)
- Protection of areas which are particularly well suited for growing crops (farmland preservation)

- Protection of communities to prevent urban sprawl (greenbelts)
- Protection of wildlife habitat (sanctuaries)
- Protection of approach and take-off areas near airports (clear zones)
- Protection of undeveloped land (landfills)
- Protection of areas aesthetically pleasing for a corridor (viewsheds)

While these areas are some of the more common open spaces, many others exist. Nash County provides access to state and county recreational areas like Chimney Rock State Park and Mount Mitchell State Park. Bird Island (State-owned) and the Carl Bazemore Bird Walk (County-owned) offer natural open spaces and wildlife observation.



Example of public open space in Davie County

Inventory Assessment

Winterville Recreation Park

Community Park | 24 acres

322 Sylvania Street, Winterville, NC

This is the site of the annual Winterville Watermelon Festival, which hosts fifteen thousand visitors and residents on average. The park is also an integral part of the standard parks and recreation programming. This park is funded by Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) funding. The park must remain a park in perpetuity and cannot house indoor recreation facilities. The playground was most recently renovated in 2018.

- Baseball / softball fields (4)
- 1/4 mile walking trail
- Playground
- Tennis courts (2)
- Picnic areas
- Amphitheater
- Concessions
- Fields



Winterville Recreation Park

Hillcrest Park

Neighborhood Park | 6.5 acres

2418 Carmon Street, Winterville, NC

This park is a beloved gathering spot for residents. It has no grant restrictions and provides green spaces with recreation amenities on the park's perimeter, which makes it conducive for small-scale public events, temporary social districts, and open space activities. WH Robinson Elementary School is approximately .2 of a mile from the park. This park needs several improvements. The teeball field needs to be updated, and there needs to be additional parking since the traffic garden has taken up approximately 18 spaces. If Town wants to keep the traffic garden where it is, there will need to be parking spaces added elsewhere. Finally, there are only partial sidewalks around the park, but the internal walking track is in good condition.

The playground was updated in 2019 and the basketball courts were resurfaced in 2018.

- Multi-purpose field
- Basketball courts (2)
- Playground / tot lot
- Shelters (2)
- 1/3 mile walking trail
- Traffic garden



Hillcrest Park

Watertower Park

Mini Park | 1.4 acres (.2 acres of the site are restricted because of the water tower)

Intersection between North Street and Jones Street in Winterville, NC

The park has a playground that is at the end of its useful lifespan. There is currently not an accessible route to the playground, shade structures, or other support facilities. The park has no dedicated parking and no known grant-related restrictions.

- Playground



Watertower Park

Joint-use Agreements

The parks and recreation department holds an informal agreement with A.G. Cox Middle School / Pitt County schools. The framework of the agreement states that when parks and recreation programs are using the facilities / fields, the department is responsible for maintaining them. When the parks and recreation department is not using the facilities / fields, the school system maintains them.

Other Public Recreation Facility Offerings

Public lands located within proximity to the Town of Winterville play an active role in providing recreation opportunities to residents and visitors. These public spaces are available through multiple public land managers, like local municipalities, Pitt County, and the State of North Carolina. The public lands offered by local municipalities, the county, the State of North Carolina, and federal lands provide recreational opportunities for Winterville's residents and visitors.

Other Local Government Recreation Facilities

Several nearby municipalities and Pitt County recreation sites are within proximity to the Town and provide access to a number of recreation amenities like the trail system, local parks, picnic areas, and camping. Some of the popular facilities are listed are the following pages..

County Facilities

Alice F. Keene District Park

District Park | 60 acres
4561 County Home Road, Greenville, NC

- Ball fields with lights (2)
- Horseshoe courts (4)
- Gaga ball court
- Half-court basketball court with two pickleball courts marked on the asphalt
- Picnic shelters (2)
- Soccer fields (4)
- Administrative building with two multi-use activity rooms and one conference room
- Gymnasium (in development)
- Fitness playground
- Large playground
- 1.2 mile asphalt trail
- 1 mile natural trail

Pitt County Office Park Recreation Complex

Community Park | 25 acres
415 Government Circle, Greenville, NC

A recreation center and surrounding outdoor recreation offerings are planned as part of the broader complex for Pitt County residents. This facility and its location will go a long way in promoting the overall wellness of residents.

- Community center / gymnasium
- Playgrounds (2)
- Picnic shelters (2)
- Multipurpose trail
- Nature play area
- Multipurpose field

Lake Glenwood Public Park

Neighborhood Park | 12 +/- acres

Intersection of Leon Drive and Eastern Pines Road

The County recently acquired this park, which presents an opportunity for a new, quiet park in a residential area. The park will likely be small, passive, and provided fishing / paddling activities.

Area Municipal Facilities

City of Greenville

Mini Parks

- Belmont / Dream Park
 - Grills
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Playground
 - Splashpad / spray ground
- Hillsdale Park
 - Playground
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Grills
- Peppermint Park
 - Grills
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Pickleball court
 - Playground
- Westhaven Park
 - Playground
 - Walking trails
- Woodlawn Park
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Accessible playground
 - Volleyball court
 - Basketball goal

Neighborhood Parks

- Andrew A. Best Freedom Park
 - Grills
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Playground
 - Walking trails
 - Ballfield
 - Restrooms
- Greensprings Park
 - Greenway
 - Grills
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Exercise trail
- Center for Arts and Crafts
 - Multi-purpose craft rooms
 - Pottery facility (6 wheels, 3 kilns)
 - Painting room
 - Dance
- Jaycee Park
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Grill
 - Playground
 - Softball field
 - Tennis courts
 - Restrooms
 - Administrative offices
 - Auditorium
 - Meeting rooms
- Paramore Park
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Grill
 - Playground
 - Walking trails

- Matthew Lewis Park at West Meadowbrook
 - Disc golf course
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Grill
 - Playground
 - Soccer field
 - Softball field
 - Little League practice field
- Extreme Park
 - Skateboard ramps
 - BMX ramps
 - Freestyle area
- South Greenville Park / Center
 - Baseball field
 - Multipurpose field
 - Playground
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Grills
 - Recreation center
 - Aerobics and exercise facilities
 - Weight room
 - Gymnasium
 - Basketball courts, equipment
 - Meeting rooms
 - Kids play area
- Thomas Foreman park / Eppes Recreation Center
 - Baseball fields with concession stand
 - Restrooms
 - Playground
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Grills
 - Outdoor swimming facility
- Recreation center
- Gymnasium
- Basketball courts
- Weight room
- Meeting rooms
- Multipurpose room with kitchen

Community Parks

- Elm Street Park / Center
 - Green Mill Run greenway
 - Stalling Stadium and baseball field
 - Sara Vaughn Field of Dreams
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Grills
 - Restrooms
 - Lighted tennis courts
 - Lighted pickleball courts
 - Playground
- Drew Steele Center
 - Recreation center
 - Gymnasium
 - Basketball courts
 - Computer lab
 - Cardio equipment
 - Weight room
 - Game room
 - Meeting room
- Evans Park
 - Tennis courts (12)
 - Softball fields (lighted)
 - Restrooms
 - Archery range
 - Picnic shelter / tables
 - Grills

- Greenfield Terrace / Community Center
 - Basketball courts
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Grills
 - Baseball field
 - Neos PlayStation
 - Restrooms
 - Recreation center
 - Meeting rooms
 - Playground
 - Walking trails
- H. Boyd Lee Park
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Playground
 - Softball fields
 - Walking / running trail
 - Restrooms
 - Cricket field
 - Exercise stations
 - Cross country track
 - Sand volleyball courts
 - Recreation center
 - Gymnasium with locker rooms
 - Meeting room
- Picnic shelters / tables
- Grill
- Restrooms
- Walter Strasvich Science and Nature Center
 - Theatre
 - Freshwater aquarium
 - Live turtles and snakes
 - Shell collection
- Wildwood Park
 - Lake
 - Fishing / fishing pier
 - Kayak launch
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Grills
 - Camping
 - Walking / hiking trails
 - Bike trails

Sport Complexes

- Bradford Creek Soccer Complex
 - Charles A. Vincent field
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Restrooms
 - Soccer fields
- Guy Smith Stadium Park
 - Home of the Greenville Yard Gnomes
 - Baseball fields
 - Batting cages
 - Locker rooms)

Regional Parks

- River Park North
 - Nature park
 - Boat ramp
 - Hiking
 - Fishing
 - Natural playground
 - Fossil pit
 - Camping

Special-use Facilities

- Beatrice Maye Garden Park
 - Garden area with seating
- Bradford Creek Golf Course
- Greenville Aquatics and Fitness Center
 - Gymnasium
 - Basketball courts
 - Pickleball courts
 - Aerobics and exercise rooms
 - Cardio equipment
 - Fitness center
 - Weight room
 - Indoor pool with locker rooms
- River Birch Tennis Center
 - Lighted tennis courts
 - Restrooms
 - Recreation center
- Sports Connection
 - Gymnasium
 - Basketball courts
 - Pickle courts
 - Locker rooms
- Perkins Complex
 - Baseball fields
 - Batting cage
 - Sand volleyball court
 - Practice field
 - Concessions
 - Restrooms
- Disc Golf Course at the Meadow
 - Walking trails
 - Disc golf course
- Town Common
 - Town Creek Bridge and South Tar Greenway
 - Veteran’s Memorial
 - Accessible play center
 - Amphitheater
 - Boat ramp
 - Fishing
 - Fishing pier
 - Picnic shelters / tables
 - Restrooms
 - Walking trails
- Existing Undeveloped Parks
 - Phil Carroll Nature Preserve
 - Eastside Park

Town of Farmville Parks

J.Y. Monk Park

- Picnic shelters / tables
- Playground
- Sand volleyball
- Basketball / pickleball court
- Splashpad

Farmville Municipal Disc Golf Course / Nature Trail

Farmville Municipal Athletic Park

- Baseball / softball field
- Multipurpose field
- Tennis courts
- Batting cages

R.T. Monk Park

- Baseball / softball fields (2)
- Multipurpose fields (2)
- Tennis courts
- Playground
- Walking trail
- Batting cages
- Maintenance facility
- Restroom / concession
- Shelter

Oliver Murphy Park

- Walking park
- Fitness equipment

Town Common

- Gazebo
- Tables and benches

Farmville Community Center

- Community center

Farmville Community Garden

- Community garden
- Public restrooms

Town of Ayden Parks**Ayden District Park**

- Small shelter
- Soccer fields
- Dog park
- Shelter

Veterans Park

- Picnic shelter

Ayden Arts and Recreation Center

- Recreation center
- Pottery building
- Softball field
- Community building

JJ Brown Park

- Shelter

Mary Alice Davenport Park**Town Hall Park****Village of Simpson Park****Community Park on Telfair Street**

- Baseball fields
- Picnic shelter
- Playground
- Public restrooms

Town of Grimesland Park**Grimesland Park**

- Walking track
- Playground
- Benches
- Grill
- Shelter

Private Recreation Facility Offerings

Private recreation providers, nonprofit organizations, and developers provide limited, alternate resources and opportunities that supplement the Town’s recreation opportunities. The types of organizations and businesses that provide these opportunities can include private fitness facilities, athletic clubs, recreational guide companies, recreational equipment rental businesses, neighborhood associations, and local nonprofit organizations. Some of the facilities available are as follows:

Golf Courses & Bowling Alleys

Ironwood Golf & Country Club

- Located at 200 Golf Club Wynd, Greenville, NC 27834, Ironwood is semi-private and offers a full-service golf experience. They have an 18-hole golf course, a pro shop, and amenities like tennis courts and a pool.

Brook Valley Country Club

- Located at 311 Oxford Road, Greenville, NC 27858, Brook Valley is a private country club with an exceptional Ellis Maples-designed golf course. They also offer family-focused amenities.

Ayden Golf & Country Club

- Located at 4343 Ayden Golf Club Road, Ayden, NC 28513. This semi-private course offers an 18-hole golf course, and their beautiful clubhouse and landscape make it an ideal venue for weddings and events.

Farmville Golf and Country Club

- Located at 3427 Bynum Drive, Farmville, NC 27828, this is a semi-private course with 18 holes and tees for different skill levels.

Greenville Country Club

- Located at 216 Country Club Drive, Greenville, NC 27834, this is a private country club with a premier golf course, recreational facilities, social events, and dining.

AMC East Carolina Lanes

- Located in Greenville, AMF East Carolina Lanes features 40 lanes with flat-screen scoring monitors, 6 flat-screen TVs, a game room, a billiard table, air hockey, a pro shop, and a meeting room (capacity up to 30 people).

Bowlero East Carolina

- Experience the best of Greenville at Bowlero East Carolina.

Bounce Houses / Trampoline Parks

- Air U Trampoline park and party center in Winterville, North Carolina

Nonprofits

- Boys and Girls Club
- Pitt County 4-H
- YMCA of Greenville

State and Federal Recreation Opportunities

The State of North Carolina manages Goose Creek State Park, which is the closest state park to Winterville. The State of North Carolina manages more than 250,000 acres of land throughout the state and a variety of state agencies. This public land is made available for recreation opportunities and to protect and conserve the natural heritage of North Carolina. These sites also provide the public with a variety of historical and education opportunities, which offer a wealth of knowledge.

Winterville is near some of North Carolina’s best recreation opportunities. From parks and game lands to public forest and trails, some of the popular destinations available to residents are listed below.

Goose Creek State Park

2190 Camp Leach Road, Washington, NC 27889

- Camping
- Hiking (8.5 miles)
- Swimming (seasonal)
- Fishing / boat ramp
- Picnic areas
- Amphitheater / auditorium
- Outdoor classroom
- Visitor center
- Beach access
- Bathhouse



Goose Creek River Boardwalk



05 | Needs Analysis

Recreation Needs Assessment

No two communities are the same, and neither are their recreational needs. Recreation facilities and programs do more than provide a place to play; they help put form and function into the culture that is envisioned by the community. Visioning a community's culture starts with understanding each community's subtle and sometimes dramatic cultural differences. A robust approach to listening to an area's citizens helps planners understand the pillars and principles of the culture envisioned for the place residents call home.

Park access should be geographically equitable to ensure access for all Winterville residents. An analysis of recreation service areas can be used to make land acquisition recommendations for current and future needs. One way to improve recreation is to provide easily accessible facilities and amenities that residents want and need. The existing recreation service areas shown on page 43 identifies potential service gaps.

To better understand what recreation resources a community has and how accessible those facilities and programs may be to the general population, this study looked at typical service areas. The existing service areas map illustrates what portions of the community lie within or near the typical recreation service areas for identified Town-owned recreation facilities. The outcome of this exercise reveals that most of the community lives near a Town-owned facility that they can easily access. Children and seniors who do not drive are typically the groups that encounter accessibility issues. Both user groups generally have greater leisure time and can directly benefit from access to parks and recreation facilities.

Existing recreation service areas indicate that the areas outside the municipalities' core have the least access to parks. Future parks and recreation system plans should consider developing facilities outside

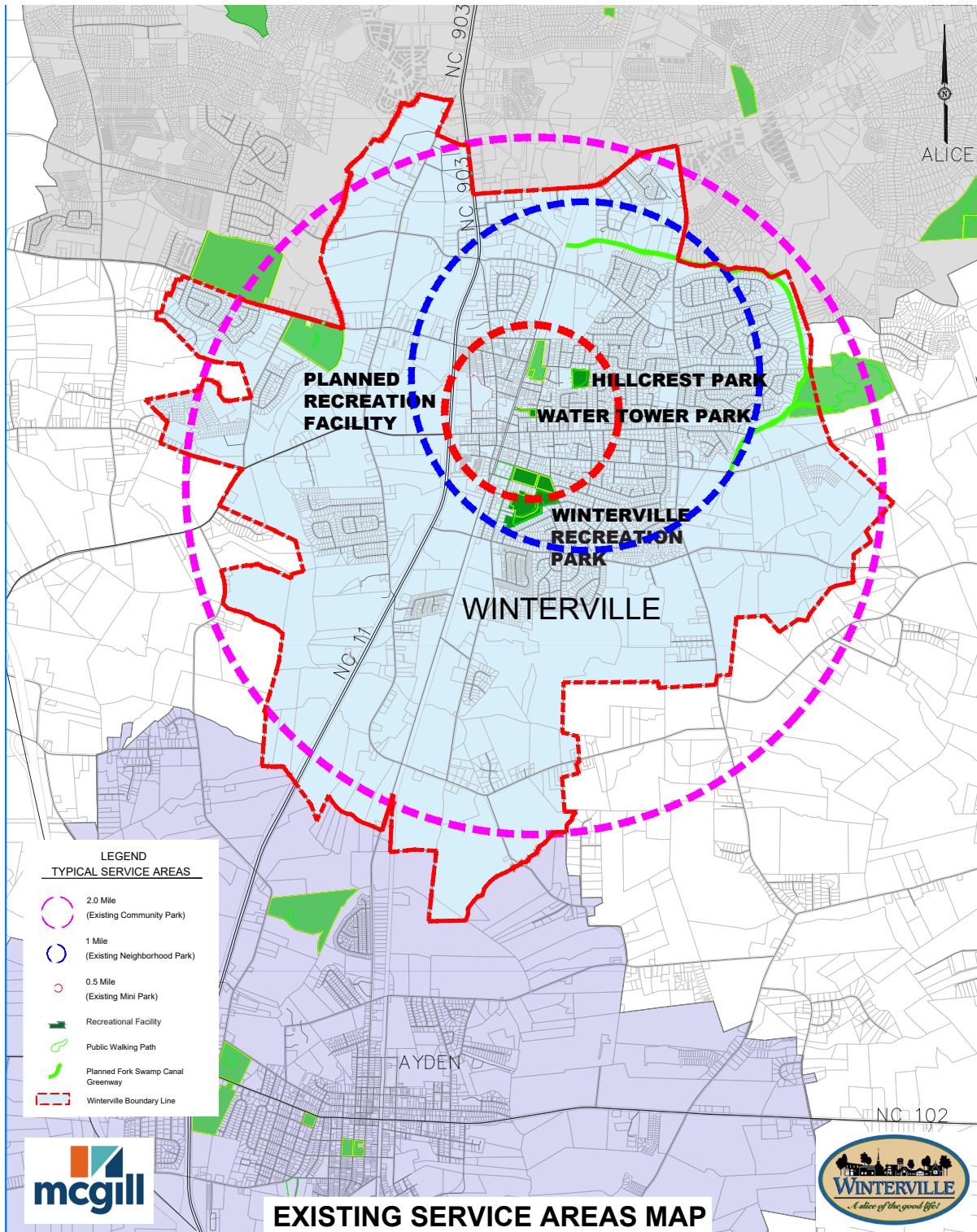
the Town's core. As new residential and commercial developments are planned, the Town should actively work with developers on what recreation amenities should be provided per the Town's planning department requirements.

Assessing and evaluating the level of service standard is another metric used to determine deficits or surpluses of parkland and amenities in a park system based on the jurisdiction's population. The analysis begins with an inventory of existing facilities, looking at national standards and evaluating staff input. A tailored service standard is created to reflect the increase in parks and recreation needs through the ten-year planning scope. The final output of the analysis is a table representing the 2024 and 2034 levels of service, showing the surpluses and deficits in park types and amenities based on population projections for the next 10 years.

Only Town-owned and operated parks and facilities and municipal facilities contribute toward the level of service calculation. It is important to note that recreational needs are also being provided by local municipalities, county facilities, state public lands, and other private or nonprofit recreational facilities. However, level of service only considers Town-owned and operated parkland.

This parameter exists for three reasons. First, the level of service is the foundation for recommendations and improvements the Town can implement. Any improvements considered must be under the jurisdiction of the Town. Second, other performance metrics, such as staffing, budgets, and maintenance, are related to the level of service acreage. For this reason, it is essential only to include acreage for which the Town is responsible. Finally, when utilizing best practices or national benchmarks, reported data is limited to what an agency owns and operates. Thus, the level of service figure maintains this same parameter to make a direct comparison.

Benchmark-driven service levels are guidelines, not requirements, for communities to understand and systematically address the demand for recreation in their given geographic areas. To ensure that the Town’s comprehensive parks and recreation master plan is distinctive yet versatile, we sought input from integral components: Town staff, Town council, and citizen representatives.



Level of Service for Parkland

The level of service guidelines for parkland that the Town owns and operates are provided in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Population figures in this analysis are based on the demographics obtained from the United States Census Bureau data. The acreage standard is based on the population ratio method pre-established for each classification of park.

Based on park acreage standards, the Town of Winterville's recreational facilities appear to exceed what is typical. Winterville currently provides one community park, one neighborhood park, and a mini park. The regional and district parks are provided by federal, state, and county resources that are within close proximity, as noted in the inventory.

Linear parks, special-use facilities, and open space areas are not designated under the parkland level of service evaluation. Due to the variability and nature of each of these facilities, determining a pre-established population ratio is very difficult. Table 5.3 denotes the level of services for Winterville's amenities, which is the standard used in this analysis.

Level of Service for Amenities

Amenities are the elements within a parks and recreation facility that attract people. Amenities include fields and courts specific to particular sports, places dedicated for play, locations for gathering, trail systems, and special-use accommodations. Level of service standards were established based upon information gathered from NRPA and historical evidence from past projects. A level of service assessment of the existing amenities is shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 shows what Town amenities are within national benchmark levels and which fall outside national benchmark levels. Amenities provided by other entities, such as Pitt County, area neighborhoods, and other nearby municipalities are not included in this table. As recreation trends and public needs vary over time, recommended amenities may not need to be implemented immediately. The recommendations are intended to meet the anticipated level of service needs over a ten-year period, but implementation of specific projects may depend on available funding, land acquisition, and periodic re-evaluation of recreation needs.

Winterville Existing Parks	Acreage
Winterville Recreation Park (Community park)	24 acres
Hillcrest Park (Neighborhood park)	6.5 acres
Water Tower Park (Mini park)	1.2 acres (additional .2 acres contain a fenced water tower)
Total Park Acreage	31.7 acres

Table 5.1

Type of Park	Town Acreage	Recommended for 2024* (population 11,248)	Recommended for 2034* (population 14,092)	Surplus / Deficit for 2034*
District Park 200 acres or 5 acres / 1,500 people	0 acres	37.5 acres	47 acres needed	47 acres deficit
Community Park 2.5 acres / 4,000 people	24 acres	7 acres	8.8 acres needed	15 acre surplus
Neighborhood Park 2 acres / 4,000 people	6.5 acres	5.6 acres	7 acres needed	1.5 acres surplus
Mini-park 0.5 acres / 4,000 people	1.2 acres	1.4 acres	1.8 acres needed	.6 acres deficit

Table 5.2 | Populations and projections based on NCOSBM population figures and growth rates

Comparative Analysis

Comparing Winterville to municipalities with similarly sized populations is an important part of the planning process. When comparing Winterville to other communities, we look at the number of parks provided, amenities offered per capita, per capita spending, and staffing levels.



Residents at a baseball field in the Town of Winterville. | Source: Sandra Harvey Photography

Facilities

Understanding how a park system compares to national benchmarks is a valuable tool for understanding what are the typical types and number of facilities can be expected for a similarly sized communities. Table 5.3 explains how Winterville is compared with these national benchmarks. A look into the benchmark data shows that the Town needs more multi-purpose fields, inclusive recreation opportunities, and multi-use courts. The Town also needs to be considering indoor recreation facilities and a gymnasium that the department controls.

Amenity	2024 NRPA Metrics Jurisdictions less than 20,000 in population	2024 NRPA Metrics (typical municipal offerings)	Metrics Based Need Range Estimated Population of 11,248	Current Municipal Owned Contribution to Service Level
Baseball / softball fields	1/1,833	1/2,432	4-6	4
Multipurpose field	1/2,493	1/3,017	3-4	1
Basketball courts (dedicated)	1/4,366	1/5,546	2	2
Community gardens	1/8,800	1/17,000	0-1	0
Tennis / pickleball	1/4,634	1/5,248	2	2
Multiuse courts (basketball / volleyball)	1/5,248	1/9,425	1-2	0
Golf courses	1/9,636	1/30,597	0-1	0
Pickleball (dedicated)	1/3,390	1/7,250	1-3	0
Playground	1/1,990	1/2,900	3-5	3
Inclusive playgrounds	1/9,644	1/10,168	1	0
Dog park	1/10,327	1/17,000	0-1	0
Fitness stations / fitness zones (outdoors)	1/8,233	1/14,500	0-1	0
Disc golf course	1/8,015	1/29,223	0-1	0
Recreation center (with gym)	1/9,685	1/16,835	0-1	0
Community center (no gym)	1/8,908	1/19,211	0-1	0
Amphitheater	1/12,769	1/27,790	0	1
Nature center	1/9,430	1/33,669	0-1	0
Aquatics center	1/12,618	1/16,430	0	0
Teen center	1/14,797	1/17,563	0	0
Senior center	1/14,286	1/27,212	0	0

Table 5.3 | Metrics derived from 2024 NRPA agency performance data

in range
 not in range
 above range

Evaluation of Staffing Needs

A successful parks and recreation department is determined by its people. From the parks and recreation director to athletic specialists to maintenance staff, the department needs to work together to provide quality offerings to the community and visitors. The key maintenance responsibilities of a parks and recreation department include, but are not limited to, operating and maintaining parks and recreation facilities; providing recreational programs and services; maintaining budgetary responsibilities that match the needs of the Town; and planning, managing, and hosting special events.

Parks and recreation departments continue to face a multitude of growing market demands, ranging from providing a superior participant experience, addressing the needs of residents, capital development project management, keeping up with changing industry regulatory requirements, and attracting and retaining the best possible employees. Challenges, such as cost recovery, participant retention, expenditure reduction, brand awareness, consistency, and technology applications, can present an opportunity to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. As the only municipal department where patrons can choose to spend their disposable income, parks and recreation departments must develop a service industry business approach to delivering services for maximum efficiency.

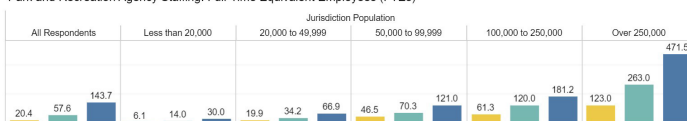
Currently, the parks and recreation department is led by the director, with support from one recreation program supervisor and one recreation programmer. The Town has one parks maintenance supervisor and one parks maintenance worker. The town uses part time and seasonal staff for site supervision, seasonal maintenance and other programmatic needs.

Comparing staffing levels and alignment with national benchmarks is a valuable gauge of resource support. Based on these benchmarks, the Town’s staffing is generally in-line with national benchmarks and its current recreation offerings. As the department develops more offerings, it will need to increase staffing levels to ensure proper maintenance and programing.

The approximate range of FTE ranges from 5 to 15. In comparing the Town’s projected levels to national benchmarks, Winterville is in the median range level. However, it is important to notes that actual FTE levels fluctuate, sometimes dramatically depending on the season and utilization levels.

Current Positions	Number of Positions
Parks and Recreation Director	1
Recreation Program Supervisor	1
Recreation Programmer	1
Parks Maintenance Supervisor	1
Parks Maintenance Worker	1
Total Full Time	5
Year-round, Part-time Site Supervisor	4
Intern	2
Seasonal Part-time Staff	19

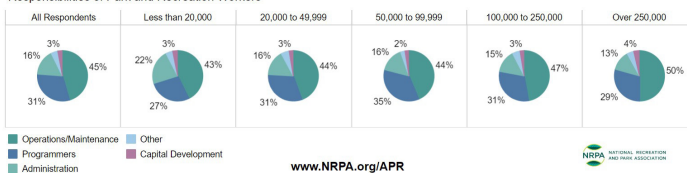
Park and Recreation Agency Staffing: Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)



Park and Recreation FTEs per 10,000 Residents



Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Workers



Financials

The Town’s population, tax rate, total budget, and parks and recreation budget were analyzed for a comparison with similarly-sized communities in North Carolina and national benchmarks.

When looking at similarly-sized communities, we find that the Town’s tax rate is in line with most. Pineville, NC in Mecklenburg County is and Mount Airy, NC in Surry County set the upper and lower thresholds for the observed communities. Winterville’s tax rate is only slightly above average for these communities. However, Winterville’s total town budget, parks and recreation budget, recreation spending as percent of total budget, and per capita spending budget are lower than the comparative averages. Among these similar communities, Winterville spends the least on parks and recreation.

Town Name	County	Year	Population	2023-2024 OSBM Tax Rate	Total Town Budget 2023-2024	Parks and Recreation Budget	Parks % of Budget	Per Capita Spending on Parks
Rolesville	Wake	2022	10,484	0.4600	\$14,432,100	\$1,217,700	8.44%	\$116.15
Waynesville	Haywood	2022	10,559	0.4392	\$17,452,975	\$2,868,295	16.43%	\$271.64
Tarboro	Edgecombe	2022	10,601	0.4600	\$12,743,575	\$1,977,428	15.52%	\$186.53
Mount Airy	Surry	2022	10,604	0.6000	\$16,985,250	\$2,686,500	15.82%	\$253.35
Winterville	Pitt	2022	10,752	0.4750	\$13,598,069	\$1,167,251	8.58%	\$108.56
Pineville	Mecklenburg	2022	10,931	0.2850	\$19,242,000	\$2,091,852	10.87%	\$191.37

The referenced budget data is sourced from each local government finance-related webpage.

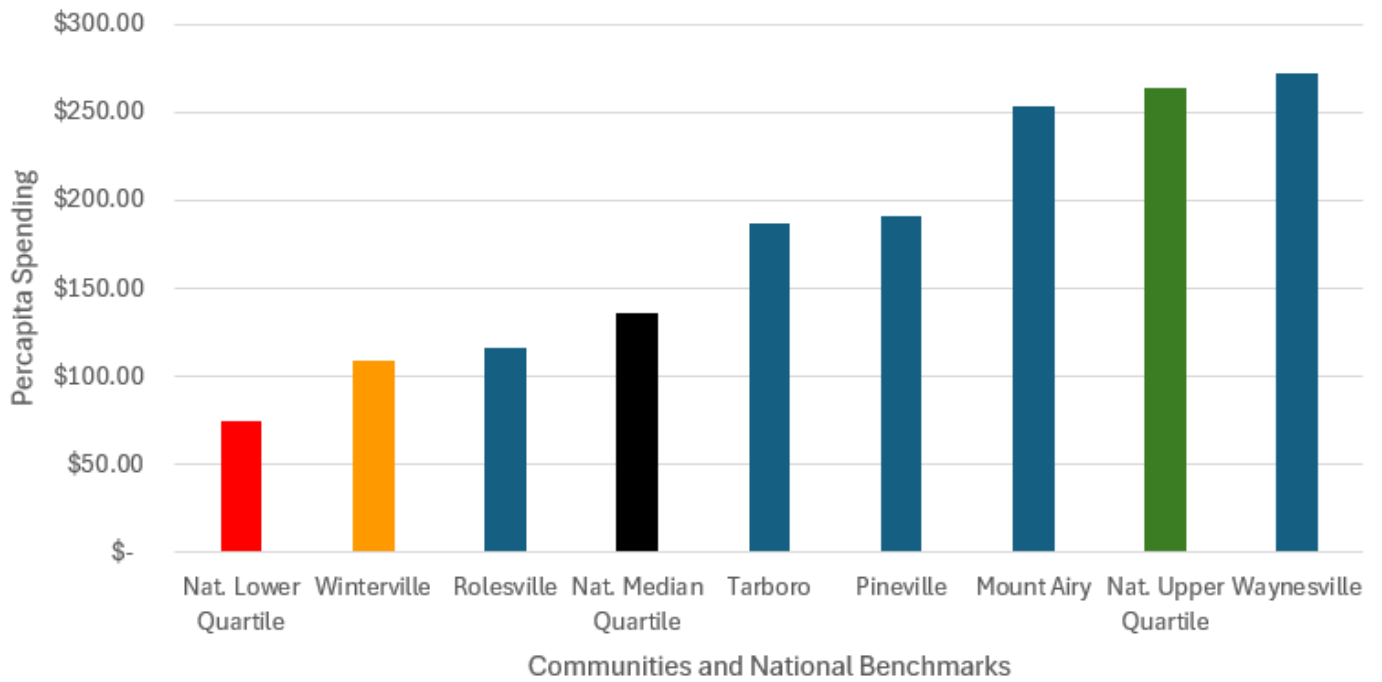
Winterville Budget at National Quartile Levels

National benchmark financial data can help gauge recreation spending. These benchmark levels present that Winterville parks and recreation investment levels are between the nation’s lower and middle quartiles. Presented alongside the similarly-sized North Carolina communities, Winterville is spending less than its peer communities and the national spending median.

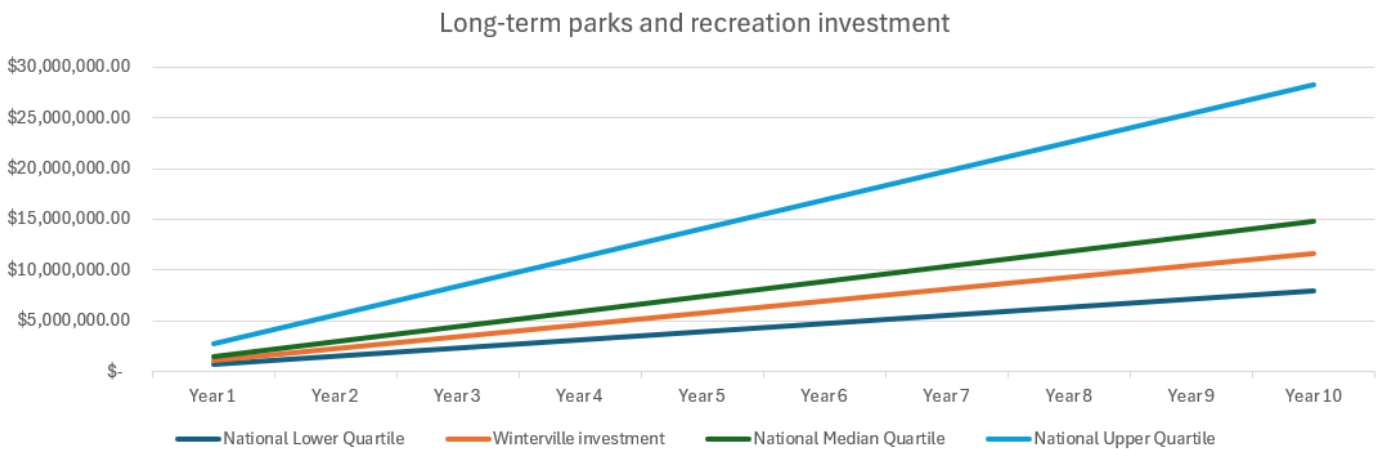
Lower Quartile	\$74.22	\$798,103.44
Current Level	\$108.56	\$1,167,251.00
Median Quartile	\$135.53	\$1,481,478.43
Upper Quartile	\$263.21	\$2,830,033.92

The benefits of parks and recreation investments are best seen in the long-term effects. A community will likely not see the benefits of parks and recreation investments immediately, rather, they will be seen over time via parks, trails, and recreation facilities that effectively provide for residents and visitors. Proper investment in parks and recreation is crucial for success.

National Benchmarks



Long-term Investment in Parks and Recreation



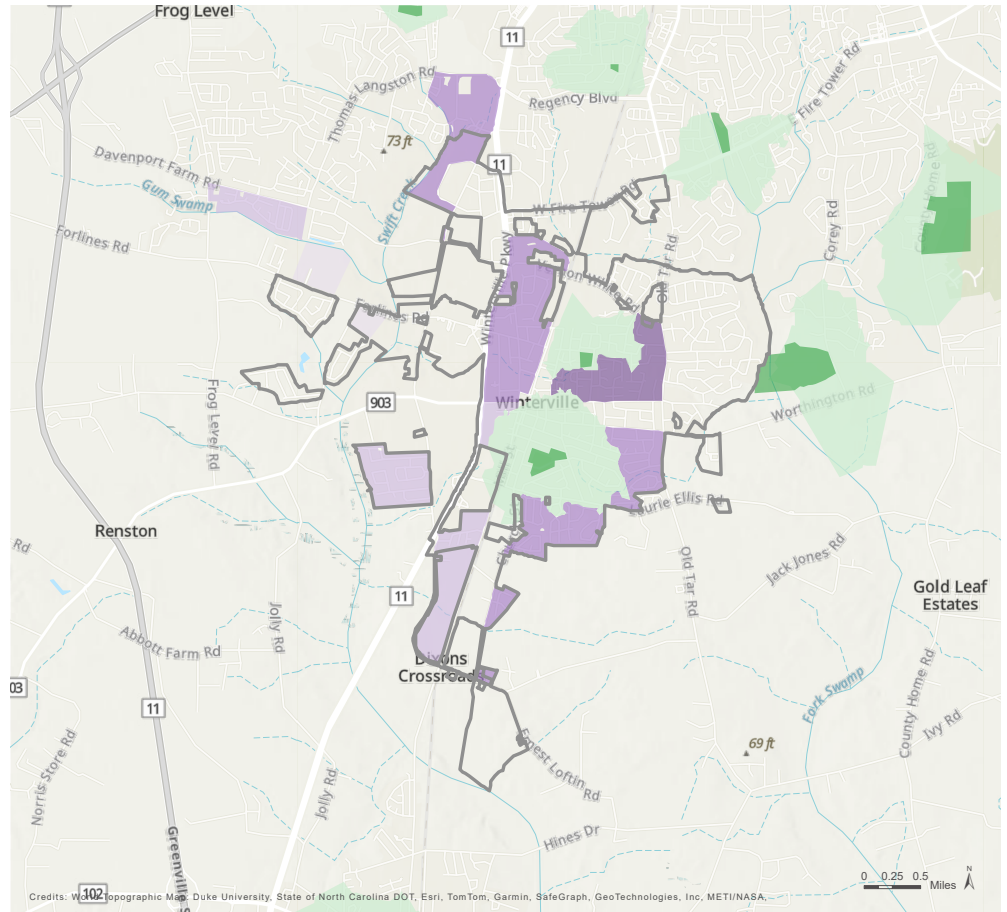
10-Minute Walk Initiative

The 10-Minute Walk initiative is another benchmark to assess the needs of the community and walkable access to parks and green space. The NRPA, the Trust for Public Land, and the Urban Land Institute have joined together for a nationwide movement to help people get greater access to parks and green spaces while transforming communities. They have set a goal to provide safe, equitable access to 100% of people in US cities by 2050.

The Trust for Public Land has created an online tool called ParkServe®. ParkServe® uses GIS databases and demographics to analyze the percentage of residents within a community who have access to parks and green space. Reports are generated for local communities to learn about how they are doing. The report provides information for local municipalities and can give insight into how a town is servicing residents. This is another tool that can show gaps within a recreation system.

ParkServe® did not have a report for Winterville park data; however, ParkServe® did indicate there are areas within a 10-minute walk from each major Town-owned park. This information provides some guidance as to what areas were lacking this standard of service and where future parks may be needed to meet growing demand.

While residents of Winterville are fortunate to have recreation resources within walking distance of many residential areas, walkability generally declines the further that you move away from the downtown. Additionally, the railroad can generally be seen as a dividing line for the Town. Areas to the east of the railroad are more walkable than areas to the west of the railroad.



- ParkServe Place
- Park with public access
- 10-minute walk service area
- Priority areas for new parks (place)
- Very high priority
- High priority
- Moderate priority
- World Hillshade

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06 | Community Engagement

Community Engagement

Community input is one of the most critical aspects of the planning process. Planning that does not seek the community's help struggles to gain support and often fails. When community members can voice their opinions, ask questions, and share their wishes for the future, they feel a sense of ownership. It shows them that local government and planners care about their needs and desires. As the planning process moves forward and community members see elements they requested come to fruition, they are more apt to support the expansion through participation, funding, and care for the facilities.

The process was intended to be equitable and inclusive, presenting various input opportunities and methods for all community members and visitors to feel safe expressing their needs and desires. Insight from local leaders and Town staff, public meetings, a community survey, and focus group interviews were used to gather ideas, share thoughts, stimulate conversations, and answer questions. The public input-gathering process was robust: public meetings, focus groups, a statistically valid survey, and a community survey that was open to residents and visitors made up the multi-model process that was employed. The open survey and public meetings were advertised on the Town website, social media pages, and via fliers at parks and other popular destinations. The contributions and materials received from community participants were essential for producing a plan that will benefit the community for generations to come.

Local Leaders and Staff

McGill team members and Winterville staff communicated frequently. We understand the staff wants to continue developing safe, affordable, and appropriate recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. The Town wants to be prepared for the population growth that is anticipated to take place over the next ten years.

Community Survey

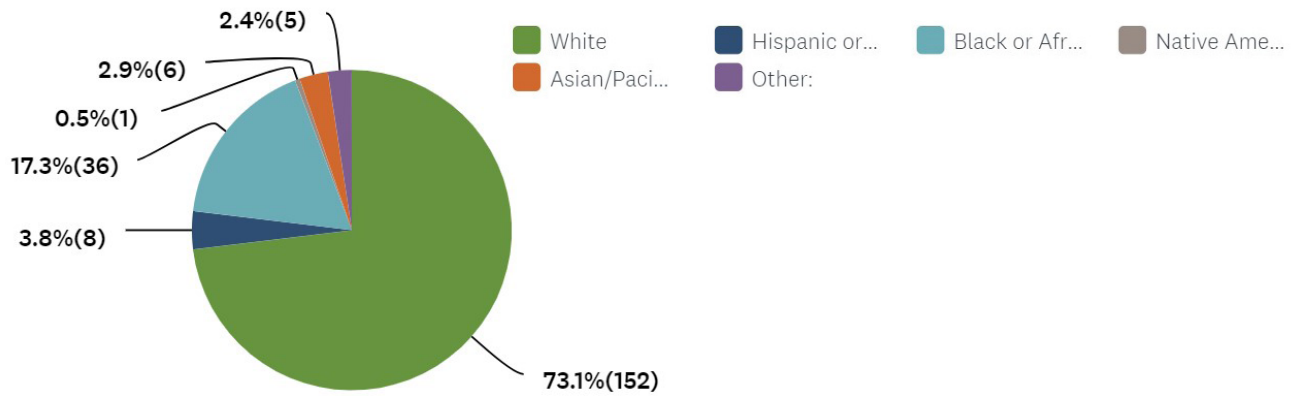
In early 2024, Pitt County paid for and conducted a Countywide survey to better understand recreation needs. The survey was well-advertised and received 969 surveys that represented 1,969 respondents. The survey was specifically designed to understand the needs of the County and each municipality. The methodology allowed for deep dive snapshots into what municipalities need. With Winterville, there was a strong enough response from residents for the data subset to stand on its own as strong gauge of true public need.

Pitt County permitted Winterville to use the subset data collected for its recreational survey. The Winterville subset represented 466 respondents, which exceeds the amount needed for statistical significance. The survey was open to all residents, not just a select sampling, which is the mark of a true statistically valid survey. This open survey was a good representation of the population and allowed for maximum participation. There was an over representation in responses from youth under the age of 14 and seniors; there was an under representation of minority responses. As the public input gathering process is multi-modal, additional input was gathered at events that were expected to be attended with a better showing of the community's demographics.

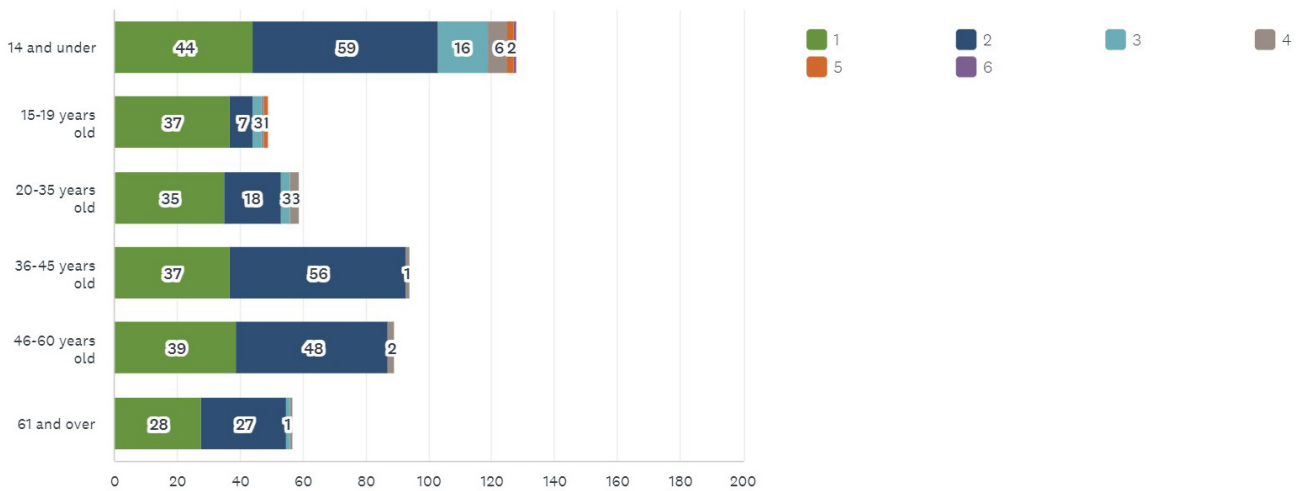


A community engagement session

Race and Ethnicity



Age and Household Size



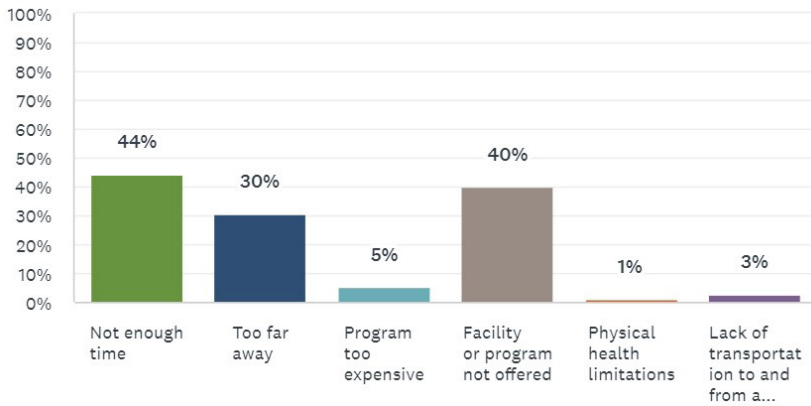
	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
14 and under	34.92% 44	46.83% 59	12.70% 16	4.76% 6	1.59% 2	0.79% 1	126
15-19 years old	75.51% 37	14.29% 7	6.12% 3	2.04% 1	2.04% 1	0.00% 0	49
20-35 years old	60.34% 35	31.03% 18	5.17% 3	5.17% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	58
36-45 years old	39.36% 37	59.57% 56	0.00% 0	1.06% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	94
46-60 years old	46.99% 39	57.83% 48	0.00% 0	2.41% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	83
61 and over	50.00% 28	48.21% 27	1.79% 1	1.79% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	56

Summary of Survey Findings

On the broadest level, we find that the largest barriers to recreation in Winterville are the lack of time followed closely by facility or program not offered. The third barrier noted, was that the facilities were too far away. Currently slightly more than half of all respondents lived within a half mile to a public park. All of these barriers are indicative, and not uncommon for growing communities.

The three, most-used parks were Alice F. Keene Park, Winterville Recreation Park, and Boyd Lee Park, which are all within five miles of downtown Winterville.

Barriers to Access

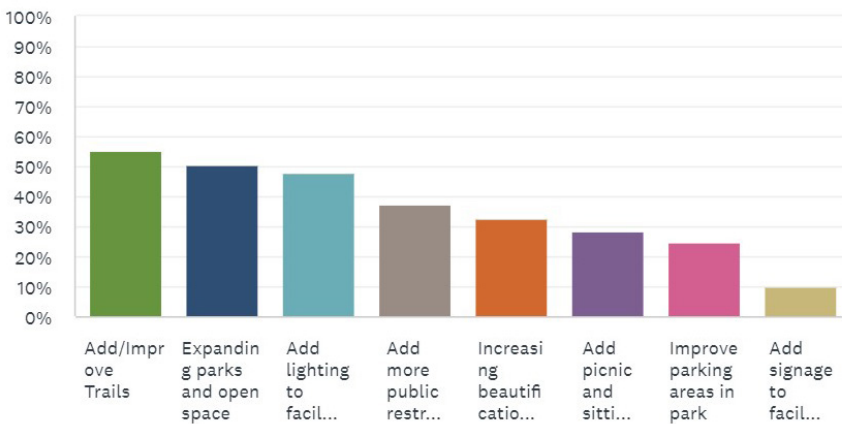


Winterville residents indicated that adding trails, expanding parks and open space, and adding lighting were the three most important needs within the current park system. Most would be willing to pay a nominal fee to attend events or special facilities.

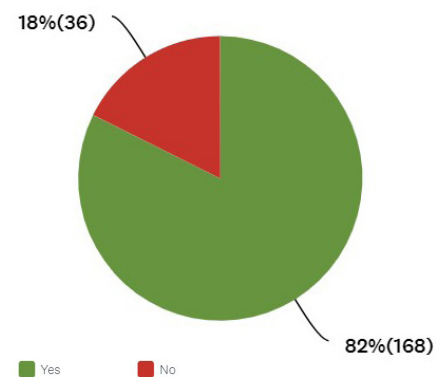
The survey provided critical insight into what types of recreation amenities would specifically be desired within Winterville. There is strong interest in additional walking, outdoor play and open space. The highest ranking active recreation facilities were aquatics and multi-use sports fields. Analysis of open responses to recreational needs help summarize open public sentiment.

In recognition that all surveys that are open to the entire public, gaps exist in user feedback. To address this multiple public input methods utilized to see public input from a variety of means.

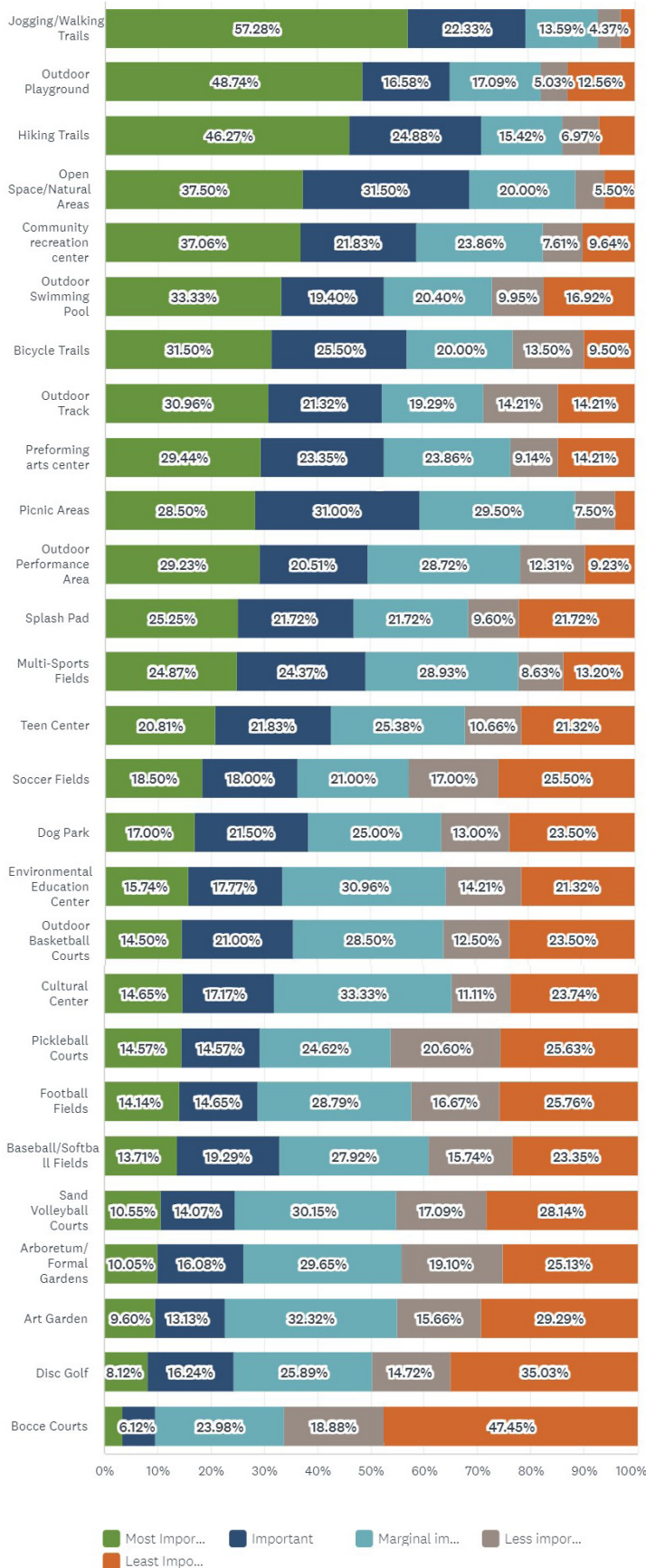
Winterville System Needs



Willingness to Pay



Resident Needs



Public Meetings

We held two public meetings during the planning process. To ensure a high rate of participation, we gathered public input at events that drew in a large number of residents and visitors: the Watermelon Festival, which is located at Winterville Recreation Park. The first session was held on Friday, August 23rd from 5:30 PM-9:00 PM, and the second was held on Saturday, August 24 from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM.

Methodology

This input session allowed for strong public input from a demographically diverse group of residents and visitors. During the process, participants were asked if they were residents or visitors. Then everyone was provided with three stickers to select the recreation that most appealed to them. Visitor stickers were marked with a V, so that after the input was collected, a comparison between visitor and resident interests could be determined. Participants also had the opportunity provide open feedback which was collected and then analyzed. We used a sign-in sheet to keep track of the approximate participation. Resident input is useful for indicating what recreation needs currently exist.

Top Visitor Interest

- 1 Adventure playground (outdoor)
- 2 Natural surface trails (outdoor)
- 3 Traditional playground (outdoor)
- 4 Dog friendly fountain (outdoor)
- 5 Pickleball / tennis court (outdoor)
- 6 Paved trails (outdoor)
- 7 Climbing wall (outdoor or indoor)
- 8 Tot lot (outdoor)
- 9 Teen programming (indoor)
- 10 Dog agility course (outdoor)



Community input event

Top Resident Needs

- 1 Gymnasium (indoor)
- 2 Soccer fields (outdoor)
- 3 Baseball fields (outdoor)
- 4 Adventure playground (outdoor)
- 5 Natural surface trails (outdoor)
- 6 Weightlifting / cardio (indoor)
- 7 Paved trails (outdoor)
- 8 Football fields (outdoor)
- 9 Teen programming (indoor)
- 10 Climbing wall (indoor or outdoor)

For residents, an indoor gymnasium was the top need. Resident feedback indicated strong support for trails and a variety of athletic fields.

Visitors had a stronger interest in outdoor, adventure-related recreation like playgrounds, trails, and dog park facilities. A more detailed breakdown of the public input meeting data can be found in the appendix.

Top Major Themes:

- 1 Indoor Recreation Center
- 2 Age-specific Programming
- 3 More Program / Maintenance Staff
- 4 More Multi-use / Baseball Fields
- 5 More Water Facilities
- 6 Trails / Greenways
- 7 Indoor Shooting Range
- 8 Horseshoes
- 9 Increased Accessibility



Winterville community enjoying an event | Source: Sandra Harvey Photography

Focus Group / Stakeholder Interview Summaries

Ten focus / stakeholder group interviews were held with approximately 45 participants. The initial interview with recreation department staff was held on October 9th and lasted approximately 1.5 hours. The focus group meetings began on September 19th, at 2 p.m. and most discussions lasted approximately 1-hour each. On October 7th the Economic Development focus group met at 9 a.m. while another meeting occurred that day at 2:30 with other recreation providers in the county. Two leadership focus groups where we met with groups of two separate pairs of Town council members occurred at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Additional focus group discussions were held on October 9th with town staff including maintenance staff (1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.). On October 16th, a discussion was held with members from area schools (1:15 p.m.) and two more meetings occurred on October 22nd. The first being with Non-profit agencies and sports leagues (1:15 p.m.) and a second with Athletic programmers at 3 p.m. At all meetings, an open-ended discussion was facilitated by McGill team members with topics of discussion that included desires and concerns regarding recreation in the Town, trending activities, potential land for system expansion, dealing with population increases, etc. The focus groups were strategically developed to increase the diversity of input and to expand the planning process to include individuals that may not have been adequately represented through other data collection methods. Each group discussed current and future parks and recreation shortcomings and needs. Interview notes can be found in the appendix.

Key Themes

1. Facilities and Maintenance
 - Need for improved field surfaces, drainage, parking, and lighting
 - Emphasis on maintaining existing facilities and planning for new ones, including a multipurpose indoor facility
2. Community Engagement and Collaboration
 - Strong focus on community input through surveys and meeting
 - Collaboration is recommended with local businesses, schools, and other municipalities to enhance recreational offerings and avoid duplication of services
3. Funding and Financial Support
 - Seeking substantial donations from larger businesses was desired but state-based grants (PARTF) likely to be sought
 - Proposal to form a charitable organization to manage recreation donations effectively
4. Recreation Programs and Needs
 - High demand for diverse recreational opportunities, including arts, theater, volleyball, pickleball, and senior wellness programs
 - Need for more indoor programming, trails, open spaces, and seasonal events
5. Connectivity and Accessibility
 - Importance of sidewalks and greenways to connect older areas with new developments and parks
 - Safe routes for children to walk or bike to parks

6. Safety and Security

- Continued collaboration with the police department for events and public engagement desired
- Use of mobile and permanent cameras for monitoring and security desired

7. Technology and Innovation

- Expanded Wi-Fi coverage in all parks and use of interactive GIS mapping for park inventory and event information, seen as helpful way to keep public informed
- Innovative programming such as maker spaces and e-gaming

8. Staffing and Volunteer Needs

- Need for more staff to manage facilities and programs
- Encouragement of volunteer involvement from parents and community members

9. Future Vision and Long-term Goals

- Recommended to have regular updates (annually) to the comprehensive plan to ensure relevance and funding eligibility
- Focus on long-term sustainability and adapting to community needs

10. Special Events and Community Building

- Successful events like “Market on the Square” and annual Halloween events as model examples
- Emphasis on festivals and special events to bring the community together, highly desirable

Action Items (suggestions from focus group attendees)

- Form a charitable organization for managing donations
- Seek state grant funding (PARTF)
- Reach out to larger businesses for financial support
- Implement fair field usage policies
- Increase community engagement through surveys and meetings
- Involve volunteers in maintaining and improving facilities
- Regularly review and update the comprehensive plan
- Enhance the existing app for recreational activities
- Develop indoor recreational facilities and expand senior and youth wellness programs
- Foster collaborations across the county and with other recreation providers for better resource sharing and event organization
- Explore innovative programming, including maker spaces and e-gaming
- Create strategies to retain young professionals to Winterville through targeted recreational offerings

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07 | Parks and Recreation Recommendations

Parks and Recreation Recommendations

Understanding the needs and desires of the Town and community members is essential for making park system recommendations. The community workshops, Town staff discussions, and the recreation survey were integral in helping identify residents' primary interests and concerns.

This master plan serves as a map for the future development of existing recreation facilities for Winterville and establishes basic objectives to obtain the department's recreation goals. In the plan, we make recommendations to help the Town council, staff, and community members.

Top Recommendations and Best Practices

General recommendations are based on professional experience and a review of national and state recreational best practices. They are intended to guide the Town's operations, administration, and growth and provide advice on policy, safety, maintenance, and other general issues. These general recommendations are intended to inform future decision-making and are not specific to a single facility or program. Many of these recommendations depend upon collaboration between Town departments and other recreation partners. They are not specific to a single facility or program initiative, but they are intended to guide the entire park and recreation system for existing and future development.

Top Recommendations

- Priority 1: Indoor recreation opportunities
- Begin building the greenway system
- Park land expansion
- Program and class expansion
- Private / public partnerships
- Increase staffing levels

Priority Recommendations

1. Indoor Recreation Opportunities

Winterville should develop indoor recreation facilities. The facilities should be able to meet needs for both passive and active recreation by having athletic/fitness focused facilities as well as multi-use spaces. This major investment should look not just meet the Town's current recreation needs but meet future needs as well and as such the Town is cautioned not to take a minimalist approach to facility development. The cost of development virtually always increases, so a significant investment now, that the Town can grow into, will provide long-term cost savings.

The Town should also consider the development of smaller community center recreation buildings that are focused on smaller programs as well as community gathering opportunities. Such spaces meet a need for family and community get-togethers as well as administrative spaces by which recreation programs can be facilitated from.

The initial recreation center should be centrally located within the community to maximize access. However, additional indoor recreation facilities should geographically spread out around the community to promote equal access from the different geographic areas of the community.

2. Fund Greenway System Development

The Town's 2019 Greenway Master Plan, while good, has gone largely unfunded. The Town should begin to fund and develop the recommendations outlined in the Greenways Master Plan. As Winterville continues to develop, current residents and new residents / businesses will expect Winterville to be a walkable community. The Town currently relies on trails within existing parks and an incomplete sidewalk system for safe walking options. Walkable communities are not only more attractive to residents and visitors, but they are also healthier. Failure to develop a walkable community will be a disadvantage when visitors and new businesses are determining where to call home, and it will impact the Town's livability.

3. Parkland Expansion

Winterville needs to develop park properties to the west of Railroad Street and landbank future park property to the south of the Town Center. The Town's recent acquisition of parkland between Railroad Street and Highway 11 was critical and should take priority for development. However, even this parcel constitutes what is emerging as the new center of Winterville. The significant park land acquisition should take place between Highway 11 and the Highway 11 Bypass because this area currently has no parkland or trails. Failure to act quickly to acquire land in this area will result in a lopsided park system, which would promote inequality of facilities and service offerings. Currently, Boyd Lee Park (a City of Greenville Park) and Alice Keene Park (a Pitt County Park) are both contained east of Winterville's town center and help serve resident needs in those areas. There are no similar parks West or South of the Town center.

Parkland Acquisition

Contiguous Property Acquisition

Acquiring property that is contiguous to Town parks should be a high priority. Efforts should be made immediately to seek the first option on all contiguous properties. At the time these options are sought, other possibilities should be presented to the property owner as well. Some property owners may be receptive to conservation easements while retaining the title to the property. Conservation easements will allow the Town to use properties for recreation while providing preservation benefits. Numerous grant sources can be used for land acquisition.

Fee Simple Land Donation

If the land is offered to Recreation Department as a donation by fee simple title with no restrictions, the property should be surveyed for natural heritage significance and relationship to existing plans and parks. If the land contains no environmental hazards, restrictive covenants, or restrictive easements, it can be beneficial for the Town to assume ownership. Not all donated land has to be developed into a park to be useful. Any land donation serves a great public need even if it is banked for the future because the development and public needs of the distant future (over 50 years) are unknown. If donated property is properly managed, the revenue and future significance of the property would far exceed its current contribution to the tax base. *IMPORTANT: In cases of straight land donation or discount sales contact your recreation planning consulting firm or North Carolina State University's Recreation Resources Service (<https://rrs.cnr.ncsu.edu/>) as the value of the donation may be eligible to be used for the development of a park, if the correct granting regulations are followed.*

Land Dedication or Fees in Lieu

Many local governments have land development ordinances require developers to donate or set aside a portion of land for greenspace. This can result in many small, marginally useful green spaces. An alternative is a Fee in Lieu of donation. This is beneficial because this fee can be combined with other donations and also leveraged with some grant funding agencies. For examples of North Carolina Fee in Lieu of Policies and Examples, please see the appendix.

4. Program and Class Expansion

The Town should significantly increase its recreation program offerings. Many of the programs noted below require indoor recreation spaces, open space natural areas, and adequate levels of athletic facilities, which the Town does not currently have.

- Indoor programming, including: STEM, teen-based, cooking, non-athletic themed camps
- Gymnasium-based recreation like basketball, indoor pickleball, volleyball, and dance
- Large concerts and events
- Exercise programs (fitness, therapeutic recreation, tai chi, and yoga)
- Aquatics-based programs (water safety, water aerobics, swim competitions)
- Nature-based programs including environmental education, camping, adventure programs, and team-building

5. Private Public Partnerships

The department should generally support private-public partnerships when they are mutually beneficial. While public recreation facilities should be viewed as an investment in the community that typically results in improved quality of life, public parks and recreation can also promote local economic growth. Public parks and recreation agencies should develop recreational properties to support the local economy and, when appropriate, include private-public partnerships in planning and development efforts. These mutually beneficial relationships often help reduce taxpayer costs for developing and maintaining facilities while providing goods and services that would otherwise not be available to park visitors.

At times, these private / public partnerships can take the form of vendors offering additional recreation services within a park setting. This can be as simple as a concession stand with restaurant-quality food

or as in depth as facility investment options (i.e. if an adventure company invests and runs an indoor climbing wall within a Town recreation center). In all cases, these interlocal agreements should be evaluated with policy guidelines and should have the residents best interests in mind.

6. Increase Maintenance and Programming Staffing

Winterville's parks and recreation staff is running with virtually no buffer. Where there are staff vacancies, the existing staff must work to pick up the extra load, which is challenging, especially in addition to the normal surge times (athletic season opening days, festivals, parades, end of season tournaments). Failure to address these needs can lower morale, create safety risks, and encourage high turn-over rates. Short staffing can also be a major barrier to increasing and improving park facility conditions and recreation program offerings. Noted below are specific staffing recommendations:

- 2 FT additional maintenance staff members, at least one of which is a skilled laborer.
- 1 FT additional programming staff, non-athletics program focused
- 1 center supervisor (brought online when a new recreation center is added)
- 1 PT marketing, business development and events coordinator
- 1 PT administrative assistant

Best Practices (not listed in order of importance)

- Marketing and Branding
- Facility Security
- Facility and Program Accessibility
- Bicycle Facilities
- Wayfinding and Signage
- Green Building

Best Practices

Marketing and Branding

Parks and recreation facilities are an invaluable asset to any community. The need to provide public awareness of recreation opportunities is just as important as providing the necessary facilities. To improve awareness of Town-owned facilities and programs, the department should launch a marketing campaign to raise awareness through social media, special events at lesser-known facilities, and signage that can direct visitors to the parks. As growth continues throughout the region, the department should partner with local chambers of commerce and real estate groups to provide pamphlets to people who relocate.

Facility Access

Where feasible, the Town should fence facility perimeters. Adding surveillance cameras and site attendant patrols can also mitigate security issues and provide a safer park environment.

Technology Access

As the culture continues to move toward information accessibility, providing access to Wi-Fi connectivity within the parks can elevate the user experience. The department should identify locations to install the necessary equipment.

Facility and Program Accessibility

Every recreation department should respect and provide for the needs of the disabled population through design and programming. All new facilities should be designed to meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Currently, the Town complies with these regulations at all of the existing facilities. As new facilities are acquired or developed, priority should be given to upgrading existing facilities that have become non-compliant.

Bicycle Facilities

Given the high cost of gas, air quality concerns, and the need to increase the health and fitness of the population, the Town should develop a planned network of bike trails, bike lanes, and shared roadways to support active transportation to recreation facilities and travel. Future roadway construction should include provisions to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel. This network should connect both existing and future park facilities and greenways. In addition, the Town should require bike racks (sheltered at schools and other potential high-use areas) to be installed at all publicly owned facilities. The Town should work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are provided as much as possible to promote alternative modes of transportation.

Entrance and Wayfinding Signage

The Town should consider providing uniform and consistent signage to promote parks and recreation facilities throughout the park system. Entrance signage is the face of parks and, therefore, the face of the Town's parks and recreation. To provide visitors with ease of navigation throughout the park system, wayfinding signage should also be installed to elevate the parks and provide consistency throughout the park system.

Green Building

The Town should implement green building components into park facilities, when cost-effective and economically feasible. Green building techniques consist of using building materials and construction practices that reduce environmental impacts (greenhouse gases, water pollution, and air pollution) and promote energy-efficient building materials and methods. These efforts will improve environmental stewardship for park facilities and educate park users.

Existing Park Facility Recommendations

Winterville Recreation Park

Community Park | 24 acres

322 Sylvania Street, Winterville, NC

- This park is in good condition, and is generally land locked and unlikely to be able to be expanded in any significant way
- Accessibility improvements are needed around the ballfields with walk ways and fencing realignments
- Trail repair and widening: The trail around the pond has many areas where the roots of the trees are degrading the condition of the trail and causing trip hazards
- Additional parking for the site is recommended
- Center field of Kiwanis field has slope and flooding issues an eventual regrade or drainage mitigation measures are needed
- A batting cages is needed the Smith field
- The temporary fencing around the scoreboard at the multi use field are irregular present an obstacle to play. A combination of permanent fencing directly around the scoreboards and

temporary fencing should be considered to mitigate risk of collision into the poles of the score board and to add character to the field

- Dugout layouts at the small ballfields are inaccessible and are in need of redesign
- The field house space is limited and needs expansion or renovation

Hillcrest Park

Neighborhood Park | 6.5 acres

2418 Carmon Street, Winterville, NC

This park is generally landlocked, and it will likely not be able to expand. It needs:

- A large pavilion to host events
- Bathroom updates
- Additional parking.
- Additional spaces for vendor hookups

The site currently has:

- Multi-purpose fields (1)
- Basketball courts (2)
- Playground / tot lot
- Shelter (2)
- 1/3 mile trail

Watertower Park

Mini Park | 1.4 acres (.2 acres of the site are restricted because of the water tower)

- Remove the current playground and add in a fully accessible playground
- Add a small picnic shelter
- Add approximately 10 parking spaces
- Add a sidewalk between the parking and the park amenities

Critical Recommendations

The Town should develop the Chapman Street Park into a new community park to help shoulder the demand that is currently being handled by Hillcrest and Winterville Recreation Park. Developing this site should combine active and passive recreation facilities. Most of the Town's current recreation infrastructure is active recreation, however, these facilities are being pushed to their limits of operation.

This park site should be anchored by an indoor recreation center. Many residents requested indoor recreation facilities and amenities, and Winterville currently does not have any indoor recreation spaces. Adding a recreation center will help the Town expand its recreation program offerings.

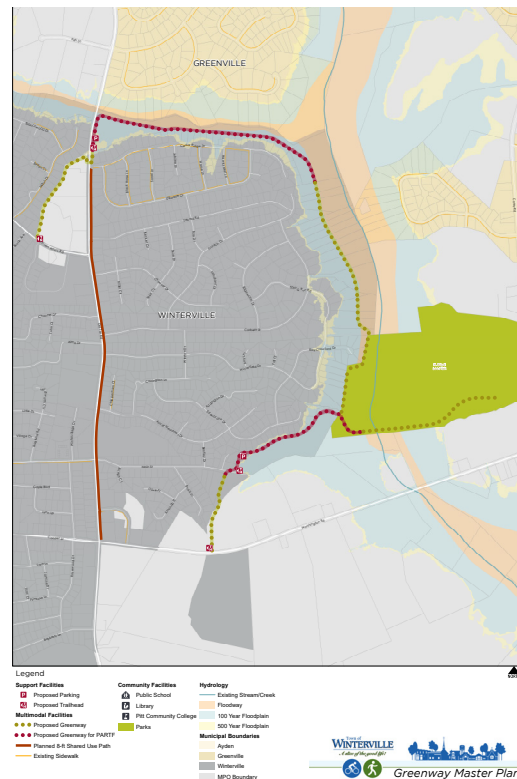
Future Land Banking

Winterville is experiencing significant growth. This growth will continue to put upward pressure on land values. The next ten years will be a critical time for the Town to plan open and green spaces for the future. The Town should act soon to acquire these greenspaces before land costs or availability of suitable parkland is out of reach. It is highly atypical for land once developed to revert back to open space. This is critical because currently there is also generally a lack of passive recreation opportunities. The acquisition of this parkland is paramount to offering passive recreation opportunities which relies on larger open spaces.

Two areas in particular are recommended for land banking. First, it is recommended that the Town acquires acreage large enough for a future community park to the south of the Town to address the future needs of the residential development that is expected in the area. Second, average large enough to suit a neighborhood park on the western side of the Town is recommended. This area is planned for more mixed use and the neighborhood park should be more of a destination park.

Greenway Priority

This plan supports the efforts shown in the 2019 Greenway Master Plan. We recommend that the Town should start funding the development of the Fork Swamp Canal Greenway. The intersection of Old Tar Road and Cedar Ridge Road that runs to H. Boyd Lee Park and then connects into Main Street and Worthington Road specifically needs work.



Recommended Level of Service (LOS) and Community Needs

The three data collection methods (public meetings, surveys, and focus group interviews) provide a robust and diverse sample of concerns and ideas that should be considered when developing future facilities and programming. The main findings of the LOS analysis show the following are needed:

- A recreation center and / or community center that can provide indoor recreation opportunities
- Additional athletic fields, particularly multipurpose, baseball, and softball fields
- Additional playgrounds, including one that is accessible
- Additional court space for basketball and pickleball

Winterville's current park system cannot meet this expected level of service because the Town does not have the necessary facilities. Recently purchased park land should help alleviate some of these needs in the near future, but additional parkland will be needed to fully meet the needs of this growing population.

The LOS profile indicates that Winterville generally desires active recreation offerings and more than passive recreation offerings. This means more sports and programed activities that can be offered both indoors and outdoors. Beyond the active recreation focus, the Town's LOS should support significant amounts of walking opportunities on paved and unpaved trails as well as a wide variety of play structures and playground.

Level of Service Summary

The Town of Winterville desires a lifestyle with ample opportunities for active recreation. This active lifestyle would be supported by indoor and outdoor facilities, athletic fields, high levels of walkability, and numerous playgrounds options.

CRITICAL:

Currently, the Town does not have an indoor recreation center.



Community market event in Winterville | Source: Sandra Harvey Photography

Table 7.1: Level of Service

Amenity	Metrics Based Need range* Estimated 2034 Population (14,092)	Current Owned / Service Level	Community Input Interest Level	Recommended number of facility to be developed by 2034
Amphitheater	0-1	0 / in range	Medium	0
Aquatics Center	0-1	0 / in range	High	0
Basketball Courts (dedicated)	2-3	2 / in range	Medium	1
Community Center (no gym)	0-1	0 / in range	High	1
Community Gardens	0-1	0 / in range	Low	0
Diamond Fields (baseball / softball)	5-7	4 / not in range	High	3
Disc Golf Course	0-1	0 / not in range	Low	0
Dog Park	0-1	0 / not in range	Medium	1
Fitness Stations / Zones (outdoor)	0-1	0 / in range	Medium	1
Golf Courses	0-1	0 / in range	Low	0
Inclusive Playgrounds	1	0 / not in range	High	1
Jogging / Walking Trails	n/a	no range	High	3 miles
Multiuse Courts (basketball / volleyball)	1-2	0 / not in range	Low	0
Multipurpose Field	4-5	1 / not in range	High	4
Nature Center	0-1	0 / in range	Low	0
Pickleball (dedicated)	1-4	0 / not in range	Medium	2
Playground	4-7	3 / not in range	High	2
Recreation Center (with gym)	0-1	0 / in range	High	1
Tennis / Pickleball Courts	2-3	2 / in range	Medium	1

Notice: “no range” data means the data is not available or difficult to categorically represent

* need derived from all public input forms

Staffing Recommendations

This plan covers a ten year period. The facilities to be constructed during that time may require some additional staffing and will require additional funding for maintenance. Consideration of these budgetary impacts should be made before the construction of any new park or facility.

Multiple factors will influence the future staffing needs of the Winterville Recreation Department: population growth, demographics, available tax monies, and tourism growth. Staff compensation should be based on market precedents. The largest factor will be the maintenance of any new parks or facilities. The current standard of maintenance should be continued, if not increased. Providing parks, facilities, and programs for the citizens impacts the quality of life for citizens, businesses, and visitors alike.

Immediate Staffing Needs (2024-2028)

Full-time

- **Recreation Center Supervisor:** This position should be slated to begin before the completion of the recommended indoor recreation center. The center supervisor should oversee the day-to-day operations of the recreation center including coordinating maintenance staff about facility needs and regular maintenance conditions. The center supervisor should guide and lead recreation programming in the center and coordinate with independent program providers, such as martial arts, and dance. The center supervisor should, under the leadership of the director, create recreation space use and rental policies and oversee the administration.
- **Maintenance Workers:** These staff members should help address the increased maintenance needs that come with a new park and recreation facility. These staff members should be skilled and

/ or trained to be able to address indoor related recreation facility needs. This staff member should also actively provide support to the rest of the parks system.

Part-time

- **Marketing and Events Coordinator:** This staff member should play a critical role in seeking out sponsors and partners for the recreation department. This staff members with assist with the branding and marketing of the department's recreation programs, facilities, and special events.

Future Staffing Needs (2029-2034)

Full-time

- **Marketing and Events Coordinator:** This position that began as a part-time and should be transitioned to full-time. At this stage, this position should begin to coordinate and offer new special events in the community on a regular basis. This position will enable the recreation center supervisor and programing staff to concentrate more on program facilitation and offerings and less on attracting participants.
 - This position should also assist the parks and recreation director with preparing program participation trends, monitoring marketing outlets that allow the recreation director more time to focus on strategic operations, and planning / system development. If the department's operations and programs grow quickly, this position could eventually transition into an assistant director role. In that case, the events coordination workload would be given to another staff member.



08 | Action Plan Implementation

Action Implementation Plan

An action implementation plan describes how the Town of Winterville can strategically address the needs of this rapidly developing community. This section discusses development priorities, recommended staffing, methods for creating the facilities, and possible routes to funding.

Priorities for Development

Winterville's parks are operating at or near capacity for this growing community and need to be improved. To adequately address resident needs, the park system must grow quickly.

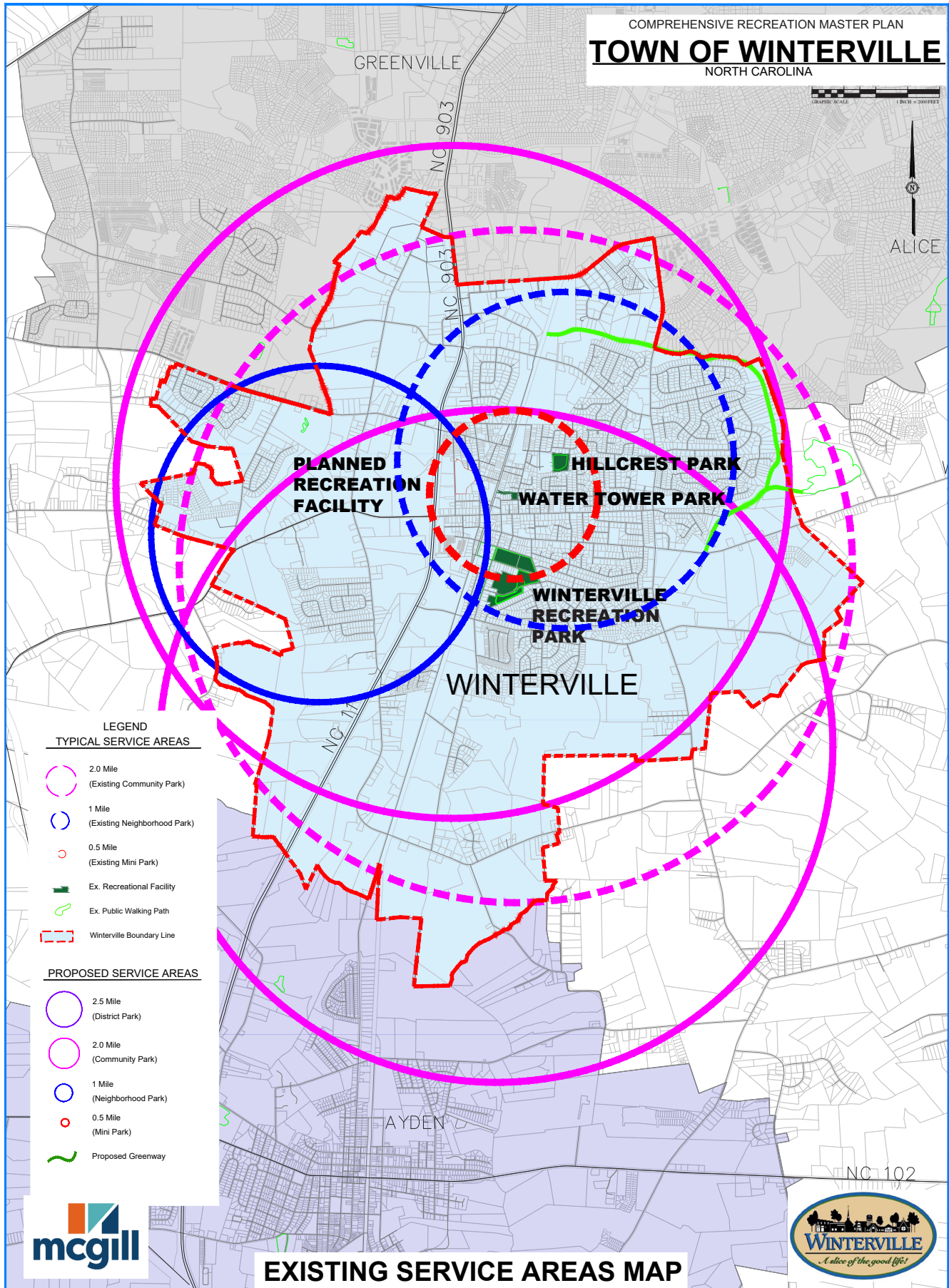
On the following page, there is a strategic approach to addressing critical needs and an opinion of probable cost that outlines the associated park system development needs. The opinion of probable cost has been developed with the most current 2024 financial figures available at the time of planning. The true cost of these items are subject to supply / demand fluctuations and inflation.

Urgent Priorities

Winterville residents want a walkable community, indoor recreation opportunities, and natural / open spaces. Currently, the Town does not have an indoor recreation space and no natural areas to walk besides the loop trails within Hillcrest, the Winterville Recreation Park, and a fractured sidewalk system.

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Park Development		Immediate (0-5 years)	Short Range (5-10 years)	Long Range (10+ years)
1a	Plan, fund, and develop a new, central park. This project will continue over several years.	x		
1b	Anchor the new park to an indoor recreation center.		x	
1c	Purchase land that can be used for future site planning and other uses outline in this comprehensive master plan.		x	
Goal 2: Greenway Development		Immediate (0-5 years)	Short Range (5-10 years)	Long Range (10+ years)
2a	Begin developing a greenway system. As the Winterville parks grow, there will be walking trail safety issues, which a new greenway system can help.	x		
2b	By the end of 2030, the majority of the Fork Swamp Canal Greenway should be developed.		x	
2c	Repair the trail safety issues that currently exist at the Winterville Recreation Park.			
Goal 3: Existing Park Improvements		Immediate (0-5 years)	Short Range (5-10 years)	Long Range (10+ years)
3a	Update Watertower Park, including ADA considerations. Updates include replacing the playground and providing a shelter and better parking, which will allow more people to get to and visit the park.	x		
3b	Update and expand the capacity of Winterville Park. The updates are needed because of the need for a larger capacity and general overuse.		x	
3c	Make improvements to Hillcrest Park so that it can be better suited to serve as a community hub for activities and events.			



Future (beyond the 10-year scope of this plan)

Winterville is in control of what kind of community it becomes. The Town continues growing, and the parks and recreation department will need to posture itself properly to get ahead of the growth. The development that is happening to the south and west of the Town center provides possible land banking areas within this 10-year plan. However, after this next decade, we anticipate that Winterville will need to be prepared to develop these properties to serve the Town's growth. In addition, the Town will need to continue to make steady progress on developing its trails and greenways to catch up and meet resident demands.

Anticipated Recreational Project Costs

A recreation capital improvement program for the development of park facilities is designed to encompass, at a minimum, a ten-year period. To assist the Town in determining those needs, this study provides a list of anticipated recreation projects based on plan recommendations. The proposed recreational project list provides costs based on recent (2024) material and labor costs. The provided opinion of probable costs includes assumed general expenditures, such as site preparation, building structures, access, site utilities, parking, and specific recreation improvements. The list provided also includes estimates for planning and design fees.

The proposed anticipated future recreational project list would cover a ten-year period and would serve to set recreation expenses for each fiscal year for the implementation of specific projects. The opinions of probable cost are preliminary and are for planning purposes only. As it becomes time to consider the recommended improvements, the Town should pursue an updated opinions on cost.

This total anticipated future recreational project cost of \$12,469,000 represents the proposed, cumulative figure to be spent for park and recreation development, improvements, and renovations by the year 2034. The total figure does not consider an inflation rate over the ten-year period. To see a breakdown of the anticipated future recreational project costs.

To meet the existing and future needs of the Town, the goals and objectives that are identified in the master plan must be seriously considered for implementation. The Town will need to update its annual budget for the parks and recreation department based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, and operations and maintenance costs.

Category / Improvement	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Cost	Future
	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033	2033-2034		
Existing Parks Renovations / Improvements												
Winterville Recreation Park												
Accessibility improvements (restrooms, dugouts)							\$60,000				\$60,000	
Trail replacement (approx. 450 SY)		\$60,000									\$60,000	
Parking expansion (550 SY)							\$50,000				\$50,000	
Kiwanis field laser grade							\$150,000				\$150,000	
Batting cages at Smith field (2)							\$65,000				\$65,000	
Additional fencing (100 LF)							\$10,000				\$10,000	
Field house / office renovations							\$100,000				\$100,000	
Subtotal	\$0	\$60,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$435,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$495,000	
Hillcrest Park												
Parking expansion (550 SY)						\$50,000					\$50,000	
Large pavilion						\$200,000					\$200,000	
Vendor hook ups (3)						\$24,000					\$24,000	
Restroom renovations						\$60,000					\$60,000	
Subtotal						\$334,000					\$334,000	
Watertown Park												
Inclusive playground					\$180,000						\$180,000	
15x15 picnic shelter					\$25,000						\$25,000	
Parking area (250 SY)					\$25,000						\$25,000	
New sidewalk (80 LF)					\$10,000						\$10,000	
Subtotal					\$240,000						\$240,000	
Existing Parks Total	\$0	\$60,000	\$0	\$0	\$240,000	\$334,000	\$435,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,069,000	\$0

Category / Improvement	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Cost	Future
	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030	2030-2031	2031-2032	2032-2033	2033-2034		
New Facility Development												
Chapman Street Property (park name tbd)												
Park development with indoor recreation	\$6,000,000					=					\$6,000,000	
Subtotal	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,000,000	
Parkland Acquisition												
Landback for southern community park								\$2,000,000			\$2,000,000	
Landback for western neighborhood park									\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	
Subtotal	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$3,000,000	
Greenway Development												
Greenway development (approx. 3 miles)			\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000							\$2,400,000	
Subtotal	\$0	\$0	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,400,000	
New Facility Development Total	\$6,000,000	\$0	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$11,400,000	
Total Anticipated Cost	\$6,000,000	\$60,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$240,000	\$334,000	\$435,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$12,469,000	\$0

Funding Opportunities

Implementing the recommendations of this comprehensive recreation master plan will require a combination of funding sources, including local, state, federal, and private money. Identifying sufficient funding is a crucial element for implementing this master plan. The NC SCORP is a guide to help identify funding sources for parks and recreation facilities. Funding for future projects will be a key issue that must be addressed in the upcoming years if governments continue to provide basic minimum services.

This section lists the most used funds for park and greenway facility projects in North Carolina. Fortunately, there are many benefits of protected greenways and parks. This allows programs in Winterville to access money earmarked for various purposes, including water quality, hazard mitigation, recreation, air quality, alternative transportation, wildlife protection, community health, and economic development. Competition is always stiff for state and federal funds, so local governments must collaborate to create multi-jurisdictional partnerships and develop local funding sources. These sources can then be used to leverage outside assistance. The long-term success of this plan will almost certainly depend on the dedication of a local revenue stream for park and greenway projects.

The Town should fully evaluate its available options and develop an investment strategy to meet community needs, maximize local resources, improve quality of life, and leverage outside funding. The Town will need funding to administer the continued planning and implementation process, acquire parcels or easements, and manage / maintain facilities. We recommend researching these programs to determine the requirements for specific grants. McGill advises the Town of Winterville to pursue a variety of funding options.

Dedicated Source of Local Funding

Winterville should evaluate the existing departmental budget and funding for capital improvements to leverage and provide matching funds for the programs listed.

Property / Sales Tax Revenues

General tax revenues traditionally provide sources for general operations and park maintenance systems for local governments. Parks and recreation development, along with health, public safety, utilities, etc., are scheduled in regular budgets established by the Town. The assessed value of real and personal property and sales tax provides the framework for the Town's tax base.

Traditionally, ad valorem tax revenue has been the primary funding source for enhancing local governments' parks and recreation properties / facilities. Recreational opportunities are considered a public service and often are a standard line item on general fund budgets. Creative financial opportunities are possible; however, ad valorem taxes will continue to be the major revenue source to support the system. Consequently, communities often vote to temporarily raise their local tax rate to support the parks and recreation systems.

General Obligation Bonds

Many communities issue bonds, typically approved by shareholders, to finance site development and land acquisition costs. The State of North Carolina grants local governments the authority to borrow funds for parks and recreation through the issuance of bonds. The amount is not to exceed the cost of acquiring or improving parks and recreation facilities. Total bond capacities for local governments are limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property value. Since the issuance of bonds relies on the support of the voting population, awareness programs are essential before a referendum vote.

General obligation bonds are the preferred financing approach of the North Carolina Local Government Commission and the general securities market because the full faith and credit of the issuer backs these instruments. That means the bonds represent an encumbrance against the property tax base of the issuing jurisdiction and, therefore, offer the best security to the bondholder. The State of North Carolina requires the issuance of bonds do not exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). Given the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, the Town may consider continuing to use general obligation bonds to develop new facilities. Total bonding capacities for local government are limited for parks and recreation to a maximum percentage of assessed property value. The following are key factors to consider before using this financing instrument:

- In North Carolina, issuing general obligation bonds requires a referendum of the voters within the issuing jurisdiction
- The debt term may be extended to 20 to 30 years.
- The debt is publicly sold, so there are costs associated with the sale. These costs generally total 3% to 5% of the bond principal. The issuance costs offset the lower interest rate. Therefore, this instrument becomes more attractive as the issuance size increases and the issuance costs are spread over the more considerable debt. It has been found that this financing option becomes financially superior as the debt principal exceeds \$10 to \$12 million

Generally, debt prepayment cannot be accomplished until reaching a call date. This usually is around 75% of debt retirement. Failure of the general obligation bond to be ratified by referendum could mean that the Town could not proceed with an alternative approach to financing without substantially changing the scope of the project.

Fee In-lieu of Contributions

The Town should consider providing developers with an option to pay a fee in lieu of rather than to dedicate land for open space or recreation within conventional subdivisions. This program has successfully helped many local governments provide a dedicated source of revenue earmarked for park development. Example of fee in-lieu of policies are provided in the appendix.

User Fees / Registration Fees

Communities nationwide employ various user fees for public recreational programs and services within their recreation departments. The fee is usually determined by a portion of the recreation costs needed for improvements and operations. These user fees are typically levied for special facilities, such as water parks and golf courses; however, they can also be charged for using trails and ball fields. The Town should continue generating revenue by charging user fees for facilities like picnic shelters to cover operation and administrative costs. Winterville should continue to have a separate fee rate structure for residents and non-residents. As the park system continues to develop, the Town should examine its fee structure to identify opportunities and additional revenue. The current user fees appear fair and reasonable for most residents and non-residents. Elected officials should determine the fees and changes based on departmental input; the fees

CRITICAL

It is important to understand that investments into parks and recreation properties and facilities are similar to real estate investments. Delaying an investment will likely not result in cost-savings, rather it will result in a cost increase or a lower return on the investment. The longer the initial investment is delayed, the lower the return on the investment would be.

should not be so high that people of modest income would ultimately be denied use.

Grants

All too often, local governments look to grants as pockets of free money. On the contrary, many funding agencies see grants as funding levers that help maximize local efforts rather than supplement them. State and federal agencies offer numerous grants to help municipalities finance their parks and recreation projects. The Town should investigate and pursue this funding source for present and future park and recreation improvements.

Parks and Recreation Trust Fund

The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) was established for local governments and the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation in 1994 as a funding source for developing or improving parks and recreation facilities and the purpose of land acquisition. A state-funded program, PARTF matches monies spent by municipalities on parks and recreation, each sharing 50% of the cost. The maximum matching fund amount provided by PARTF is \$500,000.



Recreation Trails Program

The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) is a \$1.5-million federal grant program administered by the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. It is designed to help states provide and maintain recreational trails for both motorized and non-motorized use.

RTP is a reimbursement grant program. Funds must be spent and then reimbursed upon completion of deliverables. Eligible applicants must be a state, federal, or local government agency or qualified nonprofit organization. The North Carolina Trails Committee reviews all applications and

makes recommendations to the Secretary of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The secretary makes the final determination on grant awards.

Federal Aid Construction Funds

Federal Aid Construction Funds are included in the National Highway System (NHS), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ). The funds are used to construct pedestrian and bicycle transportation facilities. The primary funding source for bicycle and pedestrian projects is STBG Enhancement Funding.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federally funded program established for local and state governments in 1965 as a funding source for outdoor recreational development and land acquisition. LWCF monies are derived from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources, primarily offshore oil and gas leases and surplus federal land sales. Acquisition and development grants may be used for various outdoor projects, such as municipal parks, tennis courts, bike trails, outdoor swimming pools, and support facilities (roads, water supply, et cetera). Facility design must be basic instead of elaborate and remain accessible to the general public. LWCF may not provide federal funds for more than 50% of the project cost, although all or part of the project sponsor's matching share may be obtained from other federal assistance programs.



Environmental Enhancement Grant Program

The Environmental Enhancement Grant Program (EEG) is used to fund projects that address the environmental needs of North Carolina, specifically to protect water quality as well as conserve natural areas. Only nonprofit organizations or government

entities for North Carolina projects are eligible. There is a preference for programs focused on the eastern part of the state. The types of grants include land acquisitions and easements, construction, remediation, restoration, and research, planning, education. The maximum award available is \$500,000. The work must be completed within 3 years of the fully executed memorandum of understanding date.

US Department of Agriculture

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) helps state and local governments with the operation and maintenance of watersheds that are less than 250,000 square acres. The NRCS provides financial and technical assistance for the improvement of watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, public water-based fish and wildlife enhancements, and recreation planning. The NRCS requires a 50% local match for public recreation and fish / wildlife projects.

Park Foundations

Foundations provide financing by directly contributing to communities, states, or the nation. These types of funds are usually described as special program foundations, general purpose foundations, or corporate foundations. Foundations can provide resources to support park projects. Foundations generally have few restrictions and limitations and are typically received from local entities. A list of appropriate foundations can be found at: <http://foundationcenter.org>.

Partnerships

To implement the recommendations in this comprehensive master plan, the Town should expand its partnership agreements with other public agencies and private sector organizations. Establishing many kinds of partnerships can help

the Town achieve its goals. Many local governments nationwide use alliances with public and private sector interests to accomplish community goals.

Listed below are the various types of partnerships that the Town should consider while improving and adding parks and recreational facilities:

- Programming partnerships to co-sponsor events and facilities or to allow qualified outside agencies to conduct activities on Town-owned properties
- Create a plan to solicit local businesses for sponsorship opportunities related to specific facilities, amenities, programs, and special events
- Operational partnerships to share the responsibility for providing public access and use of facilities
- Development partnerships to purchase land and build facilities
- Management partnerships to maintain properties and facilities

Winterville should evaluate and update its current recreation partnerships to ensure they provide the community with the best opportunities. The Town should also assess the need to form additional partnerships that address the need for a comprehensive park system. Potential partners should be addressed directly and invited to evaluate the benefits of a partnership. This step should generate interest before solidifying any responsibilities for each participating party.

Private-sector partnerships can be beneficial. Developers can use private funds to develop facilities on municipal property and lease them to the county in the long term. Over time, the developer returns a portion of the revenue to the Town, and at the end of the lease, the facility is turned over to public ownership. This arrangement would typically be a large capital investment for a special-use facility.

Land Acquisition and Development

Soliciting contributions is an acceptable method of fundraising for recreation departments. These donations, typically land, cash, labor, and materials could be requested to assist the Town of Winterville with its enhancement program. Corporations, civic organizations, individuals, and other groups generally donate to a specific park project; however, donations may be solicited for multiple project improvements or additions. The NRPA recommends using private, not-for-profit, tax-exempt foundations to accept and administer private gifts to a public park system.

Life Estates

A life estate is a gift in which a donor retains the land during his / her lifetime and relinquishes the title after his / her death. In return, the owner (or family) is relieved of property tax for the given land.

Local Gifts

Donations of land, money, labor, and construction can significantly impact the acquisition and development of park property. The solicitation of local gifts is highly recommended and should be organized thoroughly, utilizing particular strategic methods. This often-untapped source of obtaining funds requires reaching out to potential donors, such as individuals, institutions, foundations, and service clubs.

Long-term Options

Long-term options allow municipalities to purchase property over a long period. This method is particularly useful because it enables the Town to consider a particular piece of land that may have future value, though it is not currently desired or affordable. The advantages of this method of

property acquisition are that the county can protect the future of the land without purchasing it upfront, the purchase price of the land will not increase, and the Town will have the right to exercise its option. The disadvantage to the Town is that all privileges relinquished by the landowner require compensation in the form of securing the option.

Easement

An easement is the most common type of less-than-fee interest in land. It seeks to compensate the property owner for the right to use his/her land or for losing his / her privileges to use the land. Generally, the landowner may still use the land and, therefore, continue to generate property tax revenue for the Town.

Fee Simple Purchases

Fee simple purchase is the most common method of acquiring municipal property for park facilities. It has the advantage of simplifying justification to the public, and it is the most difficult method to pursue due to limited monetary resources.

Fee Simple with Lease-back or Resale

This method allows local governments to acquire land by fee simple purchase yet sell or lease the property to prospective users with restrictions that will preserve the land from future development. The fee simple with lease-back or resale method of development commonly results from situations in which landowners, who have lost considerable monetary amounts in property value, determine that it is more economical to sell the land to the Town (with a lease-back option) than to keep it.

Plan Adoption

Adopting this comprehensive parks and recreation master plan is the first step in implementation. By adopting the plan, the community can start making decisions that fit the plan's goals. The Town also gives itself greater authority to shape local land use decisions to achieve this plan's goals and vision. Adopting this master plan is essential for maximizing available grant opportunities. The Town of Winterville can promote parks, greenways, facilities, and programs through organizations, institutions, publications, and networks. Having an existing network provides a strong foundation for improving a community.



Part of the annual Winterville Christmas parade | Source: Sandra Harvey Photography

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Appendix A

	8/23 Resident	8/24 Resident	Resident Totals	8/23 visitor	8/24 visitor	Visitor Totals
Adventure Playground	26	13	39	21	14	35
Natural Surface Trails	15	22	37	14	19	33
Soccer Field	28	18	46	7	9	16
Multi-use Paved Trails	19	16	35	5	19	24
Gymnasium	21	26	47	4	7	11
Traditional Playground	7	18	25	7	19	26
Baseball Field	30	12	42	5	3	8
Weightlifting/Cardio	16	19	35	6	7	13
Climbing wall	14	15	29	10	8	18
Teen Programing	17	12	29	12	5	17
Pickleball/tennis court	11	8	19	14	11	25
Dog Friendly Fountain	5	12	17	13	13	26
Fitness Stations	8	13	21	5	8	13
Football Field	10	20	30	3	0	3
Basketball	5	18	23	7	3	10
Agility Course	9	6	15	7	10	17
Free Form Playground	6	12	18	7	6	13
Tot lot	4	8	12	3	15	18
Multi-generational Equipment	12	4	16	7	6	13
Pickleball only	9	12	21	5	2	7
Senior Program	10	10	20	6	2	8
Community Kitchen	5	11	16	8	4	12
Ping Pong	7	6	13	4	10	14
Cornhole	1	13	14	3	9	12
Outdoor Performance Area	6	9	15	0	10	10
Disc Golf	1	17	18	1	3	4
Covered Picnic Station	6	1	7	4	7	11
Concession Stand	12	1	13	2	1	3
Non-programed openspace	5	5	10	5	0	5
Shade Structure	6	4	10	4	0	4
Indoor Programing Room	5	4	9	4	1	5
Shade Structure	5	3	8	1	5	6
Educational Classroom	4	4	8	1	4	5
Pet Waste Station	3	5	8	2	2	4
Multi-acitivty game court	4	3	7	4	1	5
Tennis Court	5	3	8	3	0	3
Interpretive/Educational Signage	2	4	6	1	3	4
Bike Repair Station	3	1	4	4	1	5
Lacross Field	2	2	4	3	1	4
Leash Posts	2	0	2	0	1	1
Total votes	366	390	756	222	249	471
Approximate number of voter	122	130	252	74	83	157

Indoor Recreation Breakdown

	8/23 Resident	8/24 Resident	Resident Totals	8/23 visitor	8/24 visitor	Visitor Totals
Gymnasium	21	26	47	4	7	11
Weightlifting/Cardio	16	19	35	6	7	13
Teen Programing	17	12	29	12	5	17
Senior Program	10	10	20	6	2	8
Community Kitchen	5	11	16	8	4	12
Indoor Programing Room	5	4	9	4	1	5
Educational Classroom	4	4	8	1	4	5
Total votes	78	86	164	41	30	71

Outdoor Recreation Breakdown

	8/23 Resident	8/24 Resident	Resident Totals	8/23 visitor	8/24 visitor	Visitor Totals
Soccer Field	28	18	46	7	9	16
Baseball Field	30	12	42	5	3	8
Adventure Playground	26	13	39	21	14	35
Natural Surface Trails	15	22	37	14	19	33
Multi-use Paved Trails	19	16	35	5	19	24
Football Field	10	20	30	3	0	3
Climbing wall	14	15	29	10	8	18
Traditional Playground	7	18	25	7	19	26
Basketball	5	18	23	7	3	10
Fitness Stations	8	13	21	5	8	13
Pickleball only	9	12	21	5	2	7
Pickleball/tennis court	11	8	19	14	11	25
Disc Golf	1	17	18	1	3	4
Free Form Playground	6	12	18	7	6	13
Dog Friendly Fountain	5	12	17	13	13	26
Multi-generational Equipment	12	4	16	7	6	13
Outdoor Performance Area	6	9	15	0	10	10
Agility Course	9	6	15	7	10	17
Cornhole	1	13	14	3	9	12
Concession Stand	12	1	13	2	1	3
Ping Pong	7	6	13	4	10	14
Tot lot	4	8	12	3	15	18
Shade Structure	6	4	10	4	0	4
Non-programed openspace	5	5	10	5	0	5
Tennis Court	5	3	8	3	0	3
Pet Waste Station	3	5	8	2	2	4
Shade Structure	5	3	8	1	5	6
Multi-activty game court	4	3	7	4	1	5
Covered Picnic Station	6	1	7	4	7	11
Interpretive/Educational Signage	2	4	6	1	3	4
Lacross Field	2	2	4	3	1	4
Bike Repair Station	3	1	4	4	1	5
Leash Posts	2	0	2	0	1	1

Total votes	288	304	592	181	219	400
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Input Totals			
	8/23 Resident	8/24 Resident	Resident Totals
Gymnasium	21	26	47
Soccer Field	28	18	46
Baseball Field	30	12	42
Adventure Playground	26	13	39
Natural Surface Trails	15	22	37
Weightlifting/Cardio	16	19	35
Multi-use Paved Trails	19	16	35
Football Field	10	20	30
Teen Programing	17	12	29
Climbing wall	14	15	29
Traditional Playground	7	18	25
Basketball	5	18	23
Fitness Stations	8	13	21
Pickleball only	9	12	21
Senior Program	10	10	20
Pickleball/tennis court	11	8	19
Disc Golf	1	17	18
Free Form Playground	6	12	18
Dog Friendly Fountain	5	12	17
Community Kitchen	5	11	16
Multi-generational Equipment	12	4	16
Outdoor Performance Area	6	9	15
Agility Course	9	6	15
Cornhole	1	13	14
Concession Stand	12	1	13
Ping Pong	7	6	13
Tot lot	4	8	12
Shade Structure	6	4	10
Non-programed openspace	5	5	10
Indoor Programing Room	5	4	9
Educational Classroom	4	4	8
Tennis Court	5	3	8
Pet Waste Station	3	5	8
Shade Structure	5	3	8
Multi-activity game court	4	3	7
Covered Picnic Station	6	1	7
Interpretive/Educational Signage	2	4	6
Lacross Field	2	2	4
Bike Repair Station	3	1	4
Leash Posts	2	0	2
Total votes	366	390	756

Indoor Recreation Breakdown

	8/23 Resident	8/24 Resident	Resident Totals
Gymnasium	21	26	47
Weightlifting/Cardio	16	19	35
Teen Programing	17	12	29
Senior Program	10	10	20
Community Kitchen	5	11	16
Indoor Programing Room	5	4	9
Educational Classroom	4	4	8
Total votes	78	86	164

Outdoor Recreation Breakdown

	8/23 Resident	8/24 Resident	Resident Totals
Soccer Field	28	18	46
Baseball Field	30	12	42
Adventure Playground	26	13	39
Natural Surface Trails	15	22	37
Multi-use Paved Trails	19	16	35
Football Field	10	20	30
Climbing wall	14	15	29
Traditional Playground	7	18	25
Basketball	5	18	23
Fitness Stations	8	13	21
Pickleball only	9	12	21
Pickleball/tennis court	11	8	19
Disc Golf	1	17	18
Free Form Playground	6	12	18
Dog Friendly Fountain	5	12	17
Multi-generational Equipment	12	4	16
Outdoor Performance Area	6	9	15
Agility Course	9	6	15
Cornhole	1	13	14
Concession Stand	12	1	13
Ping Pong	7	6	13
Tot lot	4	8	12
Shade Structure	6	4	10
Non-programed openspace	5	5	10
Tennis Court	5	3	8
Pet Waste Station	3	5	8
Shade Structure	5	3	8
Multi-activty game court	4	3	7
Covered Picnic Station	6	1	7
Interpretive/Educational Signage	2	4	6
Lacross Field	2	2	4

Bike Repair Station	3	1	4
Leash Posts	2	0	2
Total votes	288	304	592

Visitor Interest			
	8/23 visitor	8/24 visitor	Visitor Totals
Adventure Playground	21	14	35
Natural Surface Trails	14	19	33
Traditional Playground	7	19	26
Dog Friendly Fountain	13	13	26
Pickleball/tennis court	14	11	25
Multi-use Paved Trails	5	19	24
Climbing wall	10	8	18
Tot lot	3	15	18
Teen Programing	12	5	17
Agility Course	7	10	17
Soccer Field	7	9	16
Ping Pong	4	10	14
Weightlifting/Cardio	6	7	13
Fitness Stations	5	8	13
Free Form Playground	7	6	13
Multi-generational Equipment	7	6	13
Community Kitchen	8	4	12
Cornhole	3	9	12
Gymnasium	4	7	11
Covered Picnic Station	4	7	11
Basketball	7	3	10
Outdoor Performance Area	0	10	10
Baseball Field	5	3	8
Senior Program	6	2	8
Pickleball only	5	2	7
Shade Structure	1	5	6
Non-programed openspace	5	0	5
Indoor Programing Room	4	1	5
Educational Classroom	1	4	5
Multi-activity game court	4	1	5
Bike Repair Station	4	1	5
Disc Golf	1	3	4
Shade Structure	4	0	4
Pet Waste Station	2	2	4
Interpretive/Educational Signage	1	3	4
Lacross Field	3	1	4
Football Field	3	0	3
Concession Stand	2	1	3
Tennis Court	3	0	3

Leash Posts	0	1	1
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Indoor Recreation Breakdown			
	8/23 visitor	8/24 visitor	Visitor Totals
Teen Programing	12	5	17
Weightlifting/Cardio	6	7	13
Community Kitchen	8	4	12
Gymnasium	4	7	11
Senior Program	6	2	8
Indoor Programing Room	4	1	5
Educational Classroom	1	4	5

Outdoor Recreation Breakdown			
	8/23 visitor	8/24 visitor	Visitor Totals
Adventure Playground	21	14	35
Natural Surface Trails	14	19	33
Traditional Playground	7	19	26
Dog Friendly Fountain	13	13	26
Pickleball/tennis court	14	11	25
Multi-use Paved Trails	5	19	24
Climbing wall	10	8	18
Tot lot	3	15	18
Agility Course	7	10	17
Soccer Field	7	9	16
Ping Pong	4	10	14
Fitness Stations	5	8	13
Free Form Playground	7	6	13
Multi-generational Equipment	7	6	13
Cornhole	3	9	12
Covered Picnic Station	4	7	11
Basketball	7	3	10
Outdoor Performance Area	0	10	10
Baseball Field	5	3	8
Pickleball only	5	2	7
Shade Structure	1	5	6
Non-programed openspace	5	0	5
Multi-acitvty game court	4	1	5
Bike Repair Station	4	1	5
Disc Golf	1	3	4
Shade Structure	4	0	4
Pet Waste Station	2	2	4
Interpretive/Educational Signage	1	3	4
Lacross Field	3	1	4
Football Field	3	0	3
Concession Stand	2	1	3
Tennis Court	3	0	3
Leash Posts	0	1	1

Grand Total	74
	70
	62
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Grand Total	58
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Grand Total	62
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	47
	51
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Appendix B

Garner

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/garner/latest/garner_nc/0-0-0-11786

Newport

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/newportnc/latest/newport_nc/0-0-0-29626

Apex

<https://www.apexnc.org/DocumentCenter/View/18203/Park-Recreation-and-Open-Space-Sites-PDF?bidId=>

Brevard

https://library.municode.com/nc/brevard/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=UNDEOR_CH7OPSP

Study from Town of Zebulon on impact Fees, 2021

https://www.townofzebulon.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Parks/pr_-_recreation_impact_fee_attachement.pdf

UNC-CH SOG article on Extractions and Subdivision approval,

<https://canons.sog.unc.edu/2013/02/exactions-and-subdivision-approval/>

Cary's

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/cary/latest/cary_nc/0-0-0-72314

Raleigh's is embedded in their UDO under Facility Fees, article 8.9

<https://user-2081353526.cld.bz/UnifiedDevelopmentOrdinance/277/>

Appendix C

Winterville Recreation Focus Group Meeting - Athletics Programs –

October 22, 2024

A focus group meeting was held to discuss the Winterville Recreation Department's athletic programs. The meeting aimed to gather input on improving facilities and addressing community needs.

Key Points Discussed:

1. Current Facilities and Maintenance:

Several participants emphasized the need for improved field quality, including better surfaces, drainage, and overall maintenance.

Issues such as limited parking and inadequate lighting during multiple sporting events were highlighted.

2. Field Use and Community Access:

Concerns were raised about the usage of fields for lessons and public access.

There was discussion about implementing policies to ensure fields are used fairly and not dominated by profit-making activities.

The idea of having more fields to alleviate pressure was considered, along with the need for lights on existing fields.

3. Funding and Financial Support:

The group discussed the need for more financial support from larger businesses in the community.

Suggestions included reaching out to big companies for substantial donations to sponsor facilities rather than small contributions.

The idea of forming a charitable organization, like Friends of Winterville Athletics, was proposed to manage and utilize donations effectively.

4. Community Engagement:

The importance of community engagement in the planning process was highlighted.

Ideas included sending out surveys to prioritize needs like new fields, updated existing fields, and all-purpose fields.

5. Volunteer and Staffing Needs:

The meeting recognized the need for more staff to maintain facilities and manage special events.

There was a suggestion to involve parents and community members in volunteering to help with tasks like field maintenance and concession stands.

6. Comprehensive Plan and Long-Term Goals:

The significance of having a comprehensive plan was stressed, noting that it would make the town eligible for various grants.

The plan should be reviewed and updated every three to five years to ensure continued relevance and funding eligibility.

Action Items:

Explore forming a charitable organization to manage donations.

Reach out to larger businesses for financial support.

Implement policies for fair field usage.

Increase community engagement through surveys and meetings.

Involve volunteers in maintaining and improving facilities.

Regularly review and update the comprehensive plan.

The focus group provided valuable insights and highlighted a strong community commitment to improving recreational facilities in Winterville. With continued collaboration and effort, significant improvements and developments are expected in the coming years.

Winterville Focus Group Meeting - Economic Development

Date: October 7, 2024

Time: 9:01 AM

Introduction

Overview

- The meeting began with introductions and an overview by a representative from McGill Associates.
- The purpose was to develop a comprehensive Parks and Recreation master plan for Winterville, addressing current needs and future growth based on community and staff input.

Collaboration and Community Involvement

Chamber of Commerce Collaboration

- Highlighted collaboration with the Parks and Recreation department to enhance community involvement and downtown activation through various events.
- Emphasized potential for further expansion and increased participation.

Economic Development Perspective

- Interest in exploring partnerships between economic development and Parks and Recreation to attract residents and businesses.
- Noted the importance of quality of life in economic development efforts.

Role of Parks and Recreation

Economic Development through Recreation

- Discussed the role of Parks and Recreation in economic development, particularly through destination-based events and tourism.
- Stressed the importance of showcasing Winterville's offerings to attract new businesses and families.

Successful Events

- "Market on the Square" features vendors and live music, drawing significant community participation.
- Importance of involving local businesses and creating special event-related promotions.

- The annual Halloween event was highlighted as a major success, providing a model for future events.

New Initiatives and Staffing Needs

New Initiatives

- Mentioned new initiatives like “Glow Golf,” a nighttime event at the recreation park, aiming to offer unique recreational opportunities and attract community participation.
- Emphasized the value of creative partnerships and innovative events.

Staffing Challenges

- Growing need for additional staff to manage new properties and increased responsibilities.
- The situation is becoming increasingly pressing as the town acquires more properties and hosts more events.
- Reliance on a small core team and volunteers underscores the need for more permanent staff.

Volunteer Management and Collaboration

Volunteer Involvement

- Challenges of managing volunteer involvement, including the need for background checks and ensuring volunteers are adequately prepared.
- The importance of collaboration between departments and the community is emphasized.
- Clear need for more resources to sustain and grow efforts.

Future Vision and Strategic Planning

Future Activities

- Envisioned a mix of active and passive recreational activities to cater to diverse community interests.
- Potential for more arts and cultural events, as well as sports tournaments, to attract visitors and new residents.
- Need for additional facilities and staff to support these activities highlighted.

Long-term Sustainability

- Emphasized the need for Parks and Recreation to offer a mix of activities that appeal to all age groups.

- Importance of planning for long-term sustainability and adapting to the changing needs of the community stressed.

Conclusion

Community Input and Participation

- Community input is crucial for the research and development of the comprehensive plan.
- Encouraged continued participation in focus group meetings to ensure the plan accurately reflects the needs and desires of Winterville's residents.
- Emphasized the importance of staying involved and communicating additional thoughts or concerns.

Summary of Winterville Recreation Leadership1 Focus Group Meeting - October 8, 2024

Participants:

- Town of Winterville staff, including representatives from Parks and Recreation and McGill Associates.

Key Points Discussed:

1. Introduction and Roles:

- Participants introduced themselves and their roles.
- McGill Associates is assisting with the comprehensive recreation plan.

2. Recreation Needs and Vision:

- Emphasis on the need for more indoor recreation space due to the town's rapid growth.
- Highlighted the importance of providing diverse recreational opportunities, including arts, theater, volleyball, and pickleball.
- Discussed the need for facilities that cater to all demographics, including seniors and young females.

3. Multipurpose Indoor Facility:

- Vision for a multipurpose center that can host various activities, community meetings, and serve as a disaster recovery center.
- Suggested building a two-story facility to allow for future expansion.
- Emphasized the need for exercise spaces, breakout rooms for educational programs, and partnerships with the Community College.

4. Outdoor Spaces and Connectivity:

- Discussed the potential for an outdoor amphitheater with Frisbee golf, trails, and rolling hills near the depot.
- Highlighted the need for more trails, greenways, and connectivity to improve access to parks.

5. Funding and Staffing Concerns:

- Addressed concerns about funding and staffing for new facilities.
- Emphasized the importance of a detailed plan with staffing recommendations and cost estimates.
- Discussed the need to align with county recreation plans to avoid duplication of services.

6. Community Engagement and Implementation:

- Stressed the importance of visible progress to show the community that their needs are being addressed.
- Highlighted the need for an action implementation plan to outline steps and leadership responsibilities.
- Encouraged ongoing community input and collaboration.

Conclusion:

- The meeting emphasized the importance of comprehensive planning for recreation facilities, considering maintenance, staffing, safety, technology, and emergency preparedness. The focus group provided valuable insights to guide the development of a well-rounded recreation plan for Winterville.

Summary of Winterville Recreation Focus Group Meeting - October 8, 2024

Participants:

- Town of Winterville staff, including representatives from Parks and Recreation and McGill Associates.

Key Points Discussed:

1. Introduction and Roles:

- Participants introduced themselves and their roles.
- McGill Associates is assisting with the comprehensive recreation plan.

2. Recreation Experiences and Needs:

- Emphasis on the importance of recreation for quality of life.
- Discussion on barriers to access and potential improvements for parks and programming.
- Highlighted the need for more indoor programming, trails, open spaces, and seasonal events.

3. Facility Maintenance and Staffing:

- Importance of maintaining facilities and the associated costs.
- Need for practical recommendations, including staffing and cost estimates.
- Discussion on balancing expanded facilities with adequate staffing.

4. Parking and Accessibility:

- Identified Hillcrest Park as a top priority for additional parking.
- Discussed the challenges of parking during events and the need for better design to accommodate overflow.

5. Future Vision and Projects:

- Critical need for an indoor facility to support indoor programs.
- Desire to see the Greenway project come to fruition for improved walkability and exercise.
- Emphasis on securing quality land for recreational use, especially on the west side of town.

6. Safety and Security:

- Collaboration with the police department for events and public engagement.
- Importance of well-maintained and well-lit parks.
- Use of mobile cameras for monitoring events and the potential for more permanent cameras.

7. Technology and Wi-Fi:

- Need for expanded Wi-Fi coverage in parks for public convenience and security.
- Importance of GIS mapping and technology for visitors to access park information.

8. Emergency Preparedness:

- Potential for the indoor facility to serve as a disaster shelter and emergency operations center.
 - Importance of planning for multiple uses, including storage and distribution points during emergencies.
9. **Community Input and Recommendations:**
- Encouragement for participants to share additional thoughts via email.
 - Plan to include public input, research findings, and recommendations for future recreational facilities and programs.

Conclusion:

- The meeting emphasized the importance of comprehensive planning for recreation facilities, considering maintenance, staffing, safety, technology, and emergency preparedness. The focus group provided valuable insights to guide the development of a well-rounded recreation plan for Winterville.

Winterville Focus Group Meeting with Recreation Providers

Date/Time: October 7, 2024, 2:30 PM

Attendees:

- Representatives from McGill Associates
 - Representatives from Pitt County Parks and Recreation
 - Representatives from the Town of Winterville Parks and Recreation
 - Representatives from Farmville
 - Other representatives from Pitt County and nearby municipalities
-

Introduction

- The meeting was introduced with the purpose of gathering input from recreation providers to enhance the recreation master plan for Winterville.
- Emphasis was placed on utilizing survey data and focus group insights to understand current recreation trends, challenges, and future needs.

Key Discussion Points

Current Recreation Landscape

- **Winterville:** Strong history in baseball and football. Recent expansions include the Winterville Recreation Park and the addition of a traffic garden at Hillcrest Park.
- **Challenges:** Limited space for practice and games, especially for football and soccer. Issues with parking and lighting at Hillcrest Park.
- **Programs:** High demand for baseball and tackle football. Waiting lists for teams due to space constraints.

Collaboration and Communication

- **Inter-Municipal Cooperation:** Emphasis on the importance of communication between different recreation departments to avoid duplication of services and to share resources.
- **Existing App:** Pitt County has an app developed by high school students that provides information on parks, amenities, and programs. The app is updated twice a year and is available for mobile users.

Future Needs and Recommendations

- **Facility Expansion:** Need for more indoor and outdoor spaces to accommodate growing programs and new activities.
- **Open Play and Unstructured Activities:** Discussion on the importance of providing open play opportunities for children and teens to engage in sports and activities without the pressure of formal competition.
- **Special Events:** Highlighted the role of festivals and special events in bringing the community together and attracting visitors from outside the immediate area.
- **Recreation Council:** Proposal to establish a recreation council to meet regularly and discuss ongoing and future recreation needs and initiatives.

Action Items

- **Data Sharing:** Enhance the existing app to include more detailed program information and ensure it is widely promoted.
- **Regular Meetings:** Schedule bi-annual meetings for recreation providers to discuss updates and collaborate on initiatives.
- **Facility Improvements:** Focus on expanding facilities and improving existing ones to meet the growing demand for recreation services.

Conclusion

- The meeting concluded with thanks to all participants and encouragement to send any additional input via email.

Winterville Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan - Schools Focus Group – October 16, 2024

A focus group meeting was conducted to discuss how the schools and the recreation department could collaborate to improve recreational facilities and programs in Winterville.

Key Points Discussed:

1. Affordability and Housing:

The high cost of living in Winterville was noted, with participants mentioning that some people choose to live in more affordable areas like Washington and commute.

2. Sidewalks and Infrastructure:

The need for more sidewalks, especially to connect older areas with new developments and parks, was highlighted. Investing in sidewalk infrastructure was deemed essential for accessibility and safety.

3. Community and Collaboration:

The importance of maintaining strong relationships between the town, the schools, and the community was emphasized. Continued collaboration is necessary for successful recreation planning and implementation.

4. Access and Connectivity:

Providing safe routes for children to walk or bike to neighborhood parks was considered crucial. Ensuring connectivity between new and older areas through sidewalks is a priority.

5. Personal Interests and Stories:

Informal discussions revealed shared personal interests, particularly in vehicle restoration and collection, adding a personal touch to the meeting. Stories about restoring old vehicles and family involvement in the process were shared.

6. Continued Engagement:

The meeting encouraged participants to remain engaged and share any additional thoughts or ideas after the meeting. Ongoing communication is vital for collecting data and improving recreational facilities and programs.

Action Items:

Advocate for more sidewalks and improved connectivity between new developments and parks.

Maintain and strengthen relationships between the town, schools, and community members.

Encourage ongoing community engagement and feedback for continuous improvement.

Address affordability issues to ensure that more people can live and work in Winterville.

The meeting highlighted the importance of collaboration and communication in enhancing recreational opportunities and infrastructure in Winterville. Continued efforts are needed to address accessibility, affordability, and community needs.

Winterville Recreation Providers Focus Group - October 7, 2024

Meeting Participants:

- Representatives from Winterville, Pitt County, and Farmville Parks and Recreation Departments
- Representatives from McGill Associates

Key Points Discussed:

1. Overview of Recreation in Winterville:

- Winterville has a strong recreation community with a history of parks even before establishing a parks department.
- Baseball and softball are particularly popular in the community.
- The town has secured grants, such as the PARTF grant in 2018 and another for the traffic garden at Hillcrest Park.

2. Sports Programs and Facilities:

- Tackle football remains popular with several teams for ages 8-12.
- Baseball, including Cal Ripken and Little League, is significant. The local team won the Southeast Regionals.
- Limited space leads to shared use of fields for multiple sports, such as using baseball outfields for football practices.
- Hillcrest Park lacks lighting, limiting practice times, and parking is also an issue.
- The AG Cox softball field is utilized for youth football.

3. Challenges and Needs:

- There's a wish list for more football and baseball fields, improved concession facilities, additional part-time staff, better parking, and enhanced lighting.
- Field space is critical as the number of teams grows, particularly for weekend activities when picnic shelters are booked.
- Indoor space is needed to offer programs and activities currently directed to nearby areas like Pitt, Ayden, and Farmville.

4. Senior and Youth Programs:

- There's a focus on senior wellness, including county-wide Senior Games and wellness classes.
- Recreational activities include flag football, movie nights, and partnerships with schools for facility use.
- The need for open and secure spaces for teens was emphasized, with examples from the Boys & Girls Club and Farmville's open gym time.

5. Future Directions:

- Suggestions included Egaming at community centers and expanding activities for younger children, teens, and seniors.
- Creating more spaces that foster socializing and community building, like playgrounds for moms' groups and new downtown coffee shops.

6. Collaborative Opportunities:

- Opportunities for collaboration across Pitt County, including sharing resources and organizing special events.
- The need for a centralized clearinghouse for recreational activities in Pitt County was suggested, potentially using an existing app developed by local students.

- Emphasis on special events that bring communities together, such as festivals and holiday events.

7. Technological and Innovative Programs:

- Proposals for maker spaces with computers, sewing machines, 3D printers, and robotics.
- Potential for collaboration with ECU students on technology-focused programs.

8. Retaining Young Professionals:

- The discussion included ways to retain young professionals (ages 21-35) in Pitt County by providing attractive recreational opportunities and amenities.

Action Items:

- Address the need for additional sports fields, improved lighting, and parking.
- Develop indoor recreational facilities to accommodate various programs.
- Expand senior and youth wellness programs.
- Foster collaborations across the county for better resource sharing and event organization.
- Explore innovative programming, including maker spaces and e-gaming.
- Enhance the app for recreational activities to serve as a centralized resource.
- Create strategies to retain young professionals through targeted recreational offerings.

The meeting emphasized the importance of planning and collaboration to meet the growing recreational needs of Winterville and the broader Pitt County area.

Summary of Winterville Recreation Staff Focus Group Meeting - October 9, 2024

Participants:

- Town of Winterville staff, including representatives from Parks and Recreation, Police Department, and McGill Associates.

Key Points Discussed:

1. Introduction and Roles:

- Participants introduced themselves and their roles.
- McGill Associates is assisting with the recreation plan.

2. Recreation Experiences and Needs:

- Emphasis on the importance of recreation for quality of life.
- Discussion on barriers to access and potential improvements for parks and programming.
- Highlighted the need for more indoor programming, trails, open spaces, and seasonal events.

3. Facility Maintenance and Staffing:

- Importance of maintaining facilities and the associated costs.
- Need for practical recommendations, including staffing and cost estimates.
- Discussion on balancing expanded facilities with adequate staffing.

4. Parking and Accessibility:

- Identified Hillcrest Park as a top priority for additional parking.
- Discussed the challenges of parking during events and the need for better design to accommodate overflow.

5. Future Vision and Projects:

- Critical need for an indoor facility to support indoor programs.
- Desire to see the Greenway project come to fruition for improved walkability and exercise.
- Emphasis on securing quality land for recreational use, especially on the west side of town.

6. Safety and Security:

- Collaboration with the police department for events and public engagement.
- Importance of well-maintained and well-lit parks.
- Use of mobile cameras for monitoring events and the potential for more permanent cameras.

7. Technology and Wi-Fi:

- Need for expanded Wi-Fi coverage in parks for public convenience and security.
- Importance of GIS mapping and technology for visitors to access park information.

8. Emergency Preparedness:

- Potential for the indoor facility to serve as a disaster shelter and emergency operations center.
 - Importance of planning for multiple uses, including storage and distribution points during emergencies.
9. **Community Input and Recommendations:**
- Encouragement for participants to share additional thoughts via email.
 - Plan to include public input, research findings, and recommendations for future recreational facilities and programs.

Conclusion:

- The meeting emphasized the importance of comprehensive planning for recreation facilities, considering maintenance, staffing, safety, technology, and emergency preparedness. The focus group provided valuable insights to guide the development of a well-rounded recreation plan for Winterville.

Winterville Focus Group

Elected Officials

October 8, 2024 1-2 pm , 3-4pm

Needs:

Connectivity to parks and people

Indoor Facility

- Gym for several sports activities

- Programs for others than youth are needed

- Activity Rooms

- Large meeting space rooms

- Walking track for inclement weather use

- Computer room

Need for park west of NC Hwy 11

Need for lighting of sports fields

Pickleball Courts (both outdoor and indoor)

Amphitheater

Disc Golf

More staff so more programs now

When construct the indoor facility, will require additional staff

Connectivity – currently a barrier to recreation opportunities

Night use at new indoor facility – classes and programs

More senior programs

Wellness and health programs – commercial kitchen for those at indoor facility

Pocket parks in areas of town with no parks is needed

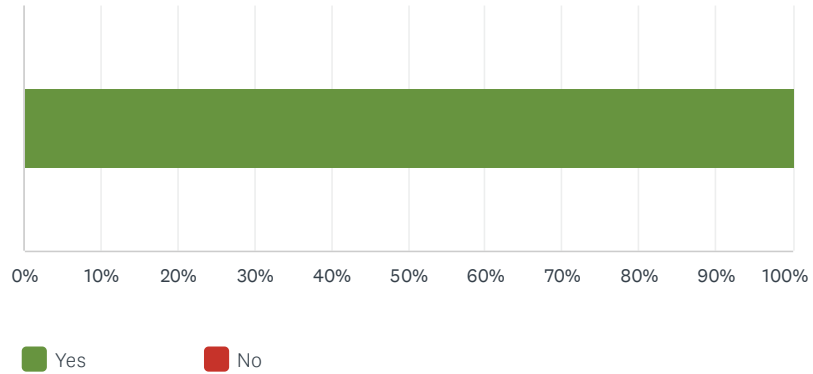
Walking trails for citizens for exercise

Bicycle paths

Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q1 Are you a resident of Pitt County?

Answered: 205 Skipped: 5

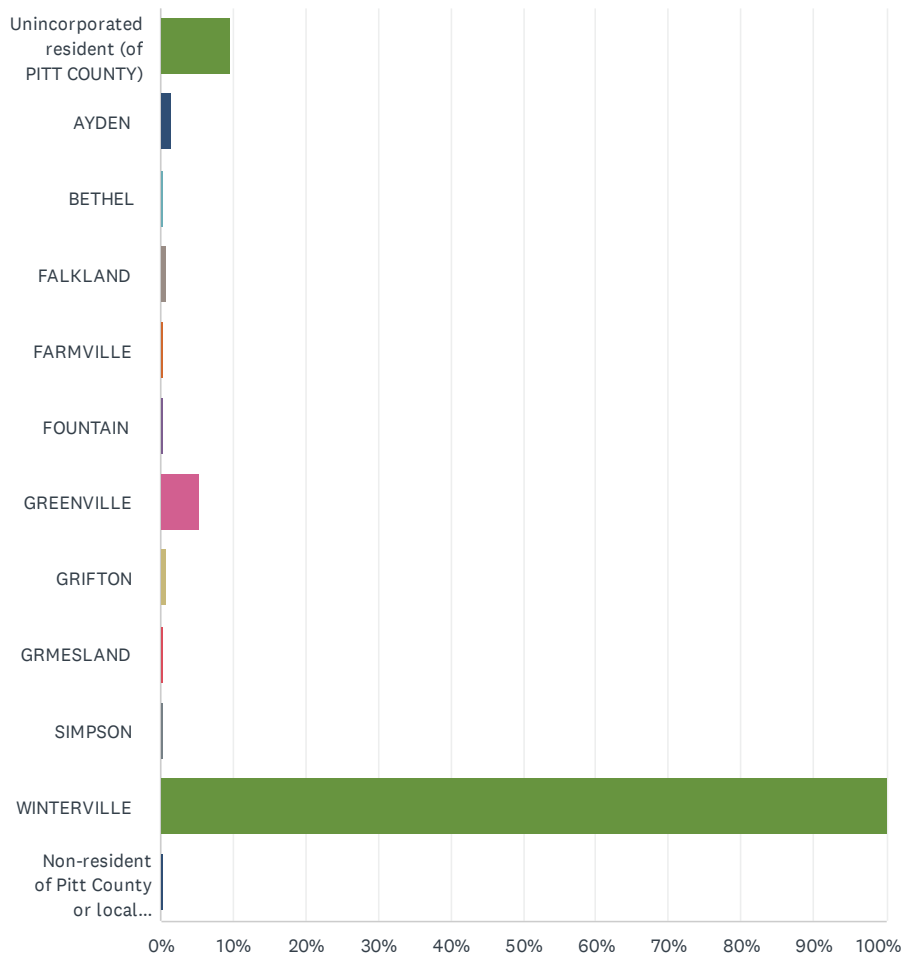


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	205
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		205

Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q2 Referring to the image above, in which general area (municipal limits or unincorporated area of Pitt County) do you live?

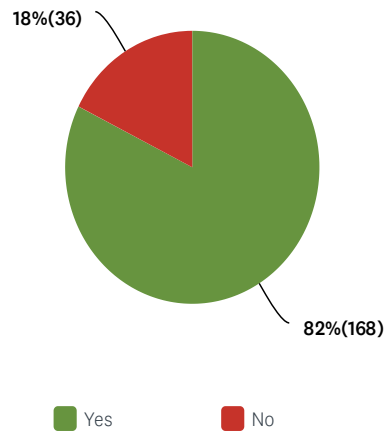
Answered: 210 Skipped: 0



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q3 Would you be willing to pay a nominal fee to attend an event or use a special facility?

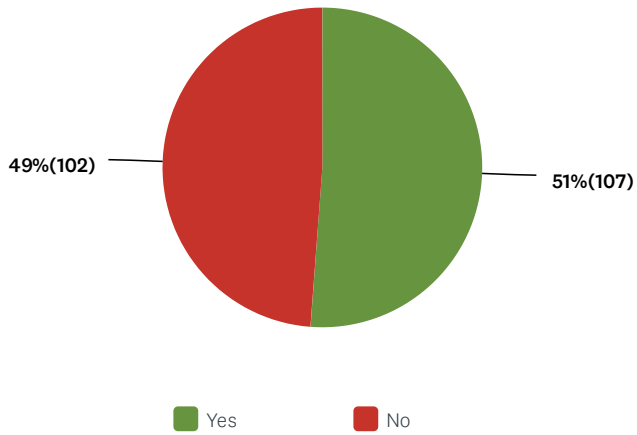
Answered: 204 Skipped: 6



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q4 Do you live within one-half mile of a public park or recreational facility?

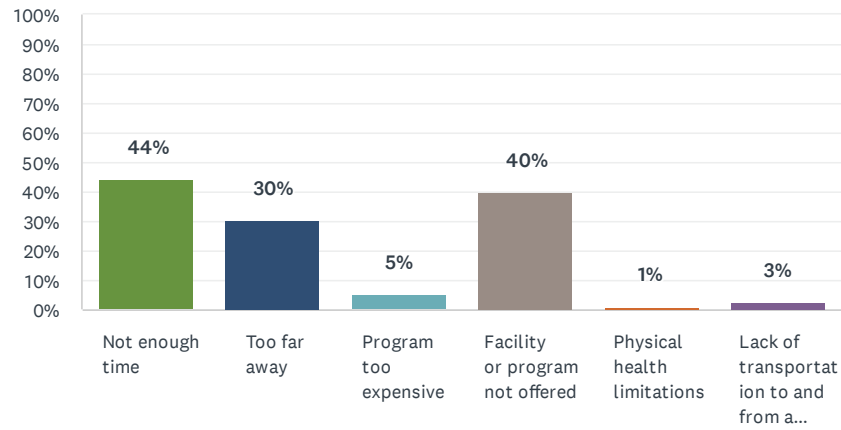
Answered: 209 Skipped: 1



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q5 What is the greatest household barrier to more regular use of a park or recreational facility?

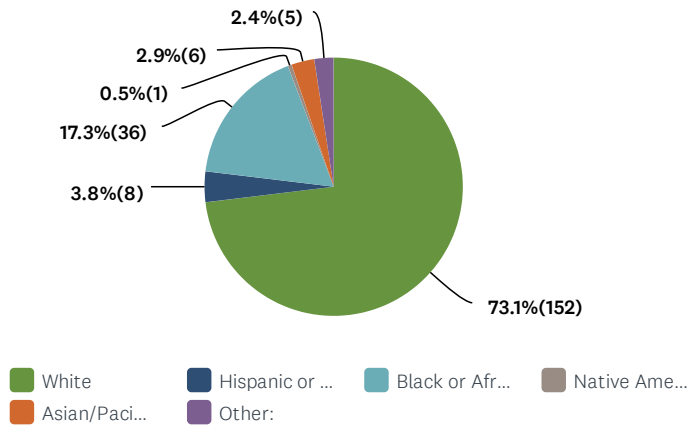
Answered: 175 Skipped: 35



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q6 Ethnicity origin (or Race): Please specify your ethnicity

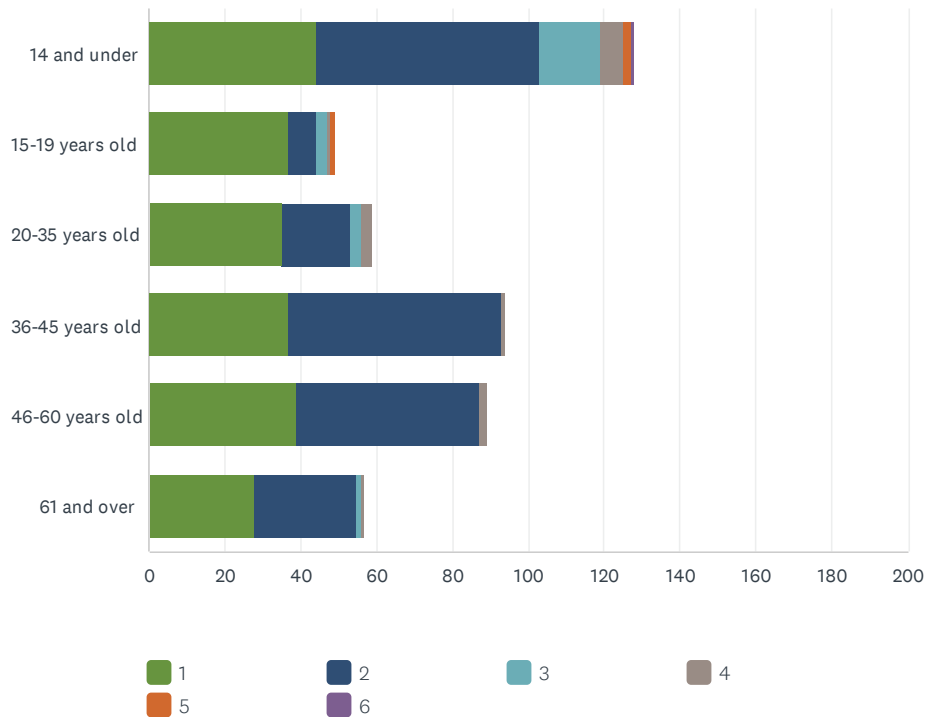
Answered: 208 Skipped: 2



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q7 Select the number of persons in your household including yourself who are in the age brackets below:

Answered: 210 Skipped: 0

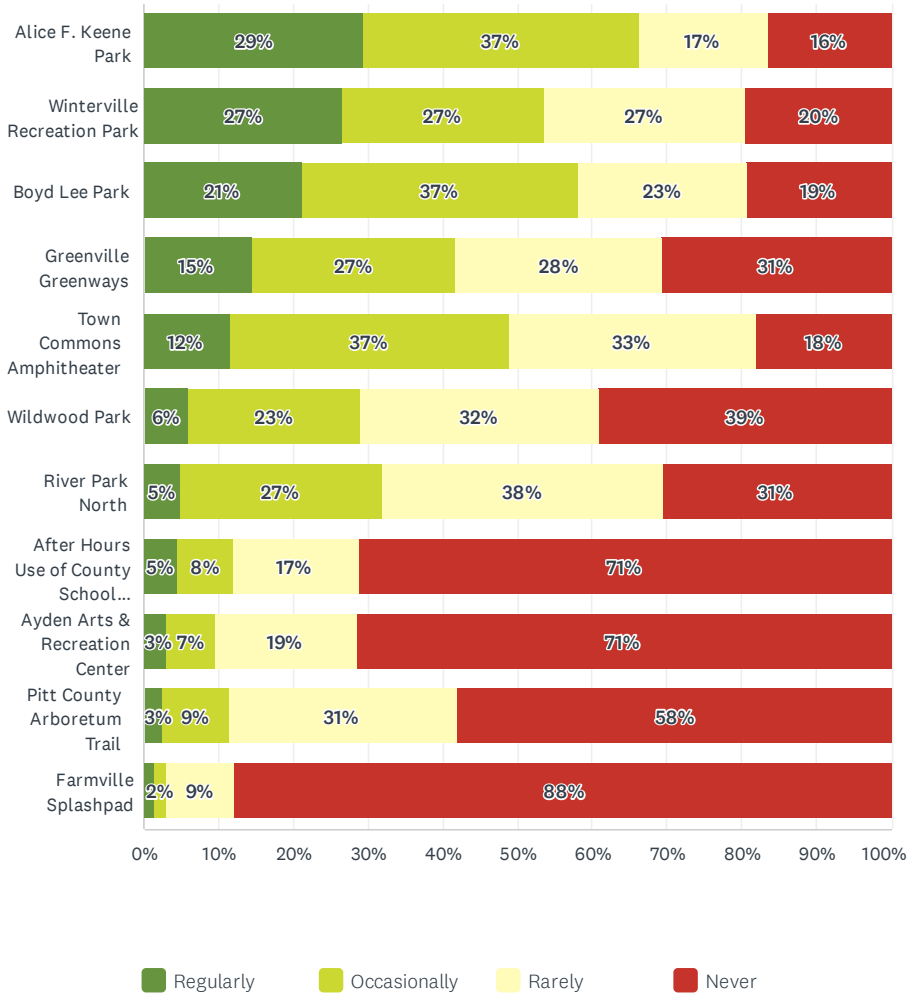


	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
14 and under	34.92% 44	46.83% 59	12.70% 16	4.76% 6	1.59% 2	0.79% 1	126
15-19 years old	75.51% 37	14.29% 7	6.12% 3	2.04% 1	2.04% 1	0.00% 0	49
20-35 years old	60.34% 35	31.03% 18	5.17% 3	5.17% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	58
36-45 years old	39.36% 37	59.57% 56	0.00% 0	1.06% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	94
46-60 years old	46.99% 39	57.83% 48	0.00% 0	2.41% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	83
61 and over	50.00% 28	48.21% 27	1.79% 1	1.79% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	56

Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q8 Check below how frequently you or others in your household have visited the following facilities in the past year.

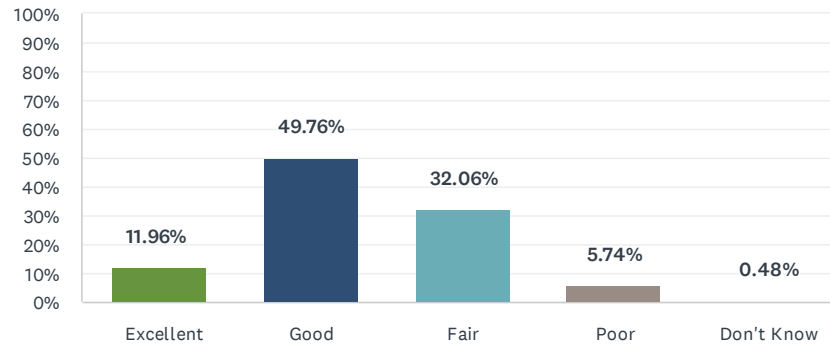
Answered: 210 Skipped: 0



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q9 Overall, how would you rate the existing recreational facilities in Pitt County?

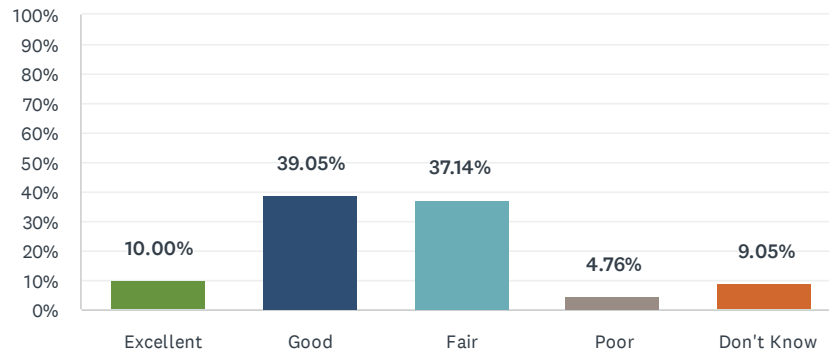
Answered: 209 Skipped: 1



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q10 Overall, how would you rate the recreational programs offered by Pitt County

Answered: 210 Skipped: 0



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

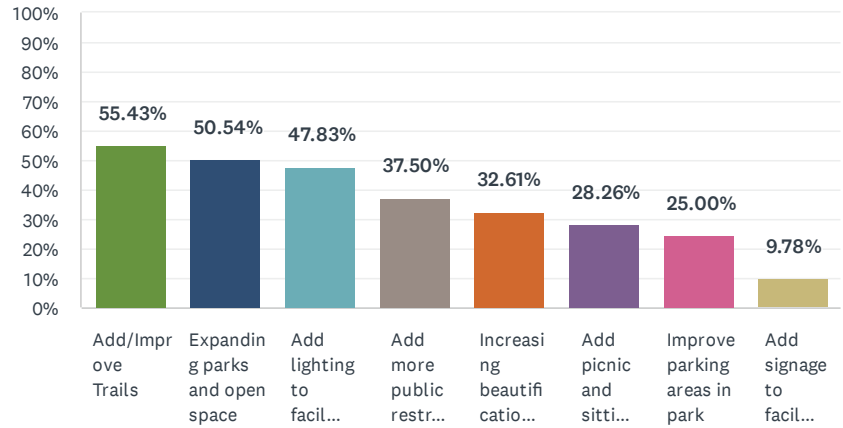
Q11 In which of the following County recreation programs and special events (where applicable) do you or others in your household participate on a regular basis? Please list in the space provided.

Answered: 98 Skipped: 112

Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q12 Check below improvements that could be made to EXISTING parks and list facilities

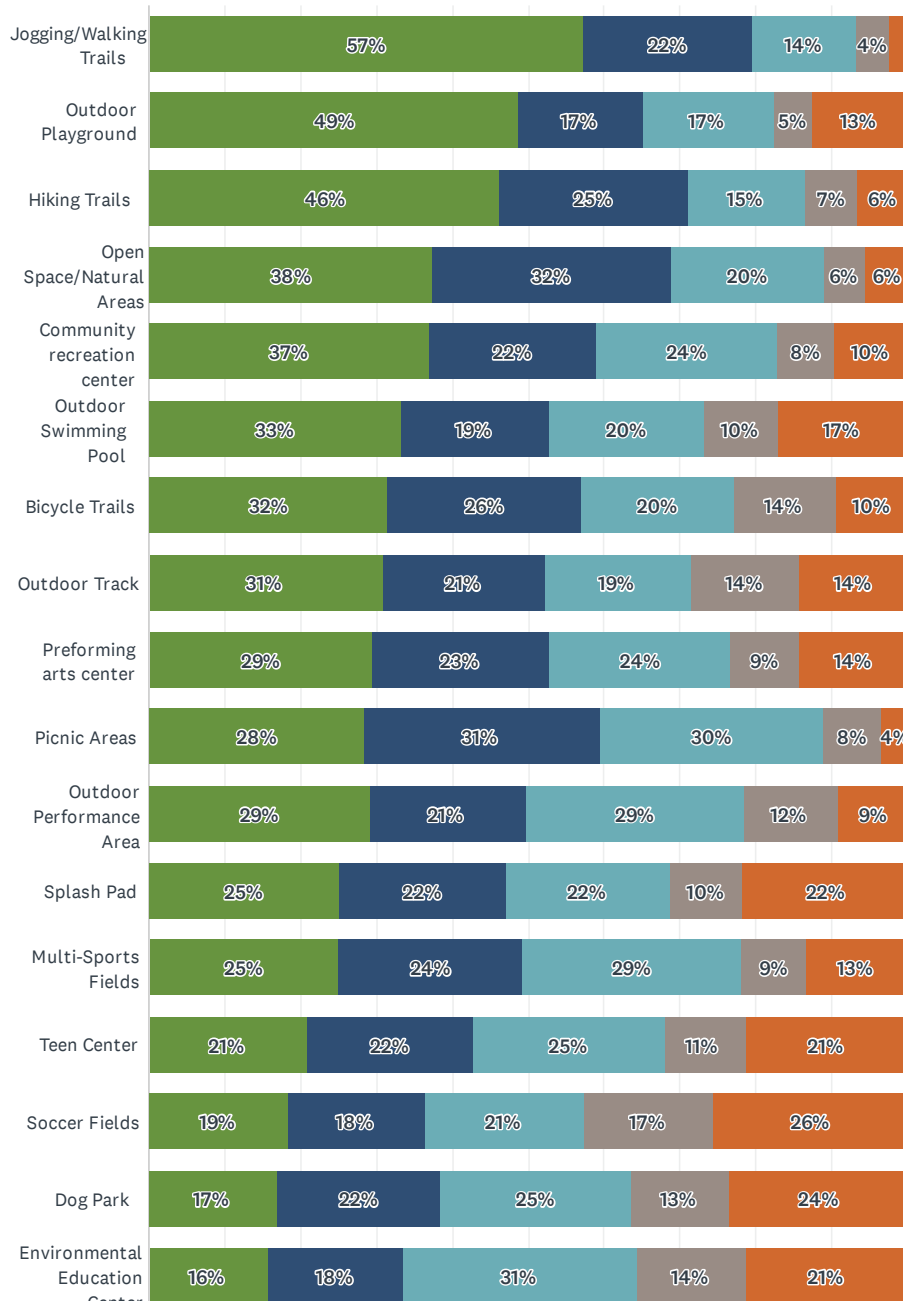
Answered: 184 Skipped: 26



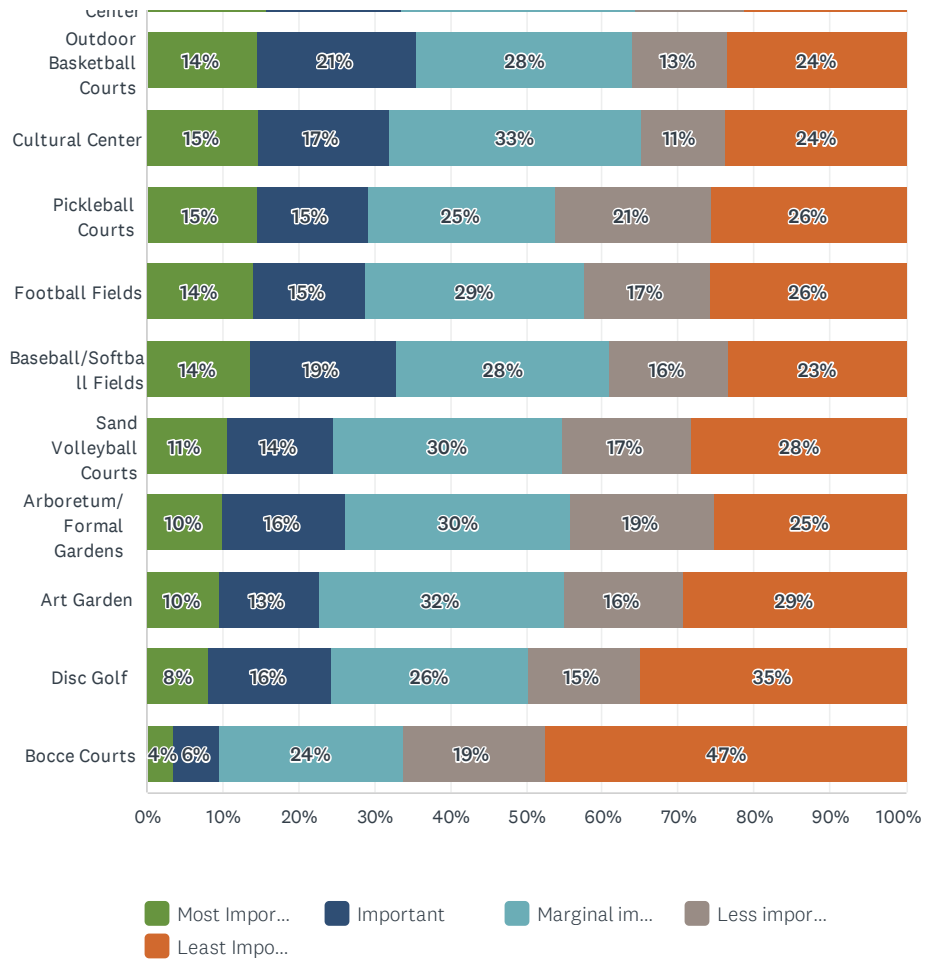
Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q13 The following is a list of recreation activities that you could do at a public park or recreation facility. Rank the importance of each activity with 1 being most important and 5 being least important. Please consider other members of your household.

Answered: 208 Skipped: 2



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

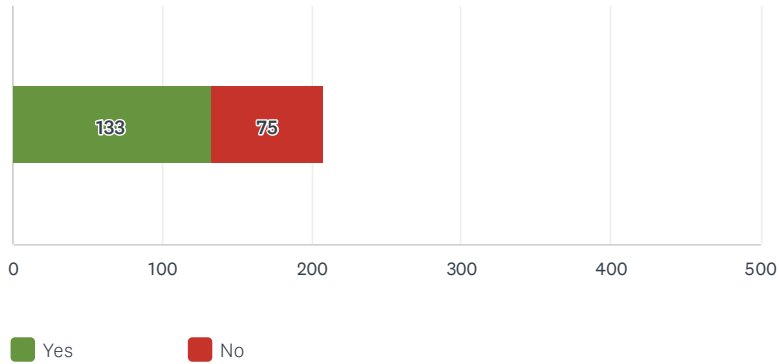
Q14 Please list below, any recreation programs or special events that you would like to see offered within Pitt County:

Answered: 81 Skipped: 129

Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q15 Do you use any school or private facilities (Sawyer's Fun Park, Aquaventure, Sports Connection, etc.) for recreation or leisure activities?

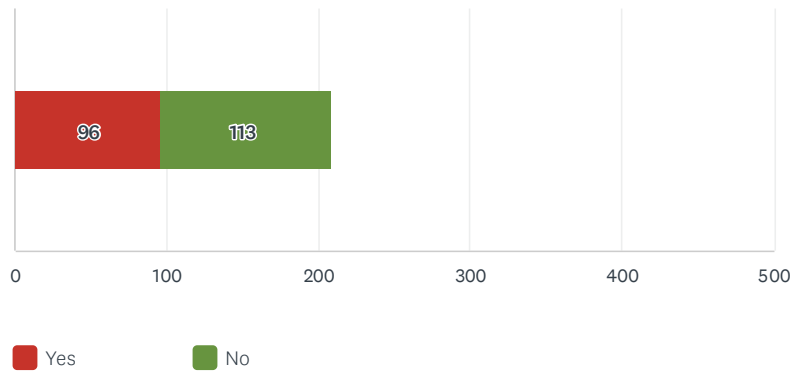
Answered: 207 Skipped: 3



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q16 Within the last year have you traveled out of Pitt County to use a recreation facility or program?

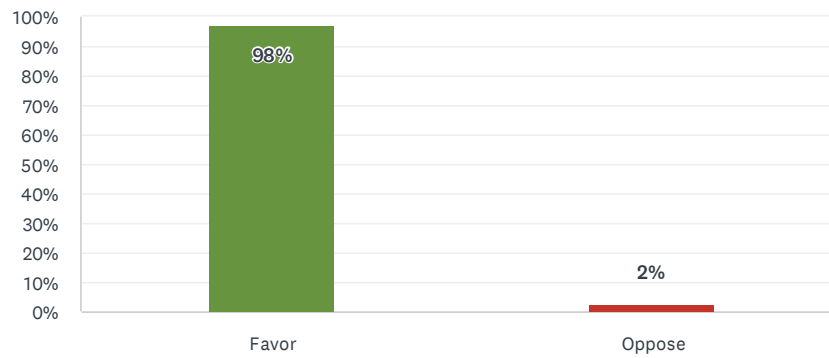
Answered: 208 Skipped: 2



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q17 Would you favor or oppose expanding recreational opportunities in Pitt County?

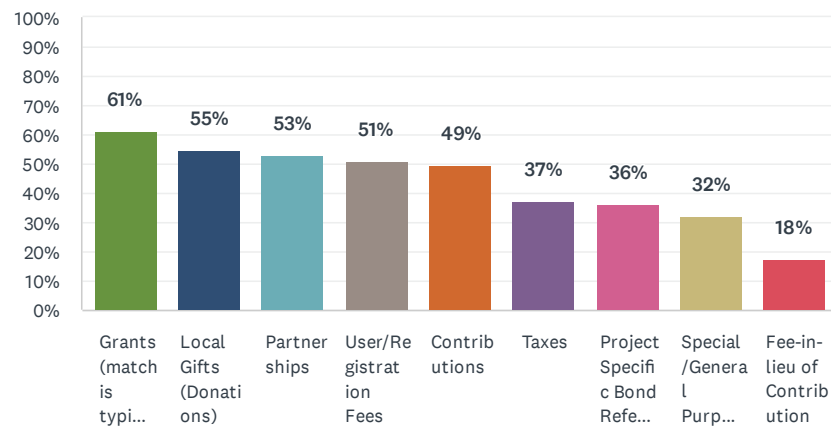
Answered: 208 Skipped: 2



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q18 What, if any, sources of funding are you willing to support in order to make improvements, build new facilities, and create programs? Check all that apply.

Answered: 199 Skipped: 11



Pitt County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey

Q19 Additional Comments:

Answered: 33 Skipped: 177

Winterville Focus Group – Town Department Heads

October 9, 2024 1:30-2:20pm

- Town Manager: Terri Parker, 15 years in role.
- Recreation: Focus on quality of life

Future Plans:

- More connectivity, indoor recreation programs, open spaces.
- Special events: Increased frequency.
- Centralized facilities for ease of maintenance
- Construct parks on Highway 11's west side.
- More staff to allow for more programs and more maintenance with growth of additional parks and facilities

Safety and Security:

- Mobile cameras: Used at parks and events has built in Wi-Fi
- Security cameras: Future installations planned.
- Increased lighting on sports fields: Impacts on policing and budget considerations
- Collaboration: Police and event management, mobile security.

Hillcrest Park:

- Increased usage and need for more fields.
- Vandalism: More people needed to use the park to help curb issues.
- Parking issues: Need to acquire adjacent land to allow for more development and more parking

New Indoor Facility

- Potential new 20,000 sq ft building.
- Will require additional staff and maintenance

Community Connectivity:

- Major greenway project: Enhance walkability and connectivity.
- Indoor programs and greenway integration.
- Update on greenway master plan: Originally done 5-6 years ago.

Land and Development:

- No pools desired.
- Mini parks: Mixed opinions, focus on west side.
- Land fees: Now fee only due to poor quality past donations.
- New developments: Small parks, service analysis, gap identification.
- Land acquisition: Small parks with expansion potential.
- Gaps in service areas
- Want the town to be bikeable/walkable to town parks
-

Technology and Facilities:

- Security cameras with built-in Wi-Fi.
- Expanded town Wi-Fi: Part of recommendations.
- Indoor facility: Multi-purpose use including a disaster shelter with generators, and commercial kitchen

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