

2016

Comprehensive



Parks & Recreation

Master Plan

Town of Winterville

NORTH CAROLINA





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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 History



The Town of Winterville is a full-service municipality - located centrally in the eastern portion of North Carolina in Pitt County (coastal plain region of the state) and is bordered by Wilson and Greene Counties to the west, Beaufort County to the east, Edgecombe and Martin Counties to the north, and Lenoir and Craven Counties to the south. Chartered in 1897, Winterville has grown to be one of the most attractive suburbs in the country. Located immediately south of Greenville (NC), the town is part of the Greenville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which has a population of nearly 200,000 people. Winterville is regularly acknowledged as a small town with big city amenities – a place where people can earn a good living without the problems of big-city life.

In 1880, newlywed Amos Graves (A.G) Cox built a home and opened a store on (what is now) the road to Renston. A successful cotton farmer, Mr. Cox eventually began manufacturing/selling his father's invention – the cotton planter – and shipped hundreds of them by steamboat to the cotton farms in the Deep South. In 1887, Mr. Cox purchased more property, and, three (3) years later, contracted to sell (wood) fuel to the Atlantic Coastline Railroad. This “fuel stop” became an agent-operated depot station named Woodrack.

Mr. Cox moved his company closer to the railroad in 1894. By this time, he was manufacturing carts, wagons, fertilizer distributors, school desks, tobacco trucks, washboards, and coffins. – many of which he, himself, had patented. The community had a post office. In 1897, the Town of Winterville was incorporated. The following timeline depicts the times, places, facts, and/or events that led to the further growth of settlers and prosperity:

***In the late 1800's,
A. G. Cox patented
the following
items:***

- ***Cotton Seed Planter***
- ***Fertilizer Distributer***
- ***Plow Harness***
- ***Tobacco Truck***
- ***Combined School Desk and Seat***

- The Town of Winterville is located at the “highest point” in the County and boasts of its excellent mineral water having several medicinal qualities.
- 1899: Mr. Cox befriended the new town physician (Thaddeus Cox) and together they worked to make Winterville a good, healthy place to live. The Town Charter prohibited the manufacture or sale of liquor; Mr. Cox’s land deeds, and the sale of spirits for ninety-nine (99) years.
- 1906: The Bank of Winterville opened with \$5,000 in capital and was one of the few banks to stay open during the Great Depression.
- 1920: The Cox Manufacturing Company sold electricity (for limited periods of time) to Winterville households with the use of a dynamo (electric generator).
- The first town in Pitt County to have electric lights, Winterville spurred the growth of industry by adding a cotton oil company, cigar factory, automobile dealership, buggy company, millinery shop, and a drug store.



Robinson Union School

- Early schools included the two-teacher elementary (Winterville Academy); the Winterville High (Boarding) School; and the Robinson Union School, which was a one-teacher (all grades) school for blacks – integrated in 1963 to become W.H. Robinson Elementary School.
- 1996: Winterville was featured in the April issue of *Money Magazine* as 23rd among 50 of America’s best suburbs.

In photos shown here, A.G. Cox built a home and a store on the road to Renston (known now as the Renston Rural Historic District), which is listed in the National Registry of Historic Places in 2000 and 2004, respectively.



Cox-Ange House



Renston Historic District



Winterville boasts “a slice of the good life”

Today, the Town of Winterville boasts a strong economy with a growing and skilled work force with easy access to major markets. The Town is very business friendly, with an active Chamber of Commerce to assist businesses both large and small. Winterville also has the lowest tax rate in Pitt County. Residents work to make their community a great place to live and a great place to do

business. Some of the major industries include metal fabrication, machine assembly, and financial services. The rural character and small-town identity of Winterville have been preserved through the years, even as nearby urban areas have continued to annex additional adjacent property. Residents of Winterville respect their land; and, their rural personality is reflected in a variety of programs and activities which contribute to the relaxed, family-oriented lifestyle for which the community has become increasingly well known.

The Town of Winterville is part of the Pitt County School District, with W. H. Robinson Elementary and A. G. Cox Middle, being located within the Town, as well as private schools – Greenville Montessori School and Christ Covenant Schools. Pitt Community College is also located in the Town of Winterville.



The total land area of the Town of Winterville is 2.5 square miles (no water). The population of Winterville is 9,269 and (at times) has grown explosively at a rate of approximately 1,000 new residents per year. Since the 1990's much of the residential growth has occurred in subdivisions - Winterville Crossing, Cedar Ridge, Coopers Pointe, Mellon Downs, Manchester, Devonshire Square, Robinson

Heights, Magnolia Ridge, Preston Trails, South Ridge, Laurie Meadows, and others in the surrounding the area.

Regardless of the population estimates used to project the future growth of Winterville, good planning practices will help to maintain and enhance the quality of life enjoyed by today's and tomorrow's residents. An official Parks and Recreation Master Plan will help the Town of Winterville make proper decisions to meet existing recreation needs and provide for the development of programs/facilities for the future.

1.2 BENEFITS OF PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEMS

Public parks offer a much greater value than is typically appreciated by most people. Park facilities support a high quality of life, health, and happiness for both residents and visitors of a community. Parks are important physical assets to the community, often serving as one or more of the following: public gathering places, natural places/environmental conservation areas, venues for the arts, and economic drivers. Public parks improve the quality of life in a community; while both stimulating public/private investment and improving the overall health and well-being of residents. (Please note: Quoted material below has been extracted from the National Recreation and Park Association’s (NRPA) *Synopsis of 2010 Research Papers: The Key Benefits*.)



Social Impact

Parks provide for a place where the community can come together in a safe, neutral space regardless of class, race, and/or gender. Research suggests that access to parks and recreation facilities alleviates feelings of isolation in individuals - especially the elderly.



Physical Impact

Public park facilities play a key role in the physical health of a community. Designated outdoor recreation space encourages physical activity and provides for greater contact with the natural environment. Multiple studies suggest that “people with a greater accessibility to parks, greenways, and trails usually have lower rates of chronic disease and obesity; and typically, will live longer than those that do not.”



Mental Impact

Accessibility and use of public recreation facilities can play an important role in mitigating some modern, mental maladies. “Numerous studies demonstrate that access to green views and environments can improve cognitive functioning, impulse

control, resilience to stressful life events, and overall mental health. Conversely, studies report a link between low nature access with increases in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), clinical depression, stress, and anxiety.”



Developmental Impact

Appropriate recreational programming may lead to improved development of life skills in young people. One study suggests that “Students who participate in at least one hour of extracurricular activities per week are 49% less likely to use drugs and 37% less likely to become a teen parent.”



Environmental Impact

The City Parks Alliance is the only independent, nationwide, membership organization solely dedicated to the renovation and development of urban parks. According to the City Parks Alliance, *“Nearly 80 percent of the American population lives in urban areas. Parks of all sizes play an important role in preserving and supporting healthy environments. A network of parks and open spaces that include protected natural lands, ecological reserves, wetlands, and other green areas is critical to providing healthy habitats for humans, wildlife and plants in these densely built places. Natural landscapes are vital to preserving regional ecosystems amid growing cities.”*



Vegetation in parks (urban or rural) typically includes; trees, shrubs, and groundcovers which help to clean the air of noxious gases, ozone, and pollutants. Tree canopies, vegetated open areas, and other green spaces in parks detain and filter rainwater runoff; thereby, reducing the amount of pollutants (such as oil and minerals) flowing from roads and lawns into surrounding watersheds (which are area of land that drains rain water or snow into one location, such as a stream, lake, or wetland.) These water bodies supply drinking water, supply water for agriculture and

manufacturing, offer opportunities for recreation, and provide habitat to numerous plants and animals. Therefore, it is important to protect the quality of our watershed.

\$ Economic Impact

Again, according to the NRPA, "...parks are one of the most direct ways to put a dent in the approximately \$147 billion direct and indirect costs of the obesity epidemic", which is affecting the economy of the entire nation.

Researchers indicate that parks are one of the most cost-effective ways to lower long-term health care costs, reduce costs associated with removing air pollutants from the air, and generate greater tax revenues from properties located close to public parks. Parks are able to provide employment



opportunities for groups typically marginalized in the traditional workforce - such as young people and the elderly. Parks and open spaces serve to promote economic development by typically enhancing the monetary worth of neighboring properties, which leads to improved tax revenues. Well-organized and funded parks and recreation systems often serve to increase the perceived value of a community to local businesses and their employees.

1.3 PURPOSES AND GOALS

Winterville provides public recreation to its citizens as a means of supporting a higher quality of life. Studies have shown that 'quality of life' issues are very important to residents and visitors; and, lively programs and events can have a major impact on community economic development as well.

The Town recognizes the importance of *planning* in order to improve recreation opportunities for all its residents and visitors. As a result, the Winterville Board of Aldermen approved the creation of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan – to include all existing and future park and recreation facilities and grounds.



Subsequently, the Town sought a consultant to devise a master plan.

The Winterville Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 provides the framework for guiding the Town Council and Staff in both its current evaluation of- and long-range planning for- the parks and recreation system for Winterville. The framework for this Master Plan is based upon conducting a review and inventory of the existing park system and recording the observations. The assessment of these facilities, or lack of facilities, will identify the immediate facility needs in the community and predict the future needs of residents.

Another purpose of the Master Plan is to recommend the addition or renovation of parks, programs, and recreational facilities. Not only does the Master Plan include recommendations, but it also *prioritizes* specific projects, such as recommended park upgrades, expansion, and land acquisition - taking into consideration the identification of user population and the development of recreation standards. This Master Plan is action-oriented and will provide the Town of Winterville with a practical guide for the enhancement of its facilities and programs in the near future and for many years to come.

In preparing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, all project participants worked closely with Town Staff and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 Steering Committee.



A key objective in the development of the Master Plan was the solicitation of community input, thereby identifying additional needs for Winterville, such as renovation, construction, land purchase, development, and/or operational policies, for both now and in the future. Community input, along with the

comparison to state and national standards are the initial steps in the Master Plan process.

State and National Parks and Recreation Standards were used as a guide to support the recommendations made for the parks and recreation facilities for Winterville. Using these standard guidelines, a plan was developed - which applied specifically to the resident and non-resident users of parks and recreational facilities.



The Parks and Recreation Master Plan emphasizes the potential for *connectivity* of proposed projects and existing sites, such as parks, recreational facilities, schools, and other government-owned properties. It is not designed to be exclusive, but rather to enhance recreational opportunities in the community.



**Participation
fosters pride**

The Master Plan is intended to maintain the type of venue in Winterville that fosters community spirit, activism, and bonding between local citizens. The study of the demographic profile of Town residents' population and ages - as related to areas of larger or smaller population - is a key factor in making the most specific and accurate recommendations.

Not only does the Winterville Parks and Recreation Master Plan make recommendations for current and future improvements, but it also suggests the *means* by which the identified objectives might be achieved. Opportunities for grants, partnerships, and outside funding are recommended as aids in the establishment of a

Capital Improvement Plan and an operating budget.

The Master Plan focuses on providing the Town of Winterville with an accurate, usable guide for decision-making as the Town begins to implement projects. Below are a few representative projects addressed in this document.

***For a complete list of projects and descriptions refer to
Section 5 "Goals and Recommendations"***

- Construct an Indoor Recreation Center or a Community Center.
- Update playgrounds to address aging of existing equipment.
- Prioritize greenway projects with neighboring plans and efforts.
- Provide a splash pad type facility centrally located and/or in conjunction with an existing or future park.

The Comprehensive Master Plan is divided into six (6) major component sections, which are listed below:

- Section 1 - Introduction
- Section 2 – Population Trends and Projections
- Section 3 – Existing Park Facilities
- Section 4 – Recreation Needs Assessment
- Section 5 – Goals and Recommendations
- Section 6 – Action Implementation Plan

1.4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Town of Winterville wishes to express its sincere appreciation for those individuals and entities, who, in any way, contributed to the creation of the Parks and 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.

Winterville Parks & Recreation Master Plan 2016 **Steering Committee**

Debbie Avery, Winterville Chamber of Commerce
Valerie Tyson (Cox), Community Non-Profit - IMPACT
Ricky Hines, Recreation Department Volunteer Coach
Tom Manning, Teacher/A.G. Cox Middle School
John Relford, Recreation Department Advisory Board
Mark Smith, Mayor Pro Tem

Winterville Town Council

Doug Jackson, Mayor
Mark Smith, Mayor Pro Tem
Ronald Cooper, Sr.
Tony Moore
Johnny Moye
Veronica Roberson

Recreation Advisory Board

Randy Bowers, President
Johnny Fleming, Vice President
Shonda bullock
Kirby Bryson
Michael Guglielmelli
Michelle Joyner
Brock Letchworth
Kyle Llewellyn
John Relford

Winterville Town Staff

Evan Johnston, Director of Parks and Recreation
Terri Parker, Town Manager
Ben Williams, Assistant Town Manager
Ryan Willhite, Chief of Police

School Administrations and PTA's

A. G. Cox Middle School
W. H. Robinson Elementary School
D. H. Conley High School
South Central High School
Christ Covenant School
Greenville Montessori School
Pitt County Community Schools & Recreation

Athletic Associations

Pitt County Girls Softball League
Baywood Raquet Club

Civic Organizations

Civitan Club
Kiwanis Club
Ruritan Club
Senior Citizens Club
Senior Fellowship
Historical & Arts Society
Youth Council
Friends of Greenville Greenways (FROGGS)



Private Enterprise

Run the East
NuLook Indoor Bounce-N-Party

Religious Affiliates

Area Pastors and Church Members

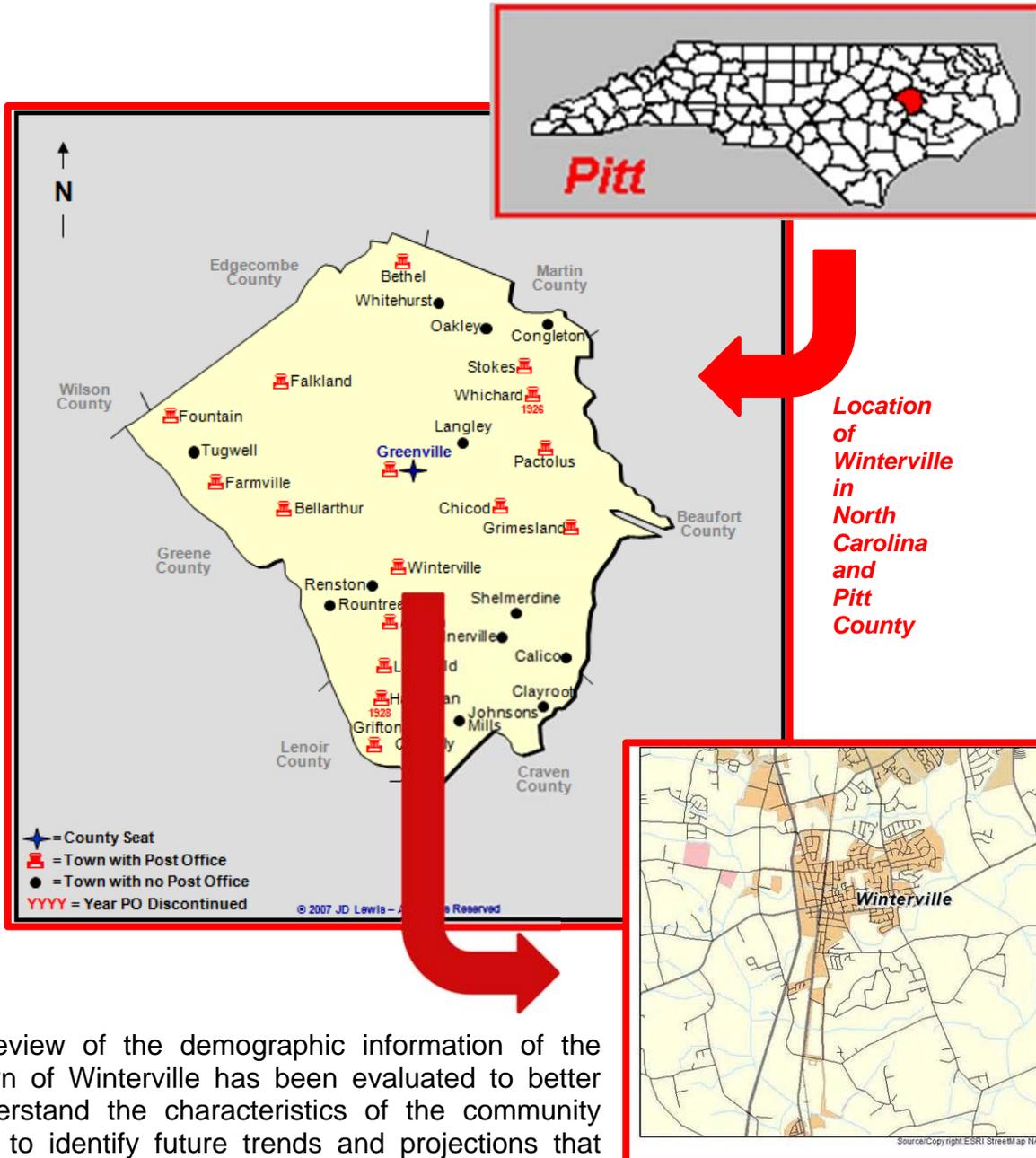
Consultant



- END OF SECTION -

SECTION 2 POPULATION TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE



A review of the demographic information of the Town of Winterville has been evaluated to better understand the characteristics of the community and to identify future trends and projections that may influence recreation and park planning. Information concerning the age and gender of the population is an important factor in determining the needs for recreation in the community. Statistics from the US Census Bureau and Town Staff indicate that there will be a period of stable growth in Winterville over the next few years. The table below contains the general demographic characteristics for full-time residents of Winterville as ascertained by the 2010 Census estimates.

Table 2.2.1 Winterville Demographics

CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT
SEX		
Male	4,470	46.6
Female	5,041	53.4
Total:	9,511	100.0
AGE		
Under 5 years	856	9.3
6 years to 18 years	2,758	29.2
19 years to 64 years	4,661	48.6
65 years and older	1,236	12.9
Total:	9,511	100.0
RACE		
White	5,973	62.8
Black	3,006	31.6
American Indian and Alaskan	28	0.3
Asian	200	2.1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific	< 1	Trace
Some other race	123	1.3
Two or more races	181	1.9
Total:	9511	100.0

Source: NC-WINTERVILLE-2010-census.asp

Demographics Summary

The 2000-2010 population estimates from the US Census Bureau reveal significant characteristics of Winterville's population. Of particular note is that young persons (birth through age 18) combined with the elderly (age 65 and older) comprise more than half of the population of Winterville (51.4%). The largest racial segment of the population identifies as White (62.8%), which is almost two-thirds (2/3) of the population, while about one-third (1/3) of the Town's residents identify as Black (31.6%). The Black

population exceeds that of the state average by more than 10%. Asians occupy 2.1% of the spectrum. Of these populations combined, only a marginal percentage (3.3%) is of Hispanic descent. (It should be noted that "Hispanic" is not a race and as such is not a category in the US Census racial categories.)

Housing and Education

The Town of Winterville is the 91st most populated municipality in the state of North Carolina (out of a total of 737). Although the number of homeowners is approximately 15% higher than that of the state; and that – of these homeowners – both the value of the homes and the per capita incomes are also higher than the North Carolina state average; the poverty level is still 11.2%. In direct proportion to the greater degree of affluence (compared to the state average) appears to be the educational level of



residents. The total number of students graduating from high school and college, as well as the percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher, is well above the state average. Most likely, this presence of "higher education" can be attributed to job opportunities in the greater Greenville area and the education available in such close proximity to these institutes of higher learning listed below. As would be expected, the unemployment rate is significantly below the state average, as well.

Institutes of higher learning (colleges, universities, and community colleges) located within fifty (50) miles of the Town of Winterville are as follows:

- Pitt Community College (Winterville)
- East Carolina University (6 miles)
- Lenoir Community College (23 miles)
- Edgecombe Community College (27 miles)
- Wayne Community College (32 miles)
- Craven Community College (34 miles)
- Nash Community College (42 miles)
- Mount Olive College (44 miles)

2.2 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

According to the 2010 US census the population of Winterville was 9,269 individuals. Based on the 2014 population of 9,511 individuals (US Department of Commerce, 2010 census quick facts - <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37/3775060.html>); there has been a 2.6% growth rate over a four year span or about a .65% growth rate annually. Using this rate of growth rate for future population size estimates can help when planning on meeting a growing demand for recreational services. The population projections for Winterville have been compiled in table 2.2.2 (below).

Table 2.2.2 Winterville Population Projections

Year	Population Estimate
2010	9,269
2016	9,634
2021	9,948
2026	10,271
2031	10,607
2036	10,953

There have been both times of rapid growth and slight decline in Winterville's population since the year 2000; however, the population has been growing at a steady rate with an improved national economy. Winterville population estimates (in five year increments) can be seen in Table 2.2.2 (above).

A population explosion occurred between 2000 and 2010 with a 98.9% increase in the number of Winterville residents during this ten-year period. This was primarily due to Winterville's location with respect to the thriving City of Greenville and the amenities offered by the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in terms of housing, schools, hospitals, churches, employment,



entertainment, etc. This type of suburb/commuter town is often referred to as an exurb (extra urban) or bedroom community.



The population and growth rates of the Town should be re-evaluated in 2025 and adjustments should be made to Plan Recommendations, as necessary.

2.3 POPULATION TRENDS

Youth and Senior Populations

Winterville's population is diverse for a number of different reasons, including an uneven distribution of age groups and uncharacteristic ethnic makeup (at least relative to other North Carolina Towns).



According to North Carolina's State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for 2009-2013 (SCORP) children and senior citizens comprise two (2) of the fastest growing groups in North Carolina, who are in need of more recreation opportunities. As the number of families with children increase in Winterville, special



Youth and seniors are fastest growing population

consideration for programming and facility needs should be re-evaluated on an annual basis. Because households with children also tend to engage more in activities such as camping, hiking, organized sports, skateboarding, motorized sports, etc., facilities (that can accommodate these types of active recreation) should become increasingly popular.

Seniors aged 55 and above, report being more likely to engage in passive activities, such as walking for pleasure, camping, nature study, or fishing. This senior population is expected to have significant impacts throughout society because of income levels, expanding population numbers, and their unique recreation needs.

The increase in senior adults is being fueled, in part, by baby boomers approaching retirement. These boomers will transform what aging means and the meaning of social services for senior adults. Commonly healthier and more active than any previous generation of seniors, these elders will continue seeking active and meaningful outdoor recreation experiences. Part of Winterville's complexity lies in the diversity of its population. Young people and seniors (combined) account for nearly the same portion of the population as the group in between. Recreational offerings for these age groups may need to reflect this uneven distribution of age groups

Obesity/Health

A disturbing trend facing the great majority of Americans is that which concerns the effects of obesity. According to the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC), in 2014 *"...more than a third of (US) adults are obese. Obesity is associated with several health conditions that contribute to the leading causes of death in the United States, including heart disease, stroke, type II diabetes, and some forms of cancer."*



Activity mitigates obesity; related health problems

More disturbing statistics mention that *"Nearly 48% of Non-Hispanic Blacks and almost 43% of Hispanic populations in the United States are obese" (CDC 2014).*

Minority populations have historically had less access to private health and fitness facilities magnifying the impact that public parks and recreation facilities have in supporting more active lifestyles for these residents.



Assuming that various studies indicate that inactivity is a causative factor of obesity; then conversely, "being active" may mitigate obesity and the related health problems associated with being overweight. Supporting this idea was a study that examined data from the National Center for Health Statistics, *"The third and fourth leading causes of preventable deaths in the United States are inactivity and obesity."*

By strengthening the Winterville Parks and Recreation System, the Town will be investing in their residents' health and well-being. *"Physical activity has been associated with a decrease in obesity and chronic disease, as well as improved cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and psychological health."* Koplán, J, Kraak V and Liverman C. (2005). Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance. Washington: National Academies Press.



Healthy community planning is a strategy for incorporating public health into comprehensive planning efforts. This Recreation Master Plan aims to guide future decision making regarding Parks and Recreation. Planning for a healthier Winterville will incorporate many acts of dedication and commitment on the part of Town officials. The impacts of investing

in the public parks and recreation areas within the Winterville Recreation System are important for different reasons; not only because of the benefits to community health, but also for the potential economic impact on local government and the perceived quality of life within Winterville. Everything from the condition of existing recreation facilities, the accessibility of and sense of safety within those facilities, and the types and locations of facilities and programming offered within the Parks and Recreation Department influences the success of the Recreation System.

According to studies on community planning, the *location* of parks also influences how frequently they are used. For this reason, a mapping exercise was used at community meetings for residents to suggest locations of future parks. A major consideration is whether these potential sites have connectivity with areas that are most dense in populations or attract frequent visitors (such as shopping, restaurants, or entertainment areas); and utmost, the type of transportation that would be required to attend.



Parks should be in walking distance for youth, senior citizens

Young people and the elderly who (combined) make up approximately 51.4% of the Winterville population are less likely to have the ability to drive to a park or recreational facility; therefore, pedestrian connectivity to these types of facilities is crucial. For this reason, it is recommended that public park facilities be located within walking distance of all recognized residential areas so as to be useful for the widest possible range of residents.

-END OF SECTION-

3.2 FACILITY INVENTORY

Parks Owned and Operated by the Town of Winterville



Winterville Recreation Park

Winterville Recreation Park is located adjacent to A. G. Cox Middle School on Church Street and (based on the most recent responses from the Master Plan survey) is the most heavily utilized park in the Town. After a park expansion, which was completed in 2010, this park now encompasses 24 acres of land.

The park serves as the home of Winterville Baseball (a Cal Ripken League for ages 7-12 years old) and as a frequent host for local, state, and regional baseball tournaments. T-Ball is offered at 4/5 years of age and 5/6 years as well. Other programs held in the park include flag and tackle football, movies and concerts in the park, adult softball, Easter Egg Hunt, Christmas Parade, and the Winterville Watermelon Festival.

Site Amenities:

- (4) Youth Baseball Fields, (2) of which are multi-purpose fields.
- Adult Softball Field
- (2) Tennis Court(s)
- Amphitheatre
- Walking Trails (0.25 miles)
- Playground
- (2) Concession Stands
- Roofed/Lighted Batting Cages
- Pavilion
- Public Restrooms
- Picnic Tables
- Park Benches
- Water Fountain
- Wooded Area
- Parking



Hillcrest Park



Hillcrest Park is a 6.5-acre community park located off of Kennedy Street approximately two (2) blocks east of W. H. Robinson Elementary School. In addition to the amenities listed below, the park has large areas of open space.

***Hillcrest Park Walking Trail
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony***

Site Amenities:

- (2) Picnic Pavilions
- Playground
- (2) Basketball Courts
- (1) Baseball Field
- Walking Trail (1/3 mile)
- Restroom Facility
- Parking

Water Tower Park

Water Tower Park is located at the corner of Jones and North Streets. The Town of Winterville's elevated water storage tank is adjacent to this small park.

Site Amenities:

- Playground
- Bench



Pitt County-Owned and Operated Facilities

Pitt County Schools



All schools in Pitt County are designated as “Community Schools”. Playgrounds are designated as school parks and many of the Pitt County Schools athletic facilities are utilized through collaboration and partnerships with the community of Winterville. Existing school walking trails are surfaced with fine screening – making them accessible to wheelchairs, strollers, and walkers. Both the school walking trails and the school playgrounds are available to the public for use during non-school hours. All residents are encouraged to use the facilities for fun, physical activity, and family outings. All formal use of facilities by residents must be requested by completing a standard Community Schools and Recreation Use of Facility Form. The total length (in miles) of the public walking trails located at the schools below are shown, as follows:

*Wintergreen
Primary and
Intermediate*



**Schools offer
0.5 miles of
walking trail
to the public**

Pitt County High Schools



- Ayden-Grifton (2.5 mi. trails)
- D. H. Conley
- Farmville Central
- J. H. Rose
- North Pitt
- South Central
- Early College High School

Pitt County Middle Schools

- A. G. Cox
- Ayden
- C. M. Eppes
- E. B. Aycock
- Farmville
- Hope (.5 mi. trails)
- Wellcome (.25 mi. trails)



Pitt County K-8 Schools

- Bethel (.20 mi. trails)
- Chicod
- G. R. Whitfield
- Grifton
- Pactolus (.25 mi. trails)
- Stokes (.25 mi. trails)

Pitt County Elementary Schools

- Ayden (.25 mi. trails)
- Belvoir (.25 mi. trails)
- Creekside (.25 mi. trails)
- Eastern (.25 mi. trails)
- Elmhurst (.33 mi. trails)
- Falkland (.25 mi. trails)
- HB.Sugg /Sam Bundy (.17 mi. trails)
- Lake Forest (.5 mi. trails)
- Northwest (.25 mi. trails)
- Ridgewood
- South Greenville
- W. H. Robinson Elementary
- Wahl-Coates (.25 mi. trails)
- Wintergreen Primary / Wintergreen Intermediate (.5 mi. trails)



Sara A. Law Memorial Softball Complex

The Sara A. Law Memorial Softball Complex was dedicated on May 16, 1998, in memory of one of its 1994 State Champions All-Star team members, who died in the spring of 1995. The Complex became a long-awaited reality for a host of

folks, including the Pitt County Girls Softball League, Inc. (PCGSL) players, parents, and other volunteers who worked diligently at the Complex to help make it ready for recreational and competitive play. Although owned by Pitt County, the Complex is located in Winterville at 4801 Reedy Branch Road.

With this complex, Pitt County softball changed forever, and girls from 8-18 years of age from across Pitt County and beyond come to play competitive fastpitch softball. A mere passive summer recreation activity became a passionate sport for many youth.



Site Amenities:

- Three (3) field practice facility
- Four (4) field competition softball complex
- Concessions
- Restroom Facilities
- Storage/Maintenance Facilities
- Parking
- The Zone (indoor batting cages, basketball court, cantina, meeting space, pro shop, etc.)

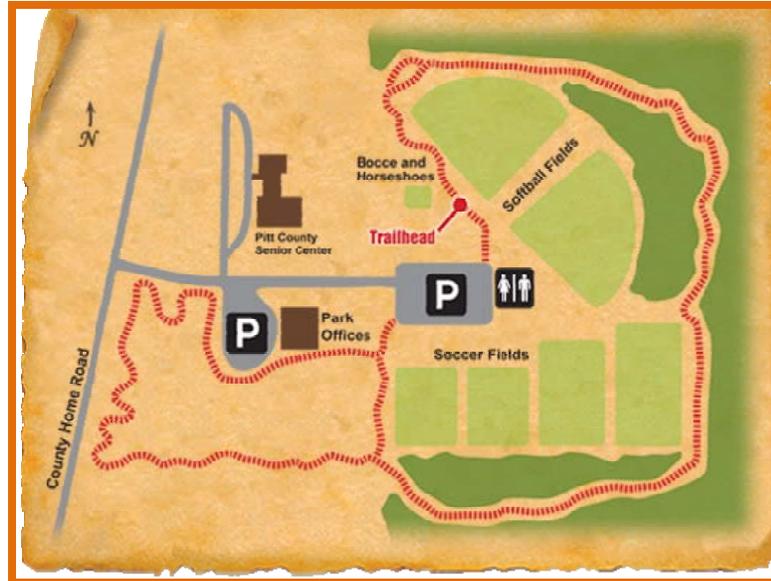
Alice F. Keene District Park (Pitt County Facility)

Site Amenities:



- Restrooms
- Lighting
- Recreation Center
- Playground
- Baseball/Softball Field
- Soccer Field
- Paved Walking Trail (1.2 mi.)

The Alice F. Keene Park TRACK Trail (see diagram on the right) is a fully-accessible 1.2 mile loop meandering through open fields and mixed pine forest. The trail connects with the community garden and trails to the Village and Farm Museum, the Wintergreen Primary School and the Intermediate School, and the Farmers' Market.



Northside Walking Trails

Site Amenities:

- Natural Trail (0.2 mi.)
- Natural Trail (1.2 mi.)
- Natural Trail (2.0 mi.)



Pitt County Arboretum Trail



Fire Hydrant Garden at Arboretum

Site Amenities:

- Multiple Surface Trail (0.25 mi.)

Other Municipality-Owned and Operated Facilities



Town of Ayden

Ayden Arts & Recreation Center



Site Amenities:

- Recreation Dept. Offices
- Art & Pottery Classrooms
- Stuart Tripp Gymnasium
- Doug Mitchell Auditorium
- Softball/Football Fields
- Skateboarding

Douglas Mitchell Memorial Auditorium

Ayden District Park



Park
is 52
acres

Site Amenities:

- Football/Soccer Field
- Splash Pad
- Playground
- Tot Lot
- Volleyball Sand Court
- Greenway Connection
- Bocce Ball/Shuffleboard Courts
- Walking Trails
- Concession Stand/Restrooms
- Picnic Shelter



J. J. Brown Park

Site Amenities:

- Picnic Shelter
- Playground



Veterans Memorial Park



Site Amenities:

- Picnic Shelter
- Playground
- Tennis Courts



Town of Bethel

Field of Dreams

Site Amenities:

- Lighting
- Picnic Shelter
- Baseball/Softball Field
- Basketball Court
- Volleyball Court
- Paved Walking Trail (0.5 miles)





City of Greenville

Located immediately north of the Town of Winterville, the City of Greenville offers a large variety of recreational opportunities. According to the survey results of the Parks and Recreation Plan 2016, Winterville residents use the facilities quite frequently. Some of those facilities include the following:

- Andrew A. Best Freedom Park
- City of Greenville Off-Leash Dog Park
- Elm Street Park
- Evans Park
- Greenfield Terrace Park
- Greensprings Park
- Green Mill Run Greenway
- Guy Smith Park
- H. Boyd Lee Park
- Hillsdale Park
- Jaycee Park/Extreme Park
- Paramore Park
- Perkins Baseball Complex
- Peppermint Park
- River Park North
- South Greenville Park
- South Tar River Greenway
- Thomas Foreman Park
- Town Common
- Westhaven Park
- Woodlawn Park
- Matthew Lewis Park at West Meadowbrook



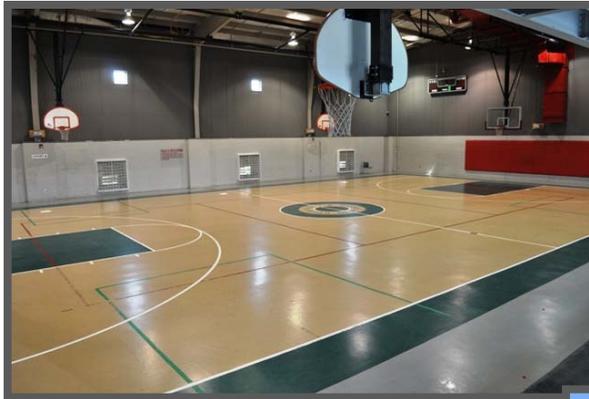
Greenville Jaycee Extreme Park

H. Boyd Lee Park



One of Greenville's newest facilities, the 92-acre H. Boyd Lee Park offers both indoor and outdoor recreational activities. At the center of the park is an approximate 16,500 square foot gymnasium/recreation center that offers a full gymnasium and two (2) meeting rooms. This facility also provides offices for Greenville Recreation and Parks Department athletics staff. The park includes a

tournament level softball complex and three (3) lighted fields, a 626 square foot scorer's tower with concession stand, and 660 square feet of outdoor restrooms. Other outdoor recreation facilities include a playground, picnic shelter, walking trails, exercise station, and the City's only cricket pitch. The park has been designed to allow expansion of the gymnasium and athletic fields. Currently, several of these expansion projects are on the Department's five-year capital improvement plan. Located in south Greenville (just north of Winterville) at 5184 Corey Road, the H. Boyd Lee Park provides a valuable park and recreation facility to Greenville and all Pitt County residents.



Site Amenities:

- Gymnasium
- Recreation Center
- Three (3) lighted softball fields
- Picnic Shelter with Grill
- Playground
- Cross-Country Course

- 5K Course
- Walking Trails
- Exercise Stations
- Cricket Pitch
- Scorer's Tower
- Concession Stand
- Restroom Facilities
- Parking



(TOP)
Gymnasium

(MIDDLE)
**Cricket Pitch
Court**

(BOTTOM)
**Scorer's Tower,
Concessions, &
Restrooms**



Town of Grimesland

Grimesland Community Park

Site Amenities:

- Picnic Shelter with Grills
- Playground
- Benches
- Paved Walking Trail (0.25 miles)



Town of Grifton

Contentnea Creek RV & Trail Park



Site Amenities:

- Camping/Hookups
- Hiking/Backpacking
- Firepits
- Natural Surface Trails (.015 and 0.5 miles)
- Fishing
- Picnic Tables/Benches/Grills
- Restrooms/Bathhouse

Creekside Overlook Trail

Site Amenities:

- Dedicated Open Space
- Picnic Shelter
- Swing
- Fishing
- Canoeing



St. David Street Park



Site Amenities:

- Tennis Courts
- Picnic Shelters/Tables/Grills
- Playground
- Lighting
- Restrooms
- Multi-Purpose Structure with Restrooms
- Pave Walking Trail (0.25 miles)



Town of Farmville

Farmville Municipal Athletic Park



Site Amenities:

- Baseball/Softball Fields
- Tennis Courts
- Restrooms

I. S. Bennett Park

Site Amenities:

- Playground
- Basketball Court



J. Y. Monk Park



Site Amenities:

- Playground
- Volleyball Court

Oliver Murphrey Park

Site Amenities:

- Exercise Station
- Paved Walking Trail (0.3 miles)



R. T. Monk Park



Site Amenities:

- Lighting
- Playground



Village of Simpson

Simpson Community Park

Site Amenities:

- Restrooms
- Playground
- Picnic Shelter/Grills
- Basketball Goals
- Baseball/Softball Fields



State of North Carolina-Owned and Operated Parks & Facilities

North Recreational Complex (East Carolina University)



North Recreational Complex is located just 10 minutes from the East Carolina University main campus

The North Recreational Complex located on Highway 264 East (at East Carolina University) features eight (8) multipurpose activity fields. The fields can be sized to accommodate soccer, flag football, lacrosse, ultimate Frisbee, and rugby. A field house, which overlooks the property, provides an equipment storage area and a covered seating area with restrooms. A parking area for the complex is located just adjacent to



Odyssey High Challenge Course

the field house. The property also includes six (6) acres of water for fishing and boating, a sunbathing sand beach, fitness equipment, 0.5 mile trail around the lake, sand volley ball, corn-hole, and an 18-hole disc golf course. The new Odyssey High Challenge Course at the North Recreational Complex is approximately 40 feet tall and has eight (8) distinct high elements. The main course is 120 feet long with two (2) 300-foot zip lines as options to finish the course.

Mountains-to-Sea Trail

The Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST) is a long-distance trail that runs across North Carolina from the Great Smoky Mountains in the west to the Outer Banks on the east coast. The trail's western endpoint is at Clingman's Dome, where it connects to the Appalachian Trail in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Its eastern endpoint is in Jockey's Ridge State Park on the Outer Banks. Currently, the MST coincides with the southern border of Pitt County (just south of Grifton) and there are plans for a trail "spur" to be constructed north to the City of Greenville. Approximately 50% of the trail across North Carolina is complete, with several disconnected segments remaining across the state. The trail is a part of the North Carolina State Trails Program which is a section of the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation.



(Jointly) Owned/Operated Recreation-Related Agencies

Pitt County Health Department



The mission of the Pitt County Health Department is to protect, promote, and assure the health of all people in Pitt County. Public Health promotes health and wellness and works collaboratively with our community to improve the health of every citizen. Both clinical and community services are provided to achieve this mission. Community

services are available when Health Department staff partners with the schools, local community groups, businesses, and other health care providers throughout the community to develop community based health improvement initiatives.

These additional services not only offer immediate assistance to individuals and families, but provide guidance for long-term wellness – in terms of maintaining a proper diet and physical fitness. They include (but are not limited to) the following:

Community Care Plan of Eastern Carolina (CCPEC) - The CCPEC provides additional management for the care of the Medicaid population. This public-private partnership builds on the primary care case management model called Carolina Access which was introduced in the early 1990's.



Community Resources - Local agencies provide assistance for domestic violence, rape victims, family planning, sexual health, HIV/AIDS, sexually-transmitted diseases, eating disorders, immunizations, substance abuse, mental health, suicide prevention, and pregnancy.

Food Literacy Partners Program – This project is led by the ECU Department of Public Health and is open to all Pitt County citizens. The Program is designed to train and certify community volunteers to provide nutrition and physical activity education in a variety of settings.



HealthAssist - An estimated 20,000+ people in Pitt County are uninsured and do not have access to a primary care physician. HealthAssist is a partnership between local communities and organizations including Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Pitt County Medical Society, private physicians, Pitt County Health Department, and the ECU School of Medicine to provide access to medical services including prescription medicines, social services, health & physical education, and other programs.

Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) – These are diverse individuals, who have tasked themselves with identifying and responding to gaps in the services provided for children within the County.





Local Strides: The Community Transformation Grant Project (CTG) - The CTG (funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) strives to reduce risk factors responsible for chronic diseases by improving health, wellness, and awareness with active, healthy, and tobacco-free living and greater access to preventive services.

Nutrition Education Outreach - The Health Department provides a variety of nutrition services in the health department and in the community in order to positively impact the health and wellness of the community. These include To Your Health, Eat Local, and Growing Up Fit.



Pitt Partners for Health – This is a community-improvement partnership with representatives from local churches, businesses, communities and human service agencies. Presently, the partnership has set seven (7) priorities: Prevention of Injury, Heart Disease, Stroke, and Diabetes; Nutrition; and Physical Activity,

Smart Start - Crossing boundaries, the Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children, Inc. will work together through community and family efforts to ensure that all children between birth and 5 are able to enter school healthy, fit, and ready to learn.



PiCASO - The Pitt County AIDS Service Organization provides services to families affected by HIV/AIDS in addition to prevention programs.

Other-Owned and Operated Recreation Facilities in Winterville

RECREATION ASSOCIATIONS

Baywood Racquet Club



Baywood Racquet Club is a full service private tennis club that features clay courts with lighting; league play for all levels; professional instruction for all ages & levels; and club social events (such as family night, ladies quad & men's night, as well as weekly cardio tennis). It is located at 471 Baywood Drive.

NuLook Indoor Bounce-N-Party

Now at a new location in Winterville (4816 Old Tar Road), NuLook Bounce-N-Party is one of the area's leading providers of inflatable fun. The store provides top quality entertainment as well as dependable safety features. Options include indoor bouncing rates, party packages, and equipment rentals



Air-U Greenville

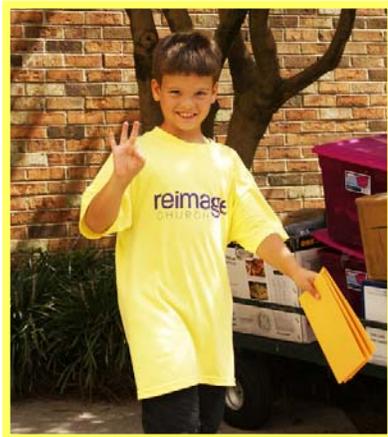


Opening in March of 2016, the Air-U trampoline facility is located at 5120 Corey Road. In addition to all the bouncing, flying, and flipping imaginable, the typical 10,000 to 15,000 square foot Air-U facility features 6' to 8' foam pits, 50' tumble ramps, and instructor-led Air-obics. Birthdays or other events can be celebrated in private rooms and Dodgeball Tournaments are also hosted. The facility includes an observation deck.

CHURCH-SPONSORED RECREATION

Religious affiliations in the Town of Winterville (based on Pitt County data from the 2010 US Census) reveal that 42.3% of the residents of the Town of Winterville were affiliated with Evangelical Protestants (21.6%) and Mainline Protestants (13.7%). 58.7% were *not* religiously affiliated. The 2010 enumeration also indicated that church affiliation steadily increased between the years of 2000 and 2010.

For many children, church-sponsored recreation is one of the first forms of organized activity to which they are exposed. Typically these activities range from arts/crafts to sports leagues and are accommodated by modern, on-site facilities – both indoor and outdoor – and include multi-purpose centers, ball



fields, basketball courts, volleyball/badminton/tennis courts, shuffleboard, horseshoes, walking trails, etc. In addition, summer camps are offered off site and feature additional activities, such as swimming, hiking, horseback riding, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, etc. Some churches operate child and senior citizen care; some even have private schools on site, with the same sports programs as public schools. Representatives of the following churches responded to the Town of Winterville's efforts to inventory recreational facilities and/or programs on their respective sites.

- Christ's Church (745 Davenport Farm Road) - None
- Christ Covenant Church (4005 Corey Road) - Unknown
- Christ Presbyterian Church (4889 Old Tar Road) – Private school with athletics programs
- Discovery Church (621 West Fire Tower Road) - Unknown
- Faith Assembly of God Church (5005 Corey Road) – Public Day Care (6 weeks – K)
- Good Hope Free Will Baptist Church (404 Mill Street) - Unknown
- Greenville Seventh Day Adventist (4658 Reedy Branch Road) - Unknown
- Haddock's United American Church (111 Lila Lane) - Unknown
- Immanuel Free Will Baptist Church (317 Vernon White Road) - Unknown
- Korean Presbyterian Church (301 Guinness Drive) - Unknown
- Mt. Shiloh Baptist Church (230 Boyd Street) - Unknown
- Open Door Ministries (4584 Reedy Branch Road) - Unknown
- Peace Presbyterian Church (301 Guinness Drive) - Unknown
- Reedy Branch Free Will Baptist Church (4457 Reedy Branch Road) – Private Playground
- Reimage Church (3950 Victory Lane) – Unknown

- St. Rest Holiness Church (154 Hammond Street) - Unknown
- Temple Free Will Baptist Church (130 West Fire Tower Road) - Public Gym; Upward Sports Basketball & Cheerleading K4-9 Private Adult Men's Basketball Team
- Winterville Baptist Church (2593 Church Street) - Unknown
- Winterville Christian Church (257 Cooper Street) – Outdoor Labyrinth for Public Rent
- Winterville Church of Christ (3170 Church Street Extension) - Unknown
- Winterville Free Will Baptist Church (489 Cooper Street) – After-school and summer child care; Public
- Wave Church (4052 Old Tar Road) – Unknown

FITNESS CENTERS (For-Profit)

AquaVenture

AquaVenture, a new \$3 million aquatics center in Winterville, is scheduled to open in the summer of 2016 at 214-A Beacon Drive. AquaVenture will be a private facility, which will sell memberships. The recreation amenities offered there will include a lap pool for swimming, scuba training, a dive tank, and fitness/wellness training (involving a local pediatrician). The Rum Runner, a scuba shop, will be located nearby.



East Carolina Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (ECBJJ)



ECBJJ has a location at 4776-A Reedy Branch Road in Winterville. With a variety of programs – ranging from beginner to adult – the ECBJJ is available to male/female adults and children. Whether jiu jitsu is used as a means of self-defense, an activity to get in shape, or a way of meeting new people, it can be a life-changing event.

GOLF COURSES

- Ayden Golf and Country Club (Semi-Private; 18-hole golf; pool; tennis)
- Bradford Creek Golf Club (Public; 18-hole golf)
- Brook Valley Country Club (Private; 18-hole golf; pool; tennis; kids club)



- Cutter Creek Golf Club (Semi-Private; 18-hole golf)
- Farmville Golf and Country Club (Semi-Private; 18-hole golf; pool)
- Greenville Golf and Country Club (Semi-Private; 18-hole golf; pool)
- Ironwood Golf and Country Club (Private; 18-hole golf; pool; tennis)

Non-Profits and Miscellaneous Recreation Providers

Pitt County Council on Aging

The Pitt County Council on Aging, Inc. is a non-profit agency headquartered at the Council on Aging Building in the Pitt County Office Complex. The headquarters building is the site of the Greenville Senior Center and the Council on Aging's executive offices. The Council maintains satellite nutrition/activities sites in Ayden, Bethel, Farmville, Fountain, and Grifton for seniors (ages 60+), who are offered programs targeted to meet their social, educational, physical and recreational interests. A lunch is served to those who meet the eligibility criteria.



Winterville Senior Citizens Club

The Winterville Senior Citizen Club is a growing group of senior citizens from the Winterville community that meet on a monthly basis in the Town of Winterville Community Room. The group works in conjunction with the Winterville Parks & Recreation Department to provide Seniors in the community with interesting monthly luncheon meetings, informative guest speakers, and special events.



Pitt County 4-H



Through 4-H, hundreds of thousands of North Carolina's young people learn new skills and serve their communities each year. The Pitt County 4-H is located at 403 Government Circle in Greenville and offers clubs, special interest programs, summer camps/recreation, school enrichment, and after-school child care. Guided by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension educators and adult and teen volunteers, 4-H'ers gain knowledge, skills, and experience that help them become responsible citizens and leaders.

Boys and Girls Clubs of the Coastal Plain

The Boys and Girls Club of Pitt County is located on Fire Tower Road in Pitt County. The purpose of the Club is to provide opportunities for young people to gain the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in life. Programs target health and life skills, character and leadership development, education and career development, art, sports, fitness, and recreation. Boys and girls (ages 6 to 18 years) are qualified to meet role models who respect and listen to them; to interact in a safe environment where they can be themselves and have fun, and to channel their youthful energy with constructive activities.



Boy Scouts of America



The Boy Scouts of America is one of the nation's largest and most prominent values-based youth development organizations. The BSA provides a program for young people that builds character, trains them in the responsibilities of participating citizenship, and develops personal fitness. The Pitt District of the East Carolina Council of BSA in Greenville is served by the Perry Family Scout Service Center in Kinston, North Carolina.



The Little Willie Center

The Little Willie Center was founded in 1990 as an organization to address the needs of latchkey children, whose parents work, seek employment, or attend school and (as a result) must leave their children home alone. The center provides a very safe alternative to being home alone. With this in mind, parents are granted peace of mind knowing their children are loved and encouraged to strive for excellence in not only their school lives, but their personal lives as well. Services offered are tutoring/mentoring, transportation, nutritious meals, survival skill classes, PSR Big Buddy Program through the ECU Medical School, Girl and Boy Scouts of America, 4-H Club, and Bible study.

Operation Sunshine

Operation Sunshine is a comprehensive program serving primarily African American girls 5-13 years of age in western Greenville, since 2003. Operation Sunshine works to develop meaningful relationships with participants and encourages them to take pride in themselves and their communities. Operation Sunshine helps girls develop skills to help them communicate effectively; resolve conflicts non-violently, acquire gender and cultural pride, and become strong, competent leaders. Operation Sunshine is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for girls by offering positive role models, activities that inspire learning and access to educational and recreational resources with an emphasis on leadership development, academic enhancement, and risk reduction.



Girl Scouts • North Carolina • Coastal Plains



Pitt County serves more than 1,300 Girl Scouts from grades K-12 in Greenville, Winterville, Ayden, Bethel, Stokes, Grimesland, Grifton, and Farmville. Girls participate in activities encouraging them to help their community, protect the environment, recycle and explore new things that will help them build skills for their future - all while having fun, making new friends, and developing their own potential. The Girl Scouts - North Carolina Coastal Pines also offers program activities, resident camps, and trips to all Girl Scouts throughout the 41-county jurisdiction. Girls can be as active as they want to or pick and choose the ways to participate in Girl Scouting. It is all about the girl and how she chooses to customize her "Girl Scout Experience".

END OF SECTION

SECTION 4 RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Winterville houses most of its indoor activities in the Operation Center located on Church Street, including aerobics classes and activities for senior citizens. The Town has three (3) parks – Winterville Recreation, Hillcrest, and Water Tower. All three (3) parks feature playground equipment.



Town of Winterville Annual Watermelon Festival

Hillcrest Park also has basketball courts, a walking trail, restrooms, and picnic shelter areas. Winterville Recreation Park – the largest of the parks – features baseball, softball, and multi-purpose fields, tennis courts, a walking trail, an amphitheater, restroom facilities, picnic shelters, and concession stands. The Town also utilizes the softball field at A. G. Cox Middle School for its recreational sport programs.

In the fall, Winterville Recreation offers tackle and flag football, baseball, soccer, and cheerleading. In the spring, the department offers baseball and its After-School Hoops program. No youth recreational sports, like basketball, are now offered in the winter due to limited facility options. It is possible that the survey may generate an interest in winter programming. The recreation program relies heavily on volunteer coaches and other participants who are willing to donate their time for the benefit of others.

The degree of need for additional parks and open space is most directly influenced by the expectations of the residents of the Town of Winterville and related strictly to the 'quality of life' to which they aspire. This Master Plan addresses (as its first priority) the parks and recreation facility needs, which are envisioned, appropriate to meet the needs and desires of the Town's residents at the time of this study and into the future.



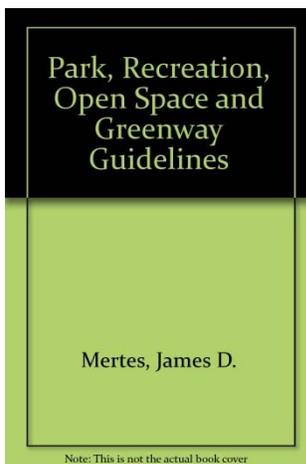
Cheer is offered from September through November

Although this Master Plan is developed primarily for the Town of Winterville, park facilities which are not owned and operated by the Town will also be evaluated in determining the needs assessment for the citizens in Winterville. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be used as a guide for improving recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Section 3 of this Master Plan inventories the Town of Winterville’s existing park facilities and the recreation facilities of other providers with relatively close proximity to the Town. This detailed inventory includes the facilities which are available within each park in order to create a better understanding of the existing recreation opportunities in the greater Winterville area. The demographic and population trends (found in Section 2 of the Master Plan) provide information needed to understand the rate of growth within the Town of Winterville for at least the next ten (10) years.

Community input, current recreation demand, and recreation standards were used as the primary methods in determining the adequate type(s) and amount(s) of park facilities needed for the Town of Winterville. This Master Plan compares standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (known as NRPA) - an independent, non-profit professional



organization for park/recreation departments nationwide – with existing facility/program criteria in Winterville. In 1996, NRPA published a manual entitled, *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, which remains a widely accepted reference standard for municipal Parks and Recreation Departments.



Standards are guidelines, not requirements, for use by communities in estimating the demand for recreation in their given geographic areas. NRPA’s 1996 guidelines shifted its emphasis from the rigid park facility standards to more flexible standards, which better accommodate unique circumstances and situations that exist in every community. To assure that the Town of Winterville’s Master Plan contains distinctiveness, yet versatility, public input was sought from its integral components: various Town of Winterville Staff, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee, the Town Council, and citizen representatives.

4.2 PUBLIC INPUT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The methodology used in establishing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan should always include citizen input. In order to ensure a successful study, it is vital that the public be able to share their concerns, needs, and desires. For this effort public input was gathered through 1) meeting with a carefully selected steering committee; 2) meeting with parks and recreational staff; 3) attendance at public events like the Watermelon Festival and the Concert in the Park; 4) a public meeting / workshop; 5) individual Stakeholder telephone interviews and surveys available online and in hard copies placed throughout town.

Recreation Advisory Board / Steering Committee

The Town of Winterville Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 Steering Committee held its kick-off meeting on August 19, 2015, at 6:30 pm in the Operations Center Conference Room with Evan Johnston (Parks & Recreation) and McGill Associates' Staff presiding. Appointed to the Steering Committee were: Debbie Avery, (Winterville Chamber of Commerce member); Valerie Cox (Community Non-Profit Organization – IMPACT member); Ricky Hines (Recreation Department volunteer coach); Tom Manning (A.G. Cox Middle School teacher); John Relford (Recreation Department Advisory Board member); and Mark Smith (Mayor Pro Tem). A McGill Associates' team member defined a Master Plan, explained the role of the committee, and (along with the members) established vision/goals for the Town of Winterville. The group discussed numerous opportunities for public involvement in the Master Plan and emphasized upcoming events where many residents/visitors would be in attendance.



Come Help Plan The Future of Winterville's Parks and Recreation!

What: First Public Meeting for The Town of Winterville's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

When: Tuesday, October 27, 2015

Where: 2571 Railroad Street

Times: 4:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m. Drop In Anytime

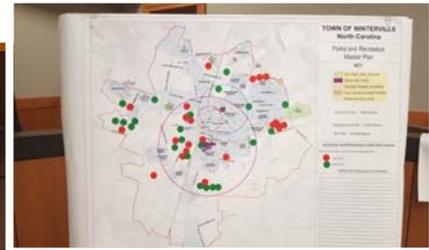
Online Survey available at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WintervilleNC>

Topics For The First Public Meeting

- * Project Overview
- * Goals and Objectives
- * Receive Your Recreational Needs & Concerns
- * Identify Potential Recreational Programs & Facilities (now and in the future)
- * Survey Questionnaires

HERE IS YOUR CHANCE TO GET INVOLVED !
YOUR OPINION MATTERS

Community Meeting



Workshop participants showed preferences with the use of hands-on activities

To facilitate community input, a public workshop was held on October 27, 2015 from 4:30 to 7:30 pm at the Winterville Town Hall. The meeting was advertised in the local newspaper, *The Daily Reflector*, the Parks and Recreation website, via emails, and flyers and banners posted throughout town and at local festivals. (See Appendix)

Participants were asked to sign in where they were given project overview, goals and objectives. They were then allowed to visit several activity stations including a Visual Preference Survey that gauged the public's preferences for recreation types, a station with current survey results shown in graph and chart forms, a map exercise allowing participants to mark where potential new parks/facilities could be renovated and/or constructed, paper hand-out surveys to gather information for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well as a private comment card station where they could make anonymous comments via a sealed drop box. Open discussion was encouraged and approximately 30 participants provided feedback at this meeting.

Stakeholder Interviews

One-on-one interviews were held with twenty-two (22) representatives from the following groups to discuss parks and recreation issues in Winterville. Attendees were invited to provide input on issues they felt needed to be addressed in the recreation plan.

**The Stakeholders List was selected to provide a broad demographic of the community as a whole and identify those special user groups that might otherwise be overlooked.*

**Stakeholder's List*

- Winterville Mayor and Town Council (the Mayor and all Town Council members were individually interviewed)
- Winterville Recreation Advisory Board
- Winterville Senior Citizens Club
- Winterville Senior Fellowship
- Kiwanis Club
- Ruritan Club
- Civitan Club
- Winterville Historical & Arts Society
- AG Cox Middle School
- South Central High School
- Boys and Girls Club
- Pitt County Girls Softball League
- Friends of Greenville Greenways
- Run the East
- Winterville Chief of Police
- Winterville Town Manager
- WH Robinson Elementary School
- Winterville Youth Council

Conclusions

**Please see Appendix for complete list of comments.*

- Need for more parks on west side of town (could be required by developers)
- Need for a year-round type facility that could provide flexible space and adapt to changing trends over time.
- Increase in walking and biking facilities
- Some type of water feature (not a pool)

Community Survey

The active participation of residents in the Town of Winterville was crucial in developing a Comprehensive Master Plan that reflects the true needs for the Winterville area. With this in mind, community input was solicited throughout the entire planning process. To begin the data collection process a survey was developed with direction from the Master Plan Steering Committee. This was the initial survey used to gather public input and get the community involved in the planning process. This survey was available between August 2015 and June 2016 in order to reach the greatest number of participants. Public meetings (where this survey was to be used) were advertised in the local newspaper and could be filled out interactively online at the Winterville official web page. Links to the online surveys (generated via SurveyMonkey.com) were also made available via Facebook and the Town's official web page. Marketing cards with the web address for the survey were made available at all the public meetings, the Parks and Recreation Office, and distributed by Town Staff and Steering Committee members. Paper surveys were also made available for those that preferred paper over using a computer.



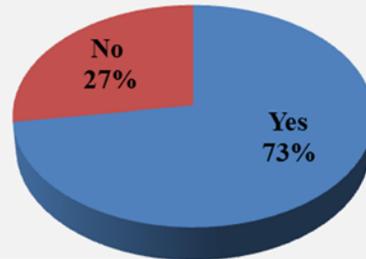
There were **344** completed surveys. This total represented approximately **792** individuals. It should be noted that some surveys returned failed to provide an answer to the question related to household size meaning the total number of individuals represented may actually be larger. These included the online (Survey Monkey) results and the paper survey results. The survey participants adequately reflected a representative cross section of the Town of Winterville in terms of ethnicity, age, and household size.

The surveys were designed to elicit answers on residents' needs and desires for recreation opportunities. It included a section where respondents rated their participation in existing programs and use of existing facilities. The survey also asked respondents to rank the programs and facilities in order of importance and asked them to list the facilities they would like to see added to the park and recreation system. To determine the profile of respondents, a series of demographic questions were also asked. The results of the surveys are as follows:

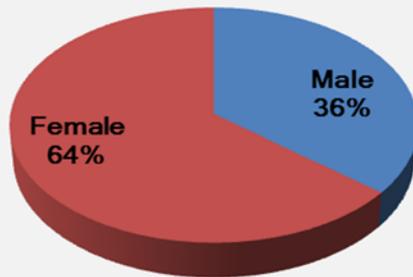
Town of Winterville Parks & Recreation Master Plan Survey (344 Completed Surveys representing approximately 792 individuals)

The majority of survey participants reported that they live in the Town of Winterville ETJ (73%); although over ¼ of the respondents do not live within Town.

Are you a resident of Winterville?

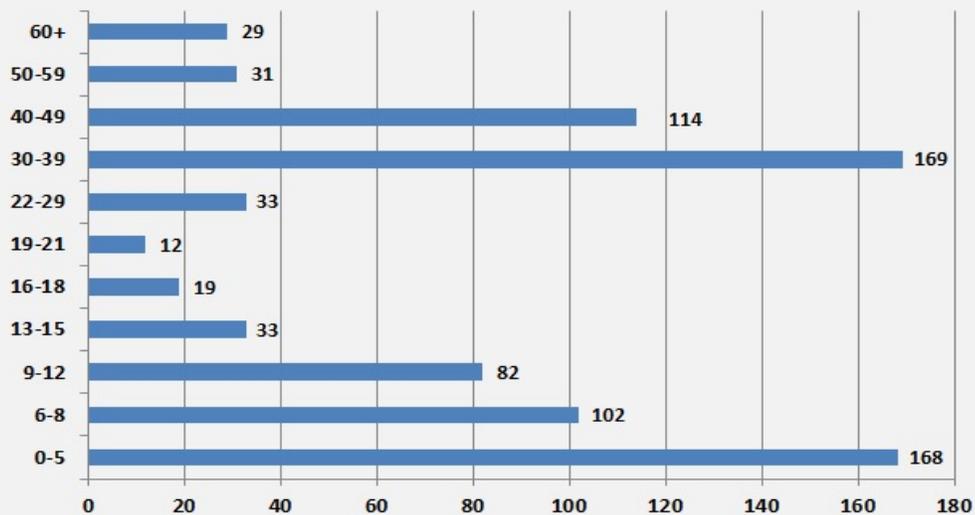


What is your gender?



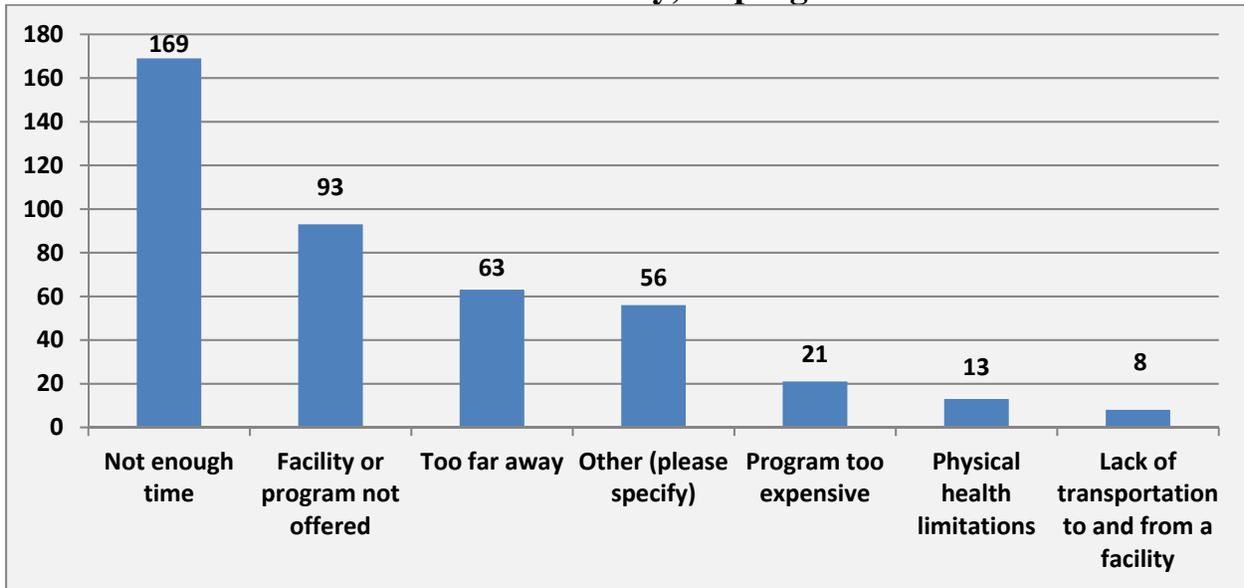
Of all the surveys submitted by residents of the Town of Winterville approximately 2/3 represented female members of the household.

List your household in these age brackets:



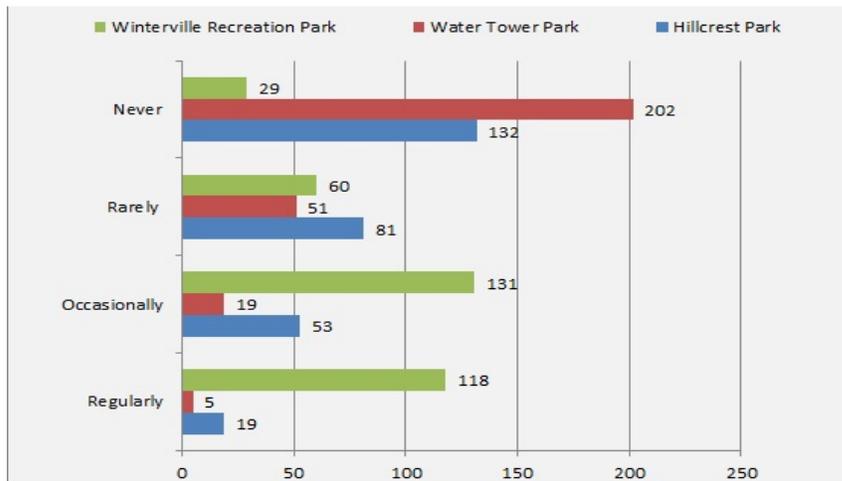
When asked about the ages of the residents in the households of respondents, the greatest number of participants appeared to be parents, whose children are ages - birth through middle school (preteen). Teens (with driver's licenses) were listed less frequently than the older population (50+).

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



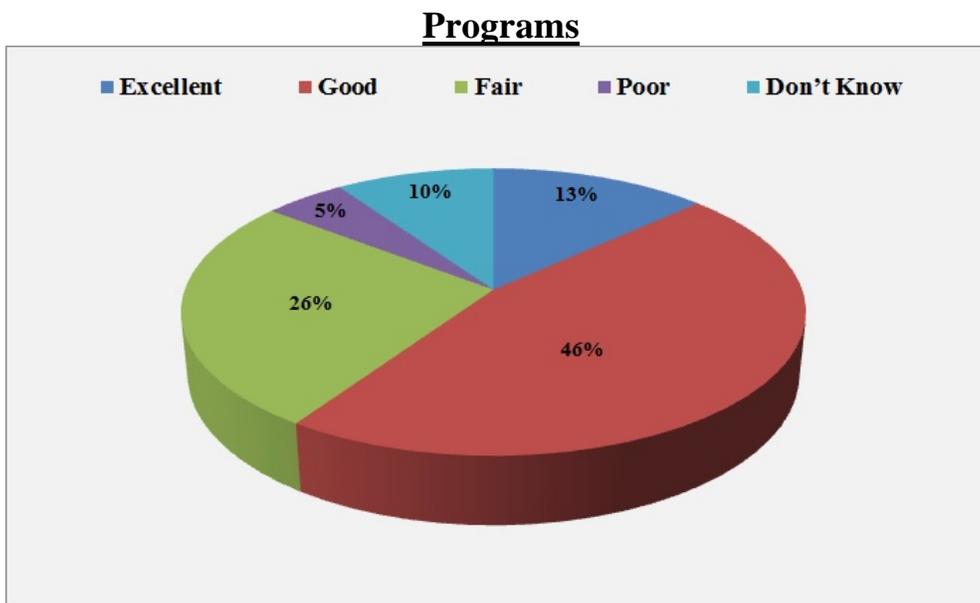
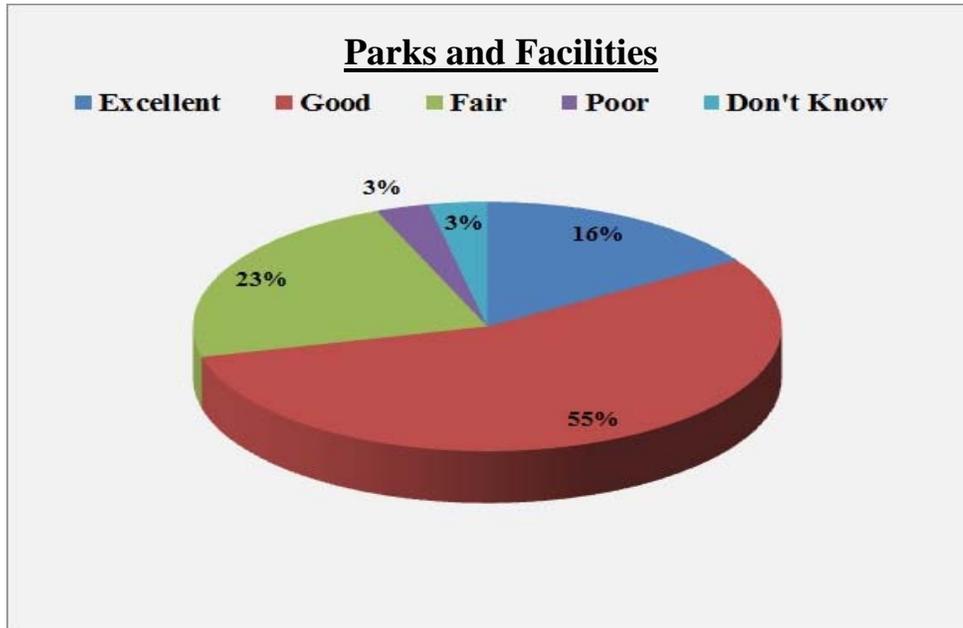
The three (3) main reasons identified were "Not enough time", "Facility or program not offered", and "Too far away". These responses made up almost 100% of the total and indicate typical reasons often heard from a busy society. This data may reflect the need for more current recreational programming within the parks system (skateboarding, disc golf, etc.) Also, it may indicate the need for new facilities in outlying areas.

Which parks have you visited within the past year?



According to survey respondents, almost 98% of regular park participation occurs at the Winterville Recreation Park, with Hillcrest and Water Tower being very distant second and third.

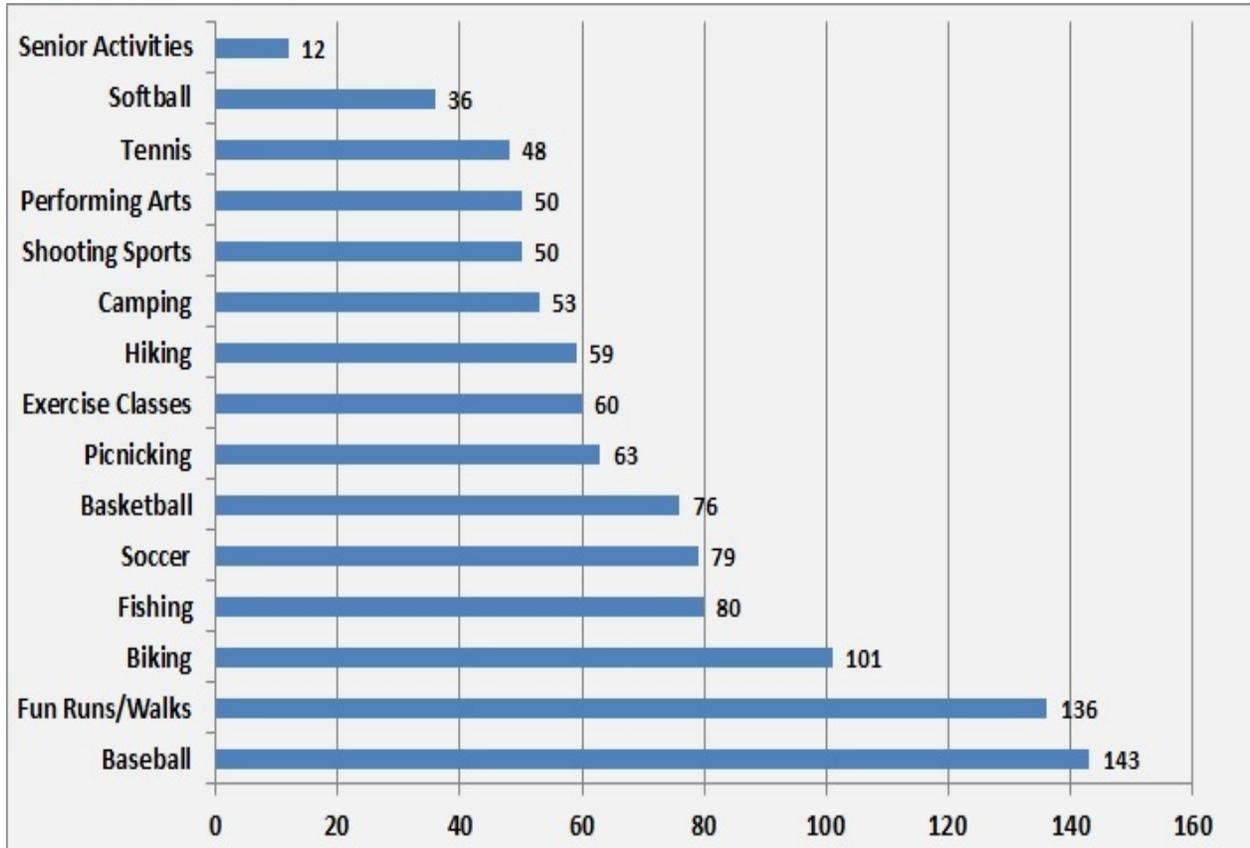
Overall, how would you rate the existing recreational amenities in the *parks, facilities, and/or programs* categories?



Survey participants rated the existing *Parks & Facilities* and the existing *Programs* in the Town of Winterville Recreation Department fairly consistently; in that, in both cases over half of the respondents thought that all of the existing offerings in each of the categories

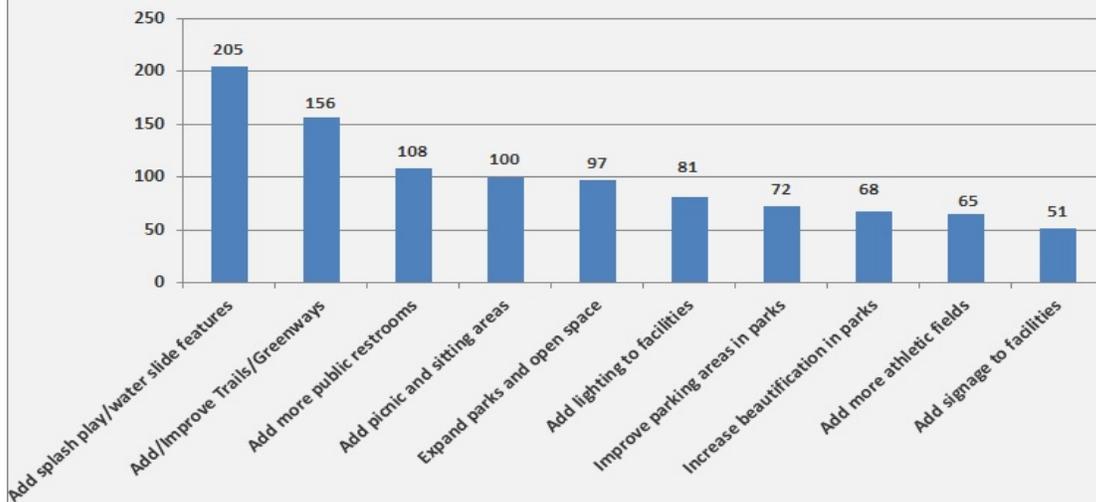
were “good”. Only minimal number of survey participants (3% *Parks and Facilities* and 5% *Programs*) considered the existing recreation amenities to be “poor”.

In which of these recreation activities and/or special events do you or others in your household participate regularly?



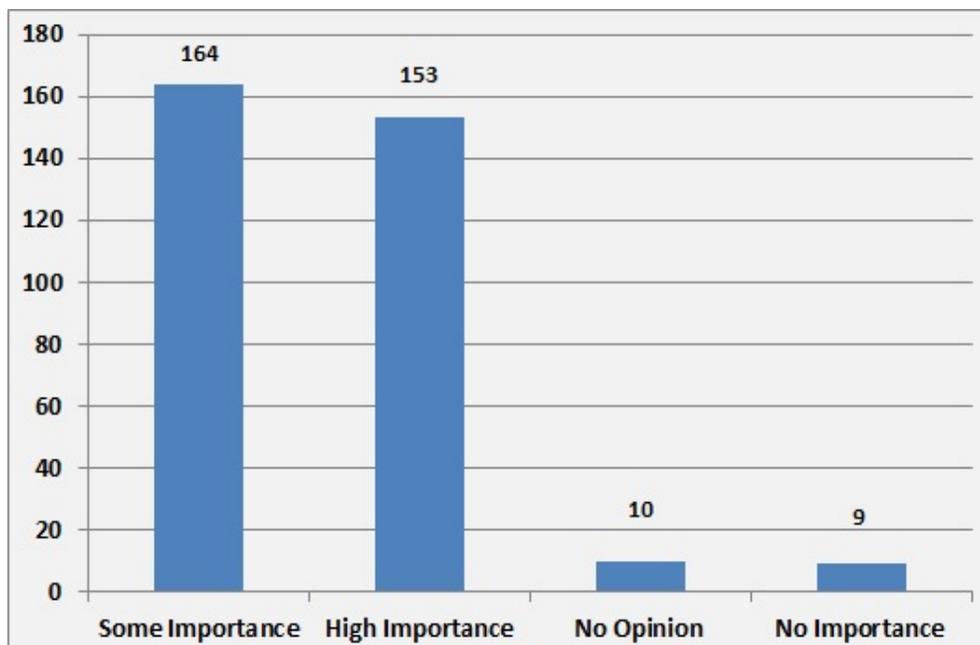
While field sports (baseball and soccer) activities were the most regularly reported recreation activities; trail/track such as walking, running, and bicycling came in as a close second; followed by the leisure activity – biking.

Check improvements that could be made to existing park facilities.



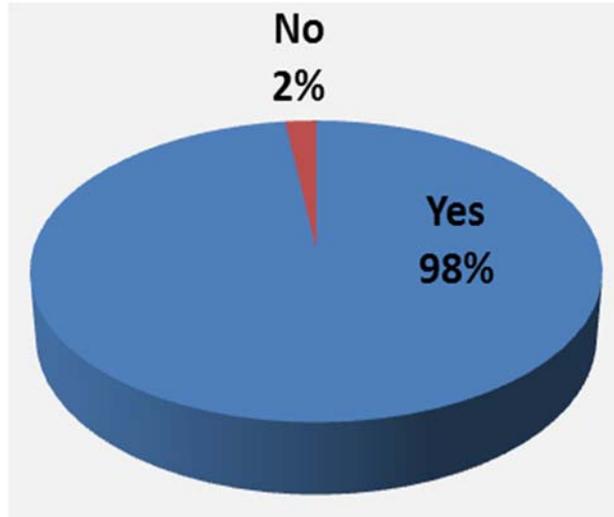
Overwhelmingly, participants responded with a desire for more trendy activities - splash play areas with waterslide features and more, improved trails/greenways. Survey responses ranged consistently from improvements to public restrooms, picnic/sitting areas, and park/open space to enhancements of lighting, parking, and aesthetics. It is clear that facility improvements are greatly desired by survey respondents.

Describe how you perceive the need for new or improved recreation activities.

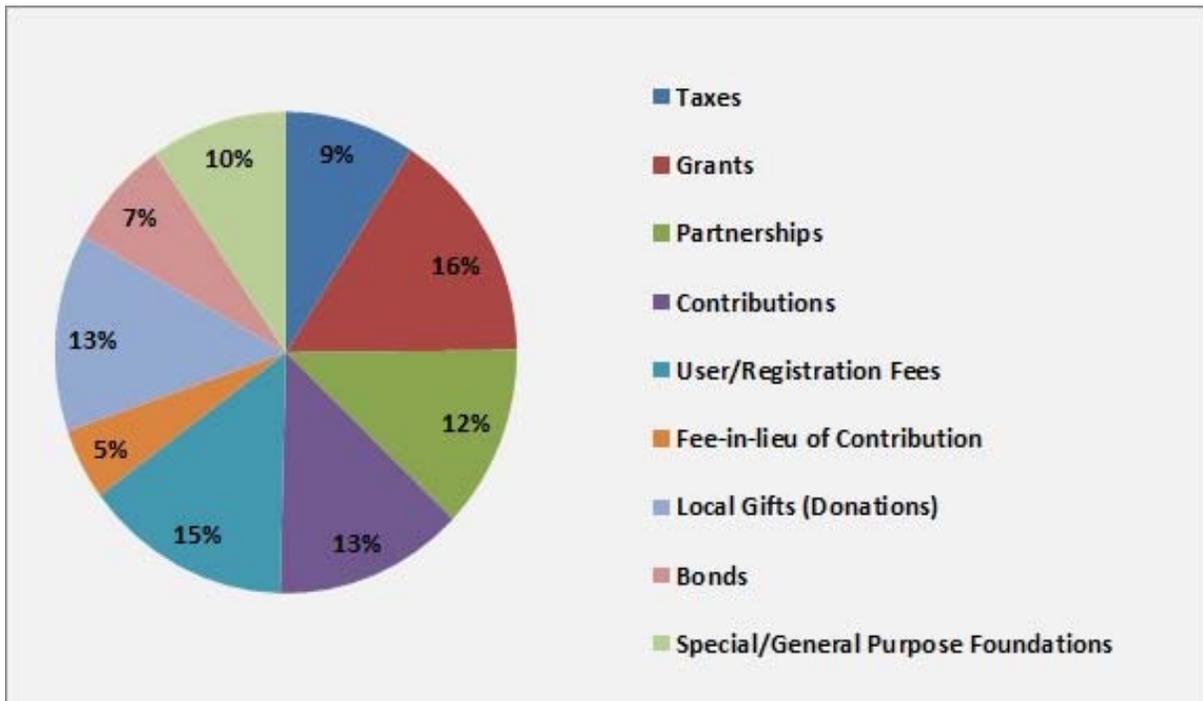


As would be expected, 98% of survey participants want improvements to recreation activities and favor program expansion; however, as also is expected – very few respondents are in favor of local taxation or bond referendums to achieve these ends. Local gifts, contributions, and fees were supported.

Would you be in favor of new or expanded programs within the Town of Winterville?

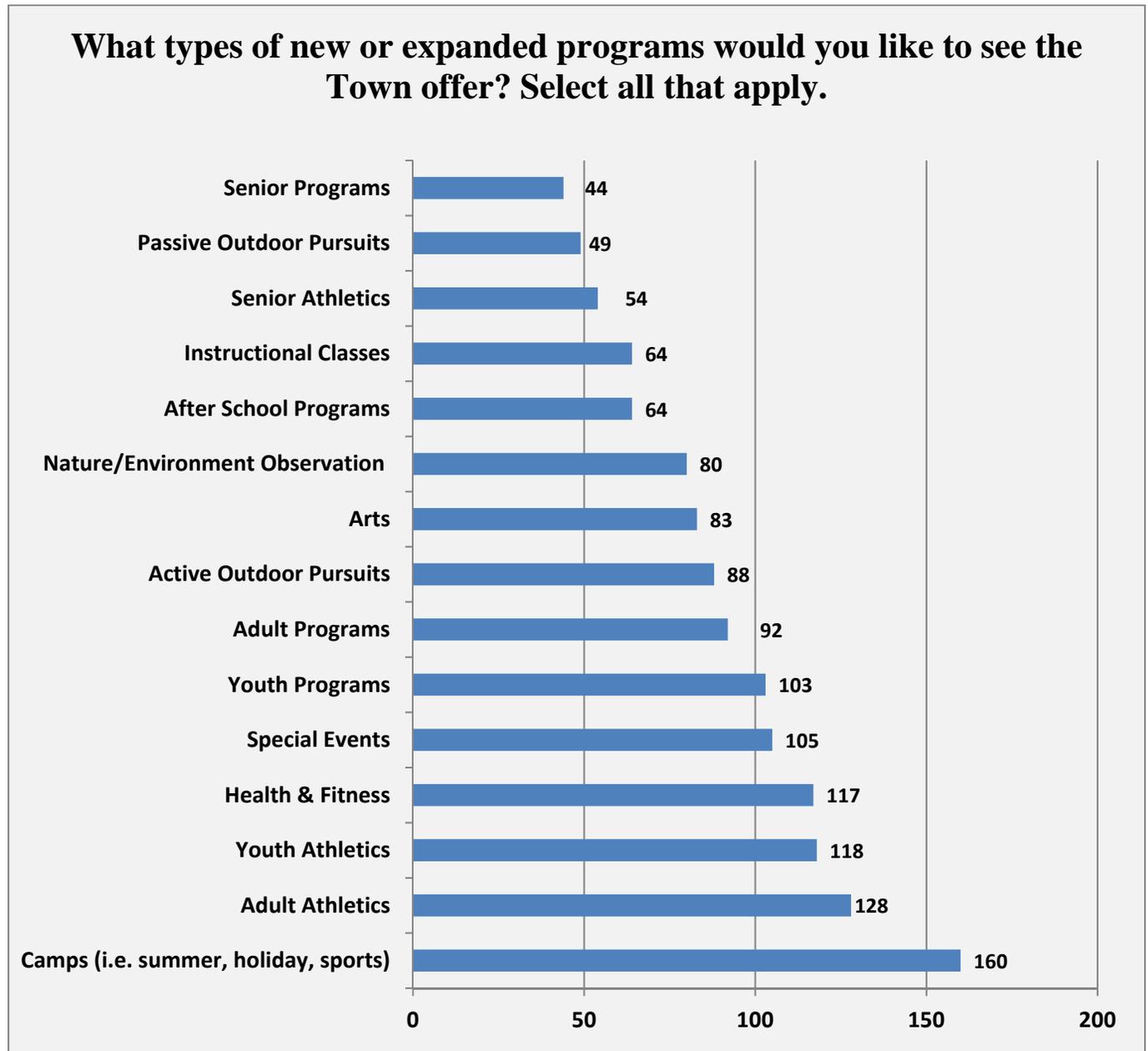


What sources of funding are you willing to support for improvements, construction, and/or new programs?



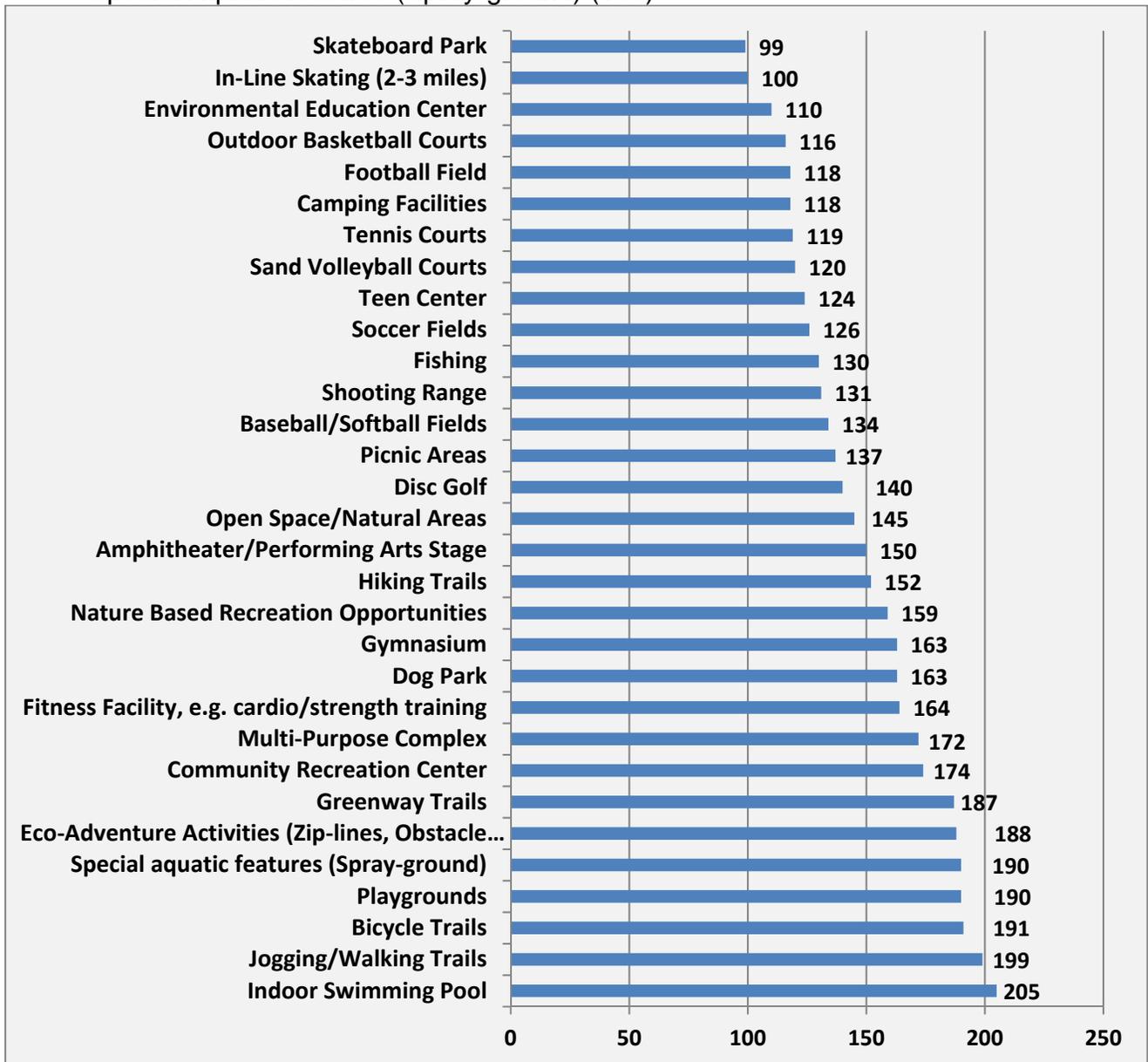


Survey responders tended to prefer new and expanded programs of an *active* nature (camps, youth/adults organized sports, fitness programs, and special events) rather than those, which are more *passive* (arts, nature, and instructional classes).



Rank, in order of importance, the top six facilities that could be improved or constructed in the Town of Winterville.

- Community Recreation Center/Multi-Purpose Center (346 = 174+172)
- Indoor Swimming Pool (205)
- Jogging/Walking Trails (199)
- Bicycle Trails (191)
- Playgrounds (190)
- Special Aquatic features (Spray-ground) (190)



Conclusions

Using the data from the survey we can determine patterns of use at existing facilities and make decisions on future facilities/programming at existing parks and at new locations. The majority of respondents in the survey were residents of the Town (73%), but 27% were not residents of Winterville.

The age brackets represented were heavily weighted towards those adults 30-49 years of age. Children and senior residents were also well represented.

Winterville Recreational Park and Hillcrest Park were the most visited facilities in the Winterville Parks and Recreation system.

Many respondents said that they would use a recreation facility more often if the programming they desired was offered or if they lived within walking distance from a park. Since most of the Town of Winterville's facilities are located fairly centrally in Town, the Town should consider exploring ways to expand opportunities to other areas of the Town where people work or live.



Some residents travel out-of-town for recreation



When it comes to recreation, many respondents feel the need to go outside of Town to meet their needs, with 38% reporting traveling outside of Winterville to use a recreational facility. 42% of the respondents reported using school or private facilities for recreation or leisure activities.

Survey responses indicated that nearly all aspects of the existing parks facilities in Winterville need enhancement or improvement.

4.3 STATE AND NATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Surveys, which are designed to determine the demand for outdoor recreation and facilities, have been conducted on both the federal and state levels, by the President’s Commission on Americas Outdoor and the North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Survey, respectively. Following are significant facts that have evolved from these surveys:

- The top ten most popular outdoor recreational activities (nationwide) are:
 1. Picnicking
 2. Driving for pleasure
 3. Swimming
 4. Sightseeing
 5. Walking for pleasure
 6. Playing sports
 7. Fishing
 8. Attending sports events
 9. Boating
 10. Bicycling



- The most rapidly growing outdoor activities (nationwide) are:

1. Canoeing
2. Bicycling
3. Attending sports events
4. Camping (all types)
5. Sailing
6. Hiking/Backpacking
7. Walking for pleasure
8. Water skiing



- The top ten most popular outdoor activities (North Carolina) are:

1. Walking for pleasure
2. Driving for pleasure
3. Viewing scenery
4. Beach Activities
5. Visiting Historical Sites
6. Swimming (in Lakes, Rivers, and Oceans)
7. Visiting Natural Areas
8. Picnicking
9. Attending Sports Events
10. Visiting Zoos



- Local governments (cities and counties) provide 39% of the public recreational opportunities in the United States.

4.4 TYPES OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

A comprehensive park system is made up of a variety of park types, ranging from small neighborhood playgrounds to larger parks with athletic fields, playgrounds, community centers, and open space. They reflect the differing recreational and preferences of diverse users. Park models are used as guidelines for fulfilling the future recreational needs of communities. Not all of these types of parks are the responsibility of the municipal agency; several agencies (federal, state, cities, and/or towns,) play roles in providing recreational opportunities as well. 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. These types of parks and recreation facilities, which may or may not be included in comprehensive park systems developed by counties and municipalities, are delineated in this section on the next several pages. They are the following:

- Regional Parks
- District Parks
- Community Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Mini Parks
- Linear Parks/Greenways
- Special Use Facilities
- Open Space



Regional Parks

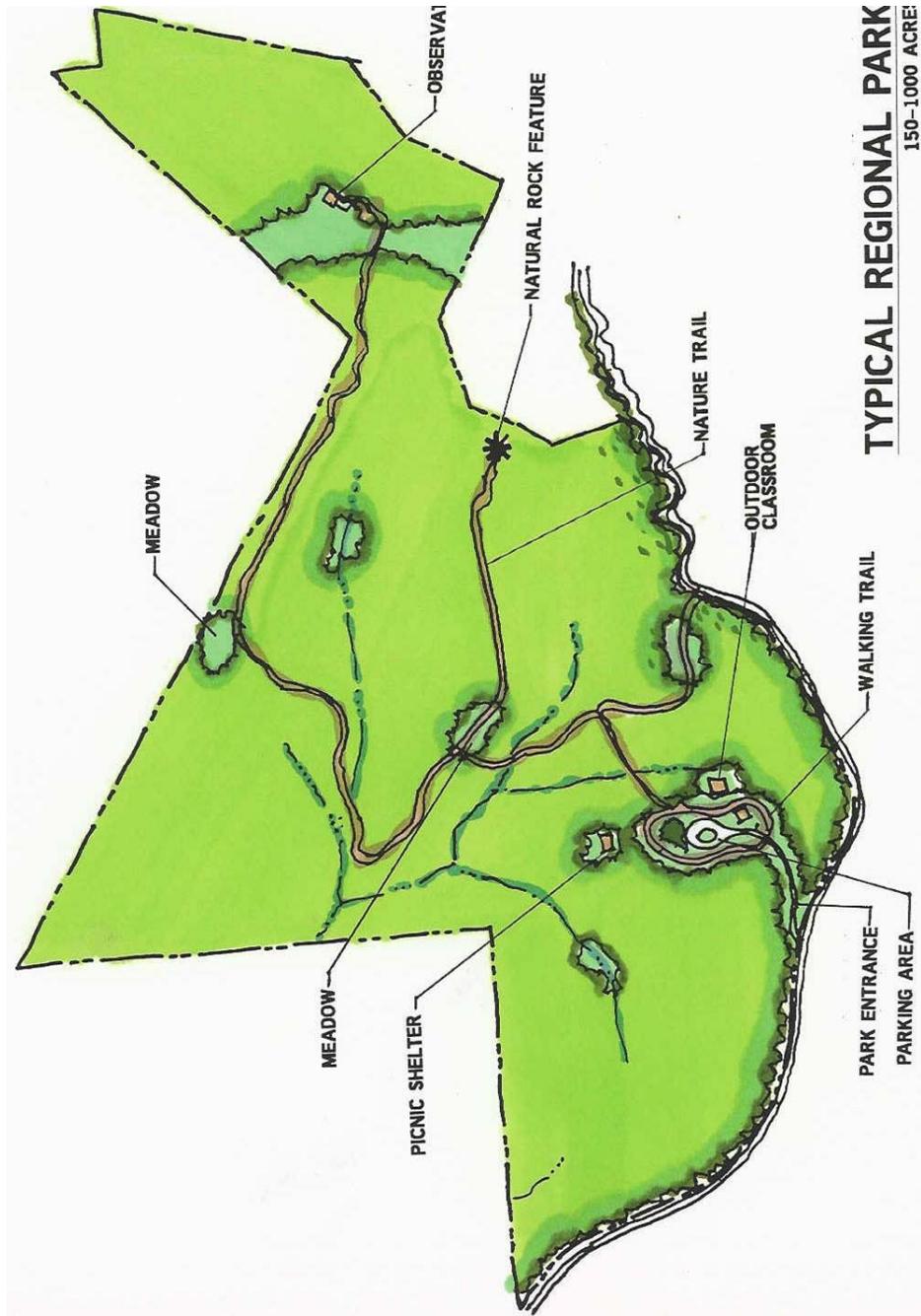
Regional parks are typically very large sites. On these sites, the unique qualities that exemplify the natural features found there, such as the diverse land formation, vegetation, and wildlife, are preserved. Parks containing environmental centers, campsites, nature trails, observation decks and picnic areas are examples of the types of facilities that are usually provided in regional parks. In addition, open fields for non-structured activities, such as Frisbee-throwing or kite-flying, are also generally found there.

When land is acquired for the development of regional parks (or the expansion of existing sites), it should be comprised of the previously mentioned characteristics, accompanied by natural water features such as lakes, rivers or creeks. The majority of the site should be reserved for passive recreation, with the remaining acreage used for active recreation.

The acquisition and development of regional parks are typically undertaken by a federal or state agency. *North Recreational Complex near East Carolina University is an example of a regional park in the area.*

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

<u>Service area:</u>	Region-wide
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	10 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Minimum Size:</u>	150-1,000 acres minimum 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.)
<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Environmental Center Equestrian Center Group Camping Nature Trails Picnic Shelters and Grills Restrooms/Vending Swimming Boating Parking Primitive Camping Recreational Vehicle Camping Observation Deck Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter) Fishing Piers/Boat Docks Caretaker's House



District Parks

A district park functions as the major source of active recreation for several neighborhoods within a community. District parks are intensely developed, offering a multitude of facilities in order to serve their intended geographic user area. Activities are balanced between active and passive recreation. District Parks are typically developed to accommodate athletic league sporting events and tournament competition. Passive recreation opportunities are found in the undisturbed areas, preferably within surrounding buffers. District parks present great opportunities for non-traditional types of recreation. *Alternate facilities may be added or substituted.

Sites for district parks should be relatively level to alleviate excessive grading for the active facilities. Where 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. The development of district parks is typically the responsibility of county or municipal agencies. *Ayden District Park is an example of a district park in the immediate area.*

Specific standards/criteria for developing district parks:

<u>Service area:</u>	2 to 6 mile radius
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	5 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Desirable Range:</u>	75-200 acres
<u>Desirable Size:</u>	+100 acres



Ayden District Park

<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Playgrounds
Tennis Courts (lighted)	Full or Half Size Basketball Courts
Volleyball Courts	Baseball/Softball/Multi-Purpose Field
Soccer/Football Field	Soccer Practice Field (movable goals)
Nature Trail	Picnic Tables with Grill (with/without shelter)
Parking/Service Yard	Benches or Bench Swings
Restrooms/Concessions	50% of Site Remains Undeveloped

<u>*Alternate Facilities:</u>	Recreation Center
Tennis Center	Amphitheatre
Observation Decks	Fishing Piers/Boating/Boat Dock



Community Parks

Community parks focus on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as 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. A variety of tree species should also be present in forested areas. Community parks should contain cleared areas for the purpose of locating active recreational facilities. At least one natural water feature (lake, river or creek) is desirable in a community park. The land acquired for use as a community park should be contiguous in nature and strategically located in order to provide access for all users within the community that it serves.

*Winterville
Recreation
Park*



The development of community parks typically falls within the realm of municipal responsibilities. *Winterville Recreation Park is an example of a community park in Winterville.*

Specific standards/criteria for developing community parks:

Service area: 1 to 2 mile radius

Acreage/Population Ratio: 2-5 acres per 1,000 persons

Desirable Range: 15-50 acres

Desirable Size: 25 acres

Typical Facilities:

Playgrounds
Full Size or Half Size Basketball Courts
Tennis/Volleyball Courts
50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped
Soccer/Multi-Purpose Fields

Swimming Pool
Picnic Tables/shelter w/wo grills
Nature Trails
Benches or Bench Swings
Restrooms/Concessions
Parking



TYPICAL COMMUNITY PARK
15-50 Acres

Neighborhood Parks

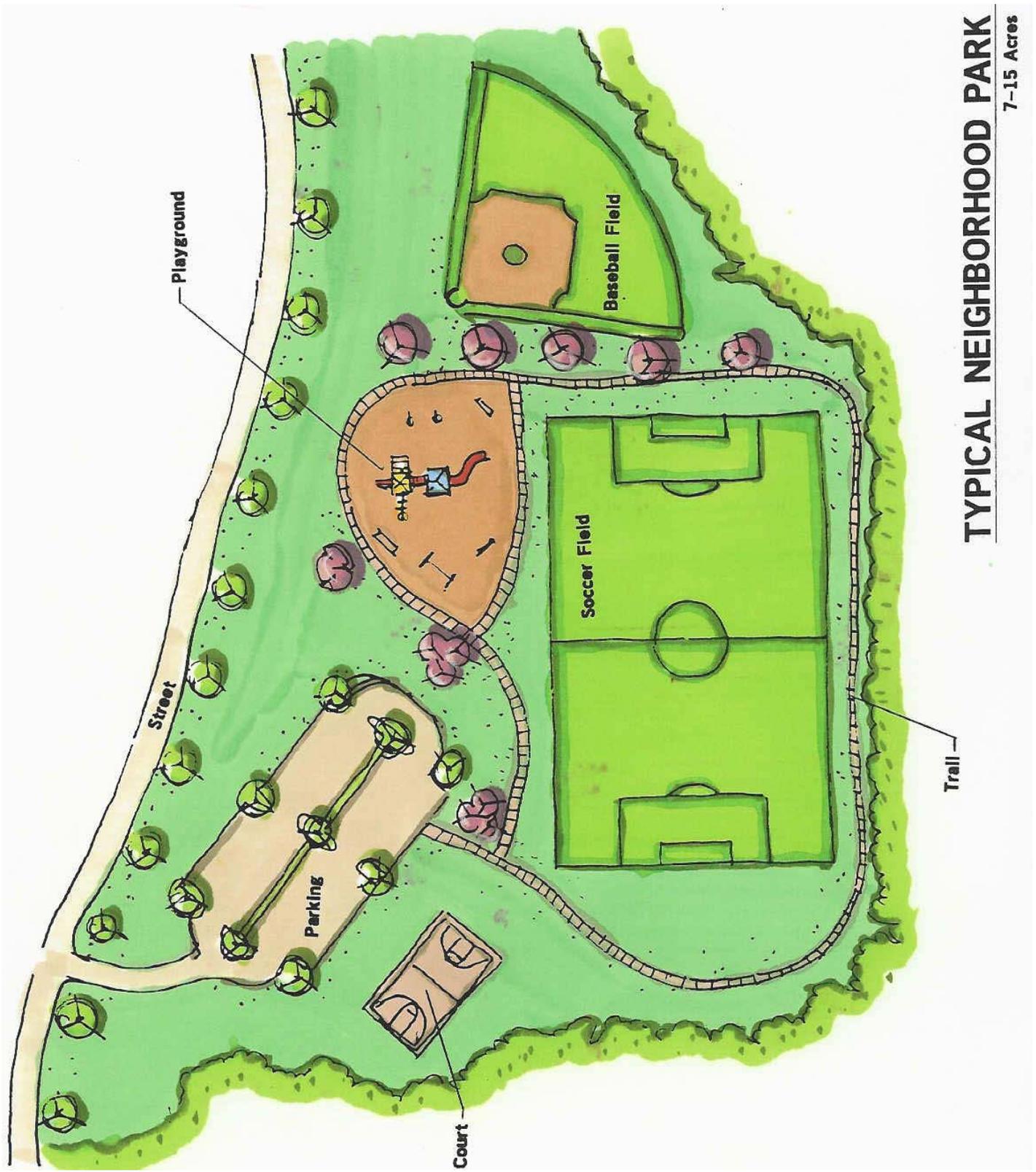
Neighborhood parks offer the public a convenient source of recreation, while serving as the recreational and social focus for the neighborhood. Usually located within walking distance of the area serviced, neighborhood parks provide both active and passive recreation opportunities, which are of interest to all age groups. The smaller size of neighborhood parks, as compared to those previously mentioned requires intense development, with fifty percent of each site remaining undisturbed and thereby serving as a buffer between the park and adjacent property owners. Hillcrest Park is an example of a neighborhood park in Winterville.

Specific standards/criteria for neighborhood parks are as follows:

<u>Service area:</u>	¾ to 1 mile radius to serve walk-in
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	2 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Desirable Size:</u>	7-15 acres
<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Playground Softball or Baseball Field 50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped Multi-Purpose Field Half Basketball Courts Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter) Picnic Shelter with Grill Benches or Bench Swings
<u>*Alternate Facilities:</u>	Tennis Courts Nature Trails



Hillcrest Park



TYPICAL NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
7-15 Acres

Mini Parks

The function of a mini park is to provide very limited, isolated and/or unique recreational needs. Mini parks are the smallest classification of parks that exist. They are often served by school and church playgrounds. These parks are located within walking distance of the area served and they provide limited recreational activities. Their very small size requires intense development; there is little or no buffer between mini parks and adjacent property owners. *Water Tower Park is an example of a mini park in Winterville.*

Specific standards/criteria for mini parks are as follows:

Service area: ¼ to ½ mile radius to serve the walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations

Acreage/Population Ratio: 0.5 acres per 1,000 persons

Desirable Size: ±1 acre

Typical Facilities (one or more):

Playground
Half Basketball Courts
Picnic Tables
Benches or Bench Swings
Open Play Area

***Alternate Facilities:** Tennis Courts
Nature Trails





TYPICAL MINI PARK

Linear Parks/Greenways

A linear park is an area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, et cetera. An example of a linear park near Winterville is the South Tar River Greenway, which is one of the Greenville Greenways System. Linear parks are developed for several reasons, including:

- 1) Connectivity to existing recreational facilities.
- 2) Facilitation of public right-of-ways.
- 3) Meeting of public demand.

As such, the length and size of linear parks vary considerably, depending on the terrain of the park land in existence and the distance between the entities to be connected. Such entities include parks, schools, homes, businesses and cultural/historical resources. In some cases, the primary reason for a linear park to be developed within a large land area is for the designated protection and management of the natural environment. In cases such as this, recreation opportunities are merely a secondary objective.



Unique or Special Use Facilities



The unique (or special use) facilities are park types that exist for the sole purpose of enhancing or utilizing a special man-made or natural feature of land or water. They can include beaches, parkways, historical sites, sites of archeological significance, a swimming pool, conservation easements, flood plains, etc. Minimum standards relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry for this category of park. Notwithstanding, a size that is sufficient to

Emphasis is on man-made/natural resources for activity, such as fishing on the Lumber River

protect and interpret the resource, while providing optimum use for residents and visitors, is considered to be a desirable outcome..

Open Space

While it is realistic and appropriate to adopt population–based standards for park land and facilities, 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 for the protection of the significant natural areas contained therein.

Public open space is defined as: *any land acquired for the purpose of keeping it in a (primarily) undeveloped state.* The functions of open space include:

1. Preservation of drainage areas for water supplies (watersheds)
2. Protection of areas which are particularly well suited for growing crops (farmland preservation)
3. Protection of communities to prevent urban sprawl (greenbelts)
4. Protection of wildlife habitat (sanctuaries)
5. Protection of approach and take-off areas near airports (clear zones)
6. Protection of undevelopable land (landfills)
7. Protection of areas aesthetically pleasing for a corridor (viewshed).



Farmland Preservation

4.5 EVALUATION OF PARK LAND NEEDS

EXISTING ACREAGE

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) developed standards that were intended as guidelines for use at the local level. However, there has recently been a change to how standards of service are calculated. There is no longer a national standard of “x” number of acres of parkland per 1,000 persons, as this method of calculation is now recognized as deficient. The current NRPA methodology calls on each community to determine its own defining blend of natural, social and economic characteristics. Each community is given the opportunity of developing its own standard, or Level of Service (LOS), tailored to an appropriate range, quantity and quality of recreational facilities within its fiscal limits. However, it is cumbersome and expensive for every community to develop an individual standard. Therefore, the previous national standards are still used by most communities as a general way to establish a standard.

EXISTING PARK ACREAGE	
Winterville Recreation Park	24.0 acres
Hillcrest Park	6.6 acres
Water Tower Park	0.2 acres
Total Town Owned:	27.8 acres

When comparing a park system to national standards, one method is to examine the total acreage of the park system. The NRPA Park land guidelines (in acres) for the total service population of the Town of Winterville are provided in the table below. The acreage requirement is based on the population ratio method (acres of park land per population of 1,000) pre-established for each classification of parks.

**PARK ACREAGE BY CLASSIFICATION
(Based on NRPA Guidelines)**

TYPE OF PARK	Existing Acreage	Recommended for 2016 Population 9,634	Recommended for 2026 Population 10,271*
REGIONAL PARK 10 acres/1,000 persons	0 acres	NA	NA
DISTRICT PARK 5 acres/1,000 persons	0 acres	48.17 acres	51.40 acres
COMMUNITY PARK 2.5 acres/1,000 persons	24.0 acres	24.85 acres	25.67 acres
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK 2 acres/1,000 persons	6.6 acres	19.30 acres	20.54 acres
MINI PARK 0.5 acres/1,000 persons	0.2 acres	4.80 acres	5.14 acres

* Projected growth based on .65% annual growth rate (see Section 2.2 of this document)

Following a summation of park acreage, it has been determined that the Town of Winterville does not meet the national and state acreage guidelines for comprehensive park systems. (See the total existing acreage as compared to the total recommended acreage in the table above.) The Town does not currently operate a District or Regional Park. Usually, those types of larger parks are operated by large cities and/or counties or State parks systems and these categories do not directly apply to this study. It should be noted that other, non-Town owned parks and recreation facilities located within the County or nearby offer residents additional leisure and recreation opportunities.



Winterville Recreation Park is a Community Park operated by the Town of Winterville, Recreation Department. This facility provides athletic fields for active recreation as well as other amenities such as the following: walking trails, a playground, two (2) concession stands, roofed and lighted batting cages, one (1) large picnic pavilion, and public restrooms. While this park meets the acreage requirements for the current population of the Town

of Winterville (according to the NRPA guidelines), it is estimated that there will be a deficit in Community Park Acreage of about two (2) acres by the year 2026.



Hillcrest Park

The Town of Winterville operates two (2) additional recreational facilities. These include Hillcrest Park, which is a Neighborhood Park, and Water Tower Park, which is a Mini Park. However, according to the NRPA guidelines (which are shown for Winterville in the tables following this discussion), there still remains a deficit of approximately 12.7 acres of Neighborhood Park space in the Town of Winterville.

Additionally, the current deficit for mini parks in the Town of Winterville is approximately 4.6 acres. However, comments from residents and Town staff (which were noted during community meetings and local interviews) have indicated that the existing Water Tower Park location is lacking the typical amenities that would ever support leisure or recreation activities in the future. Through other

Water Tower Park

qualitative data collected via discussions with members of the community, it is possible that much of the need for small area parks, such as the mini parks described in this section of the Master Plan, may already be provided by such entities as private, church, and school facilities in the community. Therefore, the demand for additional public mini parks in the Town of Winterville may be rather low.

4.6 EVALUATION OF FACILITY NEEDS

The results of local standards established by the National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA), the North Carolina Department of Environment & Natural Resources, and (foremost) the Town of Winterville have been compiled (Table 1) in order to assess the current and future facility needs (Table 2), as follows:

Table 1: LOCAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES

Facility	NRPA Standards	NCDENR Standards	Town of Winterville Standards (Recommended)
Fields			
Adult Baseball	1/12,000	1/5,000	1/4,500
Youth Baseball	1/5000	1/5000	1/5000
Softball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Football	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Soccer	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Courts			
Basketball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/2,000
Volleyball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Shuffleboard	1/5000	1/5000	1/5000
Horseshoe	1/12,000	1/5000	1/5000
Outdoor Areas			
Picnic Shelter	N/A	1/3,000	1/3,000
Playground Activities	N/A	1/3,000	1/3,000
Amphitheater	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Trails			
Walking/Hiking	1/region	0.4 mile/1,000	.5 mile/1,000
Equestrian	N/A	0.4 mile/1,000	0.4 mile/1,000
Camping	N/A	2.5 sites/1,000	2.5 sites/1,000
Archery Area	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/50,000
Specialized			
Community Center	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Swimming Pool	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Golf Course	1/25,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Bicycling (Urban)	N/A	1/25,000	1/25,000
Auditorium	1/20,000	N/A	N/A
Canoeing/Boating			
Streams/Lakes	N/A	0.2 mile/1,000	0.2 mile/1,000
Stream/Lake Access	N/A	1/10 miles	1/10 miles

Where the Town of Winterville standards deviate from the state and national standards, current demands on Park and Recreation programs have been taken into account.



Table 2: EXISTING AND RECOMMENDED PUBLIC FACILITIES

Facility	Town of Winterville Standard (Recommended)	Existing Facilities	Current Demand (pop. 9,634)	10-Year Demand (pop. 10,271 estimate)
Fields				
Adult Baseball	1/4,500	0	2	2
Youth Baseball	1/5,000	4	2	2
Softball	1/5,000	1	2	2
Football	1/10,000	0	1	1
Soccer	1/10,000	0	1	1
Courts				
Basketball	1/5,000	2	2	5
Tennis	1/2,000	2	3	5
Volleyball	1/5,000	0	2	2
Shuffleboard	1/5,000	0	2	2
Horseshoe	1/5,000	0	2	2
Outdoor Areas				
Picnic Shelter	1/3,000	3	3	3
Playground	1/3,000	3	3	3
Amphitheater	1/10,000	1	1	1
Trails				
Walking/Hiking	.5 mile/1,000	.55 mi.	4.8 mi.	5.1 mi.
Equestrian	0.4 mile/1,000	NA	NA	NA
Camping	2.5 sites/1,000	NA	NA	NA
Archery Area	1/50,000	NA	NA	NA
Specialized				
Community Center	1/20,000	0	0	0
Swimming Pool	1/20,000	0	0	0
Golf Course	1/20,000	NA	NA	NA
Bicycling (Urban)	1/25,000	NA	NA	NA
Auditorium	N/A	NA	NA	NA
Canoeing/Boating				
Streams/Lakes	0.2 mile/1,000	0	0	0
Stream/Lake Access	1/10 miles	0	1/10 mi.	1/10 mi.

From this exercise, we have concluded that the Town of Winterville exceeds typical recommendations for their amount of Youth Baseball Fields and is currently meeting the standard for Picnic Shelters. However, the addition of (2) Adult Baseball Fields, (1) one Soccer, and (1) one Football Field could possibly be warranted. According to the NRPA standards, there appears to be a deficit of one (1) Tennis Court. Facilities for Volleyball, Horseshoe Pits, and Shuffleboard Courts are not currently available at all in the town of Winterville. There may be a need of at least two (2) each of these amenities – depending totally on community interest that is expressed in meetings and discussions; and, by completed surveys.

To summarize, listed below are the results of recreational facility needs assessment, both current and for the future, based on Town of Winterville standards, not on community input. It should be noted that community input is the primary guide in the development of the comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Facility	Current Short Fall	Future Short Fall if Current Need is Met
Adult Baseball	2	0
Softball	1	1
Football	1	0
Soccer	1	0
Tennis	1	0
Shuffleboard	2	0
Horse Shoe Pits	2	0
Volleyball Court	2	0
Walking/Hiking Trails	3.5 miles	.3 miles

- END OF SECTION -

SECTION 5 GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan serves as a map for the future development of recreation facilities in the Town of Winterville. As identified in the inventory portion of this report (Section 3), there are three (3) separate, existing recreational facilities owned and operated by the Town of Winterville. These facilities offer both active and passive recreation opportunities. The plan incorporates recommendations to accomplish the objectives set forth in the Master Plan. These recommendations are divided into the following categories:

- Roles of The Town of Winterville Providers
- Roles of Other Recreation Providers
- Park Proposals and Recommendations
- Facility Proposals and Recommendations
- Staffing
- Policies
- Priorities for Development

A list of recommendations was identified in the 2005 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan and broken out into Short-Term, Mid-Term and Long-Term Goals. Winterville has been diligent in addressing either completely or partially these comments with 71% of the Short-Term Goals completed, 60% of the Mid-Term Goals completed and 50% of the Long-Term Goals completed. While some of the recommendations can truly never be fully completed, the Town demonstrates its dedication for improving recreational programs and facilities for the citizens of Winterville.

5.2 ROLES OF THE TOWN OF WINTERVILLE

The Town of Winterville should continue to offer recreational opportunities at existing parks and support the development of future parks and greenway trails for local residents and visitors alike. This is especially true for addressing connectivity to park and recreational facilities for youth and senior citizens.



Facilities, events, and programs should be the shared responsibilities

To avoid overextending park staff, the Town needs to continue to investigate various partnerships with all the other recreation providers and community groups. At this time, the Parks and Recreation Department partners with other recreation providers in the area as listed in Section 5.3 of this plan. These partnerships should be further developed and new partnership possibilities explored, especially with the proposed addition of future parks and greenways to the park system.

5.3 ROLES OF OTHER RECREATION PROVIDERS

Public Sector

Pitt County



A number of Winterville residents report using other Pitt County park facilities for at least a portion of their recreation needs. A strengthened partnership between the Winterville and the Pitt County parks and recreation departments would be of mutual benefit as it is difficult for one entity to provide all of the necessary programming and facilities for the community. Strong, honest communication between departments and elected officials is the key to fostering a successful relationship between the County and Winterville.

Pitt County Schools

The Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation Department is dedicated to maximizing the utilization of human, physical, and financial resources with the cooperative efforts of other agencies and organizations in order to impact the quality of life for all citizens in Pitt County.

Prior to the ratification of the Community Schools Legislation in 1977, the Pitt County Board of Commissioners had researched avenues for providing recreation



services in Pitt County. Reports show that it was difficult to determine a means for working with both well-developed recreation departments, as well as very small communities lacking a recreation organization. Realizing that any County recreation program would be dependent on the use of school facilities, the Community Schools Program seemed to be a logical venue for this development. Thus the original vision for Pitt County Community Schools became to maximize the utilization of school facilities by encouraging more citizen involvement and developing recreation programs/activities for all ages.

The Community Schools and Recreation Department exemplifies a tremendous partnership between the Pitt County Board of Commissioners and the Pitt County

Board of Education. A landmark event for the Department was the opening of the Pitt County Recreation Center in July of 2005. The Recreation Center houses the department offices as well as multi-purpose activity and meeting space. Through the utilization of this center, as well as thirty-five school facilities, thousands of citizens are served each year with programs,

With strong support and ownership of the two largest governmental agencies in Pitt County, Community Schools and Recreation has evolved into a department that coordinates the use of facilities in thirty-five schools; provides for greater citizen involvement through volunteerism; plans, implements, and coordinates recreation programs for citizens of all ages; works cooperatively with agencies and organizations throughout Pitt County and North Carolina; coordinates an After-School Program in twelve elementary schools; and works collaboratively with schools and communities to develop school parks across the county.

City of Greenville

Greenville City Hall

The Recreation and Parks Department provides a variety of athletic, recreational, and arts and crafts activities for all ages and special populations. There are more than 25 parks and recreational facilities, includes gymnasiums, recreation and community centers, swimming pools, tennis courts, a soccer complex, softball and baseball fields, playgrounds, a greenway, as well as The Town Common, Greenville Amphitheater, River Park North, Bradford Creek Public Golf Course, the Aquatics and Fitness Center, the Extreme Park, and River Birch Tennis Center.



Town of Ayden



Ayden Town Hall

Ayden Arts and Recreation offices are located in the former Ayden High School at 4354 Lee Street. The Department includes the supervision of arts programs, recreation, and athletic programs. It is responsible for Ayden's Parks: J.J. Brown Park (New St.), Veterans' Park (Third St.) and the Ayden District Park (3864 Jolly Rd.). The District Park is home to the popular splash pad (open summer months). All three parks have picnic shelters available for rent.

Town of Farmville

The Recreation Department plans, coordinates, and oversees activities for all ages. The Department hosts activities for youth, teens, adults and seniors in the Town of Farmville and surrounding areas. Programs are offered in the areas of arts, sports, fitness, outdoor recreation and special events.



Farmville Town Hall

Pitt County Council on Aging



The Pitt County Council on Aging, Inc. is a non-profit agency that is committed to improving the quality of life for older Americans through advocacy, services, life enrichment activities, and friendship. With locations in Bethel, Greenville, Grifton, Fountain, and Farmville, the Council provides opportunities for both recreation and physical fitness. A partnership between the Council on Aging and the Parks and Recreation Department could benefit both agencies. The Recreation Department can help to expand the opportunities for physical fitness and senior sports activities, while the members of the Council on Aging could provide volunteer help with future Recreation Department activities. Senior residents of the Town have good experience, knowledge, and creativity that will be of great benefit to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Town of Winterville Police Department

The Town (in conjunction with the Winterville Police Department) hosts activities such as “National Night Out” and “After School Hoops” where youth play basketball with off duty officers as part of the after school program.



Private Sector

Town of Winterville Chamber of Commerce



The area Chamber of Commerce and the Town Parks and Recreation Department, often partner for youth athletic competitions and other various Town activities.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Pitt County



Boys & Girls Clubs of the Coastal Plain partners with local businesses to raise funds and awareness for the organization. By patronizing these businesses, residents and visitors support the Clubs and improve the community through positive youth development. The Town currently provides funding for this organization in its budget.

FROGGS

The Friends of Greenville Greenways (FROGGS) is a non-profit, all volunteer organization that fosters awareness of the importance of greenways, advocates for their use, and solicits funding for their development and construction within the City of Greenville and the County of Pitt in North Carolina. FROGGS recently raised over \$ 7,000 to install benches, picnic tables, and trash cans along the South Tar River Greenway.



Riley's Army

Riley's Army provides support to children with cancer and their families in Eastern North Carolina.

Private Developers

Commercial and residential developers are an important component for Winterville in providing resources and opportunities for the Town. Developers can assist the Town by the dedication, construction, and/or reservation of future park sites, open space, and/or greenway corridors during the overall development process. Town ordinances can require developers to assist in developing park facilities and other amenities in their subdivisions or provide funds to the Town for use in future projects.



Ordinances can require that open space be provided in development

5.4 PARK PROPOSALS / RECOMMENDATIONS

General Recommendations

General recommendations are designed to provide guidance for the operations, goals, administration, and growth of the Town of Winterville Parks and Recreation Department. Many of these recommendations depend upon successful collaboration between the Parks and Recreation Department, other Town departments, local and state agencies, and successful coordination with previous planning efforts of other local municipalities.

➔ (General) Recommendation #1: Facility and Program Accessibility

Every park and recreation facility the Town of Winterville Parks and Recreation Department operates 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 Parks and Recreation Department appears to be in compliance with these regulations at existing facilities; however, as new facilities are acquired or developed, priority should be given to the continual upgrading of existing facilities that, perhaps, become non-compliant.



➔ (General) Recommendation #2: Previous Plans/Recommendations

Consider the recommendations of various other local and regional master plans in tandem with this plan.

Winterville's Previous Plans:

Comprehensive Recreation and Park Plan (December 2005)

This plan's purpose was to identify and address the needs of Winterville citizens as they relate to park and recreation programs, facilities, and parks offered by the Town over the next five-ten years. During the planning process, two public meetings were held with the public identifying walking trails, instead of various sport activities as a popular recreation activity. Participants also stated they travel to Greenville to participate in various recreational activities, including walking trails. Opportunities identified by the citizens included the need for walking trails. A proposed mid-term goal (3-5 years) identified in the plan was the development of outdoor recreation opportunities (i.e., greenways system). (*from Winterville's Pedestrian Plan*)

Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan (May 2009)

“The purpose of Winterville Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan (Plan) is to give guidance on how to make Winterville a walkable community. As a rapidly growing bedroom community of Greenville, the pressure to preserve its small town character while promoting economic development, balancing automobile dependency, and providing the quality of life new and existing residents seek is a challenge for the Town. Therefore, with strong support from the public and governing body, Winterville received a grant from NCDOT and provided matching funds to develop this Plan to address opportunities for connectivity, programs, policies, partnerships, and funding to improve and sustain the pedestrian environment of the Town.”

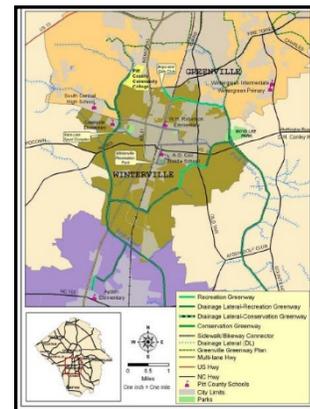
Other Regional Planning Documents:

“Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan” for the Greenville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (2011)

The purpose of this Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan is to provide clear priorities, tools and programs for improving the bicycle and pedestrian environments in the Greenville urban areas, which included the Town of Winterville and other municipalities in Pitt County. The plan chief outcome was an integrated, seamless framework for alternative transportation throughout the region.

Pitt County Greenway Plan 2025 (February 2006)

The goals of this plan are to "encourage design of walkable communities with a mixed-use core to reduce vehicle miles traveled" and to "connect neighborhoods to nearby parks, shopping, schools and other neighborhoods forming part of a multimodal transportation network". This conceptual plan identified 215 linear miles of greenway primarily along major and critical streams and rivers in Pitt County. The plan proposed 14.7 miles (7.17 miles within Town limits, 7.53 miles within Winterville’s ETJ). Winterville’s proposed greenways consists of a mixture of trail types: Type 2 (limited natural surface), Type 4 (hardened structural surface), Type 5 (dual trail surface), and/or Type 6 (On-road, sidewalk and bikeways).



Greenville Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan **(November 2008)**

The purpose of this comprehensive plan is to update the 2000 Comprehensive Plan by assessing the changes that are occurring, initiating a public discussion on future park needs while providing a road map for the future development of its recreation and park system.

➔ Recommendation #3: Greenways/Multi-use Trails



The community surveys, public workshops and stakeholder interviews all ranked greenways and similar type activities (walking, jogging, and biking etc.) in the top 3 most desirable activities needed in Winterville.

The Town should work with Pitt County and the City of Greenville to determine which greenway trail segments (identified by previous planning efforts) should be constructed to provide the greatest opportunity and connections for its residents.

➔ Recommendation #4: Recreation Easements

The Town of Winterville should encourage the coordination and planning for future utility easements with greenway facilities. Easements should be established to allow for the inclusion of recreation facilities where possible. Where new development occurs, the Town should work with the developer to provide right-of-ways or easements for proposed and future greenway facilities.

➔ Recommendation #5: Partnership Agreements

It is recommended that the Town Staff meet with existing and potential partners to determine needs and possible partnership opportunities. The Town should begin this process by developing an approach to each potential partner to establish an understanding of each entity's needs; and ultimately, result in a partnership agreement. The process will require periodic progress meetings with each partner to facilitate the partnerships goals and objectives. This may entail presentations to the partner's board or committee.



→ Recommendation #6: Educational and Stewardship Programming



The Town of Winterville should develop a consistent environmental education program and interpretative facilities at park locations and along future greenway corridors as opportunities arise for future park development. These programs should include stewardship and community volunteer programs geared to the management of natural areas and wildlife habitats.

→ Recommendation #7: Contiguous Property Acquisition

When property that is contiguous to existing parks becomes available, all reasonable efforts should be made to acquire the property. Large acreage parks offer recreation amenities that can only be achieved on large sites. The acquisition of contiguous property next to Town Parks should be of high priority to the Town of Winterville. Efforts should be made immediately to seek 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 the opportunity to use properties for recreation while providing the immediate benefits of preservation. Numerous grant sources can be used for land acquisition. Extreme care should be exercised in choosing the correct process(es) and timing for acquisition to meet the full potential afforded by grants.

→ Recommendation #8: Acceptance of Fee Simple Land Donation

If land is offered to the Town of Winterville as 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 useful and beneficial for the Town to assume ownership. Not all donated land has to be developed into a park in order to be useful. Any land donation to the Town 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) is unknown. If donated property were properly managed, the revenue and future significance of the property would far exceed its current contribution to the tax base. If the Town chooses not to accept land donation of a particular property, efforts should be made to assist the property owner with contacting an agency that accepts land donations or conservation easements.

5.5 EXISTING FACILITY PROPOSALS / RECOMMENDATIONS:

In Section 4, “Recreation Needs Assessment: Evaluation of Facility Needs”, specific facility needs were identified for the Town of Winterville by both the recreation guidelines set forth by the National Recreation and Parks Association and the community input process. Subsequently, Section 5 summarizes the Town’s needs for their existing/future facilities and makes recommendations for activities to be considered in the future development of the system.

NOTE: The proposed recommendations of this Master Plan were established based on what has developed since the implementation of the 2005 plan and those items anticipated or identified by previous planning efforts (Winterville, Greenville, Pitt County etc.) through the next ten-year planning period (2016-2026).

Hillcrest Park

Hillcrest Park is the only neighborhood park facility in Winterville. It provides opportunities for both passive and active recreation. The majority of recommendations proposed for Hillcrest park from the 2005 plan have been addressed and recommendations listed below do not supersede- and are intended to compliment- recommendations of the 2005 Winterville Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. After hearing suggestions at the local community meeting, studying the public survey responses, and having discussions with Town Staff, the following improvements to Hillcrest Park are recommended:



- Eliminate dead-end parking,
- Reconfigure parking and access to the park to make it more inviting.
- Replace or renovate restroom building with more than just new paint.
- Incorporate a splash pad or other signature feature to encourage visitors to use the park.
- Maintenance should occur on an ongoing basis.
- All park amenities should be assessed for compliance to A.D.A. standards.

Winterville Recreation Park



Winterville Recreation Park is the primary park facility for recreation in the Town of Winterville. It also provides opportunities for both passive and active recreation. The following improvements to Town Park are recommended:

- Update the playground
- Acquire adjacent parcels when possible
- Improve parking
- Add picnic shelters
- Maintenance should occur on an ongoing basis.
- All park amenities should be assessed for compliance to A.D.A. standards.

Water Tower Park

Water Tower Park is a small pocket park that was constructed after the 2005 comprehensive plan was produced. Since the park is landlocked with no room for expansion it is best to continue doing routine maintenance to keep the park elements in good working order. The following improvements to Water Tower Park are recommended:



- Update the playground equipment as needed,
- Add a picnic shelter

Greenway Network

While the Town of Winterville only has .55 miles of greenway trail in its network currently, there have been several significant planning efforts completed pertaining to greenways and other multi-modal type facilities. Greenway trails, and those activities they support, continually score at the top of public input method used in gathering feedback. This may be due to the flexibility and broad user groups that greenway trail facilities offer and the relatively low cost of

construction. An expanding Greenway network should connect several destinations within the Town including parks, schools, assisted living communities and shopping centers to each other as well as provide safe transportation paths to Downtowns, residential neighborhoods as well as tie to other neighboring community trail systems and larger regional destinations.

Winterville should coordinate future planning efforts with other town projects (Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan) as well as any adjacent municipalities to maximize efforts and minimize cost. Additional connections should be explored and developed as opportunities arise.

After evaluating the top greenway/multi-use trail and pedestrian plan priority recommendations (plans listed above), the following recommendations are suggested:

- Produce a feasibility study for the top projects identified by the previous planning efforts to prioritize projects and gather site specific details and costs associated with each project.
- Based on the current planning efforts and community input the top five (5) projects are (in no particular order): Fork Swamp Creek and Swift Creek Greenway Trail Segments, and the Firetower and Railroad connector trails, connecting Cedar Ridge property to East Main property.
- Consider future facilities such as an “Indoor Community Center” to provide trail head type amenities and parking.



Fork Swamp Creek



Swift Creek

Adult/Youth Baseball/T-Ball

Currently, The Town of Winterville meets its current need for youth baseball fields. It is recommended however, that two (2) additional adult baseball/softball fields be constructed to meet current and future needs. All existing fields should be evaluated for needed maintenance issues and updating. Any additional adult and youth baseball fields should be developed to ease the ability of leagues to host tournament play.



Tournament Baseball

Softball

*Pitt
County
Babe
Ruth
Softball
League
(13 up)*



Currently, the Town of Winterville needs one (1) additional softball field to meet the standards established in this document. It is recommended that two (2) additional fields be provided to meet the current as well as future (10 year) standards. The Winterville Parks and Recreation Department has offered fast/slow pitch softball, adult slow pitch softball, and youth fast pitch travel softball tournaments during spring seasons. The Pitt County Girls Softball League (PCGSL) plays at the Sara A. Law Memorial Softball complex, (ages 8-18).

Basketball

Currently, The Town of Winterville meets its need for Basketball Courts. All outdoor courts should be reviewed annually for court resurfacing and lighting needs.

Winterville Parks & Recreation in partnership with the Winterville Police Department team up to offer residents *Winterville After School Hoops* (WASH). After School Hoops is



a program for children in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. WASH takes place at the Hillcrest Park basketball court every Monday and Thursday from 4:00-6:00 pm.

Youth Football



Currently, The Town of Winterville does not meet its need for football fields. There is a need for one (1) football field, which may be easily accommodated by strategic sharing of fields for Soccer or other activities, but this effort can occasionally run into scheduling conflicts and is considered as only temporary.

Soccer

Soccer has become a very popular sport among youth in this country and it is a growing trend among young adults. Soccer registration has grown significantly among youth in North Carolina and continues to grow. The Town of Winterville should consider providing one (1) additional location for residents to play soccer.



Lil' Strikers Soccer Team

Indoor Recreation Center / Multi-Flex Facility

A year-round, indoor facility is essential for the success of the Winterville Parks and Recreation Department. After hearing suggestions at the community meetings, studying the public survey responses, reviewing previous plans, and tabulating steering committee interviews it is apparent that an indoor “multi-flex”

Indoor recreation facilities require intense planning and multiple funding partners.



type facility ranked as the greatest need for the Town of Winterville. A large indoor type facility, which can adapt to trends over time and accommodate various programs, was identified in the 2005 plan as one of

the top three (3) needed amenities in Winterville. It was also identified as one of the Town's 10-year projects and has maintained its standing as the most important facility missing from Winterville by its residents and 95% of the Stakeholders. While new potential sites as well as reclaiming of existing sites should be considered for future development, the magnitude of such an undertaking will require partnership opportunities with area businesses, non-profits, and other organizations to be formed to ensure a broad foundation of support will lead to a sustainable project outcome.

The following recommendations and considerations are proposed:

- The facility should serve as a “hub” for Winterville recreation.
- It is recommended that the facility be placed along designated pedestrian routes and greenways to provide connectivity to adjacent destinations and other recreational amenities.
- Since walking type activities continually rank as one of the top activities, accommodations should be made to allow for this activity year-round.
- The Town should consider installing a splash pad type facility at center
- The location for this facility should be centrally located as much as possible with special consideration given to the areas identified for projected growth (south, southeast).

Tennis Courts

Currently, The Town of Winterville does not meet its standards for Town owned public tennis courts (-3 courts). The tennis club (discussed in Section 3) is private.

This Master Plan recommends that the Town of Winterville seek a partnership with the local/regional United States Tennis Association (USTA) in order to encourage participation of tennis in Winterville and to assist with siting any new courts and developing programming responsibilities.



Baywood Racquet Club

Splash Pad or Other Aquatic Feature

NOTE: The Parks and Recreation Survey had been circulated prior to the opening of the Winterville Aquaventure Facility and classes. Therefore, the results do not reflect resident response to the current list of programs offered at this site. The information, along with the facility inventory, and comparison to adjacent communities, will help guide the Town of Winterville in determining the futures parks and recreation programs and facility needs.



There is support within the community for the construction of a splash play facility in the Winterville Parks and Recreation system. These facilities will provide a recreation opportunity that would provide respite from summer heat as well as a safe and accessible amenity for all members of the family.

It is recommended the Town consider the future development of this kind of facility to meet reported community desires. (it has been suggested during public meetings and survey results that a splash pad could be installed at Hillcrest Park or at a Community Center type facility)

Playground Activities

According to recreation standards, Winterville currently meets the need for public playgrounds. However, existing playgrounds should be inspected and evaluated for safety hazards and all playgrounds surfacing should be updated per the Consumer Product Safety Commission Guidelines (CPSCG). www.cpsc.gov



The need for additional playgrounds should be examined as the population of the Town grows. New playground amenities should include activities for various age groups and physical abilities. It is also recommended that new private development should be required to install playgrounds or similar facilities based on the planned units proposed. This will help address the need for these facilities on the west side of town as identified by survey results, public meetings and stakeholder interviews.

Staffing and Maintenance

This Master Plan covers a planning period of ten (10) years. The facilities to be implemented during that time as part of the recommendations will require some level of additional staffing and additional funding for facility operation and maintenance. Consideration of these budgetary impacts should be made prior to facility implementation.

END OF SECTION

SECTION 6

Action Implementation Plan

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes how Winterville can implement a safe, convenient, and usable park and recreation system through the execution of its established goals in the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016. The strategy for achieving goals involves the recommended park, recreation, and greenway facilities/programs discussed in Section 5. Section 6 deals with strategies and opportunities, key implementation steps (implementation policies), necessary staffing, and methods for developing facilities. Together, these sections form the implementation program.



The Parks and Recreation Master Plan contains recommendations for both facilities and programming.

The results of Winterville Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 are based on the following discovery methods: (1) a review of the study area that is within the Town limits, (2) an analysis of the existing parks and facilities; (3) community input; and (4) recreation standards that have been generically developed for municipal governments. The Master Plan is designed to be action-oriented and serve as a tool in the improvement and enhancement of the park system in Winterville.



Identification of sufficient funding is a crucial element that is required to implement the Master Plan, considering in particular, the Town budget constraints. The North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a guide by which

inadequate funding for park and recreation facilities may be identified. *Insufficient funding* will be a key issue that will need to be addressed in the upcoming years if governments continue to provide basic minimum services. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, North Carolina and its local governments are 33% below the national average in the funding of parks and recreation services.

To meet the existing and future needs of Winterville Parks and Recreation Department, the goals and objectives that are identified in the Master Plan, must be seriously considered for implementation. The Town will need to continue to establish annual budgets for parks and recreation based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, and operations/maintenance costs.

Winterville Recreation Advisory Board



To help guide and inform the decision making process concerning Parks and Recreation related issues this plan recommends careful review and considerations made by the Winterville Recreation Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board is responsible for recommending recreational programs, policies, procedures, park development, maintenance, budget recommendation, and acquisition of land. This includes assisting in the development and staffing of these programs and events.

At the time of this study, the board consisted of ten (10) members – six (6) of which reside within the Town limits at the time of their appointment and three (3) that may reside outside the Town limits now; but, were within Winterville Township at the time of their appointment. There was also one (1) alternate member, who may reside either within the Town limits or outside the Town limits, but within the township at the time of his or her appointment.

Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Goals Framework



To help to guide the philosophy and future efforts of the Winterville Parks and Recreation Department, it is important to establish a vision statement based on the vision of Town Staff on behalf of the community in which it serves. The following vision statement, mission, core values, and goals are based on interviews with Department Staff and serve as a framework for which more formal language may be developed:

Vision

"We envision an innovative, inclusive, and interconnected system of parks and recreation services that promotes recreation, health, and community cohesion as integral to a livable community."

Mission

"Deliver quality recreation opportunities and inviting parks, Greenways and recreation facilities to the residents of Winterville. "

Core Values

1. **Conservation** - We value the conservation of parks, natural and open spaces, and ecological resources.
2. **Inclusiveness** - We value creating, enhancing, expanding and promoting opportunities for participation in and enjoyment of parks and recreation services for all the residents of the Town of Winterville.
3. **Connectivity** - We value an interconnected parks and facilities network that provides access to the parks system across Winterville.
4. **Stewardship** - We value efficient and effective management of our assets and stewardship of our parks and open space, to sustain them for future generations.
5. **Quality of Life** - We value the health & well-being of the Winterville community, and the benefits that parks, recreation, and open space offer to our quality of life.



Goals

1. Provide a quality, diversified Parks and Recreation system that supports opportunities for active and passive recreation and conserves and enhances significant environmental or historical resources and features within Town.
2. Manage a local system of off-street greenway trails and



- sidewalks that links parks, open spaces, significant environmental features, public facilities, and areas of interest.
3. Incorporate features and amenities into parks that fit the local context; contribute to environmental sustainability; and are accessible, safe, and easy to maintain for the long term.
 4. Develop and operate recreation facilities to support core recreation program areas or economic development goals and meet identified recreation needs.
 5. Serve as a local recreation coordinator, forging partnerships and fostering opportunities for countywide collaboration among all major recreation providers in the provision of parks, facilities, programs, and services. Promote, coordinate, facilitate, or provide recreation programs that serve local needs, support community livability, connect the community with their parks, and encourage greater recreation participation in areas not served by other providers.
 6. Use effective and innovative funding methods to build, maintain, operate, and promote the Town's Parks and Recreation system.
 7. Develop, train, and support a professional Parks and Recreation staff that effectively serves the community in the realization of the goals and objectives of this Plan.
 8. Engage Winterville residents in the planning, stewardship, and programming of park and recreation resources, and provide effective community outreach and marketing to increase public awareness and support of recreation services.



Park and Recreation Capital Expenditures

The population estimates used in the analysis of municipal recreation expenditures were certified estimates in July 2012. The estimates were calculated by the State Demographer, the Office of State Budget and Management, and the North Carolina Office of the Governor. The figures were provided online at <http://demog.state.nc.us>. The per capita expenditure figures are from the *North Carolina Parks and Recreation Services Study, Fiscal Year 2013-2014 - Focus on Facilities*. Municipal Per Capita Expenditures are provided here to provide a comparable perspective.

The following government entities represent North Carolina Municipal Recreation Departments serving population sizes *similar* to that of the Town of Winterville. This list is organized from least to most dollars spent Per Capita.



Table 6.1.1- Municipal Recreation Department Expenditures

Recreation Providers with populations of approximately 7,000-10,000 (Class E Agency)	Population Estimate 2011-2012	Per Capita Expenditure 2011-2012
Forest City Parks and Recreation	7,133	\$190.11
Waynesville Parks and Recreation	9,922	\$179.41
*Graham County Parks and Recreation	8,327	\$160.66
Clinton Recreation and Parks	8,810	\$132.55
Oak Island Parks and Recreation	8,594	\$110.23
Morehead City Parks and Recreation	8,830	\$85.52
Black Mountain Recreation and Parks	8,526	\$77.56
Winterville Parks and Recreation	9,154	\$51.54
Siler City Parks and Recreation	8,713	\$47.13
Selma Parks and Recreation	7,671	\$45.47
Pineville Parks and Recreation	7,747	\$43.22
Summerfield Parks and Recreation	8,051	\$38.16

* Unlike the other municipalities in this list, this is a County Department.

From the table above it is clear to see that there is some variation in the amount of per capita expenditure by municipalities of similar population size to Winterville. Winterville per capita expenditure is lower than the average for municipalities with similar populations.

To meet the existing and future recreation needs of Winterville’s population, the goals and objectives, which are identified in the Master Plan, must be seriously considered for implementation. The Town will need to continue to establish annual budgets for its parks and recreation facilities based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, and operations/maintenance costs. The operating budget should include costs for staff, operations, and general maintenance requirements.

The Capital Improvements Plan provided in the Appendix provides for the first 10-year period, 2016-2026, of the Master Plan recommendations and is broken into each fiscal year for implementation of specific projects.

6.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Studies have shown that economies are impacted *very positively* where bicycle, pedestrian, and recreational tourism is fostered and promoted; and where investments are made in bicycle/pedestrian facilities. The number of people who feel comfortable walking, riding bicycles, or participating active or passive recreation is a measure of the quality of life in that area.

Trails and Greenways



Trails and greenways are extremely popular amenities for vacationing bicyclists and pedestrians. Tourists and visitors to the area often return to communities that provide places (which are safely removed from busy roads) for walking and bicycling. Trails offer scenic recreation, which is suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities. Many times, lodging is in close

Greenways may encourage the use of overnight lodging for visitors

proximity to popular trails, thereby increasing occupancy for the owner. For residents in these locales, investments in trails and greenways can increase property values and improve the overall livability of a community, as well as attracting, retaining, and expanding tourism and the associated revenues.

Greenways, as vegetated buffers located adjacent to waterways, act as “filters” to clean the water, trapping nonpoint source pollutants. These pollutants which include sediment, pesticides, fertilizers, oil, gas, and other chemicals, are transported into streams, rivers, and/or lakes by stormwater when rain or snow events occur. Greenways, therefore, can reduce the need for expensive pre-treatment of the water supply by cleaning it before it reaches residents.



Greenway serves as a buffer for nearby stream

Investing dollars in greenways yield substantial community-wide returns. These returns are in the form of increased property values, business attraction, recreation revenue, and reduced water treatment and flooding costs. Not only are tourists attracted to these areas, but business leaders are selecting sites for the relocation and expansion of industries and corporations where the quality of life is high and recreation opportunities are abundant. Increasingly, corporations are recognizing the benefits of convenient fitness and recreation for their employees and are seeking these greenway amenities for potential locations.

Trail Development

The ongoing construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is proving to be a very wise economic investment for the communities through which they pass. Trails and pathways have a positive effect on nearby property values with homebuyers and business owners realizing the effect that such facilities bring to a community. According to research by the *Rails to Trails Conservancy*, there are vast amounts of people, who are using rail trails. It is easy to understand how communities can profit economically by meeting the needs of trail users: restaurants, convenience stores, bicycle and other merchandise shops, campgrounds, and alternate lodging. All of these types of entrepreneurs attribute the location of a nearby trail to at least a portion of their success. Realtors and homebuyers alike are recognizing the benefits of properties located near trails. Both locally and nationally, the construction of trails have proven to be a cost-effective use of public funds. In particular, multi-use trails allow more visitors and residents to replace automobile trips with non-motorized trips, thereby moving the citizenry closer to achieving public health objectives, including widely increased opportunities for physical exercise.



Parks

Research has substantiated the direct proportion between economic growth and the existence of parks and open space in communities and municipalities around the country. This growth includes increased property values in residential, urban, and industrial communities, as well as the increased revenue from tourists.

Increased Property Value



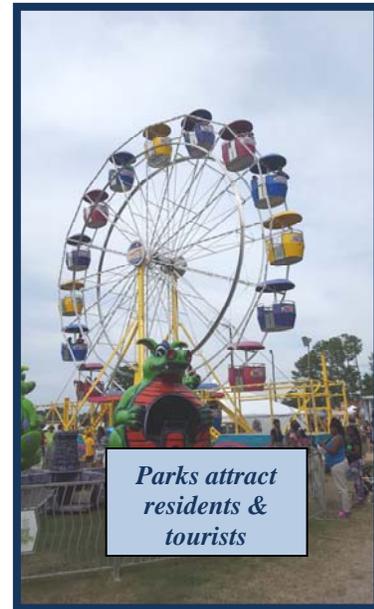
The real estate market consistently demonstrates that residents throughout the country are willing to invest larger amounts of money in properties that are located close to parks and open space areas than they would for homes that do

Park proximity attracts new housing development

not offer these types of amenities. 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, which were originally used to finance park acquisition and development.

Studies have also concluded that the positive relationship between park proximity and property value also holds true in low-income urban areas. In dense, urban neighborhoods, the value effect of nearby green space can be stronger than the resident's lot value, increasing the lot value and again, yielding higher property taxes, to perhaps fund the cost of the park.

The values of commercial properties also increase when parks or outdoor facilities such as outdoor festivals, movies, and restaurants are in the area. Studies indicate that "commercial asking rents" near park property exceed the rents in submarkets.



Tourism



A park often becomes the signature attraction for a community or municipality such as the Town of Winterville. It is often used as a marketing tool to attract residents, tourists, conventions, and businesses. Parks often shape the identity of the area and give residents (living there) a sense of pride and give tourists (visiting there) a reason to return on a regular basis for the same experience, or to attend additional facilities/events in the area.

Organized events held in public parks; arts festivals, athletic events, food festivals, concerts, plays, et cetera, often bring substantial positive economic impacts to their communities by filling hotel rooms and/or campsites, eating at local restaurants, enjoying various entertainment venues, and bringing customers to other local business enterprises.

6.3 OPPORTUNITIES AND STRATEGIES

Dedicated Sources of Local Funding

In order to leverage and provide matching funds for many of the programs listed above, the Town of Winterville should evaluate the existing departmental budget and funding for capital improvements to include the following:

- Property/Sales Tax
- General Obligation Bonds
- Fee In-Lieu of Contributions
- User Fees/Registration Fees

Property/Sales Tax Revenues

General tax revenues traditionally provide sources for general operations and maintenance of park systems for local governments. The Parks and Recreation Department is scheduled along with health, public safety, utilities, etc., in regular budgets established by the Town. Assessed valuation of real and personal property tax and sales tax provides the framework for the major portion of the tax base for the Town.

Traditionally ad valorem tax revenue has been the primary source of funding for the park and recreation enhancement of properties/facilities owned by local governments. '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. As such, communities often vote to raise their local tax rate temporarily in support of their park and recreation systems.



General Obligation Bonds

Many communities issue bonds that are typically approved by the 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 acquisition or improvement of park and recreation facilities. Total bond capacities for local governments are limited for parks and recreation, to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation. Since the issuance of bonds relies on the support of the voting population, the implementation of awareness programs is absolutely essential prior to a referendum vote.



General Obligation bonds are the preferred financing approach of the North Carolina Local Government Commission and the general securities market, because these instruments are backed by the full faith and credit of the issuer. That simply means that the bonds represent an encumbrance against the property tax base of the

issuing jurisdiction and therefore offer the best available security to the bond holder. The State of North Carolina gives the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). In

view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, borrowing of funds to develop new facilities may be necessary. Total bonding capacities for local government is limited for parks and recreation to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

The following are key factors to consider before using this financing instrument:

- In North Carolina, the issuance of General Obligation bonds does require a referendum of the voters within the issuing jurisdiction.
- The term of the debt may be extended to 20-30 years.
- The debt is publicly sold, so there are costs associated with the sale. These costs generally total 3% to 5% of the total bond principal. The issuance costs offset the lower interest rate and therefore, this instrument becomes more attractive as the size of the issuance increases and the issuance costs are spread over the larger debt. It has been found that this financing option becomes financially superior as the debt principal exceeds \$10-\$12 million.
- Generally, prepayment of the debt cannot be accomplished until reaching a call date. This usually occurs at around 75% of debt retirement.



Failure of the General Obligation Bond to be ratified by referendum could mean that the Town of Winterville could not go forward with an alternative approach to financing without substantially changing the scope of the project.

Fee In-Lieu of Contributions

Under the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), developers would have an option to pay a 'fee in lieu of' rather than to dedicate land for open space or recreation within conventional subdivisions. This

UDO's provide 'fee in lieu of' purchases of recreation amenities



program has proven to be successful for many local county and municipal

governments in providing a dedicated source of revenue, earmarked for future park improvement or development. The Town of Winterville may choose to revisit this source of revenue to study the feasibility of enhancing the fee in-lieu-of formula.

User and Registration Fees

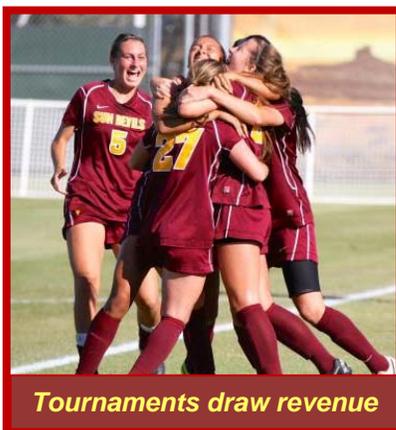


Communities throughout the nation employ a wide variety of user fees for public use of recreational programs/services within their recreation departments. The amount of the fee is usually determined by a portion of the recreation costs needed for improvements and operations. These user fees are typically levied for special facilities such as water parks and golf courses; however, they can also be charged for the use of trails and ball fields. Winterville should continue to generate revenue by charging user fees for use of facilities such as picnic shelters and community buildings in order to

cover operation and administrative costs. As the park system continues to develop, the Town should examine their fee structure to identify opportunities for additional revenue. The current user fees appear to be fair and reasonable for a majority of the Town residents. Elected officials should determine fees and charges; the fees should not be so high that persons of modest income would be denied the use of park facilities. Develop Facility Rental Policies for the various facilities that shall govern their time of use, which events are allowed, the associated cost, etc.



Town should collect user fees



Tournaments draw revenue

Facilities Fee Schedule Exceptions

The Town of Winterville seeks to provide access to quality facilities through the Town's Department of Parks and Recreation with the aim of enhancing the quality of life for all of its residents and patrons. The Town of Winterville recognizes that local non-profit organizations serving a public good may be unduly limited in access to these facilities owing to limited availability of funds. In addition, the Town of



Winterville recognizes the universal benefits of forming meaningful and lasting partnerships between the Town and local nongovernmental nonprofit and governmental organizations alike.

Recreation Department Cost Recovery

Revenue for the Parks and Recreation Department comes from two (2) primary sources - the Town's General Fund and the fees charged for facility rentals. Revenue from rental fees is currently not significant enough to support any one individual facility. The current total department cost recovery level is approximately 0% (see below).

Winterville Parks & Recreation User Fee Structure

Levels of Services/Pricing

Public Programs are basic in nature, are supported totally by tax dollars, and are available to the general public free of charge. These programs are beneficial to all tax payers even though only a few may attend.

Merit Programs are partially subsidized with tax dollars, but also have user fees attached to help recover some of their operating costs. These programs are beneficial to the community as a whole, but are primarily beneficial to the use of the program. Departmental goal cost recovery is 85% of the total program cost in this category for non-residents, and 60% recover for residents.

Private Programs are paid for entirely by the participant. These programs are beneficial only to the user and derive little to no benefit to the community as a whole. Departmental goal cost recovery is 125% of the total program cost in the category regardless of residency.

Classification of Recreation Program Offerings:

Youth Sports	Merit
Adult sports	Merit
Bus Trips	Private
Classes (CSI, Aerobics, Arts, Crafts)	Private
Christmas Tree Lighting	Public
Christmas Parade	Public
Letters to Santa	Public
Book Exchange	Public
Wiffleball Wednesday	Private
Easter Egg Hunt	Public
Day Camps	Merit/Private
Fantasy Football	Private
Evening with Santa	Merit
Cheerleading	Merit
Baton	Merit
Walking Club	Merit
Seniors Programs	Merit
Video Tournaments	Private
Tournaments	Merit

Fee Philosophy

There has historically not been a unified fee philosophy for the Winterville Town Parks and Recreation Department. A typical fee philosophy for Parks and Recreation departments is as follows: direct cost plus 30% to cover utilities, publication of activities/marketing materials, janitorial work, and facility maintenance. The existing fee schedule currently being used by the Department is a good start to managing future revenue generation but the Fees and Charges schedule should be included in the Winterville Code of Ordinances to help with standardization and transparency of how revenue is collected.



The Parks and Recreation annual budget is not structured to meet the example fee philosophy outlined above; and, expenses beyond those covered by fees are funded through General Fund revenues of the Town.

There are nationally accepted methodologies and best practices that should be implemented in the future to help decision makers and Department Staff use reliable guidelines and cost recovery targets for categories of service. This is not to promote inter-departmental comparisons (as parks, trails, and open space will naturally always have a lower cost recovery expectation than recreation due to the nature of the services). It is to provide each fund with standard and consistent descriptions of cost of service provisions to benchmark against itself over time - based on leadership guidance, departmental goals, and community values and expectations. This methodology can also be examined based on community input regarding “willingness to pay” and demand for additional services and facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Department seeks to achieve fair and equitable cost recovery levels. The Department should periodically revisit these levels to ensure that they are moving in a direction that seeks to sustain the quality of facilities, programs, and services now and into the future.

Cost Recovery and Subsidy Allocation Philosophy

Refining the subsidy and cost recovery philosophy is important as the Town works to sustain services in both the short and long term.

The creation of a cost recovery and subsidy allocation philosophy and policy is a key component to maintaining an agency's financial control, equitable pricing ability, and facilitating the identification of central services including facilities and programs. Important to the development of this philosophical undertaking is the backing of elected officials and Town staff, task groups, and ultimately, citizens. Whether or not noteworthy changes are called for, the organization should be certain that it philosophically aligns with its constituents. The development of a financial resource allocation philosophy and policy should be built upon a logical foundation, one such philosophy could be based upon the theory that those who benefit from parks and recreation services ultimately pay for services. Benefits to individuals and the community as a whole should be understood and determined by policy makers.



The identification of core programs and development of a cost recovery policy should be built on a very logical foundation; using the simple understanding of who is benefitting from recreation services and then



**Services
benefit
both
individuals
and groups
in the
community**

determining how the costs for that service should be offset. In the process, recreation programs and services may be sorted along a continuum of what delivers the greatest *community* benefit to what delivers the greatest *individual* benefit. The percentage of cost recovery for each type of recreational service (program or activity) is then resolved to create an overall cost recovery policy. Developing effective ongoing systems that help measure success in reaching cost recovery goals and anticipate potential pitfalls are reliant on the following:

- Understanding of current revenue streams and their sustainability.
- Pursuing all expenses and revenues for programs, facilities, and services to understand their contributions to overall department cost recovery.
- Analyzing who is benefitting from programs, facilities, and services and to what degree they should be subsidized.
- Accepting the full cost of each program (those direct and indirect costs associated with program delivery) and where the program fits on the continuum of who benefits from the program or service, to determine the appropriate cost recovery targets.

- Defining direct costs as those that normally exist mainly because of the program.
- Defining indirect costs as those that are typically costs that would exist anyway (like some fulltime staff, utilities, administration, debt service, etc.).

Program fees should not be founded on capability to pay, but an objective program should be in place that allows for easy admittance for lower income participants (through availability of scholarships and/or discounts).

Other Sources of Funding

Tournament- Based Recreation

The demand for recreational facilities, which can host large sports tournaments, is prevalent across the state. Tournament-quality sports complexes emphasize the vital role sports play in our everyday lives and generate revenue through the hosting of local youth, adult, and senior competitions - by providing a venue for regional, state, and national sports league tournaments. Sports complexes also highlight the quality of life in a community and serve to attract visitors and prospective residents. Sports complexes support the development of local athletics, tournament events, leagues, and clubs.

A tangible benefit that sports complexes bring to their community is the generation of revenue from the hosting of tournaments. The local park and recreation department benefits financially from the



Indoor and/or outdoor sports complexes draw revenue to local economy and create jobs

rental of the facility, admission fees, parking, and concession fees. The local retail community benefits financially from the influx of visitors spending money at retail establishments, hotels and restaurants. Indirect economic impact on the community comes in the form of additional tax revenue from sales taxes.

The main goal of any sports complex is to maximize the economic benefits of sports for the betterment of the entire local community. By increasing the number of people exposed to the host community's visitor amenities (i.e. restaurants, hotels, gas stations, etc.) these businesses gain increased opportunities to earn profit. The increased tourism generated by the sports complex may also improve visitor exposure to other local area attractions. Sports complexes capable of hosting events that span a wide spectrum of sports and performance levels can maintain their economic impact potential by creating seasonal sports tourism for the community throughout the year.

Sports complexes provide jobs in the form of public sector operations and maintenance staff. Operation of the facility can produce economic growth and private sector development and generate better statewide and regional exposure for the community.



The involvement of host clubs and organizations with regard to implementing and managing sports tournaments is crucial for the success of any sports complex. These groups can be regional, statewide, national, or even international; and thus, could be an inexhaustible resource for encouraging sports tourists to visit any given sports complex.

According to the Travel Industry Association (TIA), sports events-related travel has increased significantly in America. In 2007, TIA reports that "...in the last five years, 75.3 million U.S. adults attended an organized sports event, competition, or tournament as either a spectator or as a participant while on a trip of 50 miles or more, one-way, or away from home." TIA also reports that a quarter of all sports events travelers attended events to watch their children or grandchildren play. Becoming part of this sports tourism market is possible by providing the sports tournament infrastructure necessary to attract this market. Therefore, having a successful sports complex can mean providing economic growth while attracting visitors and prospective residents to the community.



FUNDING/ACQUISITION SOURCES

Implementing the recommendations of this Comprehensive Parks Master Plan will require a combination of funding sources that include local, state, federal, and private money. This Section provides a listing of the most commonly used funds for park and greenway facility projects in North Carolina. Fortunately, the

benefits of protected greenways and parks are many and varied. This allows programs in Winterville to access money earmarked for a variety of purposes - including water quality, hazard mitigation, recreation, air quality, alternative transportation, wildlife protection, community health, and economic development. Competition is rigorous for state and federal funds. It becomes imperative that local governments work together to create multi-jurisdictional partnerships and to develop their own local sources of funding. 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 local revenue stream for park and greenway projects.

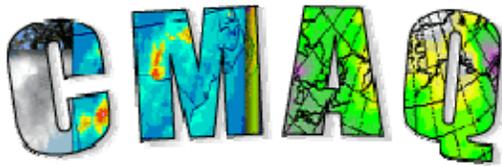


It is important that the Town of Winterville fully evaluate its available options and develop a funding strategy that can meet community needs, maximize local resources, improve their quality of life, and leverage outside funding. Financing will be needed to administer the continued planning and implementation process, to acquire parcels or easements, and to manage and maintain facilities. Further research into these programs is recommended to determine requirements for specific grants.

McGill Associates advises the Town of Winterville to pursue a variety of funding options. Below is a list of park and greenway funding opportunities that communities typically seek. Creative planning and consistent monitoring of funding options could also create new opportunities that are not listed here.

Grants

State and federal agencies offer numerous grants to assist municipalities in the financing of their parks and recreation projects. This source of funding should definitely be investigated and pursued by the Town of Winterville for present and future park and recreation improvements.



Federal Aid Construction Funds

These funds are included in the National Highway System (NHS) Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ). The funds provide for the construction of pedestrian and bicycle transportation facilities. The primary source of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects is STP Enhancement Funding.

Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF)

The North Carolina PARTF provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments for parks and recreational projects to serve the public. It is the primary source of funding to build and renovate facilities in the state parks as well as to buy land for new and existing parks. Since the inception of PARTF in 1994, more than 400 local governments across the state have used the program to establish or improve parks for their citizens. Pitt County has had fifteen (15) PARTF grants, including \$500,000 for the Phase 1 Redevelopment of Winterville Recreation Park (shown here).



North Carolina Ecosystem Enhancement Program



The N.C. Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP) combines a wetlands-restoration initiative by the N.C. Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources with ongoing environmental efforts by the Dept. of Transportation to restore, enhance, and protect its wetlands and waterways. EEP provides:

- High-quality, cost-effective projects for watershed improvement and protection
- Compensation for unavoidable environmental impacts associated with transportation, infrastructure and economic development
- Detailed watershed-planning and project-implementation efforts within threatened or degraded watersheds of North Carolina.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act of 2004 (SAFETEA).

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act of 2004 (SAFETEA), approved by the federal government in 2004, is a



primary source for financing bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway projects throughout the country, at both the local and state levels. Providing as much as 80% for development and construction costs, this grant is earmarked for facilities such as sidewalks, rail-trails, bike-lanes and greenways. The Enhancement Program (a section of SAFETEA) is used

primarily by municipalities since this section focuses on bicycle and pedestrian corridors, environmental mitigation, historic preservation, and scenic byways. 20% matching funds are required by the applying entity and applicants must meet several other criteria as well. Prior to applying for this funded enhancement program, a thorough engineering assessment should be performed in order to determine construction costs.

Recreation Trails Program

The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). RTP makes



recreation funds available for state allocation to develop and maintain recreation trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreation trail users. RTP funds are distributed to states by a legislative formula: half of the funds are distributed equally among all states and half are distributed in proportion to the estimated amount of non-highway recreational fuel used in each state. (Non-highway recreational fuel is the type which is typically used by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, and off-road light trucks.)

Watershed Protection and Flood Protection



The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) assists state and local governments in their operation and maintenance of watersheds

whose areas are less than 250,000 square acres. The NRCS provides both financial and technical assistance to eligible projects 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.

State Construction Funds

These funds (not including the Highway Trust Fund for Urban Loops and Interchanges) may be used for the construction of sidewalks and bicycle accommodations that are a part of roadway improvement projects.

The North Carolina Conservation Tax Credit

This program provides an incentive (in the form of an income tax credit) for landowners that donate interests in real property for conservation purposes. Property donations can be fee simple or in the form of conservation easements or bargain sale. The goal of this program is to manage stormwater, protect water supply watersheds, and preserve working farms and forests, and set-aside greenways for ecological communities, public trails and wildlife corridors. For additional information, visit the website at <http://ncctc.enr.state.nc.us/>.



Farmland Protection Trust Fund



Ranging from only a couple of hundred thousand dollars to millions of dollars over the last several years, this program is funded through an allocation by the NC General Assembly to

the NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. It is a voluntary program designed to protect farmland from development by either acquiring property outright or acquiring conservation easements on the property. The program is administered by the Conservation Trust Fund for North Carolina (CTNC). Questions about available funding should be directed to CTNC.

Community Development Block Grant Program (HUD-CDBG)

The CDBG is an extremely flexible, federal grant program that strives to provide communities with funding resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The program is administered through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Formed in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the oldest continuing HUD programs in existence. The CDBG program provides annual grants for facility and infrastructure related improvements to assist in revitalization and job retention within communities.



Community
Development
Block
Grant

Contributions



The solicitation of contributions is an acceptable method of fund-raising for recreation departments. These donations, typically in the form of land, cash, labor, and/or materials, could be solicited to assist Winterville with its enhancement program. Corporations, civic organizations, individuals, and other groups generally donate to a specific park project; however, donations may also be solicited for multiple project improvements or additions. The National Recreation and Park Association recommend the use of private, not-for-profit, tax-exempt foundations as a means of accepting and administering private gifts to a public park system.

Park Foundations

Foundations are another source of financing by making direct contributions within communities, states or the nation. These types of funds are usually described as special program foundations, general-purpose foundations, or corporate foundations. Foundations generally have very few restrictions and/or 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 contained in the comprehensive master plan, the Town of Winterville will most certainly have to expand their partnership



agreements with other public agencies and private-sector organizations. There are many different types of partnerships that can be formed to achieve the goals established by the Town. In fact, many local governments throughout the nation are utilizing partnerships with public and private-sector interests to accomplish community goals.

Listed below are the various types of partnerships that the Town should consider in its efforts for the improvement and addition of parks and recreational facilities:

- Programming partnerships to co-sponsor events and facilities or to allow qualified outside agencies to conduct activities on properties which are municipally owned.
- Operational partnerships to share the responsibility for providing public access and use of facilities.
- Development partnerships to purchase land and/or build facilities.
- Management partnerships to maintain properties and/or facilities.

Winterville is currently participating with partnerships in other related endeavors/functions and should evaluate forming additional partnerships which address the needs of a comprehensive park system. Direct requests should be made to potential partners, asking them to meet and to evaluate the possible benefits of partnering. This step should be made to generate interest and agreement prior to solidifying any responsibilities for each participating party.



Medical Centers typically partner with counties and local municipalities to promote wellness.

Private-sector partnerships can be beneficial to municipalities. Developers can use private funds to develop facilities on municipal property and lease it to the Town over a long term. Over a period of 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 type of arrangement would typically be a large capital investment for a special use facility.

Land Acquisition and Development

There are many different types of land acquisition available to the Town of Winterville for park system expansion and/or future development. Due to the land costs and land availability, it is recommended that the Town prioritize the property to be acquired for park facilities. Acquisition methods are listed below:

Life Estate



A life estate is a gift, whereby a donor retains the land during his/her lifetime and relinquishes title of the property 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 have significant impact on the acquisition and development of park property. The solicitation of local gifts is highly recommended and should be organized thoroughly, with the utilization of very specific strategic methods. This often untapped source of obtaining funds requires the contacting of potential donors (individuals, institutions, foundations, service clubs, etc.).

Easement



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

Fee Simple Purchase

Fee simple purchase is the most common method used to acquire municipal property for park facilities. Although it has the advantage of simplifying its justification to the general public, fee simple purchase 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 allows them to either 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 land owners, who have lost significant money 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.

Long-Term Option

Long-term options allow municipalities to purchase property over a long period of time. 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 at the time. There are advantages to this method of property acquisition. The Town can protect the future of the land without purchasing it upfront. Meanwhile, 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 land owner require compensation in the form of securing the option.



*Undesirable land
may have future
merit for Town*

6.4 PLAN ADOPTION

The first step in implementation of the Comprehensive Parks Master Plan is adoption of the plan by the Town of Winterville. By adopting the Comprehensive



Winterville Town Hall, 2571 Railroad Street

Parks Master Plan, the community is able to help shape larger regional decisions so that they fit within the goals of the plan. The Town also gives itself greater authority in shaping local land use decisions so that they achieve the goals and vision of this plan. In

addition, the adoption of this Master Plan is essential in order to maximize available grant opportunities.

Among the opportunities available to promote the recommendations contained in the Master Plan is the ability to build upon an already committed and active base of residents, visitors, and enthusiasts in the area. Through their organizations, institutions, publications, and networks, the Town of Winterville can promote both the improved and new parks and greenway facilities and programs.

Second among the opportunities is the availability of the existing park facilities (amenities, programs, existing trails, etc.) Though some changes are being suggested in the short-term and an expanded network is suggested for the long-term, the presence of an existing network provides a strong foundation from which to build. Many Town residents are already accustomed to using the existing park facilities and should become used to seeing new park amenities, programs, signage, and other improvements. Building on existing awareness is much easier than building on no awareness.

Action Steps

Upon adoption of this plan, implementation of specific recommendations can begin. Many of these will occur simultaneously and include policy and facility improvement changes. The key steps are:

Action Step 1: Secure a dedicated source of revenue to address a 10-year and beyond Capital Improvement Program and address the goals of the Master Plan.

Action Step 2: Provide staffing/volunteers necessary to support and oversee the implementation of this plan and the proper maintenance and operation of the facilities that are proposed; for example, the Town may designate or hire an employee to oversee this task.



Action Step 3: Create Winterville Parks and Recreation Endowment Fund through the NC Community Foundation.

Action Step 4: Develop/implement educational and awareness programs such as public events and parks awareness by creating advocacy groups. They can be used to announce new park facilities and upcoming projects.

Action Step 5: Begin working on the proposed facilities that are listed in the 10-year and beyond Capital Improvement Program. These opportunities produce the framework for an initial implementation strategy:

- 1) Aggressively begin to establish potential funding mechanisms for future park expansions. This high priority goal is essential for realizing the proposed recommendations for the future growth and development of Winterville's parks and recreation facilities.
- 2) Use the nucleus of park patrons to expand the awareness of the amenities and programs of Winterville parks and recreation system.
- 3) Expand and modify the existing park system into a comprehensive, multi-use system, distributed so that it better meets the needs of the community, provides opportunities to all, and enhances the current park system.
- 4) Begin making the critical greenway connections between destination points that will allow for preservation of open space and offer an alternative mode of transportation.



These four steps represent the core of the implementation strategy. As the individual policy recommendations and physical recommendations are addressed, they should each fit with one of these four (4) primary strategies.

Action Step 6: Ensure that park and greenway planning is integrated with other regional planning efforts at the state and local levels, and with long-range and current land use, economic development, parks, environmental, and community planning. The following are mechanisms to achieve this action step:

- 1) Expand local capital improvements program for yearly appropriation for greenway and park development.
- 2) Set aside money for land acquisition, construction, and maintenance of parks and greenway facilities in the annual operating budget.
- 3) Pursue and request pedestrian/bicycle projects to be added to NCDOT TIP.
- 4) Pursue developing and expanding existing and new partnerships.
- 5) Apply for PARTF Grants and other related recreation grants for park projects and improvements.

- 6) Seek other sources of revenue funding for parks and greenway improvements, such as including local assessment districts, developer exactions, etc.

- 7) Pursue funding from other sources listed in this section.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This Comprehensive Parks Master Plan has laid out a set of strategies for expanding and developing a safe, convenient, and usable park system as reflected in the following:

- Expansion and enhancement of existing facilities; and
- Creation of new facilities in areas of demand.

The plan has assessed the study area, analyzed the existing facilities, received community input, reviewed recreation standards, developed recommendations and provided strategies for implementing the plan. The Comprehensive Parks Master Plan is a comprehensive guide to be used in the improvement and enhancement of the park system for the Winterville Parks and Recreation Department.



- END OF SECTION -

