

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
FORSYTH COUNTY
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT 2016-2026



November 3, 2016

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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Appreciation to Forsyth County GIS Department for Project Assistance

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Forsyth County's scenic rural landscape is highly valued by county residents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 2012, the Forsyth County Park and Recreation Department developed a Comprehensive System-Wide Recreation Master Plan as an update to their 1998 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The 2012 Plan was designed as a five year plan; making recommendations for park and recreation facility needs through the year 2017.

Change is occurring rapidly in Forsyth County. The county's scenic rural landscape, friendly people, and close proximity to metro Atlanta, has resulted in unprecedented county growth. The 2012 Update based park and facility recommendations on a projected 2017 county-wide population of 225,000. While a reasonably valid population projection for the County's immediate needs, population growth in Forsyth County will far exceed 225,000. As this growth continues, even greater numbers of people will rely on the County's Parks and Recreation Department to provide parks and facilities for both active and passive recreation. Perhaps more importantly, as this growth continues, undeveloped land will disappear in the County. If greenspace is to be preserved in the county, efforts must continue to preserve land for the public good.

This Park and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update is a ten year vision plan. It provides County staff and elected officials with a road map to guide decision making and actions as the County balances the challenges and opportunities of rapid growth over the next decade. This Plan was carefully crafted by staff, the public, volunteers, and with the assistance of outside experts to ensure that future generations will have adequate parks, greenways and open space.

Public Input

An important aspect of the planning study was identifying the public's desire for parks, recreation facilities and greenways. The public was invited to participate through the following initiatives:

- 3 public workshops (almost 200 people attended)
- One on one interviews with over 20 stakeholders
- 4 focus group sessions (engaging over 50 participants)
- County-wide survey sent to 7,000 randomly selected households

Findings from these public outreach efforts, as well as a summary of methodology can be found in *Section Two: The People of Forsyth County*.



Approximately 200 people participated in public workshops to share ideas about park needs

Growth & Population

In addition to gathering public input, a critical step in developing the Plan is understanding the demographic changes that are occurring in the County. Information from the US Census Bureau's 2010- 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) 5 year estimates was used to assess county demographics. Findings on demographics were also cross referenced with information from the Forsyth County Comprehensive Plan 2017 – 2037 which is currently being developed. Based on population data found in this report, as well as data provided by both the Atlanta Regional Commissioners Research and Analytics Division (ARC Forecast) and the Office of Planning Budget (OPB), the County's 2030 population will be approximately $\pm 350,000$. With a planning horizon of 2026, this planning document has established a ten year population projection for the County at 300,000.

Parks, Recreation Facility & Greenway Needs

A detailed description of the Needs Assessment for this planning study can be found in *Section Three: County-wide Park and Recreational Needs Assessment*. The findings from this assessment include the following recommendations.

PARK NEEDS

In the next ten years, Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department will need to expand existing parks and build new ones. New park development should include:

Regional Parks

With the construction of Matt Community Park (while called a Community Park, Matt Community Park is large enough to serve as a Regional Park) and Lanierland Park, the County has four Regional Parks. Regional Parks typically have a service radius of 5 miles or greater. The County's Regional Parks are geographically distributed across the county to allow all county residents relatively easy access to Regional Park facilities. While there are improvements needed at each of the existing Regional Parks, and it is important that future phases of Lanierland Park and Matt Community Park be developed, the County has adequate parks within the Regional Park category to meet current and future demand.

Community Parks

Community Parks are similar to Regional Parks in that they provide a wide variety of active recreation. Typically they are smaller than Regional Parks, have less recreational facilities and provide a smaller service radius (typically 2-3 miles) than Regional Parks. Currently the County has six Community Parks.

An assessment of the service radius for each of the existing Community Parks (*see Section Four*) indicated several areas in the county where citizens do not have adequate access to Community Parks. Based on this gap analysis, there is a need for four additional Community Parks in the county. These service gaps (or Community Park needs) exist in all areas of the county (north, south, west and east).

In addition to the four new Community Parks, the County should look for opportunities to expand and improve existing Community Parks. One opportunity for expansion the County should pursue is the acquisition of property (Threatt Property) to greatly expand South Forsyth Soccer Complex. The acquisition of property from the Water Services Department will allow significant expansion of existing facilities at the park.

Acquisition of land and development of these five Community Parks will greatly increase many outdoor recreation facilities and will help meet many of the recreational needs identified in other sections of this Plan.

Neighborhood and Mini Parks

These parks are the smallest park type and are typically not developed or operated by county agencies. While small “walk to” parks are a desirable neighborhood amenity, the development of these park types should be encouraged by private developers through the development process. The development of these smaller parks should not be the responsibility of Forsyth County.

GREENWAYS

The most popular outdoor recreational activity in the nation is walking. This popularity was reflected in the county-wide survey, at all public workshops, and throughout discussions with stakeholders and focus groups. The importance of Greenways in community development was also reinforced in the County’s Comprehensive Plan and Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways 2025 Plan (see Section Three).



Big Creek Greenway is one of Forsyth County's most used recreational amenities

In the past ten years, Forsyth County has developed a significant Greenway along Big Creek. Today, this new Greenway is one of the County’s most used recreational facilities. The County should place Greenway development as one of its highest priorities in the coming decade. Based on the demand expressed by the public for Greenway expansion, the County should develop 30 miles of additional Greenway trails over the next decade. This recommendation is in alignment with the County’s Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways 2025 Plan. The first step in Greenway expansion should be developing a County-wide Greenway Master Plan to guide future trail construction.

ACQUISITION OF PARKLAND

Another important need identified in the public input process, and reinforced in the County’s Draft Comprehensive Plan, is the need for the preservation of greenspace and land for passive recreation. Based on this strong demand for preserving open space, this planning report recommends acquisition of 1,000 acres of additional parkland in the next ten years.

While some of the newly acquired parkland will be allocated for active recreation and the development of Community Parks, the majority of land acquisition should be focused on open space preservation and passive recreation. Anticipated land acquisition would include:

- Expansion of passive parks; possibly expanding acreage at existing passive parks, such as Sawnee Mountain Preserve, or acquisition of new passive parks
- Acquisition of property to develop or enhance future greenways
- Expansion of lake parks; lake park expansion may not actually require acquisition dollars, but could be accomplished on land owned by COE.

RECREATIONAL FACILITY NEEDS

The Level of Service (LOS) standards for recreational facilities (rectangular fields, playgrounds, picnic shelters, etc.) proposed for county residents were developed from a review of standards used by other agencies in the region and from input gathered in the public input process. The LOS identified in *Table 3-A Benchmark Assessments* and discussed in greater detail in *Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations* offer a well balanced approach to determining county-wide recreational needs.

Based on these LOS, the number of public facilities needed in the County’s park system through the planning period (2016 – 2026) are identified in *Table 3-B Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment*, and summarized below. A more detailed discussion of each of the facility needs is provided in *Section Four: Proposal and Recommendations*.

By 2026, when the County’s population is approximately 300,000, the following additional recreational facilities will be needed:

Recreation Facility	2026 Need
Ball Fields	23
Rectangular Fields	29
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	5
Tennis Courts	24
Pickleball (outdoor)	15

Recreation Facility	2026 Need
Volleyball Courts (outdoor)	4
Greenway Trails, miles	50.4
Walking Trails in Parks	10
Playgrounds	18
Picnic Shelters	17
Running Track	2
BMX Bike Tracks	2
Water Access	7
Boat Ramp/Kayak Launch	12
Mountain Bike Trails, miles	14
Swimming Pool	4
Aquatic Center	1
Splash Pad	5
Recreation Center	3
Community Building	3
Dog Park	2
Skate Park	1
Disc Golf Course	2

Special Use Facilities

Recreation Centers

Over the past five years, the County has greatly expanded its indoor facilities by constructing centers at Old Atlanta Park and Fowler Park and expanding the recreation center at Central Park. Even with these recent additions, there will be a need for additional indoor recreation centers as the County’s population grows to 300,000. Three new recreation centers will be needed by 2026.

Senior Services

Based on census data, persons over 65 years of age account for over 10% of the County’s population. The number of seniors is expected to grow. As that growth occurs, the County should be in a position to provide programs to serve this segment of the population.

The County’s recreation centers are an excellent resource to provide programs and facilities to seniors. As future recreation centers are planned and existing centers improved, the County should incorporate elements that can meet senior’s needs.

Community Buildings

The County currently offers unstaffed/programmed community buildings at four of their parks (Sharon Springs Park, Coal Mountain Park, Midway Park and Sawnee Mountain Park). These buildings are very heavily used for special events such as birthday parties, family reunions, etc. The County should consider development of additional community buildings in existing and/or future Community and Regional Parks.

Swimming Facilities

Currently the County does not offer aquatics facilities beyond the recently constructed splashpad at Old Atlanta Park. To help offset this lack of aquatic facilities, the County provided funding to the City of Cumming to construct an indoor aquatic center. While an outstanding facility, the Cumming Aquatic Center cannot meet all of the demand for aquatics of Forsyth County’s citizens.

While not the number one priority based on public input, there was strong demand expressed for an additional indoor aquatic center in the county-wide survey and at the public workshops. Based on this public demand, there appears to be a need for another indoor aquatics center and the construction of several outdoor pools.



The need for another aquatics center was voiced during the public workshops

In addition to the development of indoor and outdoor pools, the County should develop additional spraygrounds in several of its existing or proposed parks. Spraygrounds are considerably less expensive to construct and operate than swimming pools, but offer a unique water play experience and opportunity for social interactions.

Arts Center

There was considerable demand expressed in the focus groups and one-on-one interviews for expansion of the arts in Forsyth County. In addition, the need for a cultural arts center has been identified in the County's Comprehensive Plan Draft Report. The scope and scale of an arts center could range from a 5,000 sf exhibit space to a 30,000 sf arts center with classrooms, exhibit space, performance space, etc. The cost of such a facility could range from \$1 million to \$10 million.

Based on input received during the public workshops and focus group sessions, there is a need for a multi-purpose art center that could meet local artist needs and serve as a regional draw for classes and special events. The development of such a facility will be a significant investment in capital and operational funding. The County should initiate a feasibility study for this facility to examine demand, marketability, and best operational platform of an arts center.

The interest that was expressed during the public engagement process for this report indicates that this county-wide need should be explored in greater detail.

Improving/Expanding Existing Parks

An important component of this comprehensive planning process was an inventory and assessment of the existing facilities currently serving county residents. *Section One: Inventory* describes improvements needed at each park. An Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate for those proposed park improvements identified over \$22 million in park improvements needed in 20 of the County's parks. In addition to the facility improvements included in these 20 parks, five County parks need significant expansion and/or major renovations.

Together, renovation and expansion of existing parks is a significant component of the ten year plan. Almost \$70 million has been allotted in the Capital Improvement Plan for park improvements. Based on input received from the public, renovations of existing facilities should be a priority when investing to improve the County's park system.

Operational Needs

The expansion of park facilities described in this document will greatly expand the park and recreation offerings in the county, but will come with a cost; capital and operational. Expanding parks and adding facilities will increase operational and maintenance costs 30-40%. The

County should consider the operational cost of any capital improvement. *Section Five: Action Plan Implementation* provides some general guidelines on anticipated staff needs, as well as program and maintenance considerations.

Partnership Opportunities

The public is best served when government agencies work together. There are a number of public and private agencies operating in the county that have facilities and programs that potentially serve the public's need for parks and recreation. The County should continue to explore ways to work with other agencies to provide services and attain common goals.

The following agencies have missions that seem to be in alignment with the County's Parks and Recreation Department:

- Trust for Public Land
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Northside Hospital
- City of Cumming
- Forsyth County School Board
- Forsyth County Parks Foundation
- Forsyth County Senior Services

Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations provides greater detail on the roles of these agencies in the community and avenues for partnerships.

Capital Needs

The development and/or expansion of four new Community Parks, expansion of indoor recreation facilities, construction of 30 miles of greenways, and significant park renovations will require a substantial financial commitment from all county partners over the next 10-15 years. As noted in *Table 5-1 Capital Improvement Plan*, the anticipated cost of the recommendations found in this planning report will be approximately \$346 million. Recognizing that this is a Vision Plan for a county wide park system, County staff and elected officials must prioritize the recommendations in this document based on the available funding and other priorities. The following park development initiatives should be considered the highest priority:

- Acquire additional parkland for development of active recreation and preservation of open space
- Develop a County-Wide Greenway Master Plan and expand existing greenways
- Renovate/expand existing parks to provide additional recreational facilities
- Develop several new Community Parks

Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations and *Section Five: Action Plan Implementation* provide greater detail on improvements included in the capital improvements budget. Likewise, these sections provide strategies for funding the recommendations made as part of the comprehensive plan.

The park, recreation facilities, and greenway improvement needs identified in this planning document are significant, and it is understood that some recommendations may not be acted upon in the next ten years. Instead, it is the intent of this plan to identify a vision for the County's park system and provide recommendations for reaching that vision. Parks and recreation staff, working with community leaders and elected officials, will establish priorities and identify funding resources over the next year.

**Table 5-1
 FORSYTH COUNTY
 PARKS AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Capital Improvement and Land Acquisition	10 Year Total
Existing Parks Improvements (see Existing Park Improvements/Recommendations)	
Central Park	\$1,515,000
Fowler Park	\$3,250,000
Coal Mountain	\$575,000
Joint Venture Park	\$215,000
Midway Park	\$1,265,000
Sawnee Mountain Park	\$1,655,000
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	\$3,050,000
Ducktown Community Park	\$200,000
Haw Creek Park	\$300,000
Old Atlanta Park	\$200,000
Poole's Mill Park	\$550,000
Windermere Park	\$300,000
Charleston Park	\$500,000
Shady Grove Campground	\$3,575,000
Young Deer Creek Park	\$1,000,000
Sawnee Mountain Preserve	\$500,000
Big Creek Greenway	\$1,950,000
Chestatee Community Building	\$100,000
Chattahoochee Pointe Park	\$50,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$2,075,000
Existing Park Improvements Total	\$22,825,000
 Major Park Renovation/Expansion	
Sharon Springs Park	\$8,000,000
Bennett Park	\$8,000,000
Caney Creek Preserve	\$4,000,000
Lanierland Park (Phase Two site)	\$12,000,000
Matt Community (Phase Two site)	\$10,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$4,200,000
Major Park Renovation/Expansion Total	\$46,200,000
 Land Acquisition	
Western Community Park (50 acres @ \$125,000/acre)	\$6,250,000
Northern Community Park (50 acres @ \$75,000/acre)	\$3,750,000
Southeastern Comm. Park (50 acres @ 125,000/acre)	\$6,250,000
Southwestern Comm. Park (50 acres @ 125,000/acre)	\$6,250,000
Threatt Property (200 acres @ 100,000/acre)	\$20,000,000
Open Space/Passive Rec. (300 acres @ 100,000/acre)	\$30,000,000
Greenway Development (150 acres @ 100,000/acre)	\$15,000,000
Land Acquisition Total	\$87,500,000

**Table 5-1
 FORSYTH COUNTY
 PARKS AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Capital Improvement and Land Acquisition	10 Year Total
New Community Park Development	
Western Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
Northern Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
Southwestern Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
Southeastern Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
South Forsyth Soccer Complex (Threatt Property)	\$20,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$6,800,000
New Community Park Development Total	\$74,800,000
 New Lake Park Development	
Lake Park Development	\$15,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$1,500,000
New Lake Park Development Total	\$16,500,000
 Greenway Expansion	
30 Miles @ \$1,000,000/mile	\$30,000,000
Trailheads/Support Facilities (4)	\$2,500,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$3,250,000
Greenway Expansion Total	\$35,750,000
 Indoor Recreation Facilities	
3 Recreation Center with Gymnasiums (60,000 SF)	\$36,000,000
3 Community Buildings (3,000 SF)	\$1,800,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$3,780,000
Indoor Recreation Facilities Total	\$41,580,000
 Aquatic Facilities	
Indoor Aquatics Facility (40,000 SF)	\$14,000,000
2 Splash Pads	\$2,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$1,600,000
Aquatic Facilities Total	\$17,600,000
 Arts Center Investment	\$4,000,000

Total Capital Improvement Budget Cost	\$346,755,000
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Important Note: Order of Magnitude costs reflected in this Capital Improvement Plan are based on 2016 values. The cost of land and construction are expected to increase over the next ten years and could impact funding of future projects.



Central Park Recreation Center

SECTION ONE INVENTORY

Introduction

An important step in the master planning process is the inventory and assessment of existing parks and recreation facilities currently serving county residents. It is extremely important to utilize existing resources to their fullest capacity in order to efficiently meet current and future recreational needs. This section identifies all existing parks and recreation facilities found in the county, assesses their current condition, and makes recommendations on the most effective use of existing facilities.

The County's park system includes 25 parks and greenways covering 2,709 acres. As with most county park and recreation agencies, the majority of the County's parks are large parks (community, regional, or nature preserves). Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department is not the only provider of parks and recreation in the county. The City of Cumming offers its citizens several parks and recreational facilities and the Corps of Engineers also operates several parks on Lake Lanier that serve the parks and recreational needs of county residents.

In addition to the parks and recreational areas found in the county, there are several significant land preserves within easy driving distance that provide recreational opportunities to Forsyth County residents. Dawson Forest and the Chattahoochee National Forest provide access to tens of thousands of acres of forest and natural areas. Both preserves are open to the public for recreation in the form of natural trails, camping, etc.

Finally, the private sector offers recreational activities throughout the county. These private sector options range from outstanding golf courses, private swim clubs, fitness centers, and residential amenity areas operated by homeowner associations. These private recreation opportunities play an important role in meeting recreational needs of county residents.

This section identifies all existing parks and recreational facilities currently serving the citizens of Forsyth County.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT



Forsyth County has invested in parks and recreation for almost four decades. The Department, which was created in 1978, has grown to become one of the region's finest parks and recreation departments. Today the Department operates 25 parks and a growing greenway system. The County's park system covers 2709 acres and provides a wide range of active recreation areas, as well as many acres of undeveloped open space. The park system contains 604 acres of active park space (Regional Parks and Community Parks/Sports Complexes and 2105 acres of Passive Park space, Low Impact Recreational Areas or Regional Nature Preserves). The Parks and Recreation Department employs 72 fulltime and 129 part time employees. Its current operation budget is just under \$10 million.

Mission Statement

The mission of Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Forsyth County by providing passive and active recreational, educational and cultural programming services and to provide parks and recreational facilities that are safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing to the entire community.

Department Organization

The Department is organized into six Primary Divisions. These Divisions include:

- Recreation Division
- Athletics Division
- Park Operations Division
- Natural Resource Management Division
- Marketing and Community Relations
- Administrative Services

In 2015, the Department went through a reorganization that made some changes to the Divisions to improve operations and function. The new organization structure, while in its early stages of change, seems to be working efficiently.

The newly organized Department has two new (relatively small) divisions. The **Administrative Division** focuses on finance, human resources, and general customer services. The **Marketing and Community Relations Division** focuses on marketing, community relations, promotions, National Accreditation and Special Use Permits.

The **Recreation Division** includes both Recreation Center Operations and Programming Operations. This Division is divided into three regions built around the Department's three recreation centers; Fowler in the West, Central in the North, and Old Atlanta in the South. With the new organizational structure each of the three regional offices focusses on center operations, recreation facility operation in that region (such as tennis and skatepark), special events, and programming. This represents one of the biggest changes that resulted from the recent reorganization. Prior to the reorganization, recreation center operation and programming were connected, but not integrated. This Division is led by the Recreation manager who oversees Regional Recreation Supervisors. This Division will likely grow to 4 Regions as the recreation center planned for Lanierland Park comes on line.

The **Athletic Division** is a significant part of the Department's operation. Athletic programming in Forsyth County, as in many parks and recreation departments in the southeast, is provided almost entirely through a partnership with private non-profit Booster Clubs. Through this approach, the Booster Clubs organize and operate the team sports and tournaments while the Department provides the facilities and maintenance of the facilities. This arrangement has worked well for many years and has allowed programs in most all sports to grow and prosper. The Athletic Division operates within three regions; Sharon Springs in the South, Fowler in the West, and Central in the North.

The **Park Operations Division** was also recently reorganized to allow a greater focus on maintenance of active parks and athletic facilities. Under the new organization, the Park Operations Division focuses its efforts on the 13 larger active recreation parks, where the primary focus of maintenance is on athletic fields and active recreation. Maintenance of the Department's passive parks and greenway is provided by the Natural Resource Management Division. As with other Divisions, the Park Operations Division works on a regional basis; North, South and West.

The focus of the **Natural Resource Management Division** was recently expanded. The Division is now responsible for programming and maintenance of all passive parks and the Greenway. Under its operations function, the Division maintains and operates all of the Department's Lake Parks, Passive parks and the Big Creek Greenway. Under the programming function, the Division operates and programs the Visitor Center at Sawnee Mountain Preserve and provides nature education and adventure programming.

Staff

One of the foundational strengths of the Department is its people. The Department has a staff of experienced recreational professionals; many have worked for the Department for more than two decades. The average staff member has over 11 years' experience in the profession and almost 10 years' experience with the Department. This level of experience and dedication is reflected in the quality of the facilities and programs offered by the Department. One of the challenges for the coming decade will be replacing some of the experienced professional staff that will be retiring within the time frame of this planning report. Over one fourth of the Department's full time staff will be eligible for retirement within the next 5 years.

Staff members are also well educated. Thirty staff members (over one third of all fulltime staff members) hold some form of higher education (associates degree or higher). One area of future focus should be to get more staff members professionally certified. Currently only thirteen staff members hold either Certified Parks and Recreation Executive (CPRE) or Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) Certifications. In addition to these general certifications, the Department has two Certified Pool Operators (CPO). As a major department in a rapidly growing urban area, the Department has made it a priority to encourage professional certification of its staff.

It is important as the Department moves forward that it has adequate staff to maintain, operate and program existing facilities and prepare for parks and facilities that will be built in the future. Current staff seems to be adequate to maintain and operate existing facilities. The recent changes in organizational structure that consolidated programming and recreation center operation has improved operations of indoor facilities and programs. Likewise, reorganization of the

park maintenance programs, by breaking maintenance of active parks and passive parks into separate divisions, has streamlined park maintenance. These two changes have allowed the Department to absorb some of the additional facilities that have recently come on line without major staff growth. The recent reorganization focused on maximizing efficiency of operations, communications, and accountability.

As recommendations from this plan are implemented, new parks will be constructed and new facilities will be added. As these new assets come on line, additional staff will be required and operational budgets will need to be increased.



National Accreditation

The Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) was established in 1992 to create standards of organization and operation for all public park and recreation agencies. Standards are identified in a 10 chapter document that addresses important operation issues such as planning, organization, human resources, financial management, programs, facility/land management and risk management. Through the accreditation process, public agencies strive to meet most of the 151 Standards that have been established by the Commission. Ultimately, to become accredited, the agency must meet 37 Critical Standards and 80% of the remaining 114 standards.

The accreditation process sets high expectations on those agencies that are committed to the process; ultimately making them better departments. Currently there are approximately 140 agencies accredited nationally. Ten of those agencies are from Georgia. Some of the accredited agencies include Atlanta, Alpharetta, Roswell, and Gainesville.

Forsyth County is rapidly becoming a cutting edge community that is aimed at becoming one of the nation's best places to live. As a world class community, it's important for the County's park system to be world class as well.

The move towards accreditation takes time. Most departments begin by focusing on the accreditation standards and developing a plan to reach those standards over a 2 or 3 years period. The Department should set a goal of moving toward accreditation within the next 3-5 years.

Programs

The Department offers a wide range of both indoor and outdoor recreation programs for all age groups. The new and recently expanded Recreation Centers (Central Park, Fowler Park and Old Atlanta Park) are exploding with a wide variety of recreational activities and classes. The gymnasium and multipurpose spaces provide programs for basketball, volleyball, martial arts, gymnastics/tumbling, and dance classes. Fitness programs include everything from Cardio Express to "Butts and Guts". Classes are offered in areas of interest from Basic Car Maintenance to youth and adult Art Classes. Indoor day camps are held for everything from magic to etiquette.

Outside the Recreation Centers, the Department offers programs of interest to a wide spectrum of users. There are dozens of sports camps aimed at almost every sport and every age. In addition to the sports camps, there are adventure camps, nature camps and archery camps.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT



As noted previously, the Department does not directly program youth athletics but works with a network of private non-profit Booster Clubs to provide a wide variety of youth athletics. The Department works with over a dozen Booster Clubs to provide an outstanding selection of youth athletic programs. Youth athletics are available in the following sports:

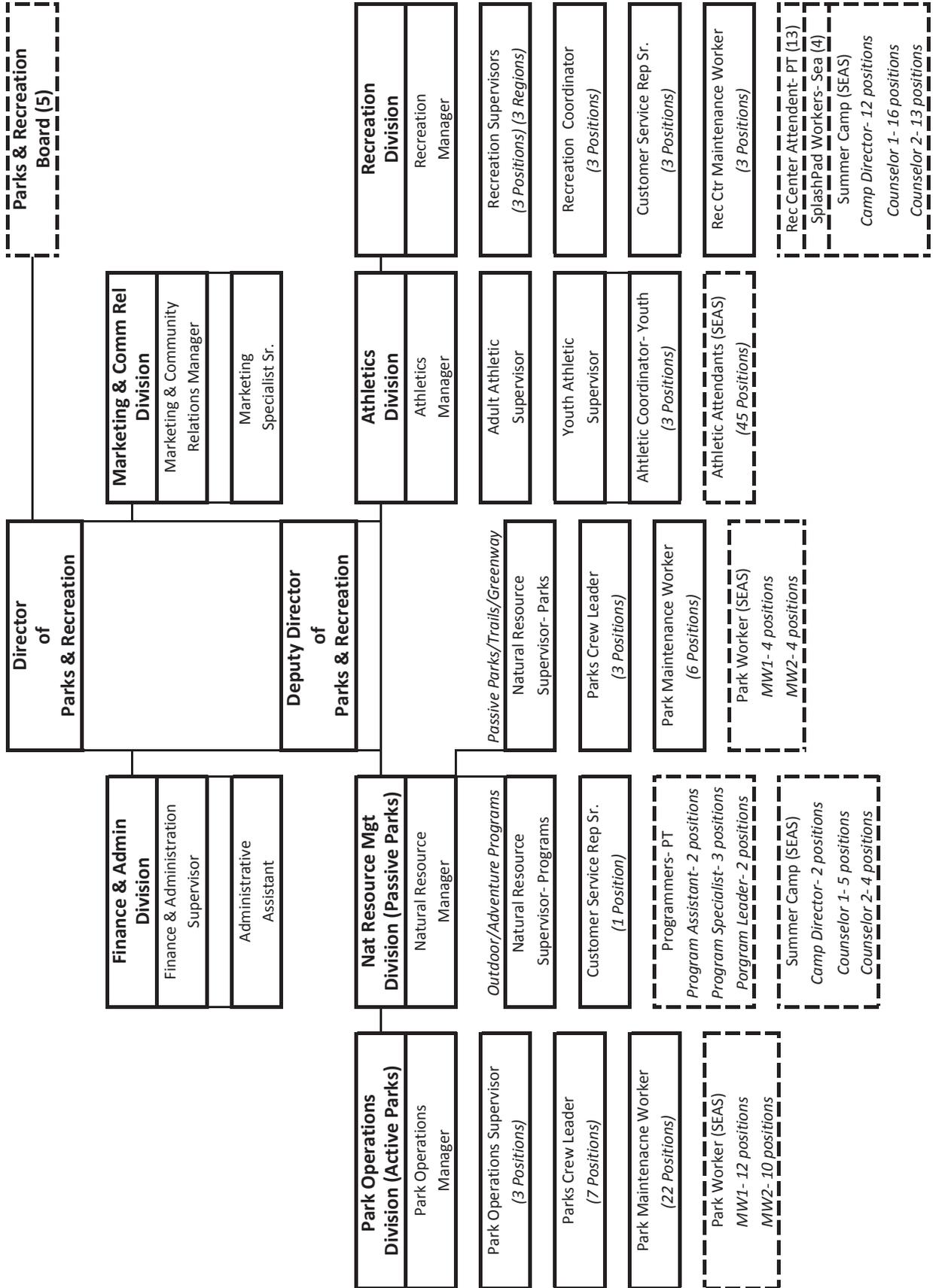
- Football
- Cheerleading
- Baseball
- Lacrosse
- Soccer



In addition to these youth programs, the Department offers several leagues. These programs are run by the Department without Booster Clubs. Leagues are offered in the following sports:

- Softball
- Flag Football
- Basketball

Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department





Central Park Playground

Central Park 121 acres

Central Park was built in 2001 with Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funding. The park is a regional sports complex with a recreation center, 12 athletic fields, a tennis facility, paved walking trails, 18 hole disc golf course, playground and picnic pavilions. The park is adjoined by a sheriff's precinct and water department facilities. Based on the Community Survey, the sports fields at Central Park are the third most heavily used fields in the county. The park is located in the north/central area of the county and is less than 1 mile from State Highway 400.

Current Activities:

Youth sports including baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, soccer and tennis. Adult sports including basketball, flag football, softball and tennis, walking, running, disc golf. The Recreation Center is used for basketball, classes, fitness programs, day camps, and community rentals.

Existing Facilities:

- 5 Youth Baseball Field, lights, natural, 3-225', 2-150'
- 4 Adult Softball Fields, lights, 325', natural, used for men and women
- 3 Multi-purpose, rectangular fields, synthetic turf, standard, lights
- 2 Basketball Courts, lights, standard, indoor at recreation center
- 8 Tennis Courts, lights, standard
- 4 Bocce Ball Courts
- 1 Playground, 1 acre
- 3 Picnic Shelters, capacity 36
- 1.03 Miles Trail, paved
- 1 Disc Golf, 18 holes
- 6 Restrooms
- 4 Concession
- Recreation Center
- Park Administration Building
- Maintenance Building/Shop



Central Park Recreation Center

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Park – overall good
- Recreation center – good
- Tennis courts – excellent
- Football field – excellent
- Multi-purpose fields – excellent
- Restrooms at multi-purpose fields renovated in 2015
- Playground renovated in 2014

Current Needs:

- Recreation Center renovations to bathrooms and office area, weight room equipment upgrade, and roof evaluation
- Built in seating at soccer fields
- Landscape improvements

Central Park (continued)

Current Needs:

- Backstops on fields
- Drainage improvements outside fields
- Vinyl fencing on all fields
- New dugout benches on all fields
- Building improvements around fields (flooring)
- Bleacher covers on adult field bleachers
- Field drainage system improvements
- Expand pavement behind all fields
- Road improvements at maintenance building to allow for large deliveries
- Parking expansion
- Information signage

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Spray Pad or playground beside recreation center



Fowler Park Pavilion

Fowler Park 85 acres

Fowler Park opened in 2012 and is located in the south west area of the county. Fowler Park is a regional park that features 12 tennis courts, 5 picnic pavilions, 3 outdoor basketball courts, 7 multi-purpose, rectangular fields, 1 track and field, 1 skate park, 1 dog park, 2 playgrounds, 1.5 mile paved walking path, access to the Big Creek Greenway, open grass field. The sports fields at Fowler Park are the most used of all the county's sports fields and record the highest rating of satisfaction based on results from the Community Survey. The park features a 40,000 square foot recreation center with two basketball gymnasiums, indoor walking track, three classrooms, one community room, fitness room and staff offices.

Current Activities: Soccer, lacrosse, baseball/softball, dog park, skate boarding, walking/running, bicycling, playground, indoor and outdoor basketball, classes and camps

Existing Facilities:

- 4 Youth Baseball Fields, lights, 4-225'
- 6 Multi-purpose Field, lights (4 synthetic turf)
- 3 Basketball Courts, lights
- 12 Tennis Courts, lights, tennis building
- 2 Playgrounds
- 5 Picnic Shelters, 4-capacity 36, 1-capacity 200
- 1.5 Miles Trail, paved
- 1 Dog Park
- 1 Skate Park
- 5 Restroom
- 3 Restroom/Concession
- 1 Concession
- Track and Field
- Maintenance/Shop Building
- Recreation Center



Fowler Park Tennis Courts



Fowler Park Fitness Center

Fowler Park (continued)

Quality of Existing Facilities: Overall – good

Current Needs:

- Convert 3 rectangle fields and track field to synthetic surfacing
- Tennis center, concrete/walkway improvements
- Landscape improvements
- Renovate/relocate dog park

Recreation Center needs

- Curb and gutter landscaped areas connected to building
- Covered entrances (front and side)
- Wood floor refinishing in dance studio, basketball courts, paint pickle ball lines on court
- New flooring in Cardio Weight Room
- Permanent window tinting to lobby windows

Potential Expansion Opportunities:

Recreation Center improvements

- Add at least one small and one large classroom
- Add gymnastics-only classroom
- Add art-only classroom
- Add larger fitness room
- Add shade structure or covered area to rear patio
- Additional parking as required with building expansion
- Splash pad



Lanierland Park

Lanierland Park 109 acres

Lanierland Park is scheduled to open in late 2016 and is located in the northeast area of the county. The first phase of the park will feature 4 synthetic turf rectangle fields, 2 restroom/concession buildings, 1 playground, 4 picnic shelters and a maintenance building.

Existing Facilities (late 2016):

- 4 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, synthetic turf, rectangle fields
- 1 Playground
- 4 Picnic Shelters
- 2 Restroom/Concession
- Maintenance Building

Potential Expansion Opportunities: There is a second phase for this park. The plan includes 4 baseball/softball fields, 6 tennis courts, maintenance building, a recreation center and a splash pad.



Matt Community Park

Matt Community Park 185 acres

Matt Community Park is scheduled to open in 2016 and is located in the northwest area of the county. The first phase of the park will feature 4 synthetic turf rectangle fields, 2 restroom/concession buildings, 1 playground, a natural walking path and a maintenance building.

Existing Facilities (late 2016):

- 4 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, synthetic turf, rectangle fields
- 1 Playground
- 1.5 Miles Trail, natural
- 2 Restroom/Concession
- Maintenance Building

Potential Expansion Opportunities: There is a second phase for this park. That plan includes 4 baseball/softball fields, 6 tennis courts, additional trails and pavilions.



Matt Community Park



Sharon Springs Park Walking Trail

Sharon Springs Park 58 acres

Sharon Springs Park opened in 1984 and is located in the south east area of the county. Sharon Springs Park is a regional sports complex park that features 8 tennis courts with restrooms/pavilion, 8 youth baseball/softball fields, 2 multi-purpose synthetic turf fields, 1 mile paved walking path, community building with kitchen and basement, 3 picnic pavilions, 1 playground, batting cages, 3 restroom/concession buildings and a maintenance building. Based on the Community Survey, the athletic fields at Sharon Springs Park are one of the county's most heavily used sports facilities. There is also a building inside the park that houses the Tax Commissioner office and Solid Waste and Recycling department offices.

Current Activities: baseball/softball, football, lacrosse, community building rentals, tennis programs, walking/running, basketball, safety tower program

Existing Facilities:

- 8 Youth Baseball Fields, lights, 4-225', 3-300', 1-340'
- 2 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, football and lacrosse, synthetic turf
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 8 Tennis Courts, lights
- 1 Playground
- 3 Picnic Shelters, capacity 36
- 1 Mile Trail, paved loop
- 1 Restroom
- 3 Restroom/Concession
- Community Building with basement
- Maintenance Shop Building

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Tennis courts – fair
- Community building – fair
- Baseball/softball fields – fair to good
- Multi-purpose fields – excellent
- Playground – fair to good

Current Needs:

- Community building renovations (restrooms and basement)
- Parking lot improvements (curb and gutter)
- Tennis courts renovations
- Baseball/softball fields, drainage improvements
- Playground, rubberized surface and shade covers
- Drainage improvements
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Potential to purchase additional land adjacent to park, add a recreation center with more basketball courts and a gymnastics area.



Bennett Park

Bennett Park 31 acres

Bennett Park was the first county park to open in 1978 and is located in the northeast area of the county. Bennett Park features 5 youth baseball/softball fields, 1 football/lacrosse turf field, 1 playground, 1 picnic pavilion and 3 restroom/concession buildings. Based on the Community Survey, satisfaction with the sports fields at Bennett Park was one of the lowest of all county sports fields.

Current Activities: Youth athletic programs - lacrosse, football, cheerleading and baseball/softball

Existing Facilities:

- 5 Youth Baseball Fields, lights, natural, 2-300', 2- 225', 1-150'
- 1 Multi-purpose Field, synthetic turf field for football and lacrosse
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic Shelter, capacity 30
- 3 Restroom/Concession
- 1 Maintenance Building/Shop

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Multi-purpose field – good
- Baseball/softball fields – good
- Restrooms/concession stands - 2 – fair/good, 1 – poor
- Playground - good condition but location is poor
- Parking lot – poor
- Picnic pavilion – good condition but land around it is in poor condition

Current Needs:

- Park wide parking lot improvements – re-configuration, lights
- Improve entrances/combine
- Park wide drainage and run-off improvements
- Landscape improvements
- Playground re-location
- Replace restrooms at multi-purpose fields
- Replace restrooms at ballfields
- Replace scorer stands at ballfields

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Coal Mountain Miracle Field

Coal Mountain Park 31 acres

Coal Mountain Park opened in 1988. This park is a sports complex that features 8 youth baseball/softball fields, 2 tennis courts, 2 pavilions, 2 playgrounds, 2 horse shoe pits, 1 multi-use rectangle field, 1 community building with kitchen, a walking path and a maintenance building. The park is located in the north portion of the county within a Forsyth County Compound that includes the Public Safety Complex, a fire station, recycling facility, animal shelter and other internal county services.

Current Activities: Youth athletics – baseball, lacrosse, soccer, softball and special needs Miracle League program, community building used for rentals, walking

Existing Facilities:

- 8 Youth Baseball Fields, lights, 1-100', 2-200' (1 rubberized), 3-225', 1-300'
- 1 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, standard, synthetic turf field - soccer and lacrosse
- 2 Tennis Courts, lights
- 2 Horseshoe Pits
- 2 Playgrounds, 1-ADA (universal)
- 2 Picnic Shelters, medium, capacity 48
- 1.1 Miles Trail, paved
- 3 Restroom/Concession
- Community Building
- Maintenance Building/Shop



Coal Mountain Universal Playground

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Tennis Courts – good
- Community Building – good
- Rectangle field – excellent
- Baseball/softball – good

Current Needs:

- Tennis court resurfacing
- Tennis court lighting
- Community building kitchen improvements
- Playground replacement
- Storage building for athletics equipment
- Resurface Miracle League Field
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Joint Venture Park

Joint Venture Park 16 acres

Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek is adjacent to Daves Creek Elementary School. The park opened in 2006 and is a partnership between the Forsyth County Board of Education and the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners. The park features 1 synthetic turf rectangle field, 3 baseball/softball fields, two picnic pavilions and one restroom concession building.

Current Activities: Baseball, softball, football, lacrosse

Existing Facilities:

- 3 Youth Baseball Fields, lights
- 1 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, football and lacrosse
- 3 Picnic Shelters
- 1 Restroom/Concession

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Turf field – excellent
- Baseball/softball fields – fair
- Bathroom/concession building – fair to good
- Pavilions – good

Current Needs:

- Storage building for athletics equipment
- Landscape improvements
- Replace scorer stands at ballfields

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Midway Park

Midway Park 39 acres

Midway Park opened in 1995 and is located in the west area of the county. Midway Park is a sports complex that features 2 tennis courts, 2 multi-purpose rectangle synthetic turf fields, 1 community building with kitchen, 1 picnic pavilion, 7 youth baseball/softball fields, 3 concessions stands, 4 restroom buildings, 1 playground, 1 mile paved walking path, a creek with a short natural trail and a maintenance shop building.

Current Activities: Baseball/softball, football/cheerleading, lacrosse, tennis, building rentals, pavilion rentals and walking

Existing Facilities:

- 7 Youth Baseball Fields, lights, 1-170', 1-270', 1-290', 4-200'
- 2 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, football and lacrosse
- 2 Tennis Courts
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic Shelter
- 1 Mile Trail, paved
- Water Access, creek
- 2 Restroom/Concession Building
- Community Building with kitchen
- Maintenance/Shop Building
- Watershed Trail

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Rectangle turf fields – excellent
- Community Building – good
- Tennis courts – lights – excellent, courts – fair
- Pavilion – fair

Current Needs:

- Community building renovations (flooring)
- Tennis courts resurfacing
- Pavilion renovations
- Landscape improvements
- New score booths at fields 1, 2, 3
- Drainage improvements
- Storage building for athletics equipment
- Parking Expansion
- Renovate restroom/concession building
- Renovate playground

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Sawnee Mountain Park

Sawnee Mountain Park 44 acres

Sawnee Mountain Park opened in 1998 and is located in the western area of the county. The area where the park is located is somewhat rural, however, there are numerous neighborhoods being developed within 5 - 10 miles of the park. The park features 8 youth baseball/softball fields, 4 tennis courts, 2 multi-purpose rectangle fields, 2 outdoor basketball courts, a walking path, a playground and a community building with kitchen.

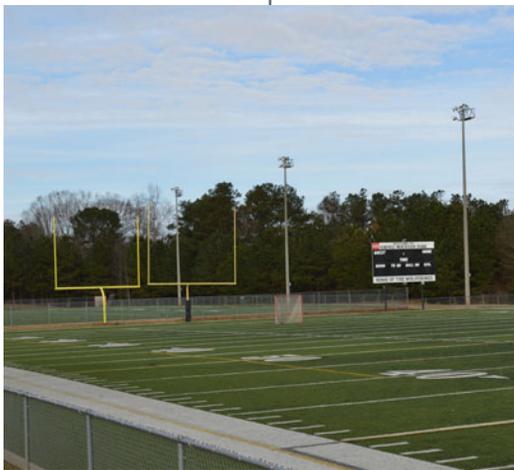
Current Activities: Baseball, softball, football, lacrosse, tennis, community building and pavilion rentals, playground, walking

Existing Facilities:

- 8 Youth Baseball Fields, lights, 1-125', 5-225', 2-300'
- 2 Multi-purpose Fields, lights, synthetic turf, football and lacrosse
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 4 Tennis Courts, lights
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic Shelter, capacity 24
- .75 Mile Trail, asphalt
- 4 Restroom/Concession
- Community Building
- Maintenance/Shop Building

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Restrooms and concession stands – outdated
- Baseball/Softball fields – fair
- Fences/Backstops – fair
- Playground equipment – good
- Pavilion – fair
- Community building – fair
- Rectangle Fields – excellent
- Tennis courts – good
- Basketball courts – poor
- Maintenance shop – good
- Walking path – fair



Sawnee Mountain Park

Current Needs:

- Pavilion and A/B complex buildings roof replacement
- Basketball courts resurfacing
- Score area improvements
- Fences/Backstops replacement
- Baseball/Softball Fields re-grading
- Restrooms renovations
- Roll up door on maintenance shop repairs
- Drainage improvements at Field #4, 5 and 6
- Landscape improvements
- Walking path improvements

Sawnee Mountain Park (continued)

Current Needs:

- Parking lot re-stripping
- Tennis court reconstruction
- Storage building for athletics equipment
- Renovate community building

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



South Forsyth Soccer Complex

South Forsyth Soccer Complex 31 acres

South Forsyth Soccer Complex is dedicated to the sport of soccer. The park borders Gwinnett and Fulton County.

Current Activities: Soccer

Existing Facilities:

- 4 Soccer Fields, lights
- 1 Multi-purpose Field, practice soccer field
- 1 Picnic Shelter, medium
- 1 Restroom/Concession

Quality of Existing Facilities: Good

Current Needs:

- Synthetic surfacing all fields
- Landscape improvements
- Pavilion replacements (2)
- Playground improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: The county owns property across the street that could be used for additional facilities.



Caney Creek Dog Park

Caney Creek Preserve 63 acres

Caney Creek Preserve opened in 2012 and features a playground, 2 picnic pavilions, restrooms and an interpretive nature trail that includes six stations with signs containing information about the Caney Creek Watershed. This short trail takes visitors along the banks of Caney Creek illuminating the diverse habitats of the preserve.

Current Activities: Hiking/walking, relaxing, dog park, playground, picnics

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Playground, nature inspired, rope elements
- 2 Picnic Shelters, capacity 24, 36
- 1 Mile Trail, natural surface trails with bridges
- 1 Water Access, creek
- 1 Dog Park, 2 areas - small and large dogs
- 2 Restrooms

Quality of Existing Facilities: Good

Current Needs:

- Drainage improvements
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Interactive fountain, shade structures, shelters



Chattahoochee Pointe River Inspired Playground

Chattahoochee Pointe Park 119 acres

Chattahoochee Pointe opened in 2012 and borders the Chattahoochee River. The park features a river themed nature playground, 2 pavilions, a soft surface trail system and a canoe launch. The park is located behind a large community development.

Current Activities: Playground, walking, running, picnics, canoeing. Local high schools use the trails for cross country practice and events. The trail is also available for the public to rent for running events.

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Playground, nature themed
- 2 Picnic Shelters, capacity 24, 36
- 2.5 Miles Trail, soft surface trail, man-made
- Water Access, canoe launch on Chattahoochee River
- 1 Restroom

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Playground and pavilions – good
- The restrooms are compost and are being upgraded this year
- Trail is in fair condition and is to be upgraded this year

Chattahoochee Pointe Park (continued)

Current Needs:

- Parking improvements
- Landscape improvements
- New restrooms
- Kayak launch improvements
- Trail improvements
- Parking fencing

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Disc Golf course



Ducktown Community Park

Ducktown Community Park 6 acres

Ducktown Community Park became a part of the county park system in 2007. The Department added a playground, picnic pavilion, rubber walking trail, volleyball court and updated the restroom building.

Current Activities: Picnic pavilion rentals, playground, walking, archery program. The volleyball court is not used much.

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic Shelter, small, capacity 24
- 0.10 mile Trail, rubberized
- 1 Restroom
- 2 Open Grass Fields

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Restrooms – good
- Walking path – good
- Playground – good
- Pavilion – good
- Volleyball court – fair
- Lower grass field area fair

Current Needs:

- Driveway improvements
- Parking improvements
- Landscape improvements
- New park signage

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Dog park



Haw Creek Park Nature Themed Playground

Haw Creek Park 85 acres

Haw Creek Park opened in 2012 and features 3.4 miles of multi-use trails for foot travel and mountain bikes, a picnic pavilion, restrooms and a multi-pod playground with a woodlands theme.

Current Activities: Walking, running, mountain biking, playground

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Playground, 3 pods, nature themed
- 1 Picnic Shelters, capacity 24
- 3.4 Miles Trail, multi-use, hiking and mountain biking
- 1 Restroom

Quality of Existing Facilities: Good

Current Needs:

- Landscape improvements
- Drainage improvements to playground area
- Invasive plant removal

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Old Atlanta Park Spray Pad

Old Atlanta Park 39 acres

Old Atlanta Park opened in 2012 and is located in the south east area of the county. The park features a spray pad, natural walking trails, a toddler playground, a nature themed playground, two picnic pavilions and a 40,000 square foot recreation center with two basketball gymnasiums, indoor walking track, three classrooms, one community room, fitness room and staff offices.

Current Activities: Spray pad, hiking, picnics, basketball, fitness, classes, rentals, parking for Lambert High School, recreation center activities

Existing Facilities:

- 2 Playgrounds
- 2 Picnic Shelters, capacity 24
- 1 Mile Trail, natural
- 1 Spray Pad
- 1 Restroom/Concession
- 1 Recreation Center

Quality of Existing Facilities: Good

Current Needs:

- Trail improvements
- Drainage improvements needed on lower playground area
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Covered Bridge at Poole's Mill Park

Poole's Mill Park 10 acres

Poole's Mill Park is located in the northwest portion of the county. It showcases a unique covered bridge, which is the focus of many local historians. Poole's Mill Bridge, built in 1901, spans the shoals of Settingdown Creek. After periods of disrepair, the structure was converted from private ownership and dedicated as a county park in 1997. The park offers residents the opportunity to picnic, hike and reminisce about the history of the area.

Current Activities: Playground, picnic, play in the creek

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic Shelter, capacity 60
- Water Access, creek
- 1 Restroom (seasonal)
- Historical Covered Bridge with Picnic Tables

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Playground – fair to good
- Pavilion – fair
- Bathrooms – fair (plans to renovate in 2016)

Current Needs:

- Landscape improvements
- Refurbish historic bridge
- Erosion control improvements
- New picnic tables near creek
- Picnic pavilion and restrooms renovations
- Playground renovations
- Parking improvements (surfacing and fencing)
- Park signage

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Walking Trail Windermere Park

Windermere Park 118 acres

Windermere Park is located within a large community development in the east section of Forsyth County. The park features a dog park, walking path, playground and large grass field.

Current Activities: walking, dog park, playground, soccer

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Multi-purpose Field
- 1 Picnic Shelter, capacity 24
- .92 Mile Trail, asphalt (.37 mile) and natural trail (.55 mile)
- 1 Dog Park
- 1 Restroom/Concession

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Dog Park – fair
- Walking path – good
- Restrooms – poor to fair
- Playground - good

Current Needs:

- Drainage improvements
- Landscape improvements
- Dog park improvements
- Restroom renovations

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Trail expansion



Charleston Park New Bridge Leading to Trails

Charleston Park 154 acres

Charleston Park is located along the shores of Lake Sidney Lanier. Forsyth County Parks and Recreation began operating the park in 2005. The County leases the property from the Corp of Engineers. The park features boat ramps, courtesy dock, multi-use trails and restrooms.

Current Activities: Access to Lake Lanier, boat ramps and courtesy dock, picnics, running, walking and mountain biking

Existing Facilities:

- 6 Miles Mountain Bike Trail, natural surface
- Water Access, Lake Lanier
- Restrooms
- Picnic Tables
- Boat Ramp
- Courtesy Dock

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Bathrooms – poor
- Courtesy dock – good
- Boat ramps – good
- Picnic tables – fair

Current Needs:

- New restrooms
- Park signage
- Parking resurfacing
- Additional picnic tables
- Additional picnic pavilions
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None



Campsite at Shady Grove



Playground at Shady Grove Campground

Shady Grove Campground 107 acres

Shady Grove Campground is located along Lake Sidney Lanier. Forsyth County Parks and Recreation began operating the park in 2005. The County leases the property from the Corp of Engineers. The park features tent sites, group sites with pavilions and RV sites with electrical hook-ups. The park also has bathhouses, a playground, swimming beach, a boat ramp and courtesy dock. The park has a gated entrance that is staffed by campground attendants. The campground is open March through November each year.

Current Activities: camping, boating, swimming, playground, summer camp

Existing Facilities:

- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Playground
- 2 Picnic Shelters, at group campsites
- Water Access, Lake Lanier
- 145 Camp Sites
- 3 Restroom/Bath Houses
- Gate House
- Maintenance Shop

Quality of Existing Facilities:

- Bath houses – poor
- ½ campsites – Fair
- ½ campsites – good
- Beach – fair
- Playground – fair to good

Current Needs:

- New bath houses
- Resurface drives
- Campsite renovations (40-50)
- Gate house expansion
- Yurts
- Re-locate playground
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Possibly add recreation amenities, shuffleboard, group fire pits, mini golf, horse shoes



Six Mile Creek Park

Six Mile Creek Park 9 acres

Six Mile Creek Park is located along the shores of Lake Sidney Lanier. Forsyth County Parks and Recreation began operating the park in 2011. The County leases the property from the Corp of Engineers. The park consists of a parking area, boat launch and courtesy dock.

Current Activities: Boating

Existing Facilities:

Water Access, Lake Lanier
1 Boat Ramp and Courtesy Dock

Quality of Existing Facilities: Fair

Current Needs:

Parking lot resurfacing
New signage
New courtesy dock

Potential Expansion Opportunities: None

Wildcat Creek Park (future) 24 acres

Land for this future park has been acquired and master planning is in process.



Picnic Area at Young Deer Creek Park

Young Deer Creek Park 14 acres

Young Deer Creek Park is located along the shores of Lake Sidney Lanier. Forsyth County Parks and Recreation began operating the park in 2005. The County leases the property from the Corp of Engineers.

Current Activities: fishing, boat ramps, picnicking, swimming

Existing Facilities:

1 Playground, swings only
1 Picnic Shelter
Water Access, Lake Lanier,
Swim beach
1 Restroom/Concession
1 Boat Ramp and Courtesy Dock

Quality of Existing Facilities: fair

Current Needs:

Park signage	Beach renovations
Restrooms	Courtesy dock
Picnic shelter	Playground

Parking improvements **Potential Expansion Opportunities:** None

Eagles Beak Park (future) 225 acres

Phase one development of this future park will begin in fall 2016.



Trail at Sawnee Mountain Preserve

Sawnee Mountain Preserve 963 acres

Located just 40 miles north of Atlanta in Cumming, Georgia, Sawnee Mountain Preserve provides visitors with 963 acres of scenic passive open space, hiking trails and an interactive Visitor Center. This park opened in 2004.

Sawnee Mountain visibly links to the summit of the Blue Ridge Mountain Range, as well as the rich history of the woodland culture of North Georgia's Native American inhabitants. The mountain is named after a local Cherokee Native American, Sawnee. Now, after having survived the passage of time, natural disasters, searches for gold, timber clearing, and urban development, Sawnee Mountain is the landmark host to The Sawnee Mountain Preserve & Visitor Center. The Center features interactive exhibits on the natural and cultural histories of Sawnee Mountain and a resource library/lounge for visitors to relax and read.

Sawnee Mountain Preserve offers a number of amenities that are available for the general public. A hike up to the Indian Seats, a natural rock formation at the top of the trail system, offers a beautiful setting for enjoying the views of the North Georgia Mountains.

Current Activities: Programs – camp, school field trips, hiking, picnicking, playground

Existing Facilities:

- 2 Playgrounds
- 4 Picnic Shelters, 2-capacity 12, 2-capacity 24
- 11 Miles Trail
- 3 Restrooms
- 1 Visitor Center
- Tree Top Canopy
- Amphitheater (120 seats)

Quality of Existing Facilities: Good

Current Needs:

- Large pavilion for camps and programs
- Landscape improvements

Potential Expansion Opportunities: Potential to purchase additional land, aerial adventure/zip line course, climbing wall



Biking along Big Creek Greenway

Big Creek Greenway 9.6 miles

The Big Creek Greenway is a 12 foot wide winding path that is constructed of concrete, boardwalk and bridges. The first three phases/sections of the Big Creek Greenway opened in 2009. A fourth section opened in the summer of 2016. Phase/section 5 is currently in the design phase.

Current Activities: The Big Creek Greenway is used for walking, running and biking. There are various running races held on the greenway throughout the year.

Existing Facilities:

- 4 Trail Heads
- 9.6 miles paved trail (concrete, boardwalk and bridges)
- 2 Restrooms
- 1 Maintenance Building/Shop (currently under construction)

Quality of Existing Facilities: Fair to Good

Current Needs:

- Trail head improvements (signage and landscaping)
- Repairs to board walk sections
- Bethelview Trail Head parking lot renovations

Potential Expansion Opportunities:

There is one additional phase planned for the greenway. Phase 5 is in the design phase. This phase will extend the trail to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve.



Big Creek Greenway

Cumming Recreation and Parks Department

The City of Cumming offers its citizens parks, recreation facilities and recreation programs through the Cumming Recreation and Parks Department. The Department offers a wide range of indoor and outdoor programs at several recreation facilities:

Cumming Recreation Department Building
Dobbs Creek Recreation Center
Dobbs Creek Ballfields (3)
Cumming Aquatic Center



Dobbs Creek Recreation Center

The City's facilities have significantly expanded in the past several years. The development of the Aquatic Center (funded largely by Forsyth County) is an outstanding facility with both indoor and outdoor pools. Recently the City also built a new recreation center at Dobbs Creek; greatly expanding indoor recreation opportunities. In addition to these indoor facilities, the Department programs three ballfields at Dobbs Creek.

The Department offers programming in art, kid's camps, dance, drama, gymnastics, self-defense, and aquatics. Athletic programs include football, lacrosse, volleyball, basketball, baseball, and softball.



Cumming Aquatics Center

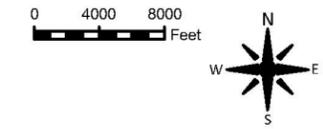
Forsyth County Inventory of Existing Facilities

Type	Name	Acreage	Adult Baseball Fields	Youth Baseball Fields	Adult Softball Fields	Women's Softball Fields	Football Fields	Multi-purpose Fields	Basketball Courts (Outdoors)	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Horseshoe Pits	Bocce Ball Courts	Playgrounds	Picnic Shelters	Greenways	Park Trails	Track	Mountain Bike Trail (Miles)	Water Access	Boat Ramp/Canoe Launch	Fitness Equipment (Outdoor)	Community Garden	Camp Sites	Swimming Pool	Splash Pad	Dog Park	Skate Park	Grass Area/Open Space	Restroom/Concession Building	Gardens/Passive Areas	Disc Golf Course	Recreation Center/Gymnasium	Community Building	
Regional Parks																																			
	Central Park	121	5	4				3		8			4	1	3		1.03													6		1	1		
	Fowler Park	85		4				6	3	12				2	5		1.5	1								1	1	1	8				1		
	Lanierland Park (under construction)	109						4						1	4														2						
	Matt Community Park	185						4						1	2														2						
	Sharon Springs Park	58		8				2	2	8				1	3		1.8												4					1	
		558	0	17	4	0	0	19	5	28	0	0	4	6	17	0	4.33	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	22	0	1	2	1	
Community Parks/Sport Complexes																																			
	Bennett Park	31		5				1						1	1														3						
	Coal Mountain Park	31		8				1		2		2		2	2		1.1												3					1	
	Joint Venture Park	16		3				1							3													1							
	Midway Park	39		7				2		2				1	1		1		1										4					1	
	Sawnee Mountain Park	44		8				2	2	4				1	1		0.75												4					1	
	South Forsyth Soccer Complex	31						5							1														1						
		192	0	31	0	0	0	12	2	8	0	2	0	5	9	0	2.85	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	3
Passive/Low Impact Recreational Areas																																			
	Caney Creek Preserve	63												1	2		1			1						1			2						
	Chattahoochee Pointe	119												1	2		3.1			1									1						
	Ducktown Community Park	6									1			1	1		0.1											2	1						
	Haw Creek Park	85												1	1		3.4												1						
	Old Atlanta Park	39												2	2		1								1			1					1		
	Poole's Mill Park	10												1	1					1									1						
	Windermere Park	118													1		1				1					1		1	1						
		440	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	10	0	9.6	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	3	8	0	0	1	0
Lake Parks/Water Access																																			
	Charleston Park	154																	6	1	1								1						
	Shady Grove Campground	107									1			1	2					1				145					3						
	Six Mile Creek	9																		1	1														
	Wildcat Creek Park (future)	24																																	
	Young Deer Creek Park	14												1	1					1	1								1						
		308	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	6	4	3	0	0	145	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0
Regional Nature Preserves																																			
	Eagles Beak Park (Future)	225																																	
	Sawnee Mountain Preserve	963												2	4		11												3						
		1188	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greenways																																			
	Big Creek Greenway	23														9.6														2					
		23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Totals		2709	0	48	4	0	0	31	7	36	2	2	4	22	43	9.6	27.78	1	6	8	3	0	0	145	0	1	3	1	4	56	0	1	3	4	

Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan | Existing Parks Plan

Forsyth County, Georgia

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation | 09.26.2016



USACE PARK (US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS)

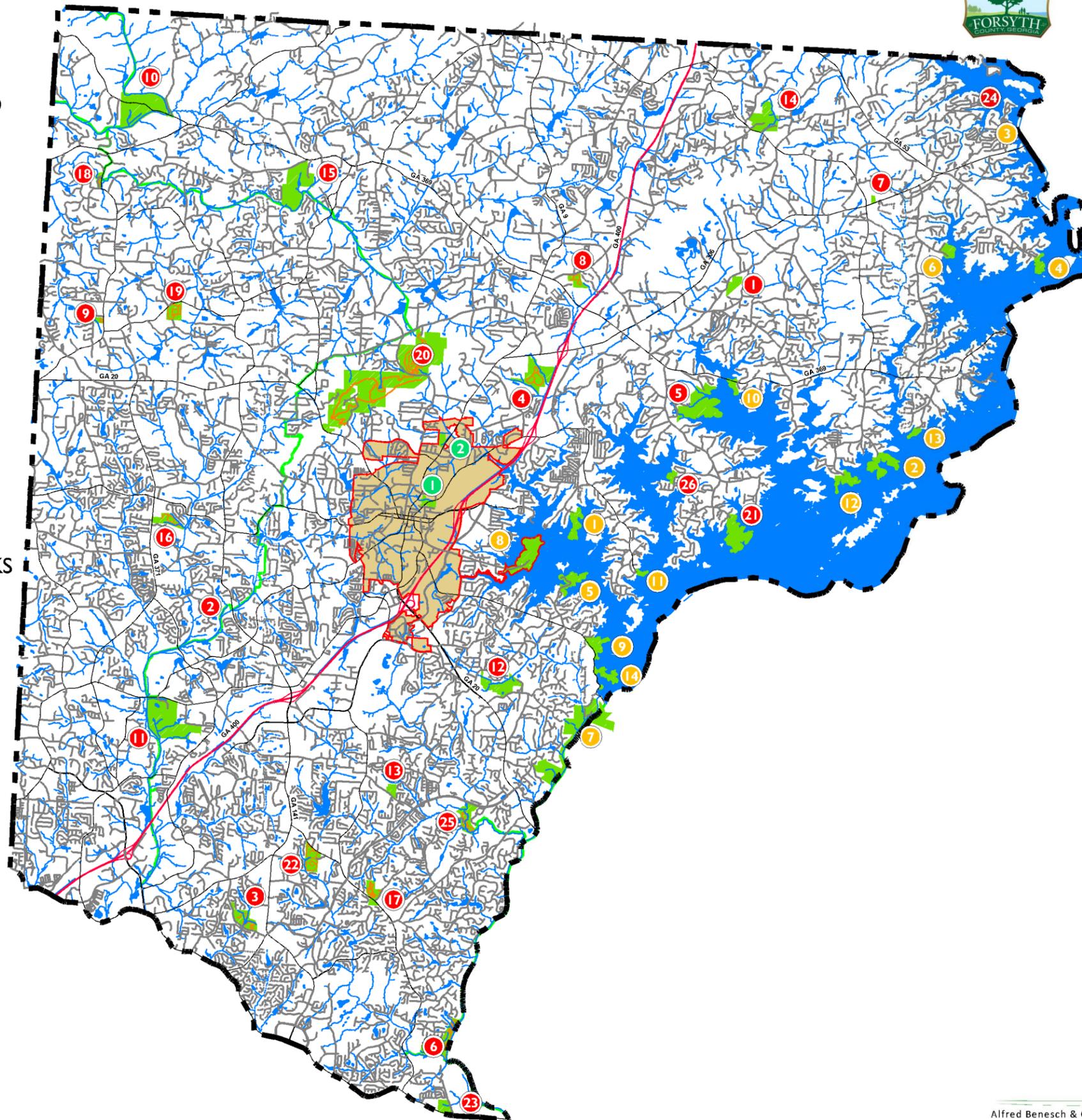
- 1 Bald Ridge Creek Park
- 2 Bethel Park
- 3 Bowman's Island
- 4 Keith's Bridge
- 5 Little Ridge Park
- 6 Long Hollow Park
- 7 Lower Pool Park
- 8 Mary Alice Park
- 9 Sawnee Park
- 10 Six Mile Park
- 11 Tidwell Park
- 12 Two Mile Creek Park
- 13 Vann's Tavern Park
- 14 West Bank Park

CITY OF CUMMING PARKS

- 1 City Park
- 2 Dobbs Creek

COUNTY PARKS

- 1 Bennett Park
- 2 Big Creek Greenway
- 3 Caney Creek Preserve
- 4 Central Park
- 5 Charleston Park (USACE)
- 6 Chattahoochee Pointe
- 7 Chestatee Community Building
- 8 Coal Mountain Park
- 9 Ducktown Community Park
- 10 Eagles Beak Park
- 11 Fowler Park
- 12 Haw Creek Park
- 13 Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek
- 14 Lanierland Park
- 15 Matt Community Park
- 16 Midway Park
- 17 Old Atlanta Park
- 18 Poole's Mill Park
- 19 Sawnee Mountain Park
- 20 Sawnee Mountain Preserve
- 21 Shady Grove Campground (USACE)
- 22 Sharon Springs Park
- 23 South Forsyth Soccer Complex
- 24 Wildcat Creek Park (USACE)
- 25 Windermere Park
- 26 Young Deer Creek Park (USACE)



- Park Parcels
- Greenway
- Trails
- Roads
- City Limits



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Play at the Park Festival - Fowler Park

SECTION TWO THE PEOPLE OF FORSYTH COUNTY

Introduction

An important step in understanding the park and recreational needs of Forsyth County is to develop an understanding of the people that make up the county. This section includes an examination of the county's population and demographics, and looks at changes that are occurring throughout the county.

In addition to reviewing the county's projected growth and demographic changes, the planning process incorporated several initiatives to engage the public to gather information on public demand and expectations for future parks. These initiatives included:

- County-wide Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Focus Group Interviews
- Public Workshops
- Meetings with Parks and Recreation Department Staff

Through these efforts, considerable insight was gained regarding the public's desire for parks and recreation programs and facilities.

Forsyth County

Changing, growing, transforming, exploding

are all verbs that could be used to describe the incredible metamorphosis that is occurring in Forsyth County. As one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, Forsyth County is experiencing sweeping changes in the make-up of its population, the rural nature of its landscape, and the lifestyles of its residents. To better understand the people of Forsyth County, it is important to understand the context and history of the county and the changes that are occurring in this rapidly urbanizing area.

Geography/History

Forsyth County is located in north central Georgia approximately 40 miles from Atlanta. The county covers roughly 247 square miles and contains 23 square miles of water (almost 10% of the total land area). The county is drained by two significant river basins. The eastern two-thirds of the county drains into the Upper Chattahoochee River sub-basin of the ACF River basin (Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint River Basin).



The Chattahoochee River drains much of Forsyth County

The Chattahoochee River forms much of the county's southeastern border. Areas along the river are protected by the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. The northern area of the county drains into the Etowah River sub-basin of the ACT River basin (Coosa-Tallapoosa River Basin).

The county has a wide variety of landforms. Much of the county has a gently rolling topography, but some areas in the northern and eastern areas of the county are somewhat mountainous. The variety of landform adds interest and beauty to the county.

The area now known as Forsyth County was originally populated by the Mound Builders of the Mississippian culture, who built mound structures along the Etowah River. Through time the Cherokee Nation settled in the territory and were the primary inhabitants for hundreds of years. White settlers began moving into the area in 1829 when gold was discovered in the region. In 1832 the white settlers divided the former Cherokee land into ten counties. Forsyth County was named for John Forsyth, Governor of Georgia from 1827-1829 and Secretary of State under Presidents Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren.

The county prospered between 1830 and 1840 from gold mining and the construction of the federal road which ran through the county. The road brought settlers that opened roadside inns and taverns. Cumming was incorporated in 1834 and by 1840 the county had several schools, including the Cumming Academy. In the early 1840s, the gold rush ended and the development of new roads and railroads went to other areas of Georgia, forcing many local businesses to close.

The Civil War (1861-65) missed Forsyth County, but reconstruction had a negative impact on the local economy. The county remained largely undeveloped and very rural for the remainder of the nineteenth century.

The County's economy has historically been based on agriculture. In the 1950s, the introduction of poultry farming created an economic influence in the county that allowed an improvement in the local economy. In 1971, Georgia State Route 400 was extended into the county and stimulated population growth, as the county became a bedroom community for Atlanta. In the 40 years since first reaching the county, the highway has extended beyond the county and expanded; fueling even more growth in the region. The county's close proximity to Atlanta, the Blue Ridge Mountains and the water amenities associated with Lake Lanier make Forsyth County a highly desirable place to live.

Today Forsyth County is one of the nation's fastest growing counties. Numerous new subdivisions with elegant homes are rapidly replacing the rural landscape. Likewise, several world class golf courses with resort like homes and amenities have been developed. Most importantly, businesses are realizing the wonderful quality of life the county offers and are beginning to be attracted to the area. As these changes occur, it becomes more and more important to preserve open space and provide recreational amenities to the citizens of the county.

Population

The population of Forsyth County is changing rapidly. The US Census Bureau released figures in March 2016 that identified a 4.2% increase in population in the county from 2014 to 2015: an increase from 203,882 to 212,438. That growth rate was the highest growth rate in the state of Georgia and the 11th highest growth rate of any county in the United States. As important as those figures are, they do not tell the whole story of change in the county. In addition to the rapid increase in numbers, there are also significant changes in the demographics of those moving to the county. Once almost entirely white and relatively poor, Forsyth County is becoming a much more diverse, affluent population.

The US Census Bureau through the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimate provides some very good information on the county's population. While this survey is based on information that is several years old and does not totally reflect the county's most recent population count (212,438), the information provided is helpful in understanding the county's make up.

The county's female/male ratio reflects the nation's ratio; women slightly outnumber men. With regard to age distribution, Forsyth County has a higher percentage of youth between the ages of 5 and 14 than the national percentage. Likewise, the county has a higher percentage of middle aged adults (35-54). These higher percentages are offset by a lower percentage of seniors (55 - 85+). Over 30% of the county's population is under 18 years of age. Conversely, only slightly more than 10% of the county's population is over 65. The median age of a county resident is 37.6.



Forsyth County has a high percentage of youth (5 - 14 years of age)

The county's population, while changing, still remains predominantly white. Over 84% of county residents of a single race are white. That compares with a national white population of less than 74%. It should be noted that the 84% white population is significantly different from the 2000 census; when 95 % of the county's population (98,000) was white. The Asian population is the fastest growing population in the county; it makes up approximately 9% of the population. There has also been significant growth in both Black and Hispanic populations.

Another important social characteristic to consider with the county's population is the number of citizens with a disability. Approximately 7.6% (over 14,000 people) of the county's non-institutionalized citizens are considered to have a disability.

Of the county's population 16 years and older, approximately 68% are in the labor force. At the time of this survey approximately 5% of those in the labor force were unemployed. Based on the continued improvement in the economy, this unemployment figure has likely decreased. Almost half (47%) of those in the work force are employed in management, business, science and arts occupations. Over a quarter (26.8%) of the county's workforce works in sales and office occupations. Service occupations comprise 12% of the county's workforce. The largest industry employers of county residents include professional, scientific and management services (18.1%), educational/health/social services (16.6%), retail sales (10.2%), and manufacturing (9.8%).

County residents are well educated. Almost 92% of those over 25 years of age have attained a high school education or higher. Over 44% of that same population holds a bachelor's degree or higher.

Forsyth County has an affluent population. The median household income (in 2014 inflation adjusted dollars) is \$87,657; significantly more than the national median household income of \$53,482. Almost 45% of the county's 59,633 reported household have incomes of over \$100,000. The percentage of families reporting income below the poverty level in the past 12 months in Forsyth County is significantly less than the national average. Only 5% of the county's families reported income levels below the poverty level. Nationally, the percentage is over 11%.

This affluence in wages reflects itself in the county's housing units. At the time of the survey, there were approximately 67,000 housing units in the county. Over 85 % of the housing units were single family detached houses. To illustrate how quickly growth is occurring in the county, almost half (47%) of the county's existing housing units have been constructed since 2000. To illustrate the affluence in this growth, the median value for owner occupied housing is \$260,200; as compared to the national median home value of \$175,700 (approximately 2/3rds the value of a home in Forsyth County). Over two thirds (68.3%) of the owner occupied units in Forsyth County have a value of over \$200,000.



The median home value in Forsyth County is considerably higher than the national median value

Looking at the data from the US Census, we see a rapidly growing and changing population comprised largely of young families with children. This demographic indicates a need for family oriented recreational activities; both indoor and outdoor. The large numbers of school age children also would indicate a strong demand for organized youth activities; especially athletics. Greater focus on specific activity needs can be found in the section on public input and the county-wide survey.

Population Projections

With the rapid growth occurring in the county, it is very important to plan for that projected growth. As the county's population expands, the county's once rural landscape is rapidly changing. Finding adequate land for parks and recreation facilities will become more difficult; and much more expensive. An important aspect of this planning report is a review of previous planning documents to identify the projected population growth of the county. This information is then used to make recommendations for land acquisition and park development for the future county population.

As a ten-year plan document, the recommendations in this plan are based on meeting park and recreation needs for the county's projected population in the year 2026; although consideration should be given to the continued growth that will occur well beyond the ten-year planning threshold.

As part of the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan currently being developed by Jacobs (the planning consultant), an Existing Conditions Report identifies current and projected population information on the county. The population projections used for the draft plan were as follows:

Year	Projected County Population
2015	213,628
2020	260,258
2030	353,518
2040	446,778

In another planning document developed by the Metropolitan North Georgia Planning District to determine water supply demand for the region, two sets of population forecasts were used to determine future population in the 15 county Metro Water District. These population forecasts came from the Atlanta Regional Commissioner's Research and Analytics Division (ARC Forecast) and the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB). This report included the following proposed population projections for the county:

Year	ARC Projections	OPB Projections
2020	255,412	245,429
2030	356,079	334,694
2040	431,478	450,066

While there is variation in all of these population projections, all projections indicate significant growth in the county. Based on these projections it would appear the 2020 county population will exceed 250,000 with a 2030 population in the 350,000 range. By 2040 the county's population could reach 450,000.

As a ten year master plan, the planning recommendations of this plan are focused on the parks and recreational needs of the county in 2026. Based on the population projections used in these previous county plans, it appears the county's population will be approximately 300,000 by 2026.

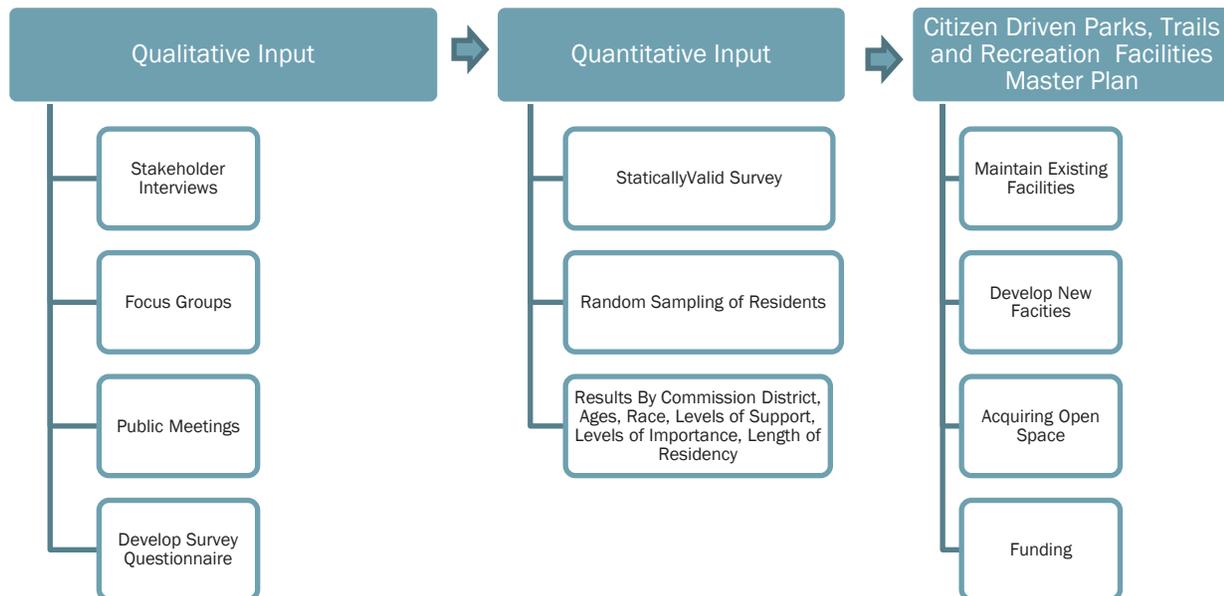
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

The public input process for this Master Plan was developed to ensure that the Plan was based on the desires of Forsyth County residents. To ensure this took place, two (2) distinct and connected public input processes were used in seamless coordination with all aspects of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Qualitative Input

In preparation of the Master Plan, it was important that input from citizens, parks and recreation partner organizations, elected officials, county business and civic leaders, senior County staff, and others was received from the 1st day of the Master Plan process, beginning with qualitative input. Qualitative input included small group focus groups, 1 to 2-person stakeholder interviews, and community meetings. The primary purpose of qualitative input is for the Benesch consultant team to “listen and better understand” issues of importance to address in the master plan process and specifically to use this feedback to design a citizen survey tailored to the specific and unique needs of Forsyth County.

The qualitative feedback efforts were led by Derek Williams, Vice-President of Benesch and Company and Project Manager for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and Ron Vine, President of Ron Vine and Associates who led the public involvement efforts. Focus groups and stakeholder interviews were held from Monday, February 22, 2016 through Thursday, February 25, 2016. In addition, 3 public workshops were held on March 8, 2016 and March 9, 2016.





Stakeholder Interviews/Focus Group Sessions

During the week of February 22, 2016, Derek Williams and Ron Vine conducted one-on-one interviews with over 20 community leaders and stakeholders, and conducted four focus group sessions to discuss relevant issues regarding parks and recreation in Forsyth County. Together over 50 people participated in these sessions. The purpose of the sessions was to allow stakeholders and citizens to voice opinions on existing parks and recreation programs, provide input on future needs, and offer suggestions relative to questions to be included on the county-wide survey.

The format of the sessions was an open-ended discussion centered on the following list of questions:

1. How would you rate the current Forsyth County Parks and Recreation System?
 - a. Superior
 - b. Excellent
 - c. Good
 - d. Fair
 - e. Poor
2. If you were asked the same question in 2012, what rating would you hope to give the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation system?
 - a. Superior
 - b. Excellent
 - c. Good
 - d. Fair
 - e. Poor
3. What are the most important actions that the County could take to improve the parks and recreation system?

4. There are hurdles that the County may face to improve the parks and recreation system. What do you feel are the biggest hurdles that will need to be overcome?
5. From your perspective what recreation facility(s) do you believe are most urgently needed at the present time to better serve the citizens of Forsyth County?
6. What do you feel are the three (3) most important issues facing the Forsyth County Park system?
7. A statistically valid survey of Forsyth County residents will be conducted as a part of the master plan. What questions would you most like to see asked on the survey?
8. How important do you feel having a high quality parks and recreation system is to the future of Forsyth County?
 - a. Very important
 - b. Important
 - c. Not important
 - d. Not sure
9. If today was the year 2021, what are the most important results that you hope are accomplished through the parks and recreation master plan?

The following comments and observations were made (in no particular order). It should be noted that these are comments made during the interviews. The statements made in this section are the opinions of those interviewed. They are not recommendations of this Plan. See Sections 3 and 4 for Plan recommendations.

Almost everyone interviewed expressed a belief that the County's parks system is a very good system with excellent facilities and staff. Overall most everyone interviewed had only positive comments on existing facilities and programs. At the same time, most everyone who rated existing facilities as superior or excellent identified a pressing need for additional parks, facilities and green space. Likewise, almost everyone interviewed expressed a need to move forward with land acquisition and park expansion before future growth makes land acquisition too expensive or impossible.

Lake Lanier is a very important natural resource for the County. In addition to its role as a water supply lake, it provides a wonderful water based recreational facility for county residents and visitors from throughout the region. It also provides opportunities for economic impact through tourism dollars. The lake touches five counties, but Forsyth County and Hall County comprise the majority of

the lake's frontage. Approximately one third of the lake's shore line is in Forsyth County.



Lake Lanier offers a wide variety of water based recreational opportunities

The US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) controls the lake and has 34 park and recreational sites on Lake Lanier. A master plan was developed for the lake's recreational sites in 1989. The master plan identifies three zones of development around the lake:

- Red Zone/Recreational Use
- Limited Development with Recreational Use Off the Water
- Protected Areas with No Development

The County currently operates four parks on the lake; Shady Grove Campground, Charleston Park, Six Mile Park, and Young Deer Creek Park. In addition to these developed properties, the County has leases on several other COE parks sites on the lake. The leases run for five years and then must be renewed. Renewal of some of the sites comes up in October 2016. The County is currently considering what to do with these properties.

The County and the COE have a good working relationship, and both agencies seem to wish to continue and expand that relationship. The COE is limited in their resources to build and manage new parks, so they look to local agencies to fill those roles.

While the lake offers great opportunities for recreational use by the county and there are opportunities to build additional parks on COE property, the response to lake development received mixed reviews from some stakeholders. Several people interviewed expressed concern over public resistance by neighbors at attempts to build parks on the lake.

The value of Lake Lanier as a recreational asset to county residents was brought up in both one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. While the county and the COE have a number of parks on the lake, many

stakeholders felt that the lake was an underutilized natural resource. Several people recommended the County develop more lake front parks utilizing COE land. The need for county parks along the northern shore of the lake was identified by several stakeholders.

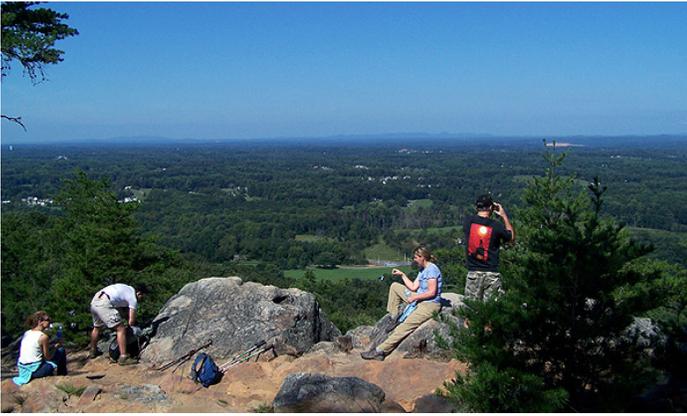
The Trust for Public Land is a valuable partner in the preservation of land and the development of parks and greenway trails in Forsyth County. They were instrumental in the acquisition of Sawnee Mountain Preserve and in organizing efforts in support of the bond referendum for park improvements. The Trust continues to be engaged in regional concerns over the loss of greenspace, development of trails and making sure people have access to greenspace.

An important initiative in Forsyth County of the Trust is preservation of land and the development of a trail along the Chattahoochee River. Another initiative is full utilization of water resources on Lake Lanier. The County should continue to seek support and assistance from the Trust for Public Land in these and other park preservation and development efforts.

The Forsyth County Community Foundation is an important community asset that can assist the County raise money for land preservation and park development. Foundation leadership has been instrumental in raising funds and support for a number of important County projects; most notably the Sawnee Mountain Foundation's efforts in acquiring and preserving land for the Sawnee Mountain Preserve. The County should continue to work with foundations in fund raising and preservation efforts.

Almost everyone interviewed individually or in focus groups spoke to the rapid change in the county and the need to preserve open space while it is still available; recommending that elected officials adequately fund parks and recreation initiatives with both operational funding and capital improvements funding.

The issue of land preservation goes beyond the Parks and Recreation Department. Zoning and land development regulations define how land is developed and can have a significant impact on how much of the county's undeveloped rural landscape ultimately is changed. Park and recreation interest should be at the table as future land use decisions are made.



Acquisition of Sawnee Mountain Preserve was a major step in preserving greenspace in the county

The value of public art was identified by several stakeholders and at several focus group sessions. While there was not a general consensus on the size and scope of the facility, the desire for Forsyth County to develop some form of arts venue was made apparent through conversations with stakeholders.

Many stakeholders expressed a concern that existing recreation facilities (indoor and outdoor) are not adequate to meet current demand (for both adult and youth activities). There is great concern that if existing facilities cannot meet current demand, the problem will only grow as the county's population grows. Several stakeholders expressed the same concern over schools and other public services.

There were several discussions on the differences between the southern area of the county and the northern area. Many stakeholders expressed concerns over the rapid growth and changes that are occurring in the south and the demand that growth is placing on existing parks and athletic facilities. There seems to be significant demand for rectangular fields in the southern part of the county. There also seems to be a reluctance by those living in southern Forsyth County to drive north of Highway 20 to facilities in the northern area of the county. People in the southern area of the county feel that there is significant need for additional facilities in the southern part of the county.

Those in the northern part of the county also expressed a need for new parks and facilities. They point to the lack of active recreation facilities in the northern section of the county; although acknowledging that the construction of Matt Community Park and Lanierland Park will add significantly to the facilities in that section of the county. Many people are concerned that even with these additional

facilities, the future population growth expected in this area of the county will still keep the area underserved. Several stakeholders spoke to the three separate areas of the county. The southern area; where the growth is most prominent and where many of the county residents are new to the area. The northern area of the county where growth is beginning, but this area is largely unchanged. This area is populated by the "old timers". Cumming is the third subculture. Like the northern area of the county, Cumming has not seen the explosive growth and most of its residents are longtime residents.

The County's athletic programming is mostly facilitated by community or district Booster Clubs. The Booster Clubs are responsible for running the programs (sign ups, team assignments, practices, games, etc.). The County Parks and Recreation Department provides the fields, maintains the fields and provides the umpires. Booster Clubs pay a fee for field and light rental. Concession sales are privatized.

Overall, most stakeholders interviewed felt this system works, but there were concerns over transparency between the Booster Clubs and the County. There were also comments made about the quality of some fields versus the quality of others. There were also some comments about competition for fields and how field time is allocated.

While Forsyth County is one of the healthiest counties in Georgia, there are many opportunities to improve the health of county residents. The county has an excellent health care provider in Northside Forsyth Hospital. The County Parks and Recreation Department currently partners with the hospital on programs that encourage healthy lifestyles. As the county's population grows and matures, new opportunities for partnerships should be explored. Areas of interest include meeting recreational needs for active seniors and providing opportunities to engage youth in activities they can carry into adulthood.

The need for additional rectangular fields was brought up numerous times in interviews and focus groups discussions. Likewise, several people discussed options for expanding fields and other recreational facilities in existing parks. Parks that were identified included:

- Coal Mountain Park
- Central Park
- Fowler Park



Northside Forsyth Hospital is a valuable community partner in improving community health

With the high demand placed on athletic fields, the County should develop synthetic turf fields wherever possible to expand use.

Existing support facilities for fields (parking, restrooms, bleachers, etc.) should be improved.

Girls' sports are growing rapidly; placing even greater demand on existing fields.

The importance of rec league play was mentioned several times. It was noted that the rec leagues provide the training ground for athletes that will one day play on high school teams.

The need for additional aquatic facilities was identified by several stakeholders. While everyone acknowledged the value of the Cumming Aquatic Center, many stakeholders spoke of a need for additional indoor aquatic centers. The demand on the existing center far exceeds its program capacity. Another concern was the travel time to this facility from both the southern and northern areas of the county.

The need for equity of facilities in all areas of the county seemed to be a common theme by many stakeholders.

The County's existing athletic facilities and lake parks are playing an important role in local tourism. Additional investment in athletic fields (rectangular fields, softball, and baseball fields) would allow tourism dollars to increase. Likewise, a new aquatic center would also increase opportunities for swim meets and other events that would attract tourist to the area.

As the county grows, and as tourism grows, additional motels/hotels will be constructed (currently there are ±650 hotel rooms in the county).

The County has recently built or expanded three recreation centers. These centers have greatly expanded indoor recreation opportunities, but there is a need for several more recreation centers if future demands are to be met.

The County recently constructed a splash pad at Old Atlanta Park. This facility has been extremely popular. Additional splash pads should be built in other areas of the county.

In addition to building parks and providing greater access to Lake Lanier, the Department should look for opportunities to provide workshops and classes on boating.

There is a need for additional disc golf courses in the county. The existing course in Central Park should be improved.

Running is very popular in the county. The County should work with existing running clubs to promote safety standards for both walkers and runners and create more running clubs. A running track is needed in the northern area of the county.

There is a need for additional mountain bike trails in the county. While several parks currently have trails (Haw Creek and Charleston Park) there is a need for more trails.

There is a very strong demand for pickle ball in the county. There is a need for both outdoor courts and adequate gymnasium space to allow indoor play.

The County should build an adventure park with facilities for unique sports like ropes courses, zip lines, climbing towers, rock climbing, etc. These facilities could be incorporated into a park that could also include a BMX track, skateboarding, extreme frisbee, etc.

Several stakeholders mentioned the need for equestrian facilities. One stakeholder felt there was demand for an equestrian center. An equestrian center could produce revenue, possibly being self-sustaining. An equestrian center could also create tourism opportunities.

Many stakeholders suggested the Department provide facilities and programs that would support "life-long" activities.



The Sawnee Association of the Arts sponsors art exhibits throughout the year



Community gardens are gaining in popularity

Several stakeholders spoke about the need for a cultural arts center in the county. While descriptions of the arts center varied, there seemed to be a central theme of a facility that offered gallery space, classrooms and some form of performance space. The Sawnee Association of the Arts and Forsyth Arts Alliance are important stakeholder groups for the local artist community and should be involved in any plans for the facility.

Several stakeholders said that while arts are important, the Parks and Recreation Department may not be the department that develops and operates a major art center.

As a county agency, the Parks and Recreation Department partners with other County departments to offer citizens a wide-range of services. Many parks have other county functions or services within them; one example of this working together is recycling. Coal Mountain Park has a recycling center. There may be opportunities to include recycling centers in other parks (existing or proposed). Recycling should also be considered a priority in all parks; supported by informational signage and appropriate trash/recycling containers.

Parks should be developed with resource management and water quality in mind. The County's parks should be examples of good stewardship. They should also include educational/interpretative signage that helps educate the public on environmental issues. For example, a storm water quality facility should have signage explaining its purpose to help educate park visitors about water quality.

Parks should be attractively designed and landscaped.

Community gardens and orchards should be developed in parks. The Cooperative Extension Agency is currently partnering with County libraries with demonstration gardens and pollinator gardens. There are partnership opportunities with parks and recreation as well.

As the County develops Sub-Area Plans, it is important for parks to be incorporated into the plans. A Draft Sub-Area Plan for the northeast area has been developed and does include proposals for parks and connectivity.

The County should consider development of Wildcat Cove Park; a Corp of Engineers property on the northern end of Lake Lanier.

The County should consider development of historical sites where appropriate.

The Big Creek Greenway is extremely popular and is heavily used. The County should continue development of the greenway and look for opportunities to expand greenways throughout the county. The County's greenways and trails should connect to the greenways of adjacent counties, creating regional trails. Examples of regional trails and blueways include Big Creek Greenway, Chattahoochee River Trail and Etowah River Trail and Blueway.

Greenway trails should not be limited to natural areas along creeks. In some cases, trails should be developed along roadways to provide connectivity between parks, schools, and other points of interest.

Additional recreation centers are needed. The County should consider working with the school board and develop recreation centers in conjunction with high schools.

Providing pedestrian access to parks is important.



Greenways offer a wide variety of family oriented outdoor recreation opportunities

The County is currently updating its Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan should be coordinated both in the planning process and in findings and recommendations. This is a great opportunity to ensure consistency in the planning process. The Sub-Area Plans are another area where community-wide plans should incorporate parks and greenways.

Young families are a segment of the population that the county would like to see grow. Good parks and recreation facilities help attract young families to the area.

Highway 400 has historically been an important transportation corridor within the county and is a driver of growth. Highway 369 is another important transportation corridor. A future interchange of these two highways will create a large area of growth. Parks and greenspace should be incorporated into this area of development. The development of a pedestrian/bike crossing of Highway 400 should be considered.

The development of a stronger identity for the lake with additional lake parks should be considered. Development of lake parks will be controversial due to neighborhood resistance.

The County should develop a larger amphitheater for concerts and special events; possibly close to Sawnee Mountain.

Additional park land is needed, but it will be expensive; especially in southern part of the county where land cost exceeds \$100,000/acre.

Consider partnership opportunities in association with the new high school planned on Mullinax and Fowler Road. Opportunities for unique historical context associated with Dr. Leila Denmark could provide a unique park facility; possibly with an equestrian component.

The importance of the County working with schools in the development of park school facilities was mentioned by several stakeholders; especially on high school sites. Joint-use ventures at Daves Creek Elementary School and Lambert High school were cited as an example.



The County's recreation centers offer a wide range of recreational activities

Field development (or improvements) should also be considered at middle schools. The Parks and Recreation Department should also seek partnerships with other County agencies (utilities, libraries, solid waste, sheriff's department, etc.) in the development of facilities. A prime example of this partnership working is land acquisition for Fowler Park.

Activities and programs for seniors should be expanded. Yoga, Tai Chi, and dance are all programs that keep people active and improve balance.

Expand opportunities for small boats, kayaks and paddle boards on Lake Lanier. Consider indoor classes for kayaks and canoes; possibly provide classes in boat building.

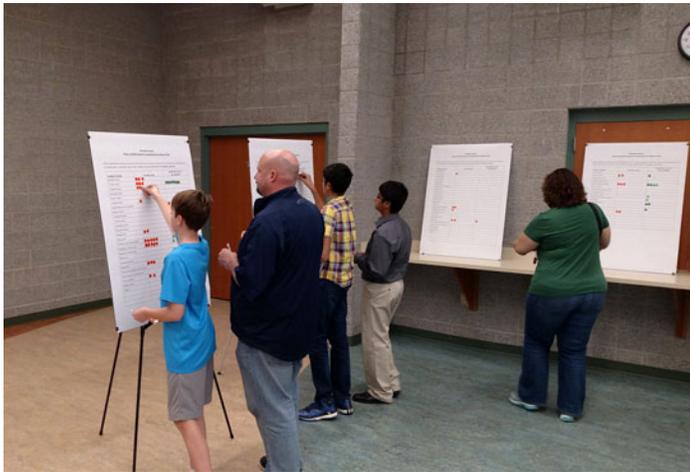
Develop long distance multi-purpose trails for hiking, running, and biking that are gravel or dirt.

The Department should expand opportunities for those with disabilities. Therapeutic exercise facilities and programs should be offered.

Several stakeholders recommended the development of a large (300-400 acre) regional park that could provide a wide variety of both active and passive recreation opportunities. This park should be centrally located for access from all parts of the county. This park could provide a large sports field venue that could become a regional tournament facility.

Public Workshops

On March 8, 2016 and March 9, 2016 three public workshops were held to allow citizens to voice their opinions on existing parks and recreation facilities and provide input on future needs. Approximately 200 people participated in the three workshops. Workshops were held at the recreation centers at Central Park and Old Atlanta Park and at the community building of Midway Park. Two of the public workshops (Central Park and Old Atlanta Park) were held in the evening. The workshop at Midway Park was conducted in the morning to accommodate people who could not attend evening meetings.



Approximately 200 people participated in three workshops to discuss park needs

A drop-in format was used for all three workshops. Once signed in, attendees were invited to walk through a series of display boards that provided information on existing county parks and recreational opportunities. As they moved through the display boards, participants were asked to provide input on the following questions:

What parks are you currently using?

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

Do you feel the existing parks and recreation facilities in

Forsyth County are meeting your needs?

Are additional parks and recreation facilities needed? If yes, what facilities are needed?

What outdoor recreational facilities are you currently using?

What outdoor recreational facilities would you like to see developed or expanded?

What indoor recreational facilities are you currently using?

What indoor recreational facilities would you like to see developed or expanded?

How supportive would you be to paying additional taxes for park and recreation facilities you would like to see developed?

How would you like to see capital funds spent?

In addition to asking these specific questions, attendees were invited to write down general comments on existing parks, park needs, program issues, etc.

It should be noted that attendees were allowed to answer questions exhibited on display boards without direct supervision. Some attendees did not answer or address all questions. Likewise, it is possible that some attendees made multiple responses to some questions (“stuffing the ballot box”). The results from the workshop questions are not considered statistically valid, but provide very good information on the desires of those in attendance.

The following is a general summary of the input received at the three public workshops. See Appendix B for detailed information from each of the display boards.

Central Park Recreation Center

The first public workshop was held at the recreation center at Central Park. The workshop was held from 6:00 pm -8:00 pm when a variety of meetings and recreational programs were occurring. This was the most highly attended public workshop with over 90 citizens signing in.

What parks are you currently using?

As expected, the majority of attendees stated they utilized Central Park for their recreational activities, but almost half (41) of the attendees indicated they also use Fowler Park. Many of the people attending the workshop seemed to utilize parks in the northern section of the county. High

use was recorded for Coal Mountain Park and Sawnee Mountain Park. There also seemed to be high use of the county's passive and lake parks (Sawnee Mountain Preserve, Charleston Park and Young Deer Creek Park), as well as Big Creek Greenway.

Satisfaction with existing parks

Everyone attending the workshop said they are satisfied with existing parks. Some expressed a "very satisfied" rating. Two thirds of those responding to the question of existing parks meeting their needs said existing parks were meeting their needs, but when asked "are additional parks and recreational facilities needed?" the overwhelmingly majority (94%) said additional parks are needed. When asked what type of facilities are needed there was a wide range of responses. Those receiving the most votes included:

- Pickleball courts
- Biking trails
- Cultural arts center
- Passive areas/greenspace



Many people at the first workshop expressed a need for additional pickleball courts

What outdoor recreational facilities are currently used/needed?

Walking and biking trails were the most popular recreational activity by current use. There was also very strong use stated for athletic fields. Softball, baseball, lacrosse, and soccer fields (in order of preference) ranked very high for existing use. Playgrounds and pickleball courts received strong support, as did mountain bike trails, tennis courts, and dog parks.

Those activities that were identified as facilities that should be developed or expanded included:

- Pickleball courts
- Mountain bike trails
- Softball fields
- Walking/biking trails

- Dog parks
- Water access
- Lacrosse fields
- BMX track
- Open space natural areas
- Playgrounds

What indoor recreational facilities are currently used/needed?

Those attending the workshop most often said they were currently using gymnasiums, fitness centers, indoor walking tracks, and indoor aquatic facilities. There was also considerable existing use of indoor pickleball courts, nature center/environmental education, and arts/crafts space.

With regard to indoor facilities that should be developed or expanded, by far the strongest demand was for additional fitness center space followed by strong demand for indoor pickleball courts. The demand for indoor facilities included the following most requested facilities:

- Fitness centers
- Indoor pickleball courts
- Civic center/arena
- Racquet ball court
- Arts/craft space

Funding future parks

Attendees were asked about their willingness to pay additional taxes to fund parks and recreational facilities and their opinions on how capital funds should be spent. Over 90% of those responding to this question indicated they would support paying additional taxes to improve park and recreational facilities.

When asked how they would like to see capital funds invested in parks (new parks, renovation of existing parks, or both), renovation of existing parks received the greatest number of votes; followed by both development of new parks and renovation of existing facilities. From this response it seems clear those attending this public workshop felt renovating existing parks should be a priority.

Comments

In addition to responding to specific questions, attendees left over 50 comments with suggestions for park improvements. Many of the comments were reflective of the responses given for each question with many people referencing the need for:

- Arts center
- Pickleball courts (indoor/outdoor)
- Bicycle trails, BMX track
- Trails

Midway Park Community Building

The second public workshop was held at the community building at Midway Park. This workshop was held from 10:00am-12:00pm. Approximately 15 people attended the drop-in workshop. Unlike the other two public workshops, there were no other activities at the community building to draw participants. Everyone attending this workshop came specifically to share their thoughts on park and recreation needs.

What parks are you currently using?

Fowler Park was listed most often by those attending this workshop, with a number of people listing Big Creek Greenway, Central Park, Sawnee Mountain Park and Sharon Springs Park.

Satisfaction with existing parks

Almost everyone attending the workshop expressed satisfaction with existing parks and facilities; although one attendee listed very dissatisfied. The majority (two thirds) of those responding to this question said existing facilities are not meeting their needs and additional parks and facilities are needed. When asked what facilities are needed several people indicated a need for:

- Arts center
- Aquatic facilities
- Water access



Attendees at the Midway Park workshop supported expansion of the arts in Forsyth County

What outdoor recreational facilities are currently used/needed?

Those attending this workshop were very diverse in their current use of outdoor recreational facilities. Walking and biking trails ranked as the most used facilities; followed by nature study, baseball fields, and football fields (all tied). When asked what outdoor recreational facilities were needed, pickleball courts and open space/natural areas were listed most often. Facilities receiving the most support included:

- Pickleball courts
- Open space or natural areas
- Walking trails
- Cultural art center
- Water access

What indoor recreational facilities are currently used/needed?

Those attending most often use gymnasiums, fitness centers, indoor walking track and nature center/ environmental education.

The indoor recreation facilities identified as most needed were pickleball courts and cultural arts center; other indoor facilities most listed included:

- Pickleball courts
- Cultural arts center
- Gymnasium
- Fitness center
- Indoor aquatic center

Funding future parks

When asked about the willingness to pay additional taxes to fund parks and recreational facilities the majority of those attending the workshop were supportive of additional taxes. Approximately a quarter of those attending this workshop said they would not support additional taxes.

Most everyone attending this workshop felt capital funds should go to both new parks and renovation of existing parks. There appears to be strong interest in investing in existing parks and facilities.

Comments

In addition to responding to specific questions attendees left almost 20 comments with suggestions for park improvements. Many of the comments were reflective of the responses given with many people referencing the need for:

- Arts center
- Expanded aquatic facilities
- Pickleball courts
- Passive recreation

Old Atlanta Recreation Center

The final public workshop was held at the Old Atlanta Recreation Center. The workshop was held from 6:00pm-8:00pm when a variety of meetings and recreational programs were occurring. This was the second most attended workshop; many families with children attended. Over 70 people attended this workshop.

What parks are you currently using?

Sharon Springs Park was the park most listed by those attending this workshop. Fowler Park and Old Atlanta Park were two other parks that were also listed by a majority of those responding to this question. Big Creek Greenway was another park/recreation facility that was heavily used by those attending.

Satisfaction with existing parks

Everyone attending the workshop said they were satisfied with existing parks. Some expressed a “very satisfied” rating. A slight majority of those responding to this question said existing parks were meeting their needs, but when asked are additional parks and recreational facilities needed, 98% of those responding said there was a need for additional facilities. When asked what facilities are needed, there were numerous responses for:

- Cricket fields
- Indoor swimming facilities
- BMX/mountain bike trails
- Natural running trails
- Pickleball courts



Attendees at the workshop at Old Atlanta Park were very supportive of an indoor aquatic center

What outdoor recreational facilities are currently used/needed?

The outdoor recreation facility most used by those attending the workshop was cricket fields. Almost two thirds of those attending indicated they were currently using cricket fields. The second most currently used facility was walking/biking trails; followed by soccer fields, playgrounds and outdoor swimming.

By far, the recreation facility most listed as needed to be expanded was cricket fields. The recreation facility listed next most often as needed was a competition pool. Outdoor swimming facility also received significant

response. The following outdoor recreational facilities were identified most often as needed to be expanded:

- Cricket fields
- Competition pool
- Mountain bike trails
- Outdoor swimming facility
- BMX track
- Walking/biking trails
- Dog park

What indoor recreational facilities are currently used/needed?

The indoor recreation facility most used was indoor aquatic facility; followed by fitness center, indoor walking track and gymnasium.

The indoor recreational facility identified as most needed was indoor aquatic center, followed by fitness center, gymnasium, nature center and senior center. The indoor recreation facilities receiving the most demand included:

- Indoor aquatics facility
- Fitness center
- Gymnasium
- Senior center
- Nature center/environmental education
- Civic center/arena
- Racquetball court

Funding future parks

When asked about the willingness to pay additional taxes to fund parks and recreation facilities, almost everyone stated they were supportive of additional taxes. Only three attendees replying to this question indicated they were unsure if they would support additional taxes for improved recreational facilities.

The majority of those responding to how capital funds should be spent indicated a desire to see both renovations to existing parks and the development of a new park. It is obvious from this response there is a strong interest in seeing existing parks improved.

Comments

In addition to responding to specific questions, attendees left over 50 comments with suggestions for park improvement. Many of the comments were reflective of responses given for each question with many people reflecting on the need for:

- Cricket fields
- Cultural arts center
- Indoor aquatics center
- Dog parks



Those attending the final workshop expressed a strong demand for cricket fields

Parks & Recreation Department Community Survey Summary

Survey Background and Methods

The 2016 Forsyth Community Survey provided residents the opportunity to rate the quality of parks and recreation facilities and activities. The survey, administered in May 2016, also measured resident priorities for future programming, parks and recreation facilities and their funding.

Portions of the survey report are included in Appendix A. The entire survey document (235 pages) can be obtained by contacting the Parks and Recreation Department.

For the 2016 Community Survey, a randomly selected sample of 7,000 residential households received an invitation to complete the survey via mail or online. A total of 526 completed surveys were returned (474 from the mailed survey and 52 from the online web survey). The overall response rate for the survey was 8%. The survey results were weighted so that age, gender, Commissioner District and those living North or South of Highway 20 were represented in the proportions reflective of adults 18 years old or older living in the county.

The 95% Confidence Interval and Margin of Error

The 95% confidence interval (or “margin of error”) quantifies the precision of the estimates made from the survey results. The margin of error for all 526 survey responses is typically no greater than plus or minus four percentage points around any given percent based on

community-wide estimates. The 95% confidence interval indicates that in 95 of 100 surveys conducted like the Community Survey, for a particular item, a result would be found that is within plus or minus four percentage points if everyone in the population of interest was surveyed. For comparisons among respondent demographic and geographic subgroups, the margin of error rises to approximately plus or minus 10% for 100 respondents to plus or minus 22% for 20 respondents.

How the Results Are Reported

For the most part, the full set of frequencies is presented in the Survey Results tables and in the tables in the appendices of the final report.

On some of the questions in the surveys, respondents could give an answer of “don’t know” or “unsure.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the Survey Results tables and the crosstabulations, unless otherwise indicated. In other words, the majority of the tables in the Survey Results section display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

When a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the common practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

Comparing Survey Results by Respondent Subgroups

Among the parks and recreation results, a number of comparisons have been made. Select questions were compared by select survey questions, demographic characteristics of survey respondents and geographic location of households and are discussed and presented in the full report.

Survey Highlights

Key findings from the Forsyth County Community Survey appear below; a graphic summary of findings of the survey can be found in *Appendix A*.

Forsyth County residents use outdoor recreation facilities more than indoor facilities, but give high ratings to the physical condition of both outdoor and indoor facilities.

- Most respondents to the 2016 Community Survey had used at least one of the 17 outdoor parks, trails and

recreation facilities listed on the survey. Only 6% of all respondents indicated they had not used any of the facilities listed (see graph below). Three-quarters of respondents reported using walking and nature trails, 69% had used greenways and 48% used the parks along Lake Lanier. Six percent or less reported using the skate park, disc golf course, pickleball courts and bocce courts in the 12 months prior to the survey.

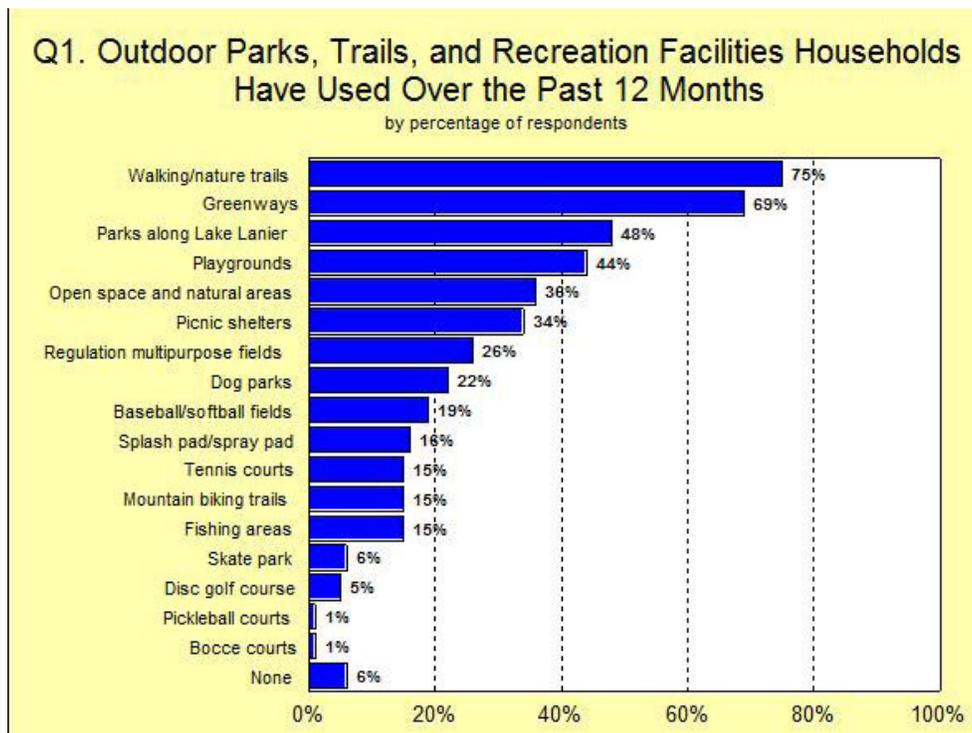
- Overall, walking and nature trails (25% indicating first most often used), greenways (19%) and playgrounds (12%) were the outdoor parks, trails and recreation facilities used most often by residents. Residents less often used pickleball courts, disc golf course, the skate park, the splash or spray pad and mountain biking trails; between 0% and 4% of respondents selected each of these as their first, second or third most often used facilities. About 18% of respondents selected “none” when asked to indicate the outdoor facilities they used first, second and third most often.
- When asked about their use of indoor recreation facilities in the 12 months prior to the survey, 47% of all respondents said that they had not used any of the 13 indoor facilities asked about on the survey. Recreation centers had been used by about 28% of respondents, indoor walking tracks were used by 18% and between 11% and 13% reported using gymnasiums, nature/environmental education center, fitness areas and indoor aquatics facility (recreation) in the last 12 months.
- Overall, 55% of survey participants selected “none”

when asked to indicate the indoor facilities they used first, second or third most often. The indoor facilities used first most often by respondents were recreation centers (12%), indoor walking track (6%), indoor aquatics facility (5%), nature/environmental education center (5%) and gymnasiums (4%). Community rooms and arts/crafts classrooms were selected by less than 4% of respondents as the indoor facilities they used first, second or third most often.

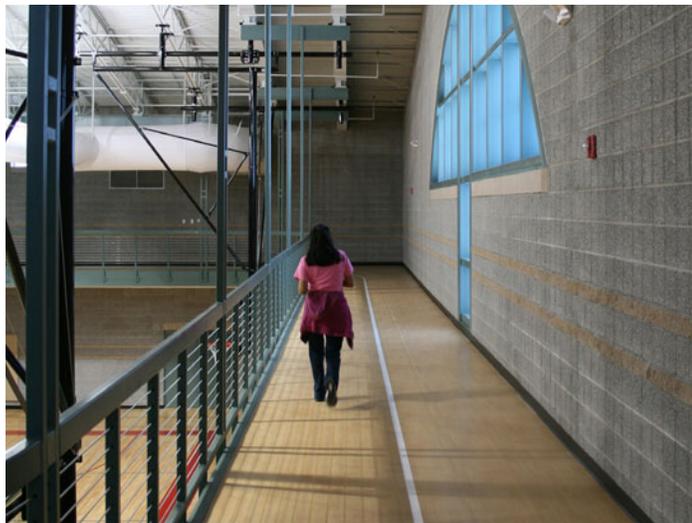
- Overall, about 9 in 10 Forsyth County residents gave excellent or good evaluations to the physical condition of all outdoor and indoor facilities they had visited in the last 12 months. Ninety-four percent of respondents felt the physical condition of outdoor facilities was excellent or good and 95% gave excellent or good ratings to the physical condition of indoor facilities.

Most respondents feel that they or another household member would use at least one of the potential new indoor recreation programming spaces if offered by the County.

- Overall, only 5% of respondents said they would not use any of the 20 potential new indoor recreation programming spaces if made available. The largest proportion of residents reported they would be likely to use a walking and jogging track (49%), a leisure pool (41%), a weight room/cardiovascular equipment (41%) and aerobics/fitness space (39%). Fewer respondents indicated they would use a 25-meter competition pool (11%) or preschool program space (11%).



- Similarly, when asked to indicate which of the 20 potential spaces they would use first, second, third or fourth most often, a walking and jogging track (21%), a leisure pool (9%) and a weight room/ cardiovascular equipment (8%) were listed most often as resident's first choice. Overall, about 13% of respondents chose to not indicate any potential programming space they would use.

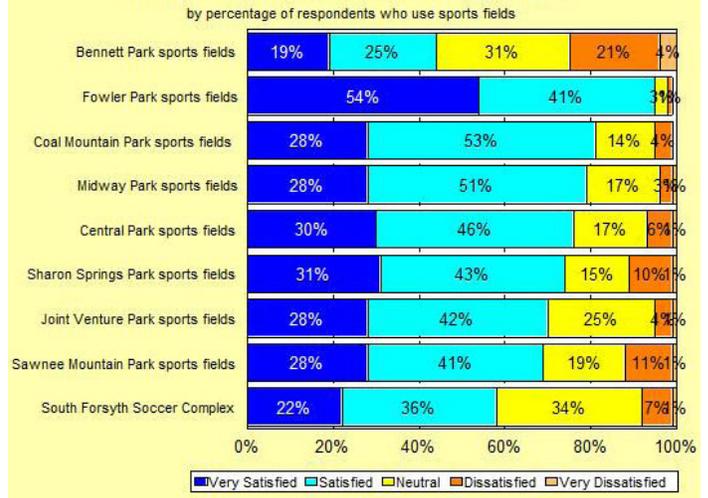


Indoor walking tracks were identified as one of the most desired indoor recreation facilities

Although a majority of residents do not use most of the sports fields provided by the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department, users are mostly satisfied.

- Overall, between 45% and 87% of respondents reported not using any of the nine sports fields provided by the County. The sports fields used most by residents included Fowler Park sports fields (55% used), Sharon Springs Park sports fields (42%) and Central Park sports fields (37%). Those used least by residents were the Joint Venture Park sports fields (87% reported not using), South Forsyth Soccer Complex (87%) and Bennett Park sports fields (78%).
- Of those who reported using the sports fields, overall satisfaction was highest for Fowler Park sports fields (96% very satisfied or satisfied), Coal Mountain Park sports fields (81%) and Midway Park sports fields (79%). Lower rates of satisfaction were observed for the South Forsyth Soccer Complex (59% very satisfied or satisfied) and Bennett Park sports fields (44%). Overall, one-quarter or less of respondents reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the various sports fields.

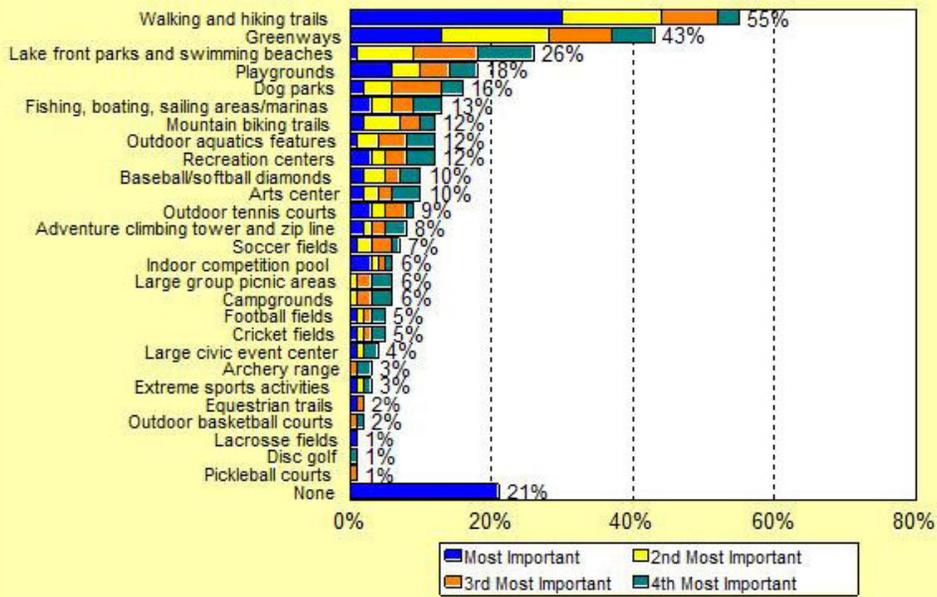
Q9. Satisfaction with Sports Fields Provided by the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department



- The facilities with the greatest need included walking and hiking trails (91% reported having a need), greenways (79%) and lake front parks and swimming beaches (63%). Disc golf (9%), lacrosse fields (6%), pickleball courts (5%), equestrian trails (4%) and cricket fields (4%) were less of a necessity for respondents.
- Those reporting a need for each of the 27 parks and recreation facilities were asked if their needs were being met on a scale that ranged from 100% to 0%. At least 8 in 10 respondents with a need reported that their needs were 100% or 75% met for baseball/softball diamonds (93%), football fields (91%), greenways (85%), soccer fields (82%), and walking and hiking trails (81%). At least half of residents reported unmet needs (0% met) for the following facilities: cricket fields (77%), archery range (58%) and adventure climbing tower and zip line (56%).
- When asked to indicate which four of the 27 parks and recreation facilities were the most important for the County to provide, the facilities most frequently listed as first, second, third or fourth most important were walking and hiking trails (55% of all respondents), greenways (42%) and lake front parks and swimming beaches (26%). Walking and hiking trails (30%) and greenways (13%) also were listed most often as the first most important facilities for the County to provide. Overall, 21% of all respondents did not select any facilities as the four most important.

Q11. Parks and Recreation Facilities That Are Most Important to Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



At least three-quarters of respondents are very or somewhat supportive of the County having used Bond funds for the major projects funded by the Parks/Recreation and Greenspace General Obligation Bond, with the construction of Fowler Park and renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail garnering the most support.

- Almost all respondents indicated that they were very or somewhat supportive of the County using Bond funds for the construction of Fowler Park (97%) and the renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail (95%). About 9 in 10 also were at least somewhat supportive of the acquisition of open space for development of Old Atlanta Park (92%), the acquisition of open space for development of Chattahoochee Pointe (90%) and the construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center (90%). Less than one-quarter of respondents indicated they were “not sure” how supportive they were for each of the 14 major Bond-funded projects.
- Respondents were then asked to indicate which four projects have been the most important additions to the Forsyth County park system. About 8 in 10 residents specified at least one facility that was most important. Construction of Fowler Park (34% of all respondents), construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center (9%), renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail (8%) and improvements to Central Park sports fields and walking trail (6%) were most frequently listed as the first most important addition to the County park system.

- Of relatively less importance were improvements to tennis courts and a new playground at Sawnee Mountain Park (9% listed as first, second, third or fourth most important), renovations of Sharon Springs Park ballfields & new Playground (9%), acquisition of open space for development of Haw Creek Park (8%) and improvements to sports fields at Bennett Park (6%).



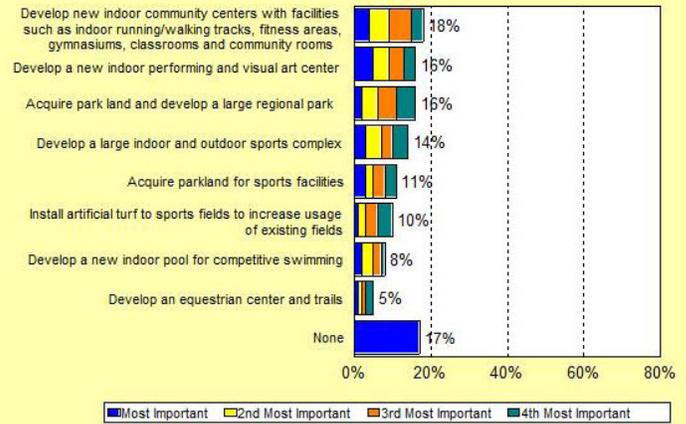
Soccer was identified as the field sport with the highest unmet need

Forsyth County residents are supportive of most of the potential new parks, trails, recreation, cultural and sports facilities presented on the survey, with almost all voicing support for renovating existing older parks and trails, acquiring parkland for passive facilities (i.e. trails, picnic areas, etc.) and expanding the Greenway system and pedestrian accesses.

- At least 9 in 10 respondents were very or somewhat supportive of renovating existing older parks and trails (97%), acquiring parkland for passive facilities (94%) and expanding the Greenway system and pedestrian accesses (94%). A majority also were supportive of acquiring land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve (87%), acquiring park land and develop a large regional park (85%), acquiring park land and develop parks along Lake Lanier (84%) and developing new indoor community centers (82%). Fifteen percent or fewer indicated that they were “not sure” about their level of support for each of the 15 potential new projects.
- Forsyth County residents were asked to list which four of the 15 potential new projects would be most important to them and members of their households. The potential projects listed most frequently as the first most important were expanding the Greenway system and pedestrian accesses (14% of all respondents), acquiring parkland and leaving it undeveloped (11%), renovating existing older parks and trails (11%) and acquiring parkland for passive facilities (11%).

Q15. Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Projects That Are the Most Important to Households Cont.

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices

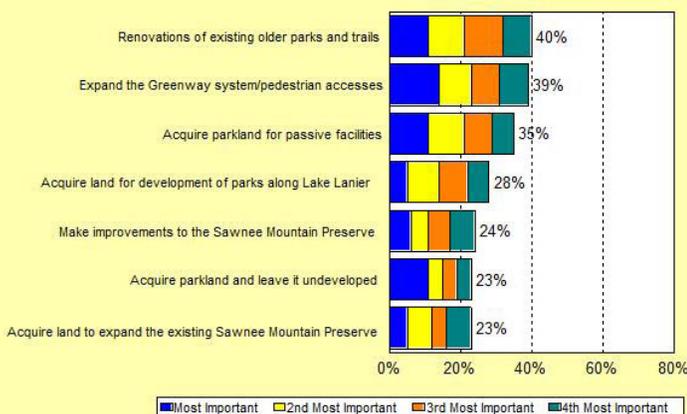


- The projects mentioned less often as being one of the four most important included acquiring parkland for sports facilities (11% of all respondents mentioned as one of the four most important), installing artificial turf to sports fields to increase usage of existing fields (10%), developing a new indoor pool for competitive swimming (9%) and developing an equestrian center and trails (5%). Overall, only 17% of respondents felt they were not able specify at least one potential new project most important to their household.

Seven in 10 respondents feel that continued improvements to parks, trails, recreation facilities and services provided by Forsyth County were essentially important or very important and most were willing to pay at least some additional tax to fund the improvements most important to their household.

Q15. Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Projects That Are the Most Important to Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



- Thirty-six percent of survey participants felt that continued improvements to parks and recreation services were essentially important, 35% felt they were very important and 22% felt they were important. Only 7% of respondents felt that continued improvements were not important or not at all important.
- When asked how much, if anything, they would be willing to pay per month in additional tax funding to fund the types of improvements that were most important to their household, 17% of residents said they were not willing to pay anything. About one-quarter was willing to pay \$1-\$3 per month (22%) and 26% were willing to pay \$4-\$6 per month. Thirteen percent of respondents said they would pay \$7-\$9 per month and the same proportion would pay \$10-\$12 per month (13%). The smallest proportion of respondents was willing to pay \$13-\$15 per month (9%).



Sawnee Mountain Park

SECTION THREE COUNTY-WIDE PARKS & RECREATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

This section contains the analysis and assessment on which the recommendations of this comprehensive plan update are based. The analysis and assessment includes a review of previous planning efforts that contain relevant findings to this planning report. It also includes a review of other park and recreation agencies in the surrounding area and the level of service (LOS) they use in providing parks and recreation facilities to their citizens. This review of similar agencies is based on a hierarchy of park types that typically make up a park system (*Appendix: C*). Using these park types as a framework, we establish a desired LOS for both parks and recreation facilities specifically for Forsyth County. This LOS is then used as a basis for establishing a park and recreation facility Needs Assessment for the county.

It should be noted that the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), in its 1995 report “Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines”, determined there are no “national standards” for park development. The latest NRPA study recommends that each community is unique, and that standards reflecting the local “uniqueness” should be established. Usually these standards are developed with an eye toward how other counties/communities of similar size provide parks and recreational services. NRPA is currently working to develop a national data base of recreation facility LOS for communities throughout the United States. This section utilizes input from the public workshops and survey, as well as a comprehensive review of other similar agencies to develop LOS specifically for Forsyth County.

This study looks at several types of service levels. First we evaluate total acreage of park land within the service area and how this acreage is broken into park types. From this study it is possible to compare the parks in Forsyth County with other counties, both in overall park acreage and park types within this overall acreage.

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

A third analysis of service in this section is an assessment of special use facility (indoor aquatic centers, art centers, etc.) needs. The level of information on these special use facilities is somewhat limited since not all departments provide these type of facilities. Decisions on special use facilities often require more detailed study because of the cost of construction and operation. Section Four includes a general discussion on county-wide needs for special use facilities.

The service levels established in this study were derived from a review of the County's 2012 Comprehensive System-wide Recreation Master Plan, guidance from staff, and (most importantly) public input.

As we begin the assessment process, it is important to recognize several unique features found in Forsyth County. The first is the absence of municipal governments in the county. The only municipality in the county offering government services is the City of Cumming. While there are approximately a dozen unincorporated communities in the county, Cumming is the only incorporated municipality. While Cumming is the county seat and is an important part of the county, the city's 5,500 residents and 6.1 square miles of land (as opposed the county's 247 square miles) are a relatively small component of the overall county; therefore, they are not a major provider of parks or recreation services in the county.

The lack of municipal government structure in the county places greater pressure on the County to provide governmental services. While the City of Cumming has a very good parks and recreation department with several excellent recreation facilities (see *Section One: Inventory*) their department is established to primarily serve the citizens of Cumming (less than 3% of the county's total population).



Cumming Aquatics Center is an excellent example of county/city partnership

Unlike some county agencies in the area that include one or more major cities (Alpharetta, Johns Creek, Roswell, etc.) Forsyth County is the primary public recreation provider for almost all county residents.

This lack of municipal agencies is reflected in the park system that has developed in the county. Without a municipal/urban framework, park development is structured around larger parks (Community and Regional Parks). There is an absence of smaller, "walk-to" parks (Neighborhood and Mini parks). This issue will be discussed in greater detail later in this section.

Another unique feature about Forsyth County that must be addressed in this planning document is the rapid population growth the county has experienced in the past decade and how that growth will accelerate over the coming decades. As levels of service are established for preserving park land and open space for the next ten years, it is important to realize that the opportunity for land acquisition in Forsyth County will become significantly more challenging in the next twenty years; as the population continues to grow. If open space is not set aside in the next decade, it will be extremely difficult to find and/or prohibitively expensive.

These two factors (absence of municipal parks departments in the county and the County's anticipated growth) have a very large impact on the needs assessment and recommendations for park development that will be discussed in the next two sections.

Previous Planning Studies

As we begin to determine the future park and recreational needs for the county, it is very important to review relevant planning studies that relate to the county's need for park and recreational facilities. As part of the planning study, several previous or recent studies have been reviewed and considered to have relevance to this report.

2012 Comprehensive System-wide Recreation Master Plan

In 2012 the Department updated its Comprehensive System-wide Recreation Master Plan. The 2012 Update was the second update to the Department's 1998 Comprehensive Plan. The planning horizon for the 2012 Plan was 5 years (2012-2017).

The Needs Assessment developed for the 2012 Master Plan was based on:

- Interviews with departmental staff
- Two public workshops
- Informal online survey

The Needs Assessment was structured around NRPA Standards for parks and recreational facilities. The NRPA Standards were adjusted to reflect specific needs of the citizens of Forsyth County.

The 2012 Master Plan used a park acreage standard of 10 acres of park land for every 1,000 people in the service population. The county's population in 2012 was 185,000 with a 2017 projected population of 225,000. The 2012 Master Plan inventory identified 2141.5 acres of existing park land in the county. This acreage included the recently acquired Sawnee Mountain Preserve and the lake parks leased from the US Corp of Engineers. This acreage did not include 837 acres of undeveloped park land that had recently been acquired, as a result of the park bond referendum.

Utilizing the 10 acres/1,000 people standard and a projected population of 225,000 resulted in a projected need for of 109 acres of additional park land by 2017. The plan recommended the acquisition of land in the south and northwest areas of the county. It also recommended that land for at least two new community parks be acquired.

The 2012 Master Plan also looked at the need for a wide range of outdoor recreation facilities utilizing population based standards established specifically for Forsyth County. The standards for recreation facility development were as follows:

Facility Type	Forsyth County Standards
Ball Fields	1 per 3,500
Multi-Purpose Rectangle Fields	1 per 6,500
Open, Grassed Play Fields	1 per Community Park, 2 per Regional Park
Tennis Courts	1 per 4,700
Running Tracks	1 per 100,000
Dog Parks	1 per 60,000
Multi-Purpose Trail System	1 per County
Park Walking Trails	1 per Community or Regional Park
Nature Trails	1 per Passive Use Park
Swimming Pool Complex	1 per 150,000
Outdoor Basketball Courts	1 per 25,000
Volleyball Courts (outdoor)	1 per 35,000
Horseshoe Courts	1 per 20,000
Shuffleboard Courts	1 per 20,000
Skate Parks	1 per 100,000
Disc Golf Courses	1 per 75,000
BMX Bike Tracks	1 per 100,000
Recreation Centers	1 per 55,000
Community Buildings	1 per 30,000
Playgrounds	1 per Neighborhood Park, 2 per Community Park or Regional Park
Pavilions	1 per Neighborhood Park, 2 per Community Park or Regional Park
Concession/Restroom Buildings	1 per Four Athletic Fields
Maintenance Facilities	1 per Community or Regional Park
Parking Spaces	75 per Athletic Field

Based on those standards, the following recreational facility needs were identified. It should be noted that based on the recreational needs listed in the table below, the 2012 Master Plan identified significant needs for all recreational activities.

Facility Type	2011 Supply	2012 Need	2017 Need*
Ball Fields	51	53	64
Multi-Purpose Rectangle Fields	27	28	34
Open, Grassed Play Fields	3	10	15
Tennis Courts	36	39	47
Running Tracks	1	1	2
Dog Parks	2	3	3
Multi-Purpose Trail System	1	1	1
Park Walking Trails	8	8	11
Nature Trails	3	2	7
Swimming Pool Complex	0	1	1
Outdoor Basketball Courts	7	7	9
Volleyball Courts (outdoor)	2	5	6
Horseshoe Courts	8	9	11
Shuffleboard Courts	0	9	11
Skate Parks	1	1	2
Disc Golf Courses	1.5	2	3
BMX Bike Tracks	0	1	2
Recreation Centers	3	3	4
Community Buildings	5	6	7
Playgrounds	9	18	24
Pavilions	28	18	24
Concession/Restroom Buildings	27	25	30
Maintenance Facilities	9	8	11
Parking Spaces	N/A	7,425	9,000

* Assumes two neighborhood parks, seven community parks, four regional parks, seven passive use parks, one special use area and nine lake parks.

Based on the Needs Assessment, the 2012 Master Plan recommended a system-wide capital improvement budget of over \$32 million. The capital improvement budget was broken down into the following categories:

Land Acquisition	\$5,000,000
Improvements to Existing Parks	\$1,760,000
Improvements to Recently Acquired Property	\$13,940,000
Old Atlanta	\$300,000
Eagles Beak	\$515,000
Echols	\$500,000
Harrison	\$400,000
Lanierland (phase 1)	\$3,200,000
McClure	\$500,000
Sawnee Mountain Preserve (phase 3)	\$3,700,000
Matt Community Park (phase 1)	\$4,700,000
Windemere Expansion (design only)	\$125,000
New Park Design	\$200,000
Lake Park Master Plans	\$150,000
Big Creek Greenway	\$7,300,000
Other	\$873,000
Subtotal	\$29,223,000
10% Contingency	\$2,922,000
Total System-wide Improvements	\$32,145,000

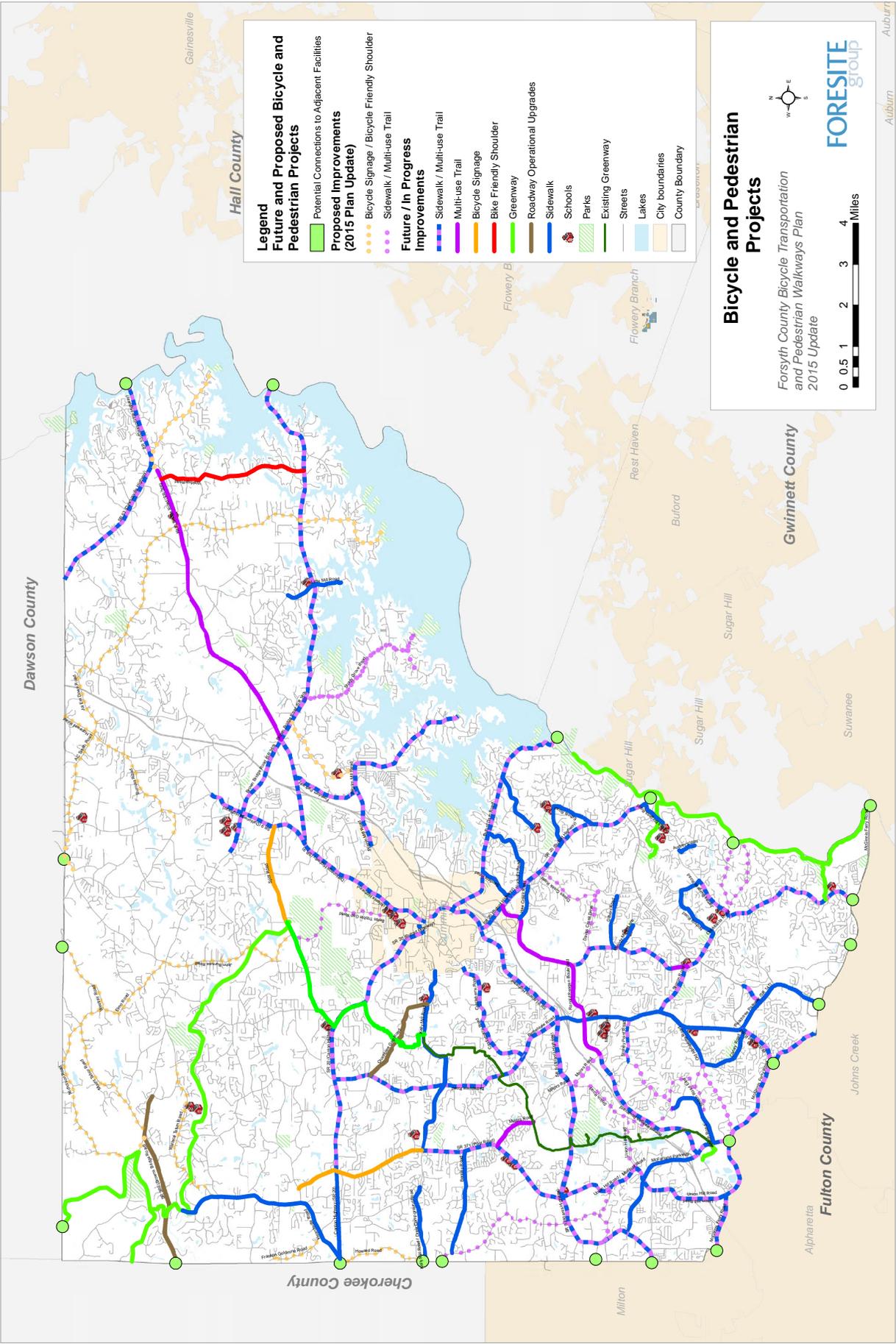
Funding for the proposed capital improvements was to come from the following sources:

Federal Funds	\$750,000
State Funds	\$50,000
Local Funds	
General Funds	\$270,000
SPLOST VI	\$6,500,000
Dedicated Millage	TBD
Impact Fees	\$6,000,000
Bond Funds Remaining	\$20,000,000
Donations	\$210,000
Total	\$33,780,000

The proposed capital improvements in the 2012 Plan did not cover development of all acquired land or the six new lake parks from the COE. The final recommendation in the 2012 Plan was for the County to either dedicated 1.5 mils for recreation (1.0 mils for operation and 0.5 mils for capital projects) or consider another bond issue for 2015 to fund these additional needs.

Forsyth County Bicycle Transportation & Pedestrian Walkways 2025 Plan: 2015 Update

In 2015, Forsyth County updated its 2025 Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkway Plan. The updated vision statement for the document reads as follows:



Foster the development of a safe interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities which promotes a healthy alternative means of transportation and recreation by connecting communities and increasing future transportation mobility to enhance Forsyth County's overall quality of life.

The focus of the Plan is around three primary goals and objectives that include:

1. Providing a system of safe, convenient and accessible bike/pedestrian facilities working through governmental agencies, the private sector, and the general public.
2. Amending the development process guidelines to encourage and promote the proliferation of bike/pedestrian facilities.
3. Providing adequate funding and staffing resources for planning, developing and maintaining high quality bicycle and pedestrian systems.

The objectives identified in the planning report include several recommendations directly related to the County's park system. These include:

- A primary focus of the bicycle/pedestrian plan is improving bike lanes and sidewalks throughout the county. As these facilities are expanded, county residents will have greater walking and biking access to existing and proposed parks. The demand for non-vehicular access to County parks was heard in the public workshops and one on one interviews.
- The 2015 update report recommends connectivity of the County's greenways to neighborhood communities, through a regional greenway system. Regional Greenway connections identified included:
 - Forsyth County's Big Creek Greenway connecting to North Fulton County
 - Marconi Drive connection
 - Chattahoochee River Walk connection
 - East/West connection at John's Creek and Milton
 - Cherokee County connection along Etowah Greenway River Trail
 - City of Alpharetta Connection to Big Creek Greenway via Ronald Reagan Boulevard and McFarland Parkway
 - Pedestrian connections to the City of John's Creek
 - Exploring opportunities to work with Gwinnett County with pedestrian connections and connectivity to the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area
 - Bicycle connections to Dawson County

Within the 2015 update, the report list the following "mid-term projects" (2020 - 2025) directly related to Greenways:

- Big Creek Extension Phase IV
- Big Creek Extension Phase V
- Chattahoochee River Phase I
- Chattahoochee River Phase II
- Etowah Greenway Extensions
- Pooles Mill Link
- Sawnee Mountain Greenway

The total development of these seven projects will increase the County's greenway system by over 30 miles.

The 2015 update to the County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provides very good information relative to greenways and bicycle routes throughout the County. It also presents the value of these facilities in a community building context. The recommendations in this updated report reinforce the strong demand for walking and greenways found in the survey and public workshops; further indicating the development of greenways should be a priority in future park development.

Forsyth County Comprehensive Plan 2017-2037 Draft Report

The County is currently working on a Comprehensive Plan Update (Forsyth County Comprehensive Plan 2017 – 2037). This Plan (when completed) will serve as the County's official long term policy guide and strategy for future growth and development. While the focus of the Comprehensive Plan is much broader than parks and recreation, parks and recreation facilities are an important aspect of the County's Comprehensive Plan. At the time of the writing of this Comprehensive Plan for parks and recreation, the County's overall Comprehensive Plan was in draft form. This review of plan recommendations is based on that draft report. Several recommendations in the Draft Comprehensive Plan are very relevant to the recommendations found in this Parks and Recreation Plan.

As with this Plan, an important aspect of the county-wide Comprehensive Plan was public engagement. As part of that planning process, the planning team conducted public workshops and a county-wide survey. Parks and recreation issues were identified by the public as key themes necessary for the County to maintain a high quality of life. "Natural, green, open space" was one of the community qualities most often mentioned as a quality of life issue by the public. "Recreational spaces/parks" was also considered by many as a quality of life community asset.

The “presence of passive open space for trails and scenic beauty” was most listed as an element important to the future success of Forsyth County by the public. Likewise, providing more “park space and trails” was the fifth most identified element that will ensure Forsyth County’s future success.

Residents identified the following cultural and recreational issues and opportunities as part of the public engagement process:

- Lack of cultural arts facilities
- Lack of central gathering places
- Desire for adding greenspace and outdoor recreation
- Need to maximize Lake Lanier as a county asset
- Desire of boating destinations along Lake Lanier



Overachieving Goals

One of the Plan’s six overachieving goals is directly related to parks and recreation. **Goal F) Maintain and Expand Greenspace** is to protect the County’s cornerstone greenspaces – Sawnee Mountain Preserve, public areas surrounding Lake Lanier including the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, parks and rivers and streams – while furthering site sensitive design that respects the environment and incorporates meaningful open space.

In **Section 4.2, County-wide Design Guidelines and Strategies** under general recommendations, the Comprehensive Plan identifies several recommendations directly related to parks and recreation. These recommendations include:

- Continue to follow the County’s recreation master plan to accommodate future demand for services and

facilities across the County and reflect these periodic updates in the Comprehensive Plan;

- Promote multi-use trail networks between park facilities and recreational uses while coordinating network connections to adjacent jurisdictions;
- Provide for contiguous open space preservation to maximize both recreational and environmental benefits of conserved natural resources;
- Develop and implement standards to ensure that outdoor recreation will not adversely impact neighborhoods in terms of light and noise;
- Promote paddle trails for canoes and kayaks, also called blueways, for recreational purposes that will connect to an inter-jurisdictional trail system along Forsyth County’s waterways.

Under the **Comprehensive Plan’s Action Plan**, there are a number of references to parks and recreation. Under **Economic Development Actions and Policies**, one of the priorities is to increase the number of cultural arts and entertainment opportunities in the county. An action item under this policy is to complete a feasibility study for a dedicated civic and performing arts center.

Under **Transportation Actions and Policies**, several actions were listed relative to trails and bikeways. These included:

- Supporting the implementation of the County’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Walkways Plan;
- Promoting connections between residential developments via ongoing development of the multi-use trail system;
- Continued support of the creation of a county-wide pedestrian and bike path network that connects with surrounding jurisdictions.

Parks and recreation issues were most predominately identified under “**Quality of Life Actions and Policies.**” Two of the section’s highlight priorities that are directly related to parks and recreation:

- **Q2 Enhance and expand passive and active park space.**
- **Q3 Protect and provide access to the County’s natural assets.**

Specific actions and policies related to these two priorities include:

- Complete and implement the update to the parks and recreation master plan;
- Recommend linkages between local, state and federal recreation resources and assist with the pursuit of funding to implement these linkages;

- Preserve greenspace and meaningful open space;
- Continue to implement greenway plans and passive recreation opportunities that will foster the conservation of open space and recreational resources;
- Work towards the creation of inter-jurisdictional trail systems and recreation resources;
- Continue to invest in accessible parks, open space, recreational facilities and public gather places to enhance the quality of life;
- Coordinate natural resource protection with regional planning initiatives such as designation of specific areas through the State’s Regionally Important Resources (RIR) Program that incorporates into regional resource plans.

Collectively, there are many issues and initiatives identified in both plans that are important to the successful growth of Forsyth County. Both plans recognize the value of parks, recreation facilities and greenways in the quality of life for county residents.

Georgia Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan: SCORP 2014-2016

The 2014 – 2016 SCORP is an intermediate update to Georgia’s 2008 – 2013 Strategic Comprehensive Outdoor Plan. The 2014 – 2016 Plan is based on the following five contributing elements:

1. Findings from the SCORP 2008 – 2013 Plan appear to still be relevant and will be updated in a new 2017-2022 SCORP Assessment.
2. Recent research on usage trends in outdoor recreation
3. Impacts of the Great Recession on outdoor recreation
4. Perspectives from a forum of outdoor recreation providers
5. Public comment

In the forum of outdoor recreation providers convened in 2013, the study found a majority of outdoor recreation providers (61%) indicated that conditions of recreation facilities have remained the same or declined since 2008. Over one-third (38%) of those participating indicated a decline in their facility. An equal percentage (38%) indicated a “notable” improvement in the condition of their facilities.

Forum participants called for the need to construct additional outdoor facilities; particularly in urban areas that were growing in population and diversity.

Two-thirds (67%) of forum participants indicated their conservation lands portfolio remained largely the same as in 2008. Roughly one-fourth (25%) indicated an increase in

conservation lands. The Department of Natural Resources acquired approximately 7,000 acres of parkland between 2008 and 2013.

Research for the SCORP was conducted on outdoor recreation usage. This research found that Georgia continues to change dramatically with regard to some demographics. The Caucasian population is declining while African American and Hispanic populations are increasing. The state’s rural population is declining while the metropolitan population is increasing. In the 2000 census, 69% of the state’s population was living in a metropolitan area. By the 2010 census, the metropolitan percentage had increased to 81%. This increase results in higher demand on recreation areas in and around metro area.

The 2014 – 2016 SCORP also included information on the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE). This survey was initiated as part of the SCORP 2008 – 2013 Plan and updated for the 2014 – 2016 SCORP. The 5 most popular outdoor recreation activities in Georgia were:

Walking for Pleasure	84%
Family Gatherings	73%
Gardening/Landscaping	68%
Viewing/Photographing Nature	54%
Attending Outdoor Sports Events	58%

It was also noted in the SCORP report that a single park could provide a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities and providing a wide variety of activities would increase popularity to a broad audience. The report used a ballfield complex as an example. By adding walking trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, etc., the park could attract a wider spectrum of users.

The 2014 – 2016 SCORP also included input from the National Kids Survey (NKS). The NKS found the following outdoor recreation activities most popular with kids:

Playing/hanging out outside	84%
Biking, jogging, walking or skateboarding	80%
Listening to music/watching movies or using electronic devices	65%
Playing or practicing team sports	50%

The kids survey also asked respondents to indicate their “primary activity” or the activity they spent most of their time doing. The following activities ranked the highest:

Playing or hanging out outside	24%
Land based sports	21%
Physical activities (biking, jogging, etc.)	20%
Use of electronic devices	3%



While popular, "use of electronic devices" was not the most popular outdoor recreation activity with youth

An interesting finding from the report is that older kids don't recreate as frequently or intensely as younger kids. 85% of children from ages 6 to 9 reported spending 2 or more hours outside on a weekday. Only 63% of older children (from age 16 to 19) indicated outdoor activity over 2 hours per day. The report found that Hispanic and Caucasian children participated in a wider diversity of outdoor activities than children from other ethnic backgrounds. The report also found children from minority groups were more involved in team sports ($\pm 57\%$) than were Caucasian children ($\pm 46\%$).

Population of Children Spending Two Hours or More Outside:		
Ethnicity	During Weekdays	During Weekends
Hispanic	68%	88%
African American	64%	74%
Caucasian	61%	77%
Other	53%	63%

Health

An important aspect of the 2014 – 2016 SCORP was relating the state's outdoor recreation needs to the health of the state's residents. Unfortunately, Georgia is the nation's 20th most obese state in the nation (Trust for America's Health 2013). Roughly 29% of Georgia's adult population was obese in 2012. The state also exceeds the national goal for childhood obesity in every category (age, sex, race and ethnicity).

More than half (54%) of adults in Georgia fail to meet the CDC's recommendation for physical activity (either 75 minutes of vigorous activity or 150 minutes of moderate

activity per week). The Georgia Department of Public Health calls for communities to promote healthy lifestyles in children by creating safe places for physical activities; like parks and recreation areas.

Government Funded Support

A majority of forum participants (85%) indicated they do not have adequate funding to provide outdoor recreation and conservation of natural resources. A similar majority of forum participants (83%) declared that since 2008 they have increased their effort to collaborate with partners to achieve common objectives. All participants agreed that collaboration with partners should be an active strategy for SCORP 2014 – 2016.

Georgia's Economical Forecast

Economic Growth projections indicate Georgia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will outpace the national GDP. Unfortunately at the time of the report, Georgia's unemployment rate (9%) was the 5th highest in the country. Outdoor recreation is having a positive impact on Georgia's economy; accounting for \$23.3 billion in consumer spending and accounting for some 231,000 jobs.

A vast majority of those participating in the forum (92%) agreed promoting economic vitality should remain an active strategy for SCORP 2014 – 2016. A majority (54%) of participants indicated their agency had increased their focus on outdoor recreation activities that contribute to economic vitality.

The 2014 – 2016 SCORP included a "call to action" that focused on three primary outcome goals:

Outdoor Recreation Directly Improves Health

- Continue to seek opportunities to leverage initiatives, programming, funds and partnerships and LWCF support to advance outdoor recreation projects that directly support active, healthy lifestyles
- Work to improve access to high quality outdoor recreation opportunities by providing safe and well maintained facilities close to where people live and work
- Explore ways to connect existing facilities for pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles and to attend to segments of the population, which are underserved by existing facilities



Outdoor Recreation is a Top-tier Georgia Economic Driver

- New emphasis to explore opportunities where appropriate, for outdoor recreation providers to get a larger part of their annual income from revenue generated on site and to rely less on public funding
- Promote tourism, event planning and revenue generation to invigorate local economies
- Encourage recreation providers to adopt business like practices by seeking partnerships with:
 - Local businesses
 - Non-profit organizations
 - Government agencies
 - Volunteer groups

Georgia’s Outdoor Recreation Inventory Needs Assessment

- Identify and prioritize the condition of outdoor recreation amenities statewide and follow LWCF support on taking care of current facilities
- Support recreational amenities that advance greater self sufficiency
- Identify lands for acquisition and begin exploring collaborative and multi-jurisdictional projects
- Continue to identify protection of wetlands as a priority, consistent with Section 303 of the Federal Emergency Wetlands Resources Act

The findings from the Georgia Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan: SCORP 2014 – 2015 are very much in line with the changing conditions found in Forsyth County. The report speaks to a rapidly growing, and changing, population and the importance parks and recreation can play in community health, economics and wellbeing. The survey conducted as part of the SCORP provides some viable information on public demand for outdoor recreation and can be used along with input received from local workshops and survey.

Finally, many of the action items listed in the report are applicable to Forsyth County.

- Develop parks and facilities to promote community health
- Improve access and connectivity to parks and facilities
- Consider parks and recreation facilities that create economic impact through travel and tourism
- Consider developing facilities that generate income to offset cost
- Seek partnerships from all sectors (private, other government agencies, etc.)

Level of Service

The first step in developing a county-wide park Needs Assessment is to establish a Level of Service (LOS) analysis for both park land and recreation facilities. Typically this process begins with a review of the LOS other agencies are using as they provide park and recreation facilities. A review of other agency standards is included as part of this planning process (see section on Benchmarking below).

The LOS for both park acreage and recreation facilities is expressed in a population based format. For example, a county may decide to provide Community Parks to its residents at a LOS of 2.0 acres of Community Park land for every 1,000 people that live in the county. If the County has a population of 100,000 there will be a demand for 200 acres of park land dedicated to Community Parks (2.0 acres x 100 = 200 acres). If that same county currently has a Community Park with 50 acres, there is a county-wide need for 150 acres of additional park land dedicated to Community Park(s) [demand (200 acres) – supply (50 acres) = need (150 acres)]. Since Community Parks are typically 40-50 acres, a 150 acre need would indicate a need for 3-4 Community Parks.

The same process is used to determine recreational facility needs. If the same county determines that ball fields should be available to its residents at a LOS of 1 field for every 5,000 people, there is a demand for 20 ball fields in the county (100,000 population ÷ 5,000 LOS = 20 fields). If the county currently has 15 existing ball fields serving the recreational needs of residents, there is a need for 5 additional softball fields [demand (20 fields) – supply (15 fields) = need (5 fields)].



Fowler Park provides a wide variety of recreation facilities

Benchmarking with Other Regional Agencies

While every park system is unique and there are no universal “standards” for providing parks or recreation facilities, most all larger park systems use some form of “standards” as a guideline for park and facility development. Reviewing the standards used by other similar departments provides important perspective when establishing (or updating) standards to be used for Forsyth County.

As part of the planning process, several parks and recreation departments within the region were used as comparison benchmarks. These departments included:

- Alpharetta Recreation and Parks Department
- Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation Department
- Cherokee County Recreation and Park Authority
- Roswell Recreation and Parks Department

Almost every one of these departments used guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) as a basis for the departmental standards they established. While each department adopted and revised the NRPA standards to meet specific departmental needs, the NRPA guidelines were used as the framework for the standards each department adopted. It should also be noted that the standards reflected in this benchmarking analysis came from the comprehensive plans of benchmarked agencies. Several of these comprehensive plans were developed many years ago and may change when plans are updated. Likewise, it should be noted we have benchmarked the “standard” being used by the agency; not the Level of Service provided.

In 2012, when Forsyth County completed its most recent Comprehensive System-wide Recreation Master Plan Update, it used a similar NRPA framework to

establish standards for both park acreage and recreation facility development. The standards used in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan Update are included in the benchmark assessment.

Park Acreage

In a rapidly growing region, perhaps the most important need to consider is the amount of park land needed to serve current county residents and the citizens that will move to the county in the future. Forsyth County is not the only government agency in the region that is faced with this challenge. All of the parks and recreation departments in the region are tasked with the decision to determine how much park land will ultimately be needed for their growing populations.



Chattahoochee Point offers acres of undeveloped open space

At the core of many departments’ adopted standards for determining the amount of land that should be set aside for public parks are guidelines provided in the 1995 NRPA publication Park, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines. In the twenty plus years since NRPA published this document, most all progressive departments have come to realize that local demographics, community features, natural resources, etc. make it impossible to have a “one size fits all” standard for the amount of park land needed. With that said, most all departments in this benchmarking assessment used the NRPA standards for park acreage as a point of departure when establishing their park needs.

The 1995 NRPA guidelines recommended that a park system should provide a core system of parks that includes 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 people in the service population. The NRPA publication ultimately identified a classification of 9 parks (and greenway) types that should comprise the park system. A

priority was placed on four “building block” park types. These basic park categories include:

- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Regional Parks

Each park type has a specific character, each park type meets a certain need, and each park type is often provided by a specific agency provider. County park agencies typically focus on Community Parks, Regional Parks, Greenways, and Passive Parks. Municipal agencies typically focus on Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks. Larger municipal departments provide all park types.

The following is a summary of park acreage standards utilized by those departments in this benchmarking assessment. The standards are presented as the number of acres of park land needed to serve every one-thousand people living in the service population. For example, a community with a service population of 100,000 would need 1,000 acres of park land with a park acreage standard of 10 acres/1,000.

Agency	Standard
NRPA	6.25 - 10 acres/1,000
Forsyth County (2012)	10 acres/1,000
Cherokee County	4.5 acres/1,000*
Gwinnett County	15 acres/1,000**
Roswell	9 acres/1,000
Alpharetta	10 acres/1,000

*Does not include over 1,000 acres of Corps of Engineers park land

**Standard includes 7 acres/1,000 Community Parks, 7 acres/1,000 Open Space, and 1 acre/1,000 other county park types

Recreation Facility Standards Benchmarks

In addition to establishing standards for park acreage, most progressive departments also establish standards for the development of recreation facilities (baseball fields, playgrounds, basketball courts, etc.). As with the park acreage standards, NRPA historically provided guidelines for many common recreational facilities. These older guidelines have been adapted and revised by most park and recreation agencies to reflect specific needs for their service population.

Table 3-A reflects some of the standards currently being used by neighboring agencies. As with the park acreage standards, these standards are population based. A community with a service population of 100,000 and a standard of one field for every 5,000 people would need to provide 20 ball fields.

Benchmarking Assessment

A quick review of the standards utilized by the departments in our benchmarking assessment confirms that there are no universal “standards” for park acreage or recreation facilities. (See Table 3-A “Benchmark Assessment” on page 3-16.)

Park Acreage

Park acreage standards for the 6 agencies benchmarked shows a variation in standards from 4.5 acres per 1,000 people to 15 acres per 1,000 people. In a county like Forsyth County (with a service population of ±200,000), that variation in standards for park acreage would compute to a variation of over 2,100 acres in park land needs (3,000 acres versus 900 acres); quite a significant difference. While the variance from lowest to highest standard seems significant, there appears to be general consensus among most of the benchmarked agencies that the upper ranges of the old NRPA standard (6.25 – 10 acres/1,000 people) seems to be an appropriate standard. Based on this assessment, Forsyth County’s 2012 standard of 10 acres/1,000 people seems to be aligned with other agencies in the region. Utilizing this standard for park land need would indicate the County has adequate park land. Based on public input, it is apparent that there is a need for additional park land. See *Forsyth County Park Needs* for additional information.



Sawnee Mountain Park

Recreational Facilities

Assessment of the standards used for development of recreational facilities becomes a little more difficult because of the variety of recreational facilities and the wide variations of how agencies classify facilities. For example, some agencies combine all ballfields into one category while others differentiate between baseball, softball, adults/youth, etc.

A general review of Forsyth County's 2012 standards with other agencies indicates there are many similarities with other agencies. Several facilities where Forsyth County's standards stood in contrast to other agencies include:

- Forsyth County's 2012 standard for developing recreation centers was 1 recreation center for every 55,000 people in the service population. This was a significantly lower standard (resulting in few recreation centers) than any of the other agencies included in the benchmark assessment (1 recreation center/20,000 people to 1 recreation center/12,400 people).
- Forsyth County's 2012 standards for developing swimming pools was 1 pool for every 150,000 people in the service population. This was a significantly lower standard (resulting in fewer swimming pools) than other agencies included in the benchmark assessment (1 swimming pool/20,000 people to 1 swimming pool/40,000 people).
- Forsyth County's 2012 standard for rectangle multipurpose fields was 1 field for every 6,500 people in the service population. This is a lower standard (resulting in fewer multipurpose fields) than many agencies currently use. With growing popularity of soccer, lacrosse, field hockey and cricket, many departments are now using a Level of Service considerably higher than the old NRPA guideline (1 field per 10,000 people). Many departments strive to provide multipurpose fields at a standard of 1 field per 5,000 people and greater.

Based on the strong demand for rectangle fields, recreation centers and swimming facilities expressed in the public workshops, focus group sessions and survey, it would appear that several of the standards used in Forsyth County's 2012 Master Plan may need to be updated.

Forsyth County Park Needs

As noted in the previous section on Benchmarking, most progressive agencies in thriving areas continue to consider the old NRPA Standards for park acreage (10 acres/1,000 people in the service population) as the point of departure as they establish a LOS of park acreage. This LOS has

traditionally been used by Forsyth County as it developed its park system. It is the LOS that projected a need for land acquisition of 837 acres in 8 new park sites funded by the \$100 million referendum in 2008.

The park bond of 2008, and the land acquisition that resulted from the bond passage, allowed the County to catch up on park land needs. That land acquisition, along with taking over several lake parks from the Army Corp of Engineers has increased the County's park system to over 2,700 acres of park land. At a LOS of 10 acres of park land/1,000 people, that would indicate that once all of these park properties are developed, the County will have adequate parks for its citizens.

During the public participation process, very strong demand was expressed for developing new parks and acquiring park land for passive recreation. Ninety-four percent (94%) of those surveyed supported acquiring park land for passive recreation. Likewise, 94% were supportive of expanding greenways and other pedestrian accesses, 84% supported acquiring land to expand Sawnee Mountain Preserve and 84% were supportive of acquiring land to expand parks along Lake Lanier.



Matt Community Park is an important addition to existing parks

With this strong demand for public open space and passive recreation, and with the understanding that in the future, undeveloped land in many parts of the County will not be available, it is important for the County to acquire park land within the next 10 years. Based on the strong demand for public park land, the County should plan its park land at a standard of 12 acres/1,000 people.

Utilizing this standard for park land, the County has a current demand of 2,500-2,600 acres of park land. With the expansion of parks brought on-line by the 2008 bond

referendum, the county has managed to barely meet current demand.

Fortunately, Forsyth County has a thriving economy with a rapidly growing population. While the 2008 bond package has funded significant park acquisition and facility development, as the County's population continues to grow, the need for additional park land will grow as well. As noted in the Population Section, the projected county population for 2026 will be $\pm 300,000$. Based on a LOS of 12 acres/1,000 people, that will give the county a need for 3,600 acres of park land; or almost an additional 1,000 acres of land.

Based on the demand expressed in the public engagement initiatives (especially the Community Survey), there are several areas of land acquisition that will be critical in the coming decade.

Open Space/Passive Recreation

First and foremost, as a rapidly developing county with ever increasing population, there is tremendous demand to purchase property and preserve it for open space and passive recreation. While this demand is high currently, this demand will only grow as the county continues to develop and citizens see woodlands and meadows rapidly being turned into housing and shopping centers. The acquisition of Sawnee Mount Preserve was a monumental step in the preservation of greenspace for the county, but additional tracts of significant undeveloped property should be acquired to allow adequate greenspace for future generations. The County could easily invest in 400-500 acres of additional land to be set aside for open space preservation.

Lake Parks

Another important demand identified in the public participation process was the public's desire for additional access to Lake Lanier. While the County has made great strides in the past decade working with the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) to expand lake access, there appears to be strong demand for additional lake parks.

Based on the input received from the survey and during one-on-one interviews, there is still a significant need for additional water access. The County is currently working with COE on potential use of five lake properties. The development of these properties would add several hundred additional acres of park land to the County's park system. On a very positive note, this collaborative venture with the COE allows the County to expand park offerings without land acquisition.



The County should expand lake parks by working with the Corps of Engineers

Active Recreation

There is also strong demand for additional active recreation sites in all areas of the county. Based on the strong demand for active recreation (athletic fields, athletic courts, indoor recreation centers, etc.), there is a need for additional Community Parks and the expansion of several existing parks. At 40-50 acres per park, the addition of four Community Parks and the expansion of existing parks will require acquisition of 300-400 acres of additional land.

Land for Greenways

In addition to the land acquisition for park sites (active and passive) the County will also be required to purchase land as it expands its greenway system. While much of its greenway development may be constructed along utility easements, there will be areas where land acquisition will be required. Expanding greenways will also require acquisition of land for trail heads and for the protection of critical watersheds.

These four expressed park needs will easily require the County to purchase or acquire 900 acres of additional park land over the next decade. Based on availability and cost, land acquisition should be a high priority for future capital expenditures.

Future Land/Open Space Needs

An important consideration for the County in the coming decade is to determine the long-term need for park land. While the focus of this plan is a ten year planning horizon, the County's long-term population will exceed the projected ten year population (300,000) used in this report. In ten years, when this plan is updated, two conditions will most likely be critical as the next plan (2026-2036)

is developed. The availability of undeveloped land will be significantly less throughout the county; especially in the southern sections. At the same time, the projected population for the County will be well beyond the 300,000 people this plan is using as the planning target.

If park land is going to be acquired for future generations, it is critical that the County find and acquire much of that land in the coming decade.

Facility Needs

Levels of service for recreational facilities (i.e. ballfields, courts, picnic shelters, etc.) proposed for county residents were developed from a review of LOS used by other counties similar to Forsyth County, and from input gathered during the public input process. The LOS, identified in *Table 3A-Facilities*, and discussed in greater detail in *Section Four: Proposals and Recommendations*, are the minimum recreation facility LOS recommended for the County.

Based on these LOS, the number of public facilities needed in the park system through the planning period (2016 to 2026), are identified in *Table 3-B "Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment"* on page 3-17 and summarized below. A more detailed discussion of each of the facility needs is provided in *Section Four: Proposals & Recommendations*.

By 2026, when the County's population is approximately 300,000, the **additional** recreational facilities will be needed:

Recreation Facility	2026 Need
Ball Fields	23
Rectangular Fields	29
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	5
Tennis Courts	24
Pickleball (outdoor)	15
Volleyball Courts (outdoor)	4
Greenway Trails, miles	50.4
Walking Trails in Parks, miles	10
Playgrounds	18
Picnic Shelters	17
Running Track	2
BMX Bike Tracks	2
Water Access	7
Boat Ramp/Kayak Launch	12

Recreation Facility	2026 Need
Mountain Bike Trails, miles	14
Swimming Pool	4
Aquatic Center	1
Splash Pad	5
Recreation Center	3
Community Building	3
Dog Park	2
Skate Park	1
Disc Golf Course	2

Table 3-A Benchmark Assessment
Comparison of Level of Service
Recreational Facilities

	NRPA Guidelines	Cherokee County	Gwinnett County	Alpharetta	Roswell	Forsyth 2012	Forsyth 2016
Fields							
Baseball	1/5,000	1/2,500	1/5,000				
Softball	1/5,000	1/2,500	1/5,000				
Ball Field					1/5,000	1/3,500	1/4,000
Football	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/35,000				
Soccer	1/10,000	1/4,000	1/6,000				
Rectangle Fields				1/8,900		1/6,500	1/5,000
Open Play Fields						1 or 2/Park	1 or 2/Park
Courts							
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/4,000	1/3,600	1/2,000	1/4,700	1/5,000
Basketball (Out)	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/10,000			1/25,000	1/25,000
Volleyball (Out)	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/30,000			1/35,000	1/50,000
Shuffleboard						1/20,000	
Playgrounds		1/1,000	1/750 Child	1/10,300	1/5,000	1 or 2/Park	1/7,500
Picnic Shelters		1/2,000				1 or 2/Park	1/5,000
Trails							
Multipurpose Trail		1 Mile/3,000		.22 Mile/1,000		1/County	1 Mile/5,000
Nature Trail						1/Passive Park	1/Passive Park
Walking Trail				1/Community Park		1/Park	1/Park
Specialized							
Running Track	1/20,000	1/20,000				1/100,000	1/100,000
Swimming Pool	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/40,000			1/150,000	1/75,000
Dog Park						1/60,000	1/60,000
Golf Course		1/50,000					
Skate Park		1/100,000	1/5,000 Child			1/100,000	1/75,000
Disc Golf						1/75,000	1/100,000
BMX Track						1/100,000	1/150,000
Recreation Center		1/20,000	1/20,000	1/12,400		1/55,000	1/50,000
Community Building		1/50,000	1/30,000			1/30,000	1/30,000

**Table 3-B Forsyth County
Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment**

Recreation Facility	2012 Standard	2016 Standard	Existing Facilities	Current Demand (215,000)	Current Need (215,000)	2026 Demand (300,000)	2026 Need (300,000)
Fields							
Baseball	Ball Fields 1/3,500	Ball Fields 1/4,000	48	54	2	75	23
Softball			4				
Multipurpose	Rectangular Fields 1/6,500	Rectangular Fields 1/5,000	31	43	12	60	29
Courts							
Basketball (outdoor)	1/25,000	1/25,000	7	9	2	12	5
Tennis	1/4,700	1/5,000	36	43	7	60	24
Pickleball (outdoor)		1/20,000	-	11	11	15	15
Volleyball (outdoor)	1/35,000	1/50,000	2	4	2	6	4
Trails							
Greenway	1/System	1 mile/5,000	9.6 miles	43 miles	33.4 miles	60 miles	50.4 miles
Park Walking Trails	1/Park	1/Park	13	19	6	23	10
Outdoor Areas							
Playgrounds	1/Neighborhood 2/Community	1/7,500	22	29	7	40	18
Picnic Shelter	1/Neighborhood 2/Community	1/5,000	43	43	-	60	17
Specialized							
Running Track	1/100,000	1/100,000	1	2	1	3	2
BMX Bike Tracks	1/100,000	1/150,000	-	1	1	2	2
Water Access		1/20,000	8	10	2	15	7
Boat Ramp/Kayak Launch		1/20,000	3	10	7	15	12
Mountain Bike Trails		1 mile/15,000	6	14	8	20	14
Swimming Pool	1/150,000	1/75,000	-	3	3	4	4
Aquatic Center		1/150,000	1*	1	-	2	1
Splash Pad		1/50,000	1	4	3	6	5
Dog Park	1/60,000	1/60,000	3	4	1	5	2
Skate Parks	1/100,000	1/150,000	1	1	-	2	1
Recreation Center	1/55,000	1/50,000	3	4	1	6	3
Community Building	1/30,000	1/45,000	4	5	1	7	3
Disc Golf	1/7,500	1/100,000	1	2	1	3	2

*Cumming Aquatic Center



Big Creek Greenway

SECTION FOUR PROPOSALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Over the past decade Forsyth County has made significant improvements to its park system utilizing funding generated from the 2008 Parks and Greenspace Bond. That bond initiative created \$100 million to be invested in park expansion and land acquisition. Park improvements created from this bond referendum have allowed significant expansion of both facilities and park land.

With the construction of Matt Community Park and Lanierland Park, most of the funding from this important funding source will be expended. As the County reaches the end of this park expansion phase it is important to focus on future needs and develop strategies for addressing those needs.

Forsyth County is in a very fortunate position. With a great location, outstanding natural resources and a wonderful quality of life, the county continues to enjoy very positive growth. As the county's population grows, the need for additional parks and recreation facilities will continue to increase. Section Three identified the parks and recreation facility needs of the county. This section looks at those park and recreational needs in greater detail to determine how these expressed needs will be met as the Department continues to develop.

While the Parks and Recreation Department is the primary provider of parks and recreation opportunities in the county, it is important to realize that they are not the only agency or organization in the county that is charged with improving citizen's lives through sports and recreational activities. There are a number of public and private entities throughout the county that have some level of responsibility in this area of community life. Recognizing and working with these potential community partners is an important step in meeting park and recreational needs.

Agencies/organizations in the county that could be partners in this mission to meet park and recreational needs include:

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Forsyth County School Board
- City of Cumming
- Northside Hospital
- Trust for Public Land
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources

This section will review the park improvements needed by the county over the next ten years and will look at each of these potential partners to see what roles they may play in meeting citizens needs for parks and recreation programs.

Proposals & Recommendations

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department

The County, through its Parks and Recreation Department, is the primary provider of parks and recreational services to all residents of Forsyth County. As previously discussed, the lack of municipalities in the county places a tremendous demand on the County with regard to both parks and recreational programs.

The Department, which was started in 1978, has grown tremendously in the past decade. Today the Department offers the citizens of Forsyth County over 2,700 acres of park land in 25 parks. In addition to their outdoor recreation opportunities, the Department operates three full service recreation centers and five community buildings.

Even with this impressive inventory of parks, the rapidly growing population in the region places stress on existing facilities and future population growth requires the County to be proactive in their park expansion efforts.

Park Needs

As discussed in Section Three, the rapid growth in county population results in a need for additional park land of approximately 1,000 additional acres. As the County looks to acquire new land for open space preservation and expanding active recreation opportunities, it is important to look at existing parks to determine what type of land is needed and where gaps exist between existing parks.

As previously discussed, NRPA identifies six to eight park types that typically make up a community's park system. These park types range from small Mini Parks (often less than one acre) to large Regional Parks that may contain several hundred acres. Most county parks and recreation departments focus on larger (Community and Regional Parks). Forsyth County's park system fits this model. As a county park department, the primary focus of the Department is on larger parks.

As part of this planning process, each of the County's twenty-five parks have been evaluated based on size, facilities offered, and service population. From this evaluation, existing parks have been placed in six categories roughly aligning with NRPA's park classifications.

The following classification reflects this evaluation.

Community Parks/Sports Complexes

Bennett Park
Coal Mountain Park
Joint Venture Park
Midway Park
Sawnee Mountain Park
South Forsyth Soccer Complex

Regional Parks

Central Park
Fowler Park
Lanierland Park
Matt Community Park
Sharon Springs Park

Passive/Low Impact Recreational Areas

Caney Creek Preserve
Chattahoochee Pointe
Ducktown Community Park
Haw Creek Park
Old Atlanta Park
Poole's Mill Park
Windermere Park



Lake Lanier and the County's rivers and creeks offer opportunities for water access

Lake Parks/Water Access

- Charleston Park
- Shady Grove Campground
- Six Mile Creek
- Wildcat Creek Park
- Young Deer Creek Park

Regional Nature Preserves

- Eagles Beak Park
- Swanee Mountain Preserve

Greenways

- Big Creek Greenway

This categorization of county parks, reflects the County's focus on providing larger parks for both active and passive recreational opportunities. Smaller parks (Mini Parks or Neighborhood Parks) may be constructed in the county (either by the City of Cumming or by private developers as part of large scale residential development), but the County will continue to build larger active and passive parks.

Community and Regional Parks

The County's active recreation programs are built on the foundation of its Community and Regional Parks. With the completion of Lanierland Park and Matt Community Park the County will have six Community Parks and five Regional Parks. As these two newest parks come online the Department's parks are fairly evenly distributed across the county; although there are several areas in the county that are underserved.

As a part of the planning process, each of the County's existing parks were located on a map and each park was assigned a service radius based on park type. Community Parks, which typically have a service radius of 0.5-3 miles, were assigned a service radius of 2 miles (see *Existing Community Park map*). Regional Parks, which are

typically larger parks and have a correspondingly larger service radius of 3-5 miles (see *Existing Regional Park map*). It should be noted that Regional Parks also serve as Community Parks for the service areas immediately around them.

Mapping the location of the County's five Regional Parks and six Community Parks (see *Community Park Gap map*) we see that with the buildout of Matt Community Park (which is actually a Regional Park) and Lanierland Park, the entire county will have reasonably good access to a Regional Park. While there are needs for facility improvements at each of the county's five existing Regional Parks and while it will be critical to fully build out the county's newest parks, the need for Regional Parks has been met.

Community Parks are smaller than Regional Parks and typically do not include the same number of recreational facilities as Regional Parks. In a county park system that does not have any major municipalities (and does not have smaller parks), Community Parks are considered the "close-to-home" park where most park users get their day-to-day recreational needs met. With Forsyth County's anticipated residential development it is important that Community Parks are relatively close to every county residence. Consequently, the recommended service radius for Community Parks is 2 miles.

Based on a 2 mile service radius, there are several service gaps for Community Parks in the county, one in the western area, and one in the north/central area of the county and several in the southern area of the county. The County should begin as soon as possible to identify property in these gap areas for acquisition. As a Community Park, the ideal site would be 40-50 acres and contain enough land for development of active recreation (ball fields, play courts, etc.). At 40-50 acres, the park site should be large enough to support development of active recreation with conservation of some open space, wooded areas, etc. In addition to acquiring land for the development of new Community Parks, another opportunity for expanding Community Parks would be the transfer/acquisition of the Threatt property previously used by the Forsyth County Water Services Department. This property adjacent to the South Forsyth Soccer Complex would allow development of additional rectangular fields.

As with Regional Parks, improvements to existing Community Parks (see *Section One: Inventory*) should also be a priority.

The acquisition of land for these new Community Parks

will require the purchase of 300-400 acres of additional park land. In addition to the acquisition of these new Community Park sites, the County should also look to expand its open space (undeveloped park land) through greenway acquisition or adding property to some of its existing passive parks.

Passive Parks, Nature Preserves, Public Open Space

As important as active recreation is to county residents, based on findings from the Community Survey, there is considerably more demand for passive parks and low impact recreational activities. Ninety-four percent of county residents are very or somewhat supportive of acquiring park land for passive recreation and expanding the county’s greenways. Likewise, when asked which projects from the 2008 bond referendum they supported, projects involving land acquisition for passive parks (Old Atlanta, Haw Creek, Chattahoochee Point, and Caney Creek) were listed as four of the top five most popular bond projects.

The County has made great strides in acquiring land for greenspace preservation and passive recreation over the past decade. In addition to those parks listed above, the County has made significant progress in protecting greenspace by the acquisition of Sawanee Mountain Preserve.

With the rapid growth, and subsequent land development, that is anticipated over the next decade, the County must continue to look for opportunities to acquire land to preserve as open space. The expansion of this protected open space should include expansion of land holdings associated with Sawanee Mountain Preserve, as well as new passive parks in both the northern and southern areas of the county.

Lake Parks

The County is currently working with the COE in developing Lake Parks on COE property. Currently the County is considering development of the following six lake sites:

Athens Site	54 acres
Bethe Site	20 acres
Chestatee Bay Point	167 acres
Rocky Point	86 acres
Six Mile Creek	33 acres
Wildcat Creek	23 acres

Of these six sites, the Six Mile Creek and Wildcat Creek sites appear to have the best potential for park development. Several of these sites have significant challenges (access, topography, etc.) for park development.

The County should continue to work with the COE to explore opportunities for development of Lake Front Parks; possibly looking for other parcels as options. Based on the strong demand for additional lake access expressed through the survey, the development of Lake Parks should be a priority.

Greenways

The most popular outdoor recreation activity in the nation is walking. This popularity is definitely reflected in Forsyth County. Walking/nature trails and greenways are the most used county recreation facility based on survey response. One fourth (25%) of survey respondents indicated walking and nature trails are the recreation facility they most often use.



The importance of multi-purpose trails was identified in the County's Bicycle and Walkway Plan

Greenway trails are typically off road trails that meander through neighborhoods and natural areas providing transportation corridors and recreational opportunities for walkers, joggers, roller bladers and cyclists. Greenway trails offer a valuable alternative to automotive transportation. A greenway trail can provide a linkage between residential communities, schools, churches, businesses and parks. In rapidly urbanizing areas like Forsyth County, a greenway trail can provide linkage between cities, towns and counties.

The importance of trails and greenways has heightened over the past decade with the increase in obesity. Walking, jogging, and biking have become important activities in the mission to improve community health.

In addition to environmental and recreational advantages, greenways can provide economic impact. National studies have shown that residential communities that have easy access to greenways have increased property value. Likewise, many communities across America have leveraged trails as economic generator through tourism. A well designed greenway running along a scenic waterway or through beautiful landscapes can attract people

regionally; providing opportunities for restaurants, hotels, and other travel related business.

Forsyth County recognizes the value greenways can play in the quality of life for its citizens. Almost a decade ago, the County embarked upon an ambitious goal of developing a greenway trail along Big Creek. Currently the Big Creek Greenway runs 9.6 miles through the county; from a trailhead off McFarland Parkway to Sawnee Mountain Preserve. The County is working on plans to extend the greenway another 6.1 miles, giving county residents a 16 mile trail along this scenic creek.

While the development of Big Creek Greenway is an important accomplishment, it should be just the beginning of a countywide greenway system that connects people with nature and provides alternative routes between homes, schools, parks and other gathering places. County leaders understand the importance greenways can play in the fabric of the community. The County's Draft Comprehensive Plan (see *Section Three*) identifies the need to expand multi-use trails and enhance connectivity as an important priority. Likewise, the County's Planning and Community Development Department is currently working on a sub-area plan for the northern area of the county that incorporates greenways and public open space into the county's future land use. These protected greenspaces are very important aspect of community planning. This approach of incorporating parks and greenways into the community design should be encouraged as the County develops sub-area plans for other areas of the county.

Forsyth County is blessed with an abundance of water based resources. Obviously, Lake Lanier is the largest of these water based resources, but the County's rivers and streams are equally important. The Chattahoochee River forms much of the County's eastern boundary. The importance of this river corridor for both environmental protection and as a recreational corridor, have long been recognized. This corridor is identified as a regional trail. The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area provides access to the river's natural beauty. A number of trails exist along this corridor in Forsyth County; including trails at Chattahoochee Pointe. Development of additional greenspace and trails along this scenic river should be expanded by the County. The County should work with the Trust for Public Land and other agencies currently working to preserve this corridor for future generations.

While Big Creek is perhaps the largest creek running through the county, there are dozens of smaller creeks that make up the regional drainage system. Many of these

smaller creeks have great potential to serve as greenway corridors.

Based on the strong demand voiced in the public survey (91% reporting a need for walking and hiking trails, 79% reporting a need for greenways), expansion of the County's greenway system should be one of the Department's highest priorities. Any future expansion of the greenway system should be guided by a county-wide greenway plan. The County should implement a comprehensive study to identify a greenway system and set priorities for development.

Bikeways

The need for bikable roads and the development of greenways was mentioned in many of the interviews and in the public workshops. With the focus on healthy lifestyles, the environment, and alternative transportation, there is a great need to implement the recommendations found in the County's bike plan.

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

The County should consider applying for federally funded programs that construct non-vehicular modes of transportation such as bike lanes and greenways.

Through careful planning, the County should encourage development of bike routes that will connect all of the county's residential communities with parks, schools, and other points of interest. Ultimately, a bike friendly community will result in a higher quality of life and make Forsyth County a more desirable place to live or visit.

Water Access and Blueways

With its abundance of water resources, Forsyth County is in a position to create outstanding opportunities for kayaking and canoeing (as well as other water sports). The most obvious resources for these blueway corridors are Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River.

The County should work with other agencies associated with these water resources (COE, National Parks Service, Gwineett County, etc.) to identify opportunities for creation of kayak and canoe access points and development of blueway trails; similar to greenway trails.



Expansion of lake access should be a priority for the County

Facility Proposals & Recommendations

This planning report recommends Forsyth County develop four new Community Parks, expand and renovate many of its existing parks, construct several new lake parks, and expand trails and greenways. In addition to these outdoor recreation needs, there are improvements needed to meet indoor recreation needs. The improvements that will be made as part of these expansions and renovations will add many new facilities to the Department’s inventory. The County should consider the list of facility needs established in Section Three and described in greater detail in this section as it builds new parks and renovates existing facilities.

Ballfields

Currently the County has 54 ballfields in 8 parks. The County’s ballfields are well designed and well maintained. With the County’s rapidly growing population, there will be a need for additional fields. Ball field play is comprised of several different games.



The demand for baseball and softball has decreased in the past decade

Over the past five to ten years, the popularity of adult baseball has waned, both locally and across the nation. There is not a pressing need for an additional adult baseball field. Additional fields may be constructed in the future as the County's population increases.

Youth baseball is a very popular sport in the southeast and that popularity is evident in Forsyth County. Additional fields to support youth play will be needed by 2026.

In addition to the local demand for youth baseball fields, the development of facilities for youth baseball could also provide valuable economic benefit to the county. Several people discussed this opportunity during the stakeholder interviews and public workshops. A tournament level baseball facility in Forsyth County could successfully create a venue for youth tournaments that would bring tens of thousands of tourist to the county; creating economic impact through restaurants, hotels and shopping. See *Section Five on Park Facilities as Economic Developers*.

Men’s adult softball has traditionally been a popular sport in Georgia. The County currently has a need for additional softball fields. These fields, as the well as the little league fields, could be located in the proposed Community Parks or through expansion of existing parks.

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

Utilizing a standard of one field for every 4,000 people in the service population, there will be a need for 4-5 additional ballfield complexes (±20 additional fields) by 2026. These fields can be incorporated into the four additional Community Parks that will be developed over the next decade.

Multi-Purpose Rectangular Fields

The demand for multi-purpose rectangular fields in Forsyth County is extremely high. The need for additional fields was heard at all of the public workshops, was discussed by many of the stakeholders in one-on-one interviews, and was repeated by staff in their assessment of park and facility needs. Based on the Community Survey, 26% of the county's population have used multi-purpose fields in the past 12 months. Likewise, 24% of the population expressed a need for multi-purpose fields. Less than half (44%) indicated their need was not being met.

As the name implies, multi-purpose rectangular fields are used by a wide variety of field sports. Several of those sports are experiencing tremendous growth in popularity. While soccer is the most dominant field sport played on rectangular fields, the rapid increase in play of both lacrosse and cricket have placed extreme demand on the County's existing 31 fields. In addition to these primary rectangular field uses, football, rugby and ultimate Frisbee result in even greater demand being placed on existing fields.

The County's 2012 plan set a standard of one field per 6,500 people for the development of rectangular fields. Based on that standard, the Department's 31 fields should be able to meet existing demand. It is obvious from staff and the public that current demand is not being met.



There is a need for additional rectangular fields in the county

A new standard of development for multi-purpose fields has been established at one field for every 5,000 people in the service population. Based on this standard there is a current need for 12 additional rectangular fields. By 2026, this need will increase to 29 new fields.

New multi-purpose field complexes will be constructed in each of the four proposed Community Parks and at the Threatt Property. In addition, existing Community or Regional Parks should be studied to determine if additional fields can be added.

In addition to developing new multi-purpose fields, the County should continue to improve existing fields by converting natural turf fields to synthetic surfacing. Synthetic surfacing allows much more intensive field use and significantly reduces down time during inclement weather. The County has already converted a number of grassed fields. Conversion of additional fields should be

a priority. Likewise, the County should light all of their existing fields to extend playing time.

Basketball (Outdoor)

Basketball remains a relatively popular sport in the United States. Played by a variety of ages, and increasingly by females, this sport can be played either indoors or out. Seven public outdoor basketball courts are located throughout the county and there are 3 recreation centers with indoor basketball courts. There does not appear to be strong demand for additional outdoor basketball courts in the county. Based on public input, the County's current standard of one court per 25,000 people seems to be meeting existing demand. In the future, with population growth, there may be a need for several additional courts.

Unlike outdoor courts, there seems to be demand for indoor basketball. See the section on Recreation Centers/ Gymnasiums for the County's need for indoor courts.

Tennis

Based on input received in stakeholders interviews and the public workshops, tennis is a relatively popular sport in Forsyth County. Currently there are thirty-six public courts in the county.

Utilizing a relatively conservative LOS of facility development (one court per 5,000 people) there is a current need for seven additional courts throughout the county. By 2026 this need will increase to 24 courts.

Pickleball

The demand for tennis courts is also impacted by the recent emergence of pickleball. As noted under the section on Trends in Parks and Recreation Facilities, pickleball is one of the region's fastest growing recreation activities. Pickleball can be played on a realigned tennis court; this increases the demand for tennis courts. Many departments have repainted tennis courts to accommodate play of both sports. While maximizing use of existing courts, this multi-use approach does take staff time to coordinate.

Based on the strong demand expressed for pickleball in the public workshops and focus groups, the County should develop outdoor pickleball courts dedicated to this sports. In addition, gymnasium space should be made available for pickleball play.



The demand for pickleball is growing throughout the region

Volleyball (outdoor)

There are currently only two outdoor volleyball courts in the county park system and there does not appear to be significant demand for adding outdoor courts. Utilizing a very conservative standard for volleyball (one court per 50,000 people) would indicate there may be a need for one or two additional courts. Unless prompted by some local demand for outdoor courts, development of additional outdoor volleyball courts would not be a priority.

Picnic Shelters

Picnicking was one of the most popular recreational activities listed by respondents in the County’s survey. There are currently forty-three picnic shelters located throughout the county. Based on a LOS of one shelter per 5,000 people, there will be a need for almost twenty additional shelters by 2026.

Picnicking is one of the most popular outdoor recreational activities. The County should consider adding shelters in many of its existing parks and all new Community Parks should have several shelters.



Picnicking and passive recreation are popular outdoor recreation activities in Forsyth County

Playgrounds

There are twenty-two playgrounds in the County’s existing parks. Playgrounds were listed as a popular recreational facility in the survey and public workshops. Additional playgrounds are needed. As new parks are developed, the County should look for locations for additional playgrounds. Larger parks may warrant more than one playground.

Safety inspections and ADA accessibility audits should be conducted at all existing playgrounds. As new playgrounds are completed and existing playgrounds renovated, wood fiber and sand surfaces should be replaced with solid rubber surface material. These surfaces provide wheelchair accessibility and reduce maintenance and lifecycle costs of the playgrounds.



Natural Play areas have been developed in several county parks

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

The County currently has several of these natural play areas (Old Atlanta, Caney Creek, Chattochochee Pointe, and Haw Creek). Response locally to these more natural play venues has been mixed. Public input should ultimately determine the themes of future playgrounds.

Pedestrian Trails

Walking is the number one outdoor recreational activity in the United States. Walking or nature trail use scored high in the public survey (91% indicated they have a need for trails). One fourth of survey respondents indicated walking and nature trails are their most often used facility.

With this level of public demand, the development of walking trails and greenways should be a priority for future park development. A priority should be placed on walking trail development in all existing and future parks. A paved walking trail is an important component of all park types, and should be provided in all Community and Regional Parks. In addition to paved trails, many county parks should also include natural trails for passive recreation and access to undeveloped open space within the parks.

Pedestrian trails should be included in all parks as the County expands its park system. In addition to park trails, the County should look for opportunities to work with partner agencies/organizations to explore opportunities for trail development along the Chattahoochee River, Lake Lanier, and Big Creek (see section on greenways).

Biking Trails

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



Mountain Biking is a popular outdoor recreational activity

In addition to paved bike trails, the County should look for opportunities with its existing or future parks to develop mountain bike trails. Based on input received at the public

workshops and in stakeholder interviews there is demand in the county for this sport. Currently there are two public mountain bike trail (Charleston Park and Haw Creek Park) in the county. Based on the popularity of these facilities the County should consider development of additional trails.

Amphitheaters and Outdoor Performing Areas

There is one existing amphitheater in the Department's parks at Sawnee Mountain Preserve. There seems to be demand for outdoor special events based on public input. The need for outdoor performance areas and venues to host community events was also identified by the County's Comprehensive Plan. Additional amphitheaters should be considered as potential outdoor amenity areas as future parks are developed.

Special Use Facilities

Recreation Centers/Gymnasiums

Over the past five years, the County has greatly expanded its indoor recreation facilities. The construction of recreation centers with gymnasiums at Fowler Park and Old Atlanta Park, as well as the expansion of indoor facilities at Central Park have greatly improved the indoor facilities available to county residents.



There is a need for 3 additional gymnasiums in the County by 2026

Even with these new indoor facilities, there is a need to construct additional indoor facilities. Almost half (48%) of those surveyed stated a need for recreation centers. When asked if existing facilities were meeting their need only 27% indicated their need for recreation centers were currently being met. Likewise, there was demand expressed in the public workshops, focus groups and one-on-one interviews for additional recreation centers.

Based on this demand, the County should build additional recreation centers with gymnasiums in several of its

existing and proposed parks. By 2026, the Department should provide three additional recreation centers with gymnasiums and fitness areas; all features included in the recently constructed recreation centers. Generally speaking, the County's new recreation centers seem to work well. Recreation staff identified several areas within the new centers that should be expanded in future centers. These additional needs include expanded gymnasium space, larger fitness rooms, and additional room for gymnastic programs.

Community Buildings

Community buildings are another indoor recreation facility currently offered by the County. These smaller community buildings are located at Sharon Springs Park, Coal Mountain Park, Midway Park, and Sawnee Mountain Park. These buildings are unstaffed facilities that offer users a multi-purpose room with kitchen for special events (parties, family reunions, etc.). The existing community buildings are well used and generate some revenue through rentals.

Based on current use of existing facilities, these community buildings facilities should be considered for additional locations.

Arts Center

There was considerable demand expressed in the focus groups and one-on-one interviews for expansion of the arts. In addition, the need for a cultural arts center was identified in the County's Comprehensive Plan. The scope and scale of an arts center could range from a 5,000 sf exhibit space to a 30,000 sf arts center with classrooms, exhibit space, performance space, etc. The cost of such a facility could range from \$1 million to \$10 million.

Based on input received during the public workshops and focus group sessions, there is a need for a multi-purpose art center that could meet local artist needs and serve as a regional draw for classes and special events. The development of such a facility will be a significant investment in capital and operational funding. The County should initiate a feasibility study to examine demand and marketability of an arts center within the next five years. An important aspect of this Plan would be to identify community partners and the lead agency.

The interest that was expressed during the public engagement process for this report indicates that this community need should be explored in greater detail.

Swimming Pools & Spraygrounds

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

Currently the County does not offer any aquatic facilities beyond the new splash pad at Old Atlanta Park. To help offset this lack of aquatic facilities the County gave the City of Cumming \$12 million to construct an aquatics center. The Cumming Aquatic Center has been a huge success, but this one aquatic center cannot meet all of the aquatic demand of Forsyth County's citizens.

The demand for swimming was expressed in the survey and the public workshops. Over one third (35%) of those responding to the survey expressed interest in an outdoor swimming facility. Almost one fifth (19%) indicated a need for an indoor competition pool. Only 17% of county residents said their outdoor aquatic needs are being met. Even with the high cost of construction and operation, the development of swimming facilities to serve county residents should be considered. Based on the response from the public workshops and survey there appears to be demand for another indoor facility and several outdoor pools.

The development of swimming facilities would allow swim lessons and courses on water safety. A pool would also allow an opportunity for lap swim, water aerobics and other healthy lifestyle activities.

Spraygrounds are growing in popularity across the country. The County recently completed its first sprayground at Old Atlanta Park. In addition to offering a water-based play experience, the play structures, sprays, etc. afford children of all ages a unique play environment and are much more economical to operate than a standard swimming pool. A properly designed, large water park sprayground could serve as a regional draw, provide revenue to the County, and provide a beneficial economic impact to the surrounding areas.

The final decision on aquatic facilities should be worked out in future planning studies, but the County should take the initiative to carefully consider development of a second indoor facility and adding pools and spraygrounds to existing and future parks.



Spraygrounds and interactive fountains are a new trend in outdoor recreation

Senior Services

The National Council on Aging now classifies older adults or seniors as age 60 and above. There are 10,000 Americans turning age 65 every year. “As the population ages, older Americans will play an increasingly important role in our economy.” – National Council on Aging. According to the Census Bureau 2012 data numbers, persons 65 years and over account for over 10% of the county population.

Healthy Aging

By investing in and expanding programs for Forsyth County's senior citizens, proactivity and prevention can offset significantly more costly medical treatments and expenses. Chronic health conditions are, unfortunately, often a part of the aging process. Ninety-two percent of people over age 65 live with at least one chronic health condition, such as diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, or cancer. Seventy-seven percent live with two or more such conditions (Source: National Association of Area Agencies on Aging). Today, services aimed at seniors are assisting them in the management of these conditions, helping seniors remain healthy and active in their communities.

Trends in Park & Recreation Facilities

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

One of the downsides of the national and local guidelines is that they are not updated often and fail to incorporate newer trends and activities. In the past decade, several new activities have been growing in popularity and should be

considered in future park development. These activities include:

Skateboard Parks and Extreme Sports

Skateboarding has been popular for several decades. In the past decade, many communities have recognized its popularity and have tried to provide a safe and vandal resistant setting for this creative sport. The County recently constructed an outstanding skate park in Fowler Park. Based on the popularity of this new facility, there may be a need for a future skateboard park somewhere in the northern area of the county.

Disc Golf

Disc golf did not receive significant demand in the survey, but nationally the popularity of the sport continues to grow. Likewise, there was considerable interest expressed for the sport in the focus groups and interviews. There is currently one disc golf course in the County's park system. Disc golf courses are inexpensive to construct and operate, and have minimal impact on the land. The County may consider development of additional disc golf courses in the future.

Off-leash Dog Areas

Off-leash dog areas are one of the newest trends in park development. The popularity of these facilities (also known as Dog Parks), is a response to the nation's love of pets and an increase in apartment/condo living. Many communities are now constructing Dog Parks. Several people suggested constructing Dog Parks at the public workshops and over one third (39%) of survey respondents expressed a need for Dog Parks.

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

The County has developed dog parks in several of its parks (Fowler, Caney Creek, and Windermere). Based on their growing popularity, the County should consider building additional dog parks in existing or future parks.

Community Gardens

Community gardens provide a wide variety of community enhancements. They offer health benefits by providing local gardeners with fresh vegetables and increased exercise as they tend the gardens. They also provide environmental benefits by reducing transportation cost

for food production and providing more plant cover, which reduces urbanization impacts on climate change. In addition, community gardens provide a venue for social interaction that reduces isolation and supports community involvement.



Community gardens provide a wide variety of benefits

There are currently no community gardens in the County's parks. With the many benefits provided by community gardens, the County may consider developing gardens at some of its facilities; although development of community gardens may fall under other County departments.

Pickleball

One of the fastest growing sports in the region is pickleball. Played on a court similar (but smaller) to a tennis court, this sport uses a paddle and plastic ball. The smaller court and plastic ball makes the sport attractive to seniors, but youth and teenagers are also attracted to the quickness of the game. With the rapid increase in popularity of this sport, many recreation departments are encountering community demand to build pickleball courts or convert tennis courts to multiple uses.

Pickleball is currently being played in several of the County's gymnasiums. The demand for this relatively new sport places even greater pressure on gymnasium scheduling and results in a higher need for the expansion of gymnasiums.

A more economical way of providing facilities for pickleball play is the development of outdoor courts. The County has already begun work to provide outdoor courts. The County should continue to expand opportunities for outdoor courts.

Community Partners

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Forsyth County is not alone in its mission to provide "passive and active recreational, educational, and cultural programming services and to provide parks and recreational facilities... to the entire community." There are a number of organizations and agencies in the area that share similar missions. Identifying and working with these potential partners will assist the Department as it seeks to achieve its mission.

Georgia State Parks and Historical Sites

While there are no State Parks located in Forsyth County, there are a number of State Parks within easy driving distance of county residents. These parks provide a wide-range of low impact recreation opportunities and can help ease the demand for open space and passive recreation for the County.



One of the State's newest parks is located on Lake Lanier in Gainesville. The new park offers campsites and cottages, picnic facilities and lake access. Further north, Dahlonega Gold Museum Historical Site provides an opportunity to learn about the US Branch Mint that was founded in 1838, almost a decade before the gold rush in California. Further north the State of Georgia offers a wide variety of outdoor recreation experiences at Amicalola Falls State Park and Lodge. This unique State Park provides scenic trails, camping, picnicking and lodging along the Chattahoochee National Forest.

The State of Georgia should be considered a valued partner in Forsyth County's efforts to provide quality outdoor recreation and allow its citizens opportunities to enjoy nature. The County, along with other nearby government agencies, should express their interest to see State Parks enhanced to their utmost potential. This may include the expansion of facilities and recreational opportunities. The State should be encouraged to be a provider of parks that include opportunities for camping, fishing, biking, and special facilities of regional and statewide interest; not competing with county parks, but increasing opportunities for county residents.

US Army Corps of Engineers

As noted previously in this report, the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) is a major provider of parks and recreational opportunities on Lake Lanier. While operating some lake sites through their own resources, the COE is very open to working with local government agencies to further expand recreational opportunities on the lake. Forsyth County has already partnered with the COE to expand parks for county residents. Charleston Park, Shady Grove Campground and Young Deer Creek Park are examples of this partnership.

In addition to these three existing parks, the COE has agreed to allow the County to develop additional lake parks at six other locations:

- Athens
- Bethel
- Chestatee Point
- Rocky Point
- Six Mile Creek
- Wildcat Park

The County has completed preliminary studies on each of these sites. Existing field conditions may preclude development of some sites; additional study is required. The COE is an important partner with the County in the mission to expand lake parks. This partnership should be leveraged to the fullest extent possible to expand access to Lake Lanier.

Northside Hospital

Citizens of Forsyth County have access to an outstanding medical facility in Northside Hospital. This facility, which is currently undergoing major expansion, provides residents of Forsyth County and the entire region with excellent healthcare. Recent studies on obesity and healthy lifestyles have made it apparent that a community's health is linked to regular physical activity. Many of the activities currently offered by the Department promote community health.

The County should continue to look for opportunities to partner with Northside Hospital in programs that promote healthier lifestyles.

Forsyth County School Board

There is currently no universal joint-use agreement in place between Forsyth County and Forsyth County Schools. Instead, joint-use agreements are negotiated with individual school principals for use of school recreation facilities. At present, the County's use of schools for after school recreation is limited to the gymnasiums of several

elementary schools. As with programming, the joint planning of schools and parks is very limited. There are some parks that are in close proximity to schools (Old Atlanta Park) and there was collaboration with the School Board on Joint-Use Park, but overall schools and parks are planned individually.

Currently this park/school independence seems to be working, but as the county's population grows and land for parks and schools becomes harder to acquire, there may be more interest in partnership opportunities between the school board and the County. The County should be open to opportunities for partnership.

City of Cumming

As noted in Section One, the City of Cumming has a Parks and Recreation Department and provides indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and programs to its citizens. Perhaps the largest of these facilities offered by the City is the Indoor Aquatics Center, which was largely funded with monies from the County's bond referendum.



The County's Parks and Recreation Department should work in collaboration with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to coordinate program offerings, as well as facilities. It is important for the two departments to work in sync and not compete or duplicate programs or facilities.

Regular meetings (semi-annually) should be held between the two departments to ensure open communication.

Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land has historically been an important partner with the County in the preservation of open space and expansion of park opportunities. The Trust was instrumental in identifying the important projects to be included in the bond referendum, and assisting in the successful packaging of and promoting those projects to a successful conclusion.

As the County moves forward with future efforts to finance the park improvements and land acquisition that are recommended in this report, the Trust should be engaged

in those efforts. Their knowledge of open space needs, environmentally sensitive areas, and their experience with public education of the importance of these issues are critical to the implementation of this plan.

Parks & Recreation Agencies in Neighboring Counties

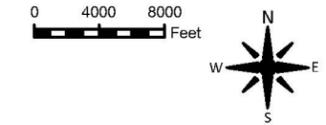
In a rapidly growing region, the line between surrounding counties and municipalities is very thin. Park and recreation programs and facilities in places like Johns Creek, Alpharetta, and Hall County impact the residents of Forsyth County. Being aware of what is happening in these departments will reduce redundancy and competition in both programs and facilities. Likewise, as the County's greenway system expands, communication and coordination with neighboring agencies will be critical in developing a regional trail system.

County parks and recreation staff should meet regularly with staff from neighboring departments to discuss issues relevant to parks and recreation.

Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan | Existing Regional Parks

Forsyth County, Georgia

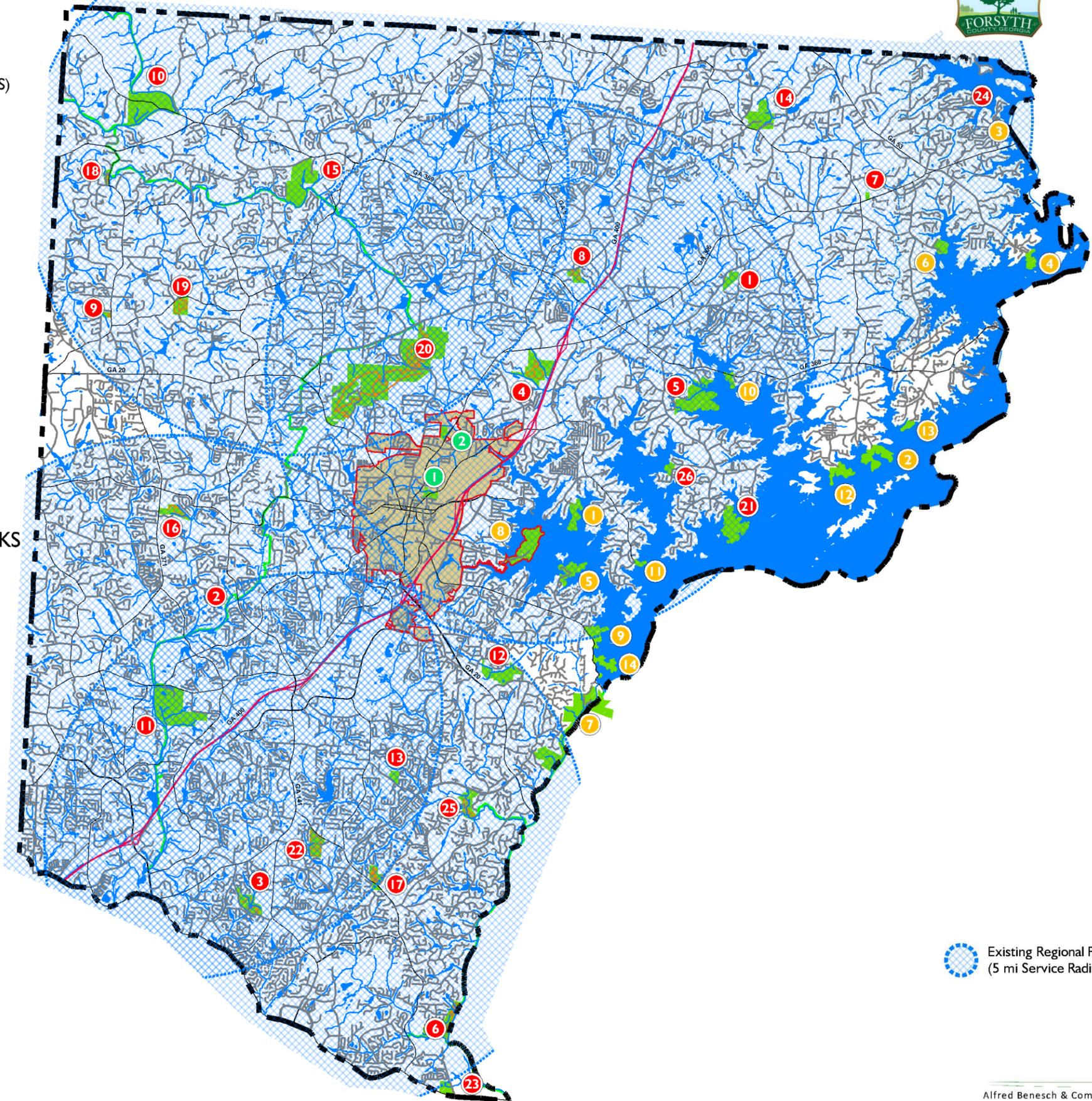
Forsyth County Parks and Recreation | 09.26.2016



- USACE PARK**
(US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS)
- 1 Bald Ridge Creek Park
 - 2 Bethel Park
 - 3 Bowman's Island
 - 4 Keith's Bridge
 - 5 Little Ridge Park
 - 6 Long Hollow Park
 - 7 Lower Pool Park
 - 8 Mary Alice Park
 - 9 Sawnee Park
 - 10 Six Mile Park
 - 11 Tidwell Park
 - 12 Two Mile Creek Park
 - 13 Vann's Tavern Park
 - 14 West Bank Park

- CITY OF CUMMING PARKS**
- 1 City Park
 - 2 Dobbs Creek

- COUNTY PARKS**
- 1 Bennett Park
 - 2 Big Creek Greenway
 - 3 Caney Creek Preserve
 - 4 Central Park
 - 5 Charleston Park (USACE)
 - 6 Chattahoochee Pointe
 - 7 Chestatee Community Building
 - 8 Coal Mountain Park
 - 9 Ducktown Community Park
 - 10 Eagles Beak Park
 - 11 Fowler Park
 - 12 Haw Creek Park
 - 13 Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek
 - 14 Lanierland Park
 - 15 Matt Community Park
 - 16 Midway Park
 - 17 Old Atlanta Park
 - 18 Poole's Mill Park
 - 19 Sawnee Mountain Park
 - 20 Sawnee Mountain Preserve
 - 21 Shady Grove Campground (USACE)
 - 22 Sharon Springs Park
 - 23 South Forsyth Soccer Complex
 - 24 Wildcat Creek Park (USACE)
 - 25 Windermere Park
 - 26 Young Deer Creek Park (USACE)



- Park Parcels
- Greenway
- Trails
- Roads
- City Limits
- Existing Regional Park (5 mi Service Radius)

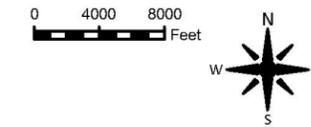


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Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan | Existing Community Parks

Forsyth County, Georgia

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation | 09.26.2016



USACE PARK (US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS)

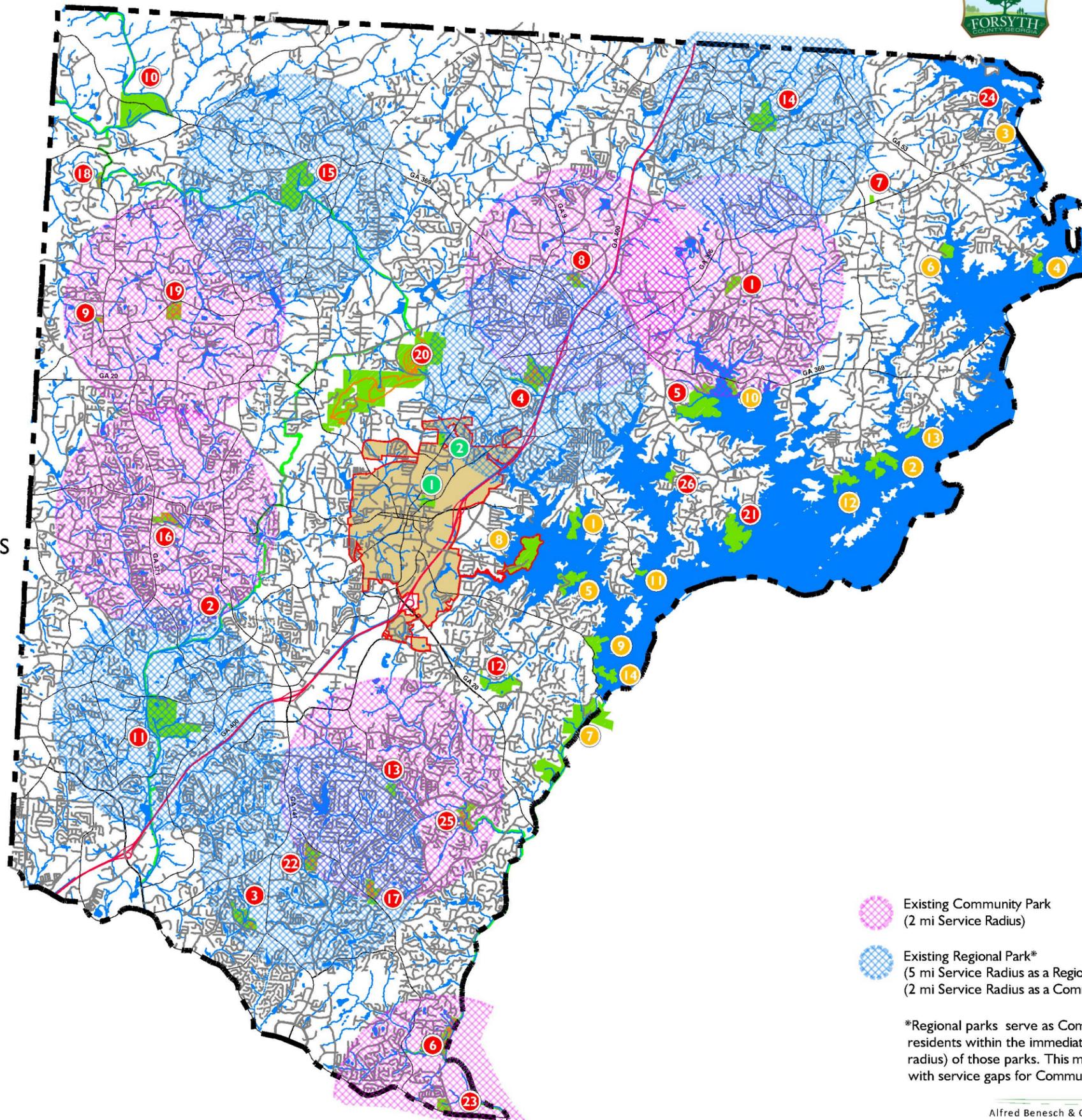
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CITY OF CUMMING PARKS

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COUNTY PARKS

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- 23 South Forsyth Soccer Complex
- 24 Wildcat Creek Park (USACE)
- 25 Windermere Park
- 26 Young Deer Creek Park (USACE)



- Existing Community Park (2 mi Service Radius)
- Existing Regional Park* (5 mi Service Radius as a Regional Park) (2 mi Service Radius as a Community Park)

- Park Parcels
- Greenway
- Trails
- Roads
- City Limits

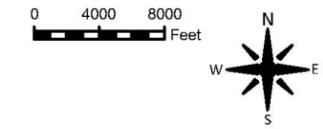
*Regional parks serve as Community parks for residents within the immediate area (2 mile radius) of those parks. This map identifies areas with service gaps for Community parks.



Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan | Community Park Gap Analysis

Forsyth County, Georgia

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation | 09.26.2016



USACE PARK (US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS)

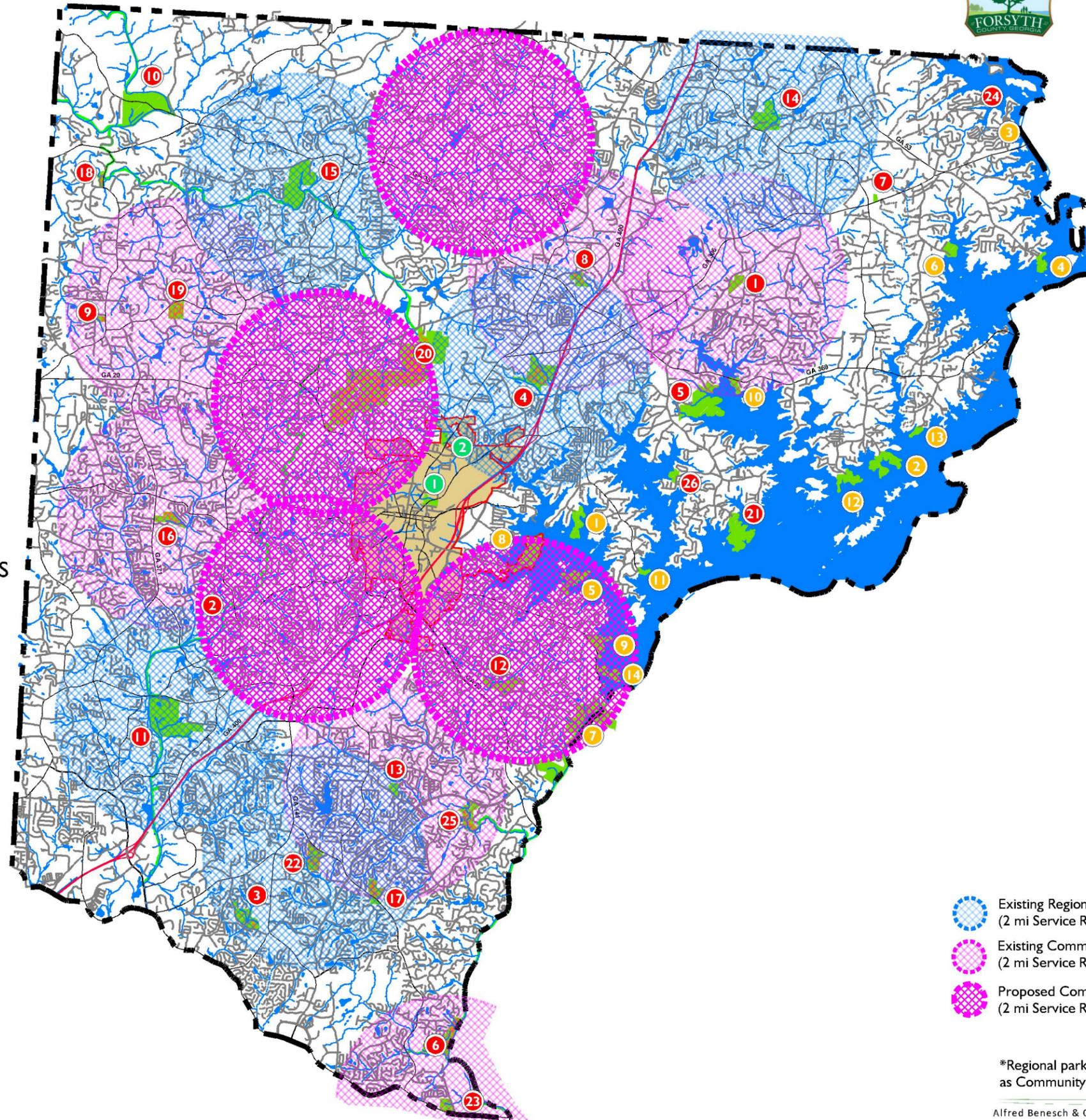
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- 26 Young Deer Creek Park (USACE)



- Existing Regional Park (2 mi Service Radius)
- Existing Community Park (2 mi Service Radius)
- Proposed Community Park (2 mi Service Radius)

- Park Parcels
- Greenway
- Trails
- Roads
- City Limits

*Regional parks also serve as Community parks



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Youth soccer is extremely popular in Forsyth County

SECTION FIVE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

In the previous sections, the County's needs for parks, recreational facilities, and greenways have been identified. Careful planning and strategic thinking will be required if these needs are to be met. Instrumental to the implementation of the Master Plan is the identification of adequate funding for facility development and improvements. This section looks at a Capital Improvements Plan for addressing recommendations found in Section Four and provide a strategy for raising funds to construct the proposed improvements and new facilities.

While much of the focus of previous sections has been on capital needs and facility improvements, physical improvements are only part of the needs if the County is to offer its citizens quality parks and recreation services. As County leaders plan for the future, they must also consider a number of operational and management issues that will position them to meet county-wide needs. No new facilities should be developed without fully understanding the operational and lifecycle cost of those improvements. While not an operations/maintenance plan, this section reviews some of these issues.

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

Revenue Plan

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



A Revenue Plan can help identify income opportunities

KEY FUNDING/REVENUE SOURCES

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

General Tax Revenues (operational & capital)

General tax revenues traditionally provide the principle source of funds for general operations and maintenance of municipal and county parks. Recreation, as a public service, is scheduled along with health, public safety, schools, etc. in annual budgets established by the governing authority. Assessed valuation of real and personal property provides the framework for this major portion of the tax base. This tax base is then used to fund the majority of county services. Over the past decade, County leadership has shown a strong commitment to parks and recreation services and has financially supported improvements to facilities through a variety of innovative funding sources (park bonds, SPLOST, etc.). The County must continue to support funding for park improvements if the needs identified in this planning report are to be met.

Park Foundation (operational & capital)

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

Forsyth County has a parks foundation that recognizes the importance of parks and open space and is active in the community. The Forsyth County Parks Foundation has been engaged in developing new sources of support for County parks and recreation programs. The County should continue to work with the Foundation and seek ways to assist its membership in expanding the Foundation's visibility.

In addition to the Forsyth County Parks Foundation, the Sawnee Mountain Foundation is an important local foundation that has been instrumental in raising funds for a number of County projects; most notable funding for acquiring land for the Sawnee Mountain Preserve. The County should work to foster a strong relationship with the work of this important foundation.

General Foundations (operational & capital)

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

General Obligation Bonds (capital)

General tax revenue for parks and recreation are usually devoted to current operations and maintenance of existing facilities. General obligation bonds are often used to finance capital improvements in parks. The State of Georgia gives municipal and county governments the authority to accomplish this borrowing of funds for parks and recreation through the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). For purposes of paying the debt service on the sale of these bonds, government bodies are often required

to increase property taxes. Total bonding capacities for these government agencies are limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

Forsyth County has successfully funded park improvements through this funding source. Funding from the 2008 Parks Board has significantly expanded parkland and expanded facilities within the County. Without this significant infusion of capital funding, the Department would be in a much different position with regard to both dedicated parkland and recreational facilities. If the County is to meet the future park and recreational needs of county residents, it is important that the County develop a strategy for future park bond initiatives.

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

Revenue Bonds (capital)

Revenue bonds are used for financing high use specialty facilities like golf courses, aquatic centers, tennis centers, and complexes for softball and soccer. The users, and other revenue sources, pay for operations and sometimes repayment of the bonds. The legal requirements for utilizing these funding mechanisms are extremely complicated and can require approval from the state legislature.

Special Purpose Local – Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)

A Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is a financing method for funding capital projects in Georgia. It is an optional 1% sales tax levied by the County for the purpose of funding the construction of parks, schools, roads and other public facilities. The revenue generated by the additional tax cannot be used towards operating expenses or most maintenance projects.

SPLOST VI was approved by voters on February 25, 2008 and went into effect July 1, 2008. It expired on June 30, 2013. SPLOST VI included a number of park improvement projects (\$13,500,000). In November of 2011, voters approved SPLOST VII. Collection of those funds began in July of 2013 and will continue to generate funds until 2019.

It will be important for the County to identify and fund park improvement projects recommended in this report on future SPLOST programs. The SPLOST funding is a valuable source of funds for public involvements and should be utilized for park renovations and expansions.

Impact Fees

Forsyth County charges a parks and recreation Impact Fee on new residential development. These fees cover the cost of Active Parks. The County recently conducted a reevaluation of Impact Fees for parks and recreation and updated the fees they charge.

Impact Fees currently generate \$3 - \$4 million annually to support parks and recreational facilities. In the future, as the County's population grows, this funding source will likely increase. These fees are an important funding source for new park improvements.

Federal and State Assistance (capital)

Federal funding sources are available to assist financing capital improvement recommendations found in this plan. One of the oldest park funding sources has been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Unfortunately, funding through this program has been sporadic over the past few years. Other potential federal funding sources are the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The State of Georgia, through its Department of Natural Resources, administers several grants programs that could provide funding sources for future park improvements. These grants include:

- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants
- Recreational Trails Program
- Georgia's Heritage Grants

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) also provides a number of grants that provide funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that could be associated with recreational use and provide non-vehicular access to existing and future parks.

In the past, SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: a Legacy for Users) provided funding for pedestrian trails and bikeways. SAFETEA-LU expired in 2009, but has been replaced with Moving Ahead for Progress Century Act (MAP-21). Funding programs under SAFETEA-LU have been incorporated under MAP 21 and continue to fund projects.

MAP 21 consolidated most bicycle and pedestrian funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Recreational Trails Program and Safe Routes to Schools funding would be opportunities to consider. TAP funds are administered by the State DOT and are determined through a competitive process.

In 2014, Forsyth County passed a \$200 million General Obligation Bond for a variety of transportation projects. Over one-third (\$81 million) of the proposed projects in that bond package were developed in partnership with Georgia Department of Transportation. Several of the projects in this package includes improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Additionally, the State can fund projects such as bikeways and pedestrian walks through the federally funded SAFTEA [formerly known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)]. The Georgia Department of Transportation administers the funds and the local government agency can use these funds for developing portions of any proposed Greenway system.

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

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

Any of these categories could have grants that could be used to develop programs and facilities for parks. Unfortunately, competition for these grants is typically very high. As one of Georgia's more affluent counties, Forsyth County often has difficulty in procuring these grant opportunities.

User Fees (operational)

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

Ultimately, the County may consider a change in user fees that will help offset more of the cost of some activities.

Based on elected officials' direction, the revenue generated by increased fees could then be used to offset impacts on the general fund and possibly be used for capital improvement funding to help make park improvements.

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

A number of the facilities proposed in this Master Plan have opportunities for operational cost recovery. Indoor facilities such as recreation centers, community buildings, aquatic center, and arts facilities can be operated with membership fees, rental fees, instructor fees, etc. The ultimate decision with regard to the Department's philosophy on cost recovery will be determined by County leaders.



Many agencies generate income through facility rentals

Revenue Opportunities

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

- Sponsorships from local private businesses. Sponsorships typically come in the form of products, events, programs, cause-related, and in-kind. Sponsorships can also take the form of naming rights for a facility or program. Sponsorship or naming agreements should include very specific details related to sponsorship cost, duration, use of promotional materials, etc. The County is planning to use this method of revenue generation.

- Partnerships are a relatively new method of sharing funding resources to provide services. These partnerships can be formed with a wide variety of other public or private agencies. Many times the partners are two or more government agencies. Through these partnerships, the County receives direct benefit in either facility use, programming assistance, or volunteer man hours. All of these benefits add value and help offset cost; thus creating earned income. This earned income requires both agencies to have common visions, values, and goals for the partnership to be successful. Examples of partnerships include:
 - Youth sports associations are an important partner in organizing and programming many youth sports in the county. Forsyth County currently partners with a broad network of youth athletic associations through their Booster Clubs.
 - Trail sponsors that adopt sections of trails for maintenance and cleanup.
 - Adopt-a-park partners that help maintain park lands. These sponsors are typically neighborhood associations and businesses that are in proximity to parks.
 - School partnerships where both partners invest in the development of facilities and programs based on shared use of facilities and staff. This investment may be financial, or may include other means of support.
 - Special event partners that assist with the development of community-wide events.
 - Program partners who assist in providing services to the community.
- Advertising and licensing in programs, facilities, and events sponsored by the County. The County could leverage highly exposed advertising space to businesses willing to pay a fee for the right to advertise.
- Volunteer development programs can reduce staff costs. Volunteers can create advocacy and bring down the cost of programs and services.
- Privatizing the development of facilities or services is an opportunity that is used by some departments when they are unable to control the cost of labor and are unable to find the needed capital to develop a recreational facility or a concession operation. This gives the government agency a management tool to create an asset or improve a service without tapping into their own resources. Facilities that are typically considered for privatization may include golf courses, marinas, camping and RV facilities, boat rentals, bike rentals, equipment rentals, and other forms of concessions.
- Marketing strategies are an important component in developing untapped revenue opportunities. Promotional activities improve awareness of the activities provided by the County and assist in bringing more revenue to the system by filling programs and facilities.

Methods for Land Acquisition & Dedication

In order to meet the needs identified in this report, the County will need to expand its park and recreational lands. Methods available for acquiring the land include the following:

Fee Simple Purchase

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

Long-Term Option

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

First Right of Purchase

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

Land Trust

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

The County has previously worked with the Land Trust on land acquisition for Sawnee Mountain Preserve and several other land acquisition initiatives. The Land Trust is a valued partner. The County should look for additional partnership opportunities with the Land Trust in the acquisition of property recommended in this plan.

Donations

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

The most frequently used type of gift involves the giving of land to be used for a park. A similar use of gifts involves donated labor or materials, which become part of an improvement project and help to reduce project costs. The value of the services or materials can, in some cases, also be used to match non-local grant funds.

Some agencies have developed a gifts catalog as a tool for promoting a gifts program. Such a publication should explain the role and importance of the gifts program, describe its advantages, define the tax advantages that may occur to the donor, and identify various gifts (land, labor, play equipment, materials, trees, etc.) that are needed to meet program needs. The gifts catalog should be prepared in a format that can be distributed effectively and inexpensively and should provide a clear statement

of needs, typical costs associated with various gifts, and be made readily available to the public.

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

Life Estate

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



Athletic tournaments create tourism opportunities

Park Facilities as Economic Developers

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

- **Attracting Tourists:** The features and programs that attract tourism to a community include parks, beaches, historic sites, museums, special events and festivals, and athletic tournaments. The majority of these features are provided by public agencies (national,

state, local park agencies, etc.).

- **Enhancing Real Estate Values:** Research shows people will pay more to live close to natural park areas. These higher property values result in owners paying higher property taxes, which in turn offsets some of the cost for the development of parks and preservation of open space.
- **Attracting Business:** Quality of life issues influence where businesses locate. Parks, recreation, open space, and senior services are an important component of the quality of life equation. Good parks attract and retain businesses.
- **Attracting Retirees:** A new growth industry for American communities is the retirement population. The decision to relocate by this segment of our population is primarily governed by climate and recreation opportunities. This segment of the population is extremely attractive to local governments because retirees are unlikely to have children enrolled in the local school system and therefore are less of a burden on the community's tax base.

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

There are many opportunities for economic impact in Forsyth County through tourism. Community leaders have recognized the potential for this economic impact by establishing the Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce. This organization is actively engaged in bringing visitors to Forsyth County.

John Crompton lists the following opportunities for tourist attractions:

Tournament Sports

- Softball
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Basketball

Arts

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

Heritage Places

- Ethnic cultural places

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

Parks

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

Arenas

- College sports
- Professional franchises
- Concerts and exhibitions

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

Operational Recommendations

County leadership must also address some of the operational issues that will face the County in the coming decade. These issues relate to the manpower and organizational changes that will be required as the County adds new parks/facilities. These recommendations address some of the critical operational issues the County needs to identify as it expands the facilities and services it provides. An important aspect of these planning recommendations is to develop an operational vision for the County to improve existing parks, build new parks and recreation facilities, and greatly expand greenways for county residents. Ultimately, the provision of better parks and recreational programs includes both facility improvements and establishing a method of delivery of services. If the County is to continue to improve the quality of parks and recreation facilities offered, it will be required to add staff to manage/operate facilities and provide services.

Staff Needs

Action on the recommendations found in this Master Plan will greatly expand the County's parks and facilities. The development of several Community Parks, the construction of new recreation and aquatic facilities, and the expansion of miles of new trails will require additional

staff to maintain, operate and program these new facilities. While the development of an operation and maintenance program for these future facilities is beyond the scope of this Master Plan, the County should plan to add positions to effectively operate the future facilities.

New staff positions will be required in the following areas:

- Park Operations Division
- Natural Resources Management Division
- Athletic Division
- Recreation Division
- Administrative Division

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

Operational Costs

As noted above, the development of new recreation facilities (indoor and outdoor) will require additional staff. These new staff positions will add to the annual operational budget in both staff and equipment costs. The expansion of recreational facilities will add to the energy and utility cost of park and recreation facilities. The recommended facility improvements included in this Plan will increase the County's facilities significantly. Expansion of this magnitude will have significant implications to the operational budget. The County's management staff and elected officials must carefully consider the financial impact of each major capital improvement project as projects are considered. No capital improvement project should be undertaken without the commitment of support for adequate ongoing operational funding. In evaluating the additional operational cost some facilities may have, consideration should be given to the positive economical impacts some facilities may have on the County's economy. These positive impacts could include revenue generation through programs and special events, increased opportunities for travel and tourism, and increased value of real estate values created by an improved quality of life in the county.

Greener Operation

As the world's population expands and environmental concerns over global warming, conservation of resources, and preservation of our fragile natural systems become more apparent, greater environmental responsibility by public and private agencies has become critical. As a government agency, particularly one that is involved

with the management of public open space and the improvement of the public's health, the Department's operation should make a concerted effort to minimize its environmental impact.

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



Promoting recycling is one initiative to reduce waste

The County's parks should serve as examples of sensitive development by designing facilities that minimize land disturbance, impervious paving and tree removal. The County should seek to develop parks that minimize stormwater runoff, protect water quality, and highlight these initiatives through interpretive signage and environmental education.

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

Capital Improvements Recommendations

The previous sections of this planning report have identified over two dozen recommendations for land

acquisition, new park development and new recreation facility construction. In addition, the report has identified needed renovations at almost all county parks.

The recommendations for capital improvements to the County's park system falls into nine general categories. These categories include:

Existing Park Improvements

While existing parks are currently meeting many recreational needs of county residents, many of the County's parks are more than 30 years old and renovations are needed. This planning report identifies improvements to be made at nineteen existing parks. Proposed improvements range from landscape enhancement to major renovations of park infrastructure (parking, restrooms, etc.). Construction budgets for each park varies from \$100,000 to several million dollars. Together, renovations to existing parks will require over \$20 million over the next ten years.

Major Park Renovations/Expansion

Major expansions or total park renovations are a second category of park renovations that make up the capital improvement recommendations. This group of park improvements includes two of the County's oldest parks (Sharon Springs and Bennett Park). These two parks have served the county well, but major renovations are needed at both parks. Unlike the renovations recommended in the previous group of parks, improvements to these parks are not limited to renovations to existing facilities; instead, these parks need a complete redesign guided by a master planning process that includes public input.

Also included in this capital improvement classification is the completion of several parks that have recently been constructed (or are currently under construction). Two of these park expansions (Lanierland and Matt Community Park) are currently on the County's five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Completion of recommendations under these two categories of capital improvements should be a priority with the County. Renovations and expansion of existing parks offer "low hanging fruit" to the County as it looks to spend resources wisely. These renovations should not require major land acquisition. Likewise, park infrastructure (water, sewer, electrical service, etc.) is already in place; allowing capital funding to focus on recreation facility improvements. The importance of improving existing park facilities was also recognized during the public input process. The public indicated very

strong support for renovation of existing parks in both the survey and at the public workshops.

Land Acquisition

As a rapidly growing County, perhaps the most time sensitive recommendation in this report is to acquire parkland for future generations. Over the next decade, the availability of undeveloped land will significantly be reduced in Forsyth County. If land is not acquired in the next ten years, two things will occur. First, it will become very difficult to find acreage suitable for development of parks. Secondly, in ten years the cost of land in Forsyth County will increase significantly; regardless of where the land is located.



Undeveloped land in the County is rapidly disappearing

As noted in Section Three, there will be a need for almost 1,000 acres of new parkland in Forsyth County by 2026. Section Three identifies several areas of land needs. By 2026, there will be a need for four new Community Parks and the expansion of existing parks; primarily to provide active recreation facilities to county residents. At an anticipated size of ± 50 acres, these four proposed Community Parks will require ± 200 acres of new parkland. Expansion of South Forsyth Soccer Complex will add another 200 acres of land.

In addition to new land for active recreation, there is very strong demand for passive recreation in the County. 61% of those surveyed indicated they were very supportive of acquisition of parkland for passive use. Likewise, passive park recreation facilities, such as picnic shelters and walking trails, ranked very high in public demand. Based on this strong support for passive parkland, the report recommends acquisition of 300 acres of land for passive recreation and preservation of open space.

Another area of park development that will require land acquisition is the construction of future greenways. Identified as the number one park need by citizens in the survey and at the public workshops, the development of greenways should be one of the County's top priorities over the next decade. While some greenway development will occur along sanitary sewer easements, there will be areas where land acquisition may be required (or desired). Land acquisition will also be required for development of trail heads and other support facilities.

One final area of potential land acquisition could be in the area of lake parks. Over 50% of those surveyed said they were very supportive of acquiring land along Lake Lanier for park development. Ultimately, the development of Lake Parks may not require land acquisition because the County has a good working relationship with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and may develop all future lakes on COE lands.

New Community Park Development

This category of capital improvement investment includes the four new Community Parks and the expansion of South Forsyth Soccer Complex (Threatt Property) identified in Section Three. Assuming a Phase One development of \$12,000,000 per park (similar to Phase One development of Matt Community and Lanierland), the development of these four Community Parks and the expansion of South Forsyth Soccer Complex will cost almost \$75 million. The development of these five Community Parks will significantly expand active recreation facilities in all areas of the County.

New Lake Park Development

Over the past ten years, the Parks and Recreation Department has worked with COE land on Lake Lanier to develop several lake parks. These parks have become very popular; indicating a need for additional Lake Park development. Likewise, very strong support for Lake Park development (81% supported new Lake Parks) was voiced in the community-wide survey. Based on this strong demand for lake access, this report recommends development of Wildcat Creek Park. Most importantly, the County should consider development of other property owned by the COE for future Lake Parks as soon as possible.

Greenway Expansion

As noted previously, walking and trails were identified as the most popular outdoor recreational activity in both the survey and public workshops. In addition, expanding greenways and pedestrian access was identified as the park improvement with the highest priority among survey

respondents. 93% of those surveyed supported expansion of the Greenway.

This planning report recommends developing 30 miles of new greenways over the next ten years. To put this in context, this recommendation will expand the length of existing greenways in Forsyth County by three times. In addition to greenway trail development, the capital improvement budget includes monies for the development of trail heads and other support facilities.

Indoor Recreation Facilities

With the construction of recreation centers at Fowler Park and Old Atlanta Park, and the expansion of the recreation center at Central Park, the County has made a significant move into indoor recreation operation. The popularity of these indoor recreation facilities was reflected in the survey. Over eighty percent (82%) of survey respondents indicated support for the development of new indoor recreation centers with facilities such as gymnasium, indoor walking trails, fitness centers, etc. In order to meet this demand for indoor recreation facilities, the report recommends the construction of 3 new recreation centers over the next 10 years. These recreation centers will be similar to the centers recently constructed at Fowler and Old Atlanta Park.

In addition to these large multi-use recreation centers, this report recommends construction of 3 smaller community buildings over the next ten years. These community buildings will be similar to the existing community buildings at Midway Park. They will be approximately 3,000 SF and will include a large community room, kitchen, and restrooms.



The development of three additional recreation centers/ gymnasiums will greatly expand indoor programming

Aquatic Facilities

Very strong support for additional aquatics facilities was expressed during the public workshops. Likewise, over half (62%) of those surveyed expressed support of a new indoor pool for competitive swimming. Based on the strong public support for a new indoor aquatics facility, this report recommends a new indoor pool be constructed in the next ten years.

In addition to the new indoor facility, two new splash pads should be constructed. The County's new splash pad at Old Atlanta Park has been extremely popular and many people expressed a desire for additional splash pads at the public workshops and in focus group meetings.

Arts Center

The need for an indoor performing and arts center was expressed in many of the one on one interviews and at several focus group sessions. In addition, 61% of those surveyed expressed some level of support for an arts center. Almost one-third (31%) were very supportive of this idea. While the exact structure of an arts center, or a complete understanding of the partners that may come together to develop the center, will not be determined through this report, it is important that the art center have a placeholder in this report for future consideration.

Five Year Priority Projects

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

- Acquire additional parkland for development of active recreation and preservation of open space
- Develop County-wide Greenway Master Plan and expand existing Greenways
- Renovate/expand existing parks to provide additional recreational facilities
- Develop several new Community Parks

Funding Sources

This Master Plan identifies a Vision Plan for park development in Forsyth County. It is unlikely that all of the recommendations will be acted upon over the next decade. The County will ultimately have to prioritize the steps they will take to meet many of these park and recreation needs. It will require a combination of revenue sources to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. There are numerous combinations of funding strategies

that can be explored and implemented. Upon careful analysis of past budget documents, current practices, available resources, and national trends, an example of a funding strategy is presented as one possible strategy.

General Funds

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

In addition to this increased operational spending, the County should begin budgeting for capital improvements projects on an annual basis. Annual allocations of \$1 - \$2 million annually to capital improvements over the next ten years could provide \$15 - \$20 million in funds for capital projects.

General Obligation Bonds

General Obligation Bonds could be used for major renovations and to acquire and develop new parks and recreation facilities. A successful bond campaign for park improvements in the next ten years could generate \$100-150 million for construction and acquisitions. This would represent a significant portion of funds needed for the proposed capital improvements budget. These funds can be dedicated to funding the larger park development and making major park improvements. As noted earlier in this section (General Obligation Bonds, page 5-2), this level of bond sales will likely result in the need for additional tax revenues to pay for the debt service created by the sale of these bonds.

Revenues & User Charges

One strategy to help accomplish the goals of this plan is to price services based on the value and benefits received by the participants beyond those of all taxpayers. Increasing the number of participants using the facilities and programs will increase revenue opportunities. A good time to price services to their value and benefits is when new facilities are constructed or when facilities have been renovated to enhance a participant's recreational experience. A proposed user charge revenue strategy designed to recoup a good percentage of program cost could be considered. This will create more revenue and capacity opportunities for the program needs of the County.

Currently, revenues and user charges account for a portion of the operating budget. As facilities are developed, the County may consider a fee structure that will allow greater net revenue to be realized. Assuming the level of funding can increase, it could generate hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, providing millions of dollars in increased income over the next ten years that can be used for operating new facilities developed as recommended in this plan.

Partnerships & Gifts

The County should work with existing foundations to explore ways to raise sponsorships and gifts. These non-profit organizations can engage private citizens and corporations to donate money and in-kind services for use for parks and recreational services. Through active involvement with a park foundation, the County may be able to raise \$250,000 - \$500,000 in funds annually. This could result in donations of as much as several million dollars over the next ten years.

Sponsorships & Naming Rights

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

SPLOST

Communities throughout Georgia have an opportunity to fund significant capital projects through the issuance of a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) as described on page 5-3 earlier in this section. The County has used this funding option previously to fund park improvement projects.

Based on the magnitude of the cost of the recommendations in this Master Plan, it is anticipated that SPLOST funds will be used to finance many of the more significant elements of this park plan.

Over the next decade, park improvements will need to be included as a major component of at least two future SPLOST programs if the recommendations of this Master Plan are to be achieved.

Impact Fees

Impact Fees will continue to be an important funding source for new parks and recreational facilities. Based on an annual funding of \$3 - \$4 million, Impact Fees should contribute \$30 - \$40 million to park improvements over the next decade.

Overview

Together, these funding options could be used to raise several hundred million dollars of development capital over the next decade. It may be optimistic to assume the County can fund ±\$346 million in park improvements in the next ten years. Actively pursuing the options that are available should provide funding for many of the needs listed in this Master Plan. Through the continued use of this document, County staff and elected officials can identify and prioritize community needs and actively seek funds to meet those needs over the next ten (or more) years.

**Table 5-1
 FORSYTH COUNTY
 PARKS AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Capital Improvement and Land Acquisition Existing Parks Improvements (see Existing Park Improvements/Recommendations)	10 Year Total
Central Park	\$1,515,000
Fowler Park	\$3,250,000
Coal Mountain	\$575,000
Joint Venture Park	\$215,000
Midway Park	\$1,265,000
Sawnee Mountain Park	\$1,655,000
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	\$3,050,000
Ducktown Community Park	\$200,000
Haw Creek Park	\$300,000
Old Atlanta Park	\$200,000
Poole's Mill Park	\$550,000
Windermere Park	\$300,000
Charleston Park	\$500,000
Shady Grove Campground	\$3,575,000
Young Deer Creek Park	\$1,000,000
Sawnee Mountain Preserve	\$500,000
Big Creek Greenway	\$1,950,000
Chestatee Community Building	\$100,000
Chattahoochee Pointe Park	\$50,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$2,075,000
Existing Park Improvements Total	\$22,825,000
Major Park Renovation/Expansion	
Sharon Springs Park	\$8,000,000
Bennett Park	\$8,000,000
Caney Creek Preserve	\$4,000,000
Lanierland Park (Phase Two site)	\$12,000,000
Matt Community (Phase Two site)	\$10,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$4,200,000
Major Park Renovation/Expansion Total	\$46,200,000
Land Acquisition	
Western Community Park (50 acres @ \$125,000/acre)	\$6,250,000
Northern Community Park (50 acres @ \$75,000/acre)	\$3,750,000
Southeastern Comm. Park (50 acres @ 125,000/acre)	\$6,250,000
Southwestern Comm. Park (50 acres @ 125,000/acre)	\$6,250,000
Threatt Property (200 acres @ 100,000/acre)	\$20,000,000
Open Space/Passive Rec. (300 acres @ 100,000/acre)	\$30,000,000
Greenway Development (150 acres @ 100,000/acre)	\$15,000,000
Land Acquisition Total	\$87,500,000

**Table 5-1
 FORSYTH COUNTY
 PARKS AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN
 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Capital Improvement and Land Acquisition	10 Year Total
New Community Park Development	
Western Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
Northern Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
Southwestern Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
Southeastern Community Park (Phase One)	\$12,000,000
South Forsyth Soccer Complex (Threatt Property)	\$20,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$6,800,000
New Community Park Development Total	\$74,800,000
New Lake Park Development	
Lake Park Development	\$15,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$1,500,000
New Lake Park Development Total	\$16,500,000
Greenway Expansion	
30 Miles @ \$1,000,000/mile	\$30,000,000
Trailheads/Support Facilities (4)	\$2,500,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$3,250,000
Greenway Expansion Total	\$35,750,000
Indoor Recreation Facilities	
3 Recreation Center with Gymnasiums (60,000 SF)	\$36,000,000
3 Community Buildings (3,000 SF)	\$1,800,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$3,780,000
Indoor Recreation Facilities Total	\$41,580,000
Aquatic Facilities	
Indoor Aquatics Facility (40,000 SF)	\$14,000,000
2 Splash Pads	\$2,000,000
Planning/Design Administrative Cost (10%)	\$1,600,000
Aquatic Facilities Total	\$17,600,000
Arts Center Investment	\$4,000,000

Total Capital Improvement Budget Cost	\$346,755,000
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Important Note: Order of Magnitude costs reflected in this Capital Improvement Plan are based on 2016 values. The cost of land and construction are expected to increase over the next ten years and could impact funding of future projects.

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation
Existing Park Improvements and Recommendations

Central Park		\$1,515,000
Recreation Center Renovations		\$250,000
Soccer Field Seating		\$50,000
Backstop and Fencing Improvements		\$500,000
Drainage Improvements (Fields)		\$250,000
Renovate Buildings at Fields		\$250,000
Concrete at Dugouts (\$5,000/field)		\$45,000
Road Improvements and Parking		\$150,000
Electronic Park Informational Signage		\$20,000
Fowler Park		\$3,250,000
Synthetic Fields (3)		\$2,000,000
Dog Park Improvements		\$200,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000
Recreation Center Improvements/Expansion		\$1,000,000
Coal Mountain Park		\$575,000
Tennis Court Resurfacing (2)		\$15,000
Tennis Court Lighting		\$60,000
Community Building Improvements		\$75,000
Playground Replacement		\$200,000
Landscape Improvements		\$25,000
Miracle Field Resurfacing		\$200,000
Joint Venture Park		\$215,000
Replace Scorer Stands		\$65,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000
Renovate Restroom/Concession		\$100,000
Midway Park		\$1,265,000
Community Building Renovations		\$50,000
Tennis Court Resurfacing (2)		\$15,000
Picnic Pavilion Replacement		\$200,000
Scorer's Booths (3)		\$75,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000
Drainage Improvements		\$50,000
Renovate and/or Replace Restroom/Concession Buildings		\$600,000
Renovate Playground		\$225,000
Sawnee Mountain Park		\$1,655,000
Roof Replacement		\$50,000
Renovate Community Building		\$200,000
Basketball Court Resurfacing		\$15,000
Replace Score Booths (4)		\$65,000
Replace Fences/Backstops (6 @ \$70,000, 2 @ \$40,000)		\$500,000
Baseball/Softball Field Renovations		\$100,000
Restroom Renovations		\$50,000
Maintenance Building Renovations		\$25,000
Drainage Improvements (Fields 4, 5 & 6)		\$50,000
Walking Track Renovation		\$100,000
Parking Lot Resurfacing/Restriping		\$100,000
Tennis Court Improvements		\$200,000
Pavilion Replacement		\$100,000
Playground Improvements		\$70,000
Landscape Improvements		\$30,000

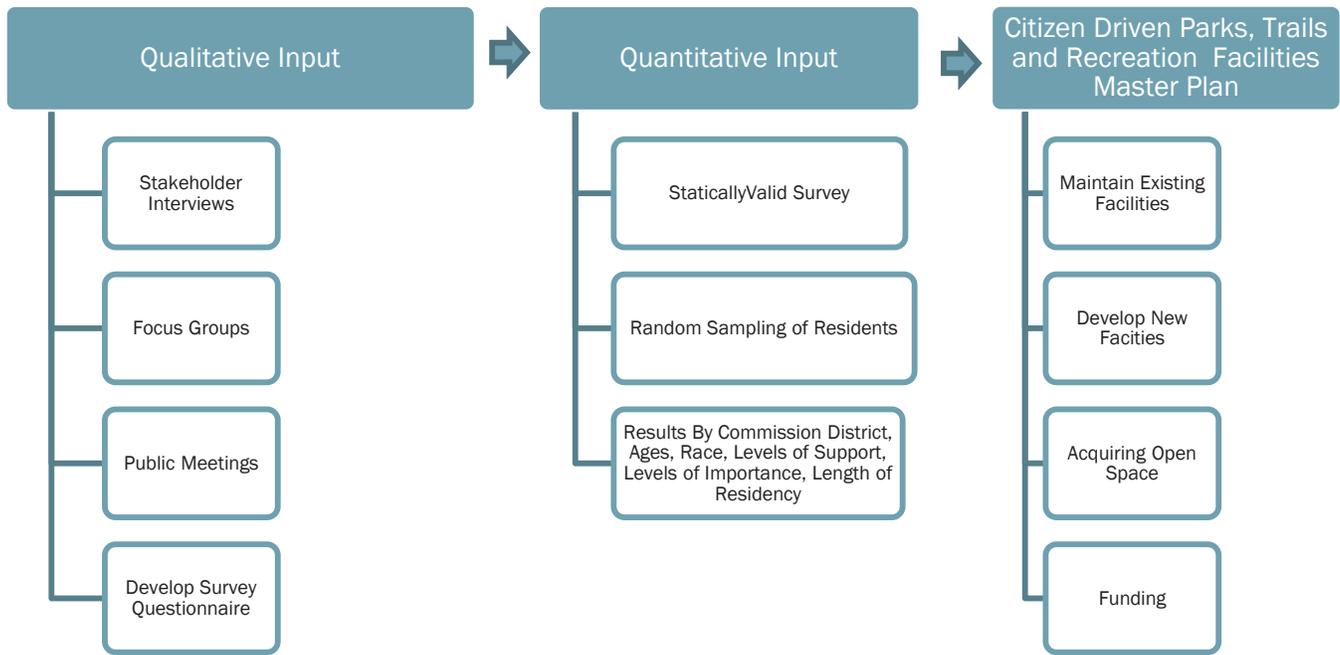
Forsyth County Parks and Recreation
Existing Park Improvements and Recommendations

South Forsyth Soccer Complex		\$3,050,000
Synthetic Surfacing (4 Fields)		\$2,600,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000
Restroom/Concession Building Renovation		\$400,000
Ducktown Community Park		\$200,000
Drive & Parking Improvements		\$100,000
Landscape Improvements		\$25,000
Park Signage		\$25,000
Dog Park		\$50,000
Haw Creek Park		\$300,000
Playground Improvements		\$200,000
Landscape Improvements		\$25,000
Drainage Improvements		\$50,000
Invasive Plant Control		\$25,000
Old Atlanta Park		\$200,000
Trail Improvements		\$100,000
Drainage Improvements		\$50,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000
Poole's Mill Park		\$550,000
Shelter Renovations		\$100,000
Refurbish Historic Bridge		\$25,000
New Playground		\$225,000
Parking Improvements		\$100,000
Picnic Area Improvements		\$25,000
Park Signage & Landscape		\$25,000
Erosion Control Improvements		\$50,000
Windermere Park		\$300,000
Drainage Improvements		\$50,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000
Dog Park Improvements		\$25,000
Restroom Renovations		\$75,000
Trail Expansion		\$100,000
Charleston Park		\$500,000
Restrooms		\$250,000
Signage		\$25,000
Resurfacing Parking		\$100,000
Picnic Tables/Shelter		\$100,000
Landscape Improvements		\$25,000
Shady Grove Campground		\$3,575,000
New Bath House (3)		\$1,500,000
Resurface Asphalt		\$500,000
Camp Site Renovations		\$1,000,000
Gatehouse Expansion		\$250,000
Yurts		\$50,000
New Playground		\$225,000
Landscape Improvements		\$50,000

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation
Existing Park Improvements and Recommendations

Young Deer Creek Park		\$1,000,000
Signage		\$50,000
Restrooms		\$250,000
Picnic Shelter		\$50,000
Beach Renovation		\$250,000
Docks		\$200,000
Playground		\$100,000
Parking Improvements		\$100,000
Sawnee Mountain Preserve		\$500,000
Large Pavilion		\$150,000
Aerial Adventure/Zipline		\$100,000
Climbing Wall		\$250,000
Big Creek Greenway		\$1,950,000
Trailhead Signage (4)		\$100,000
Trailhead Landscape Improvements (4)		\$100,000
Boardwalk Repairs		\$1,500,000
Renovate Bethelview Trailhead Parking		\$250,000
Chestatee Community Building		\$100,000
Building Renovations		\$100,000
Chattahoochee Pointe Park		\$50,000
Frisbee Disc Golf Course		\$25,000
Landscape Improvements		\$15,000
Kayak Launch Improvements		\$10,000
Existing Park Improvements Total		\$20,750,000

APPENDICES

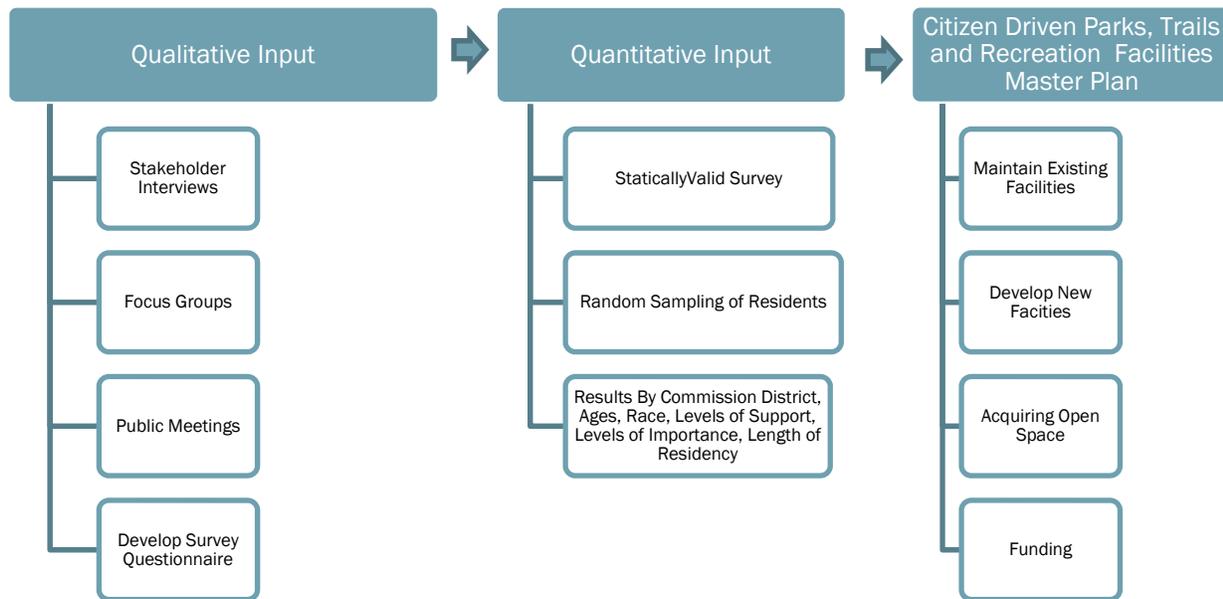


APPENDIX A: SURVEY RESULTS/GRAPHS

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Public Involvement Process for Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The public input process for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed to ensure that the developed Parks and Recreation Master Plan was based on the vision of Forsyth County residents. To ensure this took place two (2) distinct and connected public input processes were used in seamless coordination with all aspects of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



Qualitative Input

In preparation of the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Master Plan it was essentially important that input from citizens, parks and recreation partner organizations, County elected officials, County business and civic leaders, senior County staff, and others was received from the 1st day of the Master Plan process, beginning with qualitative input. Qualitative input includes small group focus groups, 1 to 2-person stakeholder interviews, and community meetings. The primary purpose of qualitative input is for the Benesch consultant team to “listen and better understand” issues of importance to address in the master plan process and specifically to use this feedback to design a citizen survey tailored to the specific and unique needs of Forsyth County.

The qualitative feedback efforts were led by Derek Williams, Vice-President of Benesch and Company and Project Manager for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and Ron Vine, President of Ron Vine and Associates who led the public involvement efforts. Focus groups and stakeholder interviews were held from Monday, February 22, 2016 through Thursday, February 25, 2016. In addition, a public workshop was held the evening of March 8, 2016.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITIZEN SURVEY

Quantitative Input

Based on feedback from the focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and public workshop, a parks and recreation survey was developed by Ron Vine, President of Ron Vine and Associates, with assistance from Jim Fowler, Director of Parks and Recreation for Forsyth County, Derek Williams, Vice-President of Benesch and Company and Project Manager for the Master Plan, and Laura Urban, Project Manager for the National Research Center.

Questions on the survey covered the full-range of issues impacting the developing Parks and Recreation Master Plan, including:

- ❖ Usage and satisfaction with the current outdoor park system.
- ❖ Usage and satisfaction with the current indoor recreation system.
- ❖ Priorities and potential usage for indoor program spaces that could be developed.
- ❖ Needs, unmet needs, and priorities for parks, trails, and indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.
- ❖ Usage and satisfaction with sports fields provided by Forsyth County.
- ❖ Support, usage, and importance for various major projects that were completed and funded through proceeds of a 100 million dollar Parks, Recreation and Greenspace General Obligation Bond passed by Forsyth County voters in 2008.
- ❖ Support and importance for potential parks, trails, recreation, cultural, and sports facility projects identified in the qualitative public input.
- ❖ Willingness to pay various amounts of tax funding per month for the types of parks, trails, recreation, cultural and sports facilities most important to individual households.
- ❖ The importance of continued improvements to parks, trails, recreation facilities and services provided through the Forsyth County Park and Recreation Department to the future of Forsyth County.
- ❖ Demographic questions.

The following pages describe the Survey Methodology employed by National Research Center, Inc. in administering the statistically valid survey.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Survey Methodology

Selecting Survey Recipients

“Sampling” refers to the method by which survey recipients are chosen. The “sample” refers to all those who were given a chance to participate in the survey. All households located in the county boundaries were eligible for the survey. Because local governments generally do not have inclusive lists of all the residences in the jurisdiction (tax assessor and utility billing databases often omit rental units), lists from the United States Postal Service (USPS), updated every three months, usually provide the best representation of all households in a specific geographic location. NRC used the USPS data to select the households that would receive the survey.

A larger list of addresses than needed was selected so that a process referred to as “geocoding” could be used to eliminate addresses from the list that were outside the study boundaries. Geocoding is a computerized process in which addresses are compared to electronically mapped boundaries and coded as inside or outside desired boundaries. All addresses determined to be outside the study boundaries were eliminated from the list. A random selection was made of the remaining addresses to create a mailing list of 7,000 addresses. Commissioner District and whether a household was located north or south of Highway 20 also was identified for each address so that geographic comparisons of the data could be made. Surveys were mailed to Commissioner Districts in approximately the same proportions (1,400 mailed to each of the five districts).

Attached units were oversampled to compensate for detached unit residents’ tendency to return surveys at a higher rate. An adult 18 years or older in the household was asked to complete the survey. This instruction was contained in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

Survey Administration and Response

Each selected household was contacted once. Households were mailed the six-page survey containing a cover letter signed by the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Director enlisting participation. The cover letter included a web link for residents interested in completing the survey online. An access code was provided on the letters to prevent duplicate responses. A postage-paid, pre-addressed return envelope in which the survey recipients could return the completed questionnaire to NRC was provided.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITIZEN SURVEY

The mailing was sent in May 2016 and completed surveys were collected over the following six weeks. Less than 1% of the 7,000 household surveys mailed were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the remaining 6,943 households, 526 completed the survey (including 52 web responses), providing a response rate of 8%. The response rates for the survey by Commissioner District are shown in the table below.

Table 1: 2016 Community Survey Response Rates

	Number of surveys mailed	Undeliverables	Eligible households	Number of returned surveys	Response rate
District 1	1,400	14	1,386	96	7%
District 2	1,400	9	1,391	108	8%
District 3	1,400	12	1,388	118	9%
District 4	1,400	7	1,393	109	8%
District 5	1,400	15	1,385	91	7%
OVERALL	7,000	57	6,943	526*	8%

**Note: The geographic areas of four respondents could not be identified as they scratched out or removed the access code included on the survey.*

95% Confidence Intervals

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” and accompanying “confidence interval” (or margin of error). A traditional level of confidence, and the one used here, is 95%. The 95% confidence interval can be any size and quantifies the sampling error or imprecision of the survey results because some residents’ opinions are relied on to estimate all residents’ opinions.¹

The margin of error for all 526 survey responses is typically no greater than plus or minus four percentage points around any given percent based on community-wide estimates. For comparisons among subgroups the margin of error rises to approximately plus or minus 10% for respondent sizes of 100.

Survey Processing (Data Entry)

Mailed surveys were submitted via postage-paid business reply envelopes. Once received, staff assigned a unique identification number to each questionnaire. Additionally, each survey was reviewed and “cleaned” as necessary. For example, a question may have asked a respondent to pick two items out of a list of five, but the respondent checked three; staff would choose randomly two of the three selected items to be coded in the dataset.

Once cleaned and numbered, all surveys were entered into an electronic dataset. This dataset was subject to a data entry protocol of “key and verify,” in which survey data were entered twice into an electronic dataset and then compared. Discrepancies were evaluated against the original survey form and corrected. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed.

The online survey included data validation (e.g., respondents will be limited to choosing only one response on a “choose one” question), so less cleaning of these data was required. Data from the online survey were downloaded and integrated with data from the mailed survey.

¹ A 95% confidence interval indicates that for every 100 random samples of this many residents, 95 of the confidence intervals created will include the “true” population response. This theory is applied in practice to mean that the “true” perspective of the target population lies within the confidence interval created for a single survey. For example, if 75% of residents rate a service as “excellent” or “good,” then the 4% margin of error (for the 95% confidence interval) indicates that the range of likely responses for the entire community is between 71% and 79%. This source of uncertainty is called sampling error. In addition to sampling error, other sources of error may affect any survey, including the non-response of residents with opinions different from survey responders. Differences in survey administration, question wording, order, translation and data entry, as examples, can lead to somewhat varying results.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITIZEN SURVEY

Weighting the Data

The demographic characteristics of the survey respondents were compared to the 2010 Census data for adults age 18 or older in Forsyth County. The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the Census and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting. Several different weighting “schemes” are tested to ensure the best fit for the data.

The variables used for weighting were respondent gender, age, Commissioner District and North/South of Highway 40. The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the following table.

Table 2: 2016 Forsyth County Community Survey Weighting Table

Characteristic	2010 Census	Unweighted Data	Weighted Data
Sex and Age			
Female	51%	62%	51%
Male	49%	38%	49%
18-34 years of age	24%	11%	23%
35-54 years of age	49%	47%	49%
55+ years of age	27%	42%	28%
Females 18-34	12%	9%	12%
Females 35-54	25%	30%	25%
Females 55+	14%	23%	14%
Males 18-34	12%	3%	11%
Males 35-54	25%	17%	25%
Males 55+	13%	18%	13%
Commissioner District			
District 1	19%	18%	19%
District 2	20%	21%	20%
District 3	22%	23%	22%
District 4	19%	21%	19%
District 5	20%	17%	20%
North/South			
North	42%	41%	42%
South	58%	59%	58%

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITIZEN SURVEY

Analyzing the Data

The electronic dataset was analyzed by NRC staff using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). For the most part, frequency distributions are discussed in the survey highlights of the report.

Also included are resident and non-resident survey results by respondent characteristics and geographic area of residence (Chi-square or ANOVA tests of significance were applied to these breakdowns of selected survey questions. A “p-value” of 0.05 or less indicates that there is less than a 5% probability that differences observed between groups are due to chance; or in other words, a greater than 95% probability that the differences observed in the selected categories of respondent subgroups represent “real” differences among those populations. Where differences between subgroups are statistically significant, they have been marked with grey shading in the appendices.

For the 2016 Community Survey, a randomly selected sample of 7,000 residential households received an invitation to complete the survey via mail or online. A total of 526 completed surveys were returned (474 from the mailed survey and 52 from the online web survey). The overall response rate for the survey was 8%. The survey results were weighted so that age, gender, Commissioner District and those living North or South of Highway 20 were represented in the proportions reflective adults 18 years old or older living in the county.

The 95% Confidence Interval and Margin of Error

The 95% confidence interval (or “margin of error”) quantifies the precision of the estimates made from the survey results. The margin of error for all 526 survey responses is typically no greater than plus or minus four percentage points around any given percent based on community-wide estimates. The 95% confidence interval indicates that in 95 of 100 surveys conducted like the Community Survey, for a particular item, a result would be found that is within plus or minus four percentage points if everyone in the population of interest was surveyed. For comparisons among respondent demographic and geographic subgroups, the margin of error rises to approximately plus or minus 10% for 100 respondents to plus or minus 22% for 20 respondents.

How the Results Are Reported

For the most part, the full set of frequencies is presented in the Survey Results tables and in the tables in the appendices.

On some of the questions in the surveys, respondents could give an answer of “don’t know” or “unsure.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply are in the appendices. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the Survey Results tables and the cross tabulations, unless otherwise indicated. In other words, the majority of the tables in the Survey Results section display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

When a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the common practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

Top 10 Most Important Findings by Commission Districts

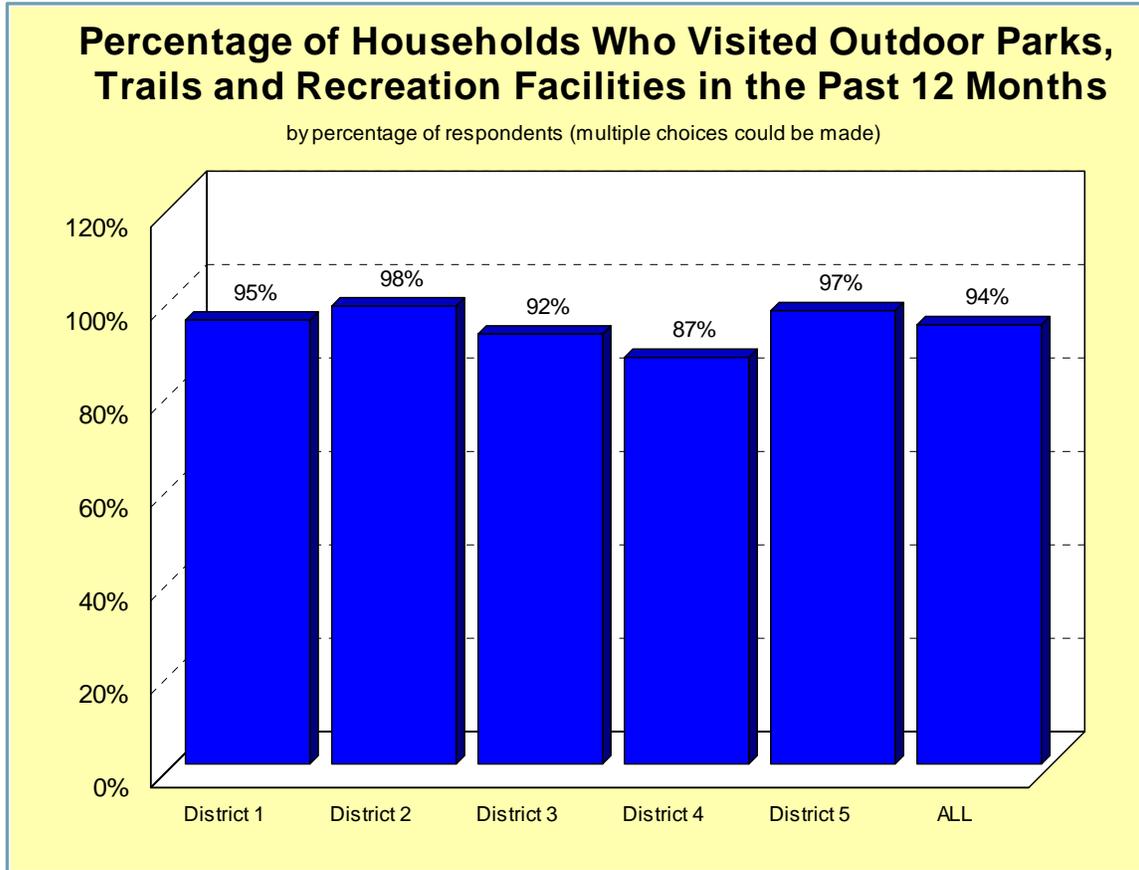
**FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN
CITIZEN SURVEY**

Importance to Future of Forsyth County

In ALL 5 Commission Districts at Least 86% of Respondents Indicated Continued Improvements to Parks, Trails, Recreation Facilities and Services Provided by the Forsyth County Park and Recreation Department Are Essentially Important, Very Important or Important to the Future of Forsyth County

Question 17: Improvements Importance by District						
Rank	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
Essentially important	45%	42%	34%	29%	34%	36%
Very important	26%	30%	42%	39%	37%	35%
Important	25%	24%	21%	27%	14%	22%
Not important	3%	4%	2%	3%	13%	5%
Not important at all	2%	NA	2%	3%	1%	2%

Visitation of Outdoor Parks, Trails and Facilities is Very High in Every District



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

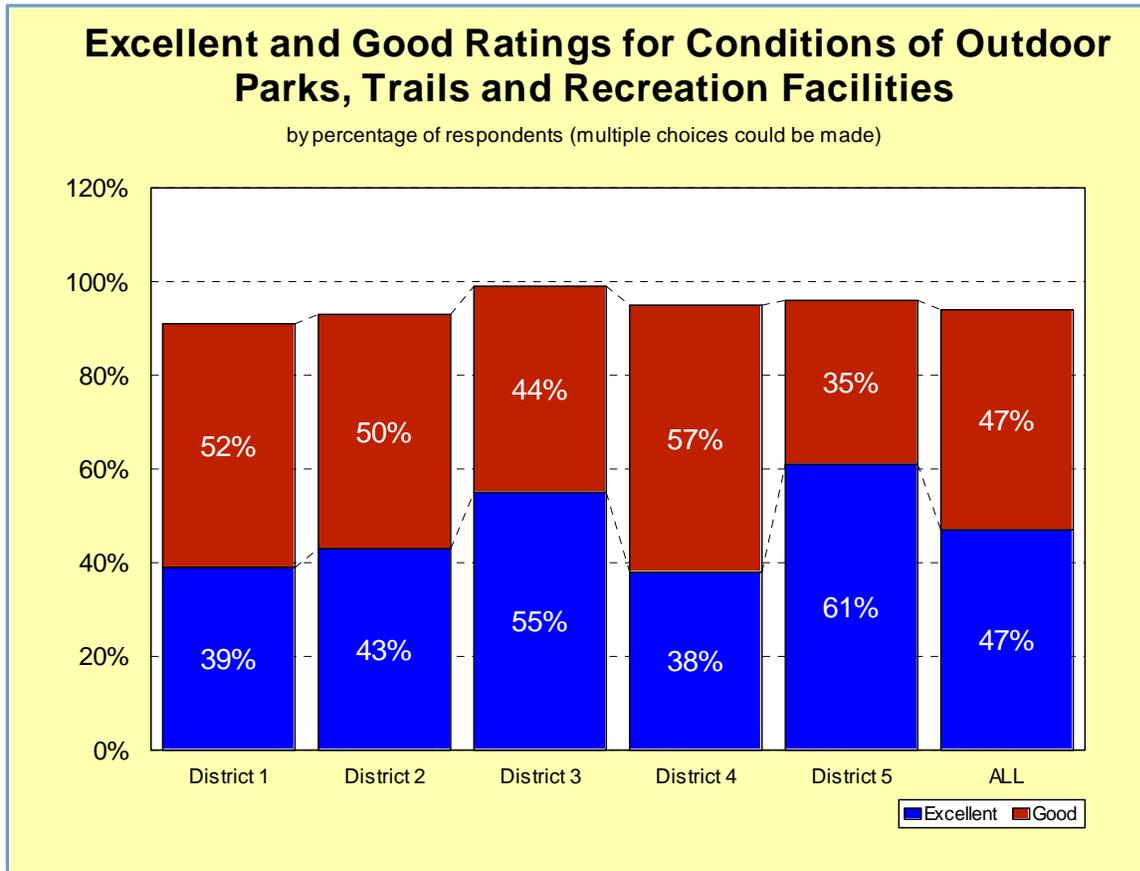
Most Frequently Used Outdoor Facilities: Walking/Nature Trails, Greenways, and Playgrounds Are Among the Top 3 in All 5 Commission Districts

Question 2: Top 7 by Districts and Overall (Top Choice)						
Rank	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
1st	Walking/nature trails (30%)	Walking/nature trails (32%)	Greenways (31%)	Walking/nature trails (17%)	Walking/nature trails (30%)	Walking/nature trails (26%)
2nd	Playgrounds (13%)	Greenways (30%)	Walking/nature trails (23%)	Playgrounds (17%)	Greenways (16%)	Greenways (19%)
3rd	Greenways (12%)	Playgrounds (9%)	Playgrounds (11%)	Baseball/softball fields (17%)	Parks along Lake Lanier (14%)	Playgrounds (12%)
4th	Baseball/softball fields (9%)	Regulation multipurpose fields (6%)	Tennis courts (6%)	Parks along Lake Lanier (9%)	Playgrounds (9%)	Baseball/softball fields (6%)
5th	Regulation multipurpose fields (5%)	Baseball/softball fields (2%)	Dog parks (2%)	Regulation multipurpose fields (7%)	Regulation multipurpose fields (8%)	Parks along Lake Lanier (5%)
6th	Parks along Lake Lanier (4%)	Picnic shelters (2%)	Regulation multipurpose fields (2%)	Greenways (6%)	Tennis courts (4%)	Regulation multipurpose fields (5%)
7th	Mountain biking trails (3%)	Skate park (1%)	Baseball/softball fields (2%)	Mountain biking trails (1%)	Baseball/softball fields (3%)	Tennis courts (3%)

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Outdoor Parks, Trails and Recreation Facilities Are Well Maintained

In ALL 5 Council Districts at Least 91% of Parks, Trails and Recreation Facilities are Rated Excellent or Good.



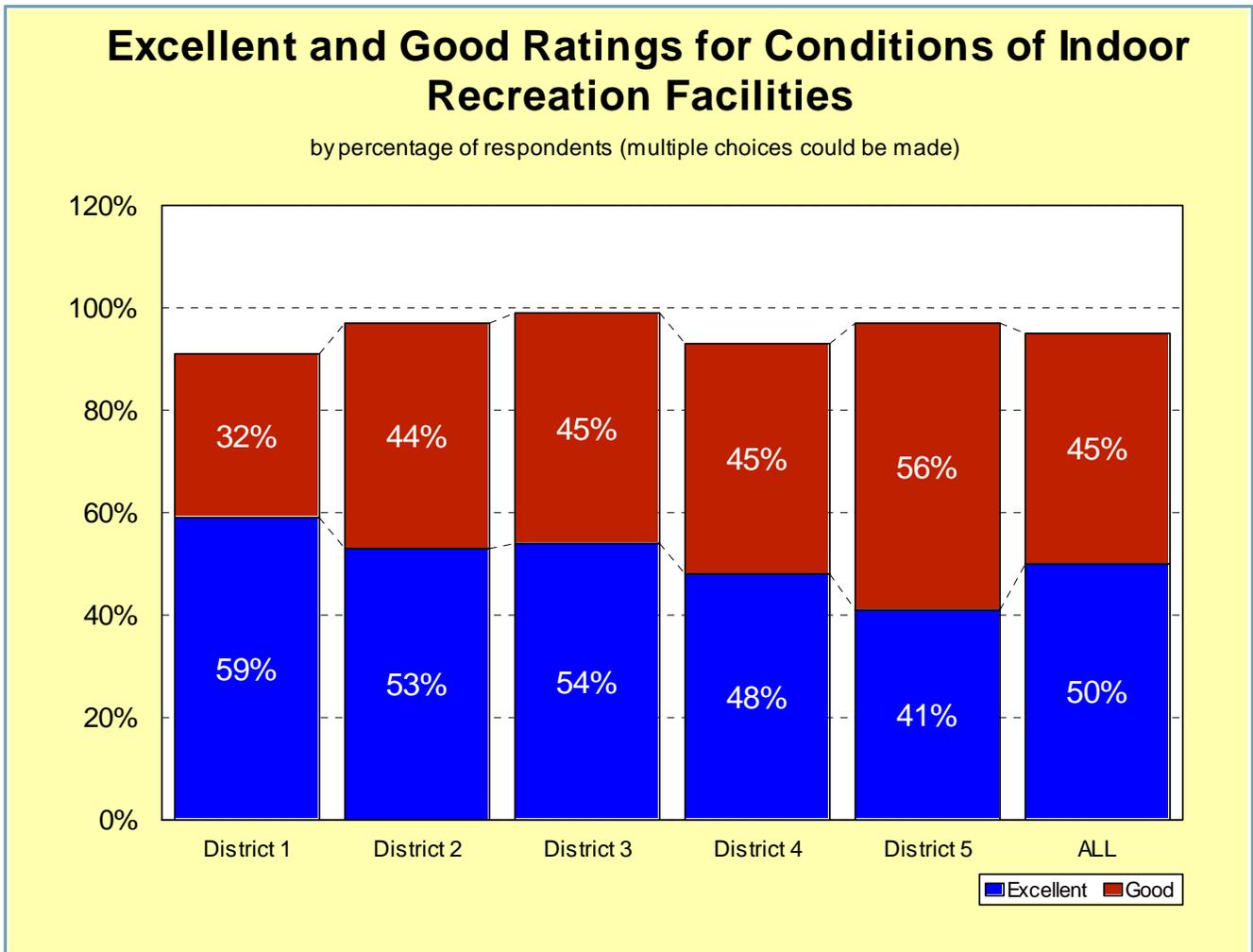
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Most Frequently Used Indoor Facilities: Recreation Centers Are the 1st Choice Most Used Indoor Facility in All 5 Commission District

Question 4: Top 5 Indoor Recreation Facility Usage by District						
	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
1st	Recreation centers (28%)	Recreation centers (31%)	Recreation centers (17%)	Recreation centers (32%)	Recreation centers (34%)	Recreation centers (28%)
2nd	Nature and environmental education center (18%)	Indoor walking track (22%)	Indoor walking track (10%)	Indoor walking track (25%)	Nature/environmental education center (19%)	Indoor walking track (18%)
3rd	Indoor walking track (17%)	Nature/environmental education center (16%)	Gymnasiums (9%)	Gymnasiums (21%)	Indoor walking track (18%)	Gymnasiums (14%)
4th	Gymnasiums (16%)	Gymnasiums (14%)	Nature and environmental education center (6%)	Indoor aquatics facility (recreation) (20%)	Fitness areas (17%)	Nature and environmental education center (13%)
5th	Small community buildings (12%)	Small community buildings (9%)	Small community buildings (6%)	Small community buildings (11%)	Small community buildings (10%)	Small community buildings (9%)

Indoor Recreation Facilities Are Well Maintained

In ALL 5 Council Districts the Condition of at Least 91% of Indoor Facilities are Rated Excellent or Good



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Walking and Jogging Tracks Would Be the Most Frequently Used Indoor Facilities in 4 of the 5 Districts if They Were Developed

Question 7: Top 5 Indoor Program Spaces Households Would Use by Districts

	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
1st	Walking and jogging track (54%)	Walking and jogging track (44%)	Walking and jogging track (44%)	Leisure pool (57%)	Walking and jogging track (52%)	Walking and jogging track (49%)
2nd	Weight room and cardiovascular equipment (44%)	Leisure pool (42%)	Aerobics and fitness space (38%)	Weight room and cardiovascular equipment (51%)	Weight room and cardiovascular equipment (41%)	Weight room and cardiovascular equipment (41%)
3rd	Leisure pool (39%)	Aerobics and fitness space (42%)	Lanes for lap swimming (38%)	Walking and jogging track (50%)	Rock climbing and bouldering wall (40%)	Leisure pool (41%)
4th	Rock climbing and bouldering wall (38%)	Lanes for lap swimming (40%)	Weight room and cardiovascular equipment (37%)	Aerobics and fitness space (42%)	Leisure pool (36%)	Aerobics and fitness space (39%)
5th	Aerobics and fitness space (37%)	Weight room and cardiovascular equipment (36%)	Rock climbing and bouldering wall (37%)	Rock climbing and bouldering wall (39%)	Aerobics and fitness/space (36%)	Rock climbing and bouldering wall (37%)

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Most Important Parks, Trails or Facilities by District:

Walking & Hiking Trails Are Most Important Facility in ALL Districts

Greenways and Lakefront Parks and Swimming Beaches are the 2nd or 3rd Most Important

Question 11: Sum of Top Choices Most Important by District

Rank	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
1st	Walking and hiking trails (58%)	Walking and hiking trails (68%)	Walking and hiking trails (60%)	Walking and hiking trails (37%)	Walking and hiking trails (50%)	Walking and hiking trails (55%)
2nd	Greenways (50%)	Greenways (59%)	Greenways (51%)	Lake front parks and swimming beaches (31%)	Lake front parks and swimming beaches (30%)	Greenways (42%)
3rd	Lake front parks and swimming beaches (30%)	Lake front parks and swimming beaches (25%)	Playgrounds (19%)	Greenways (23%)	Greenways (26%)	Lake front parks and swimming beaches (26%)
4th	Dog parks (20%)	Playgrounds	Lake front parks and swimming beaches (16%)	Playgrounds (23%)	Dog parks (16%)	Playgrounds (18%)
5th	Recreation centers (17%)	Dog parks (15%)	Dog parks (15%)	Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas (21%)	Playgrounds (15%)	Dog parks (16%)
6th	Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas (14%)	Mountain biking trails (12%)	Mountain biking trails (14%)	Adventure climbing tower and zip line (21%)	Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas (13%)	Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas (13%)
7th	Playgrounds (14%)	Indoor competition pool (12%)	Outdoor tennis courts (13%)	Baseball/softball diamonds (20%)	Outdoor aquatics features (13%)	Recreation centers (13%)

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Most Important Improvements to Parks, Trails or Facilities by District

Continued Acquisition of Parkland, Renovations of Existing Parks, and
Development of New Facilities Remain Important Improvements

Question 15: Sum of the Top Choices by District						
Rank	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
1 st	Renovations of existing older parks and trails (42%)	Acquire parkland for passive facilities (47%)	Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (46%)	Renovations of existing older parks and trails (39%)	Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (39%)	Renovations of existing older parks and trails (40%)
2 nd	Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve (41%)	Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (45%)	Renovations of existing older parks and trails (44%)	Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve (30%)	Acquire parkland for passive facilities (37%)	Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (39%)
3 rd	Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (39%)	Renovations of existing older parks and trails (44%)	Acquire parkland for passive facilities (37%)	Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (28%)	Renovations of existing older parks and trails (31%)	Acquire parkland for passive facilities (35%)
4 th	Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (39%)	Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped (43%)	Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped (22%)	Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve (27%)	Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (31%)	Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (28%)
5 th	Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve (32%)	Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (21%)	Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve (21%)	Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (25%)	Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve (29%)	Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve (24%)
6 th	Acquire parkland for passive facilities (28%)	Acquire park land and develop a large regional park (20%)	Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (20%)	Acquire parkland for passive facilities (24%)	Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped (23%)	Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped (23%)
7 th	Develop new indoor community centers with facilities (23%)	Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve (19%)	Develop a new indoor performing and visual art center (20%)	Develop new indoor community centers with facilities (20%)	Develop new indoor community centers with facilities (21%)	Develop new indoor community centers with facilities (18%)

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Tax Support Is High in ALL 5 Districts for Improvements At Least 79% Of Respondents in ALL 5 Districts Would Support Some Level of Tax Increase for the Types of Improvements Most Important to Their Households

Question 16: Tax Increase Per Month by District						
Rank	District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5	Overall
\$13-\$15 per month	9%	20%	5%	5%	7%	9%
\$10-\$12 per month	8%	14%	14%	14%	14%	13%
\$7-\$9 per month	10%	11%	15%	14%	13%	13%
\$4-\$6 per month	28%	24%	33%	20%	26%	26%
\$1-\$3 per month	23%	21%	21%	26%	19%	22%
Nothing	22%	9%	12%	21%	21%	17%

Summary of Survey Questions Responses

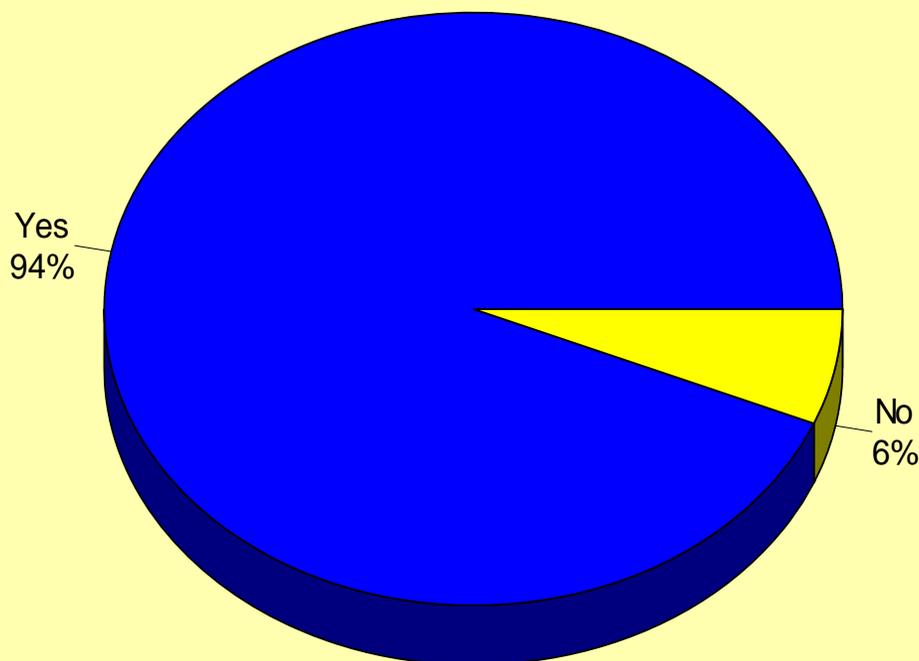
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ 94% of households had used at least one of the 17 outdoor parks, trails and recreation facilities listed on the survey which is a very high usage.
- ❖ Users of walking and nature trails, greenways, parks along Lake Lanier, and open space and natural areas are the most likely to pay \$13-\$15 in additional tax revenues for the types of park improvements most important to their households.

- ❖ Walking/Nature Trails (75%) and greenways (69%) are by a wide margin outdoor parks, trails, and recreation facilities used the most often.
- ❖ 38% of households who have children 9 and younger have used multipurpose fields and 48% of households with

Q1. Visitation of Outdoor Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Over the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

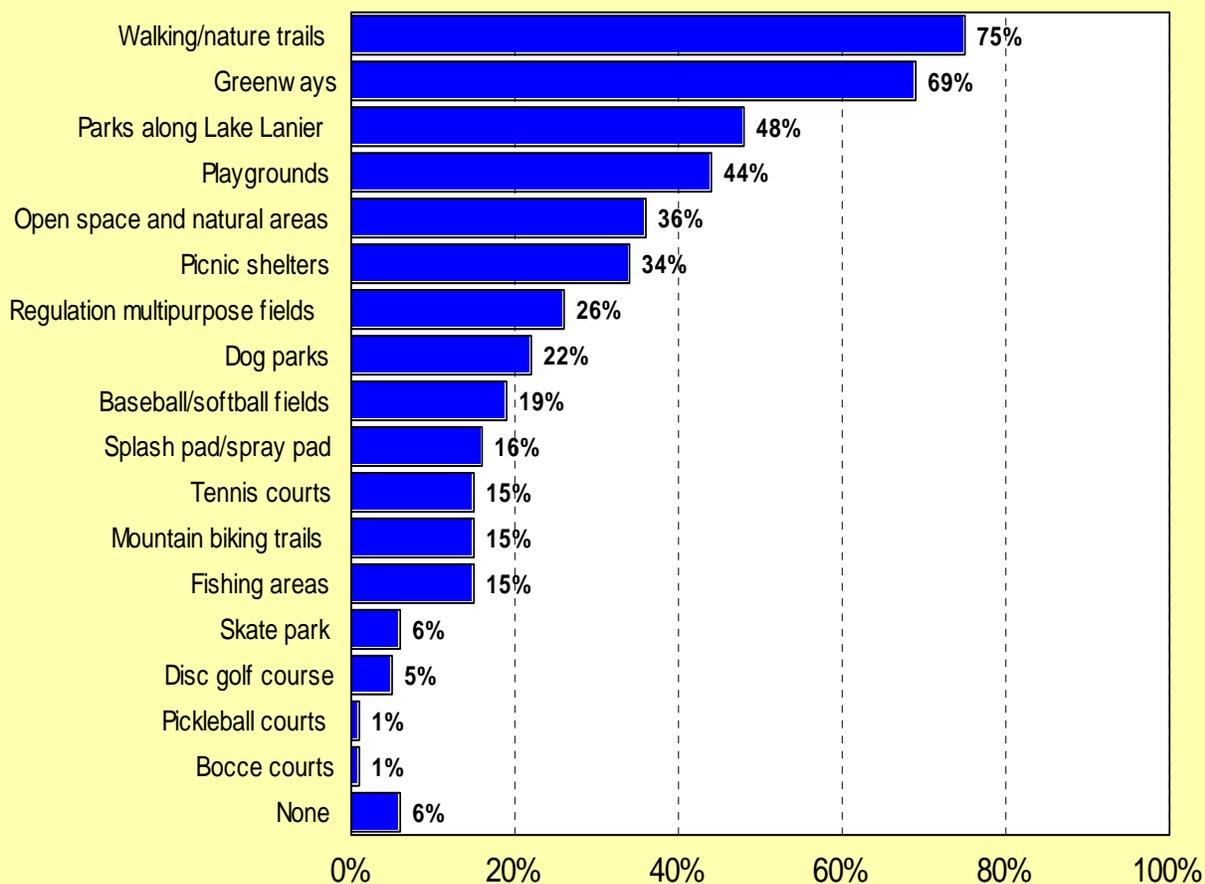
CITIZEN SURVEY

youngsters 10-19 years old have used multipurpose fields. In comparison less than 10% of households with no youngsters in their households have used multipurpose fields.

- ❖ 33% of households who have children 9 and younger have used baseball/softball fields and 28% of households with youngsters 10-19 years old have used baseball/softball fields. In comparison less than 9% of households with no youngsters in their households have used baseball/softball fields.

Q1. Outdoor Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Households Have Used Over the Past 12 Months

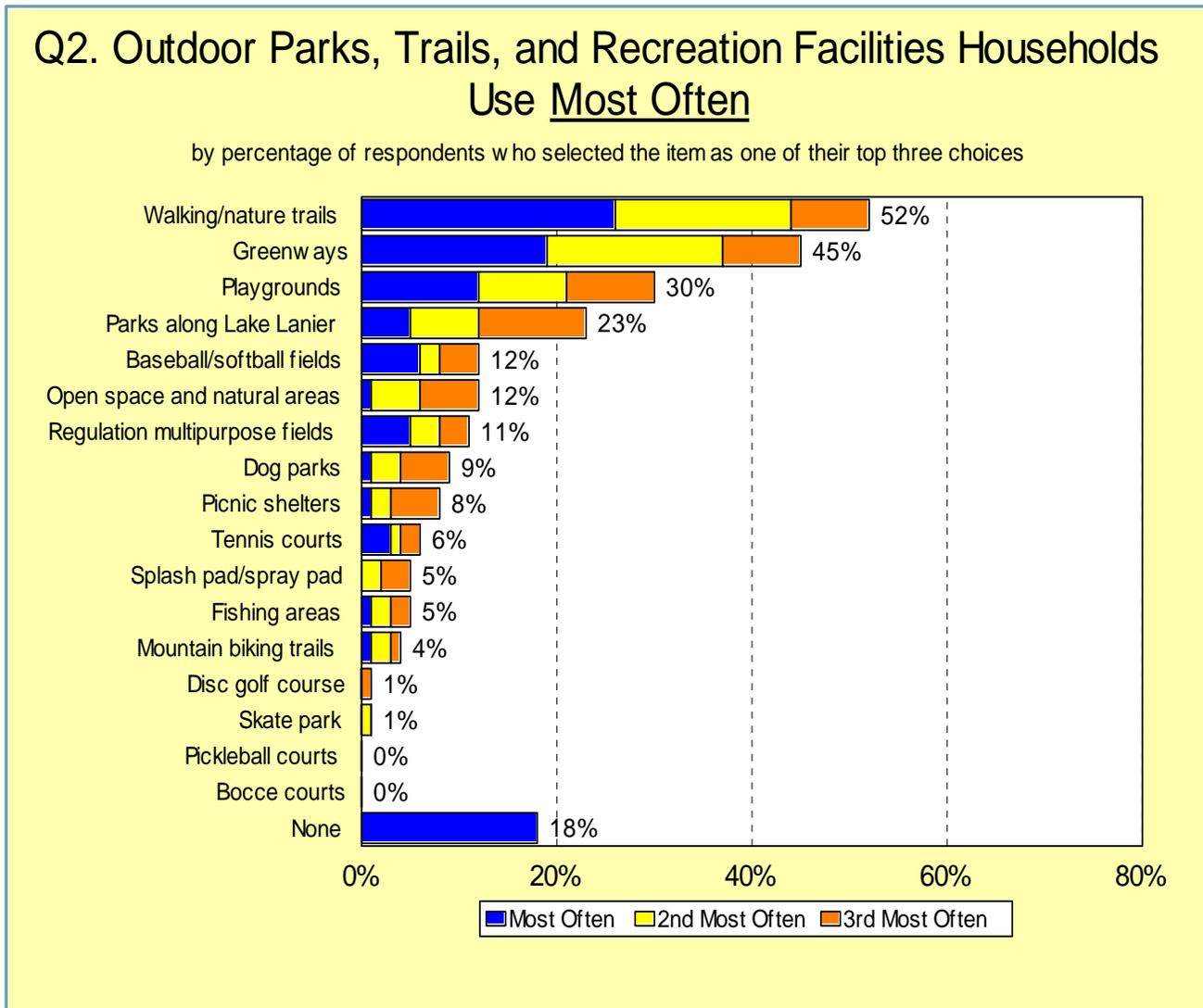
by percentage of respondents



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ Overall, 25% indicated walking and nature trails as first most often used, 19% indicated greenways as 1st most used and 12% indicated playgrounds as first most used for outdoor parks, trails and recreation facilities.



- ❖ 52% of households indicated walking and nature trails among the three (3) facilities they use the most often, followed by greenways (45%) playgrounds (30%) and parks along Lake Lanier (23%)
- ❖ Walking/nature trails and greenways were the two (2) facilities used most often by households who would pay any level of a tax increase for improvements to the park system.

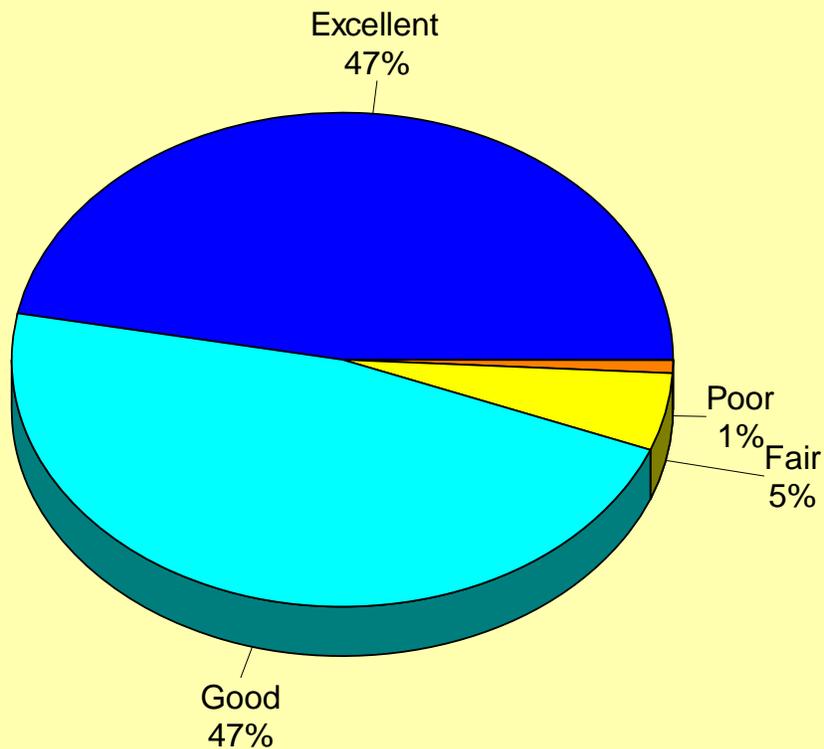
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ 47% of households indicated the condition of the outdoor facilities they used was excellent, which is an extremely high percent indicating excellent. An additional 47% indicated good.
- ❖ Over 50% of households who would pay \$10 to \$15 in additional taxes for system improvements rate the condition of the current system as excellent.

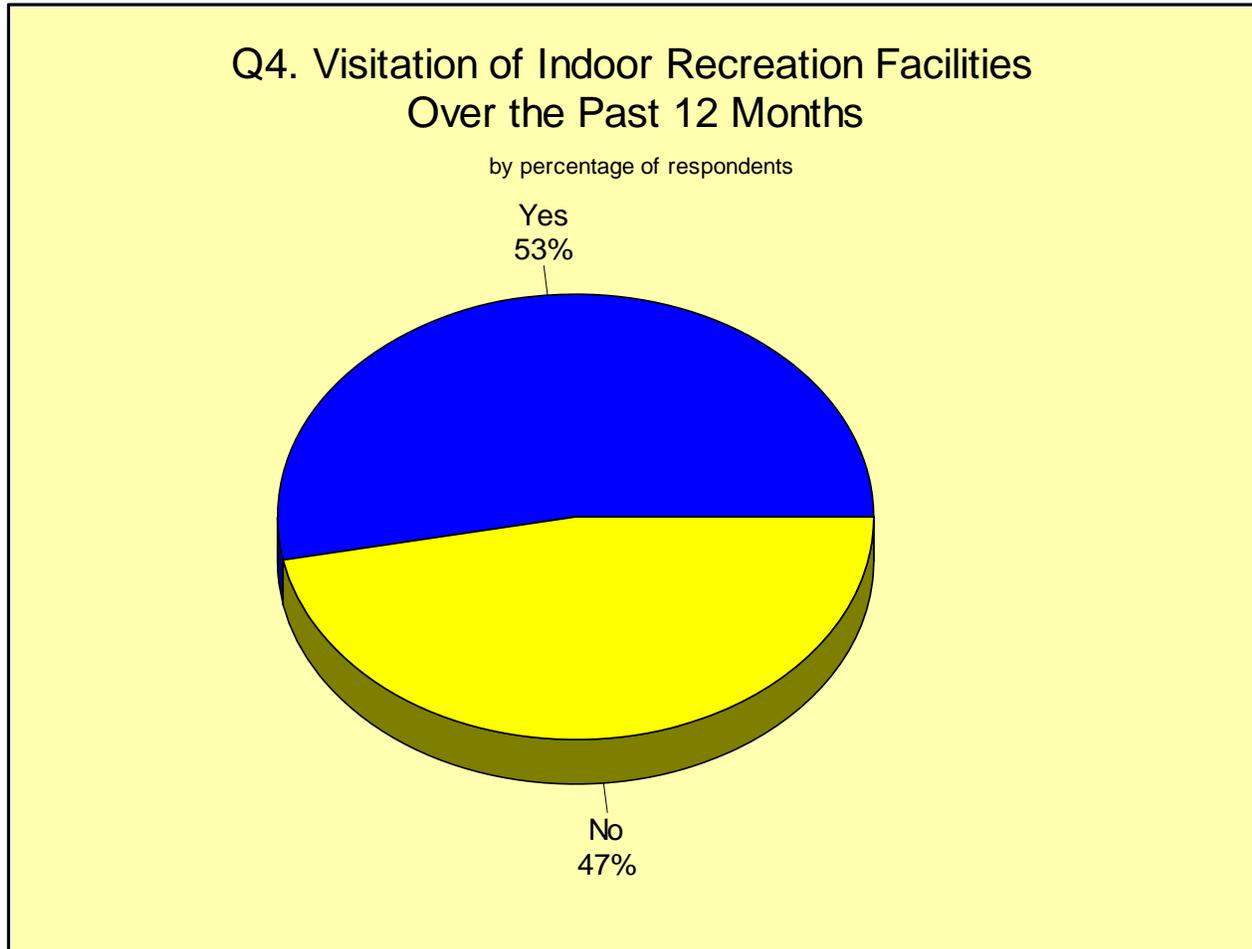
Q3. How Households Rate the Physical Condition of All Outdoor Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Visited

by percentage of respondents who used facilities



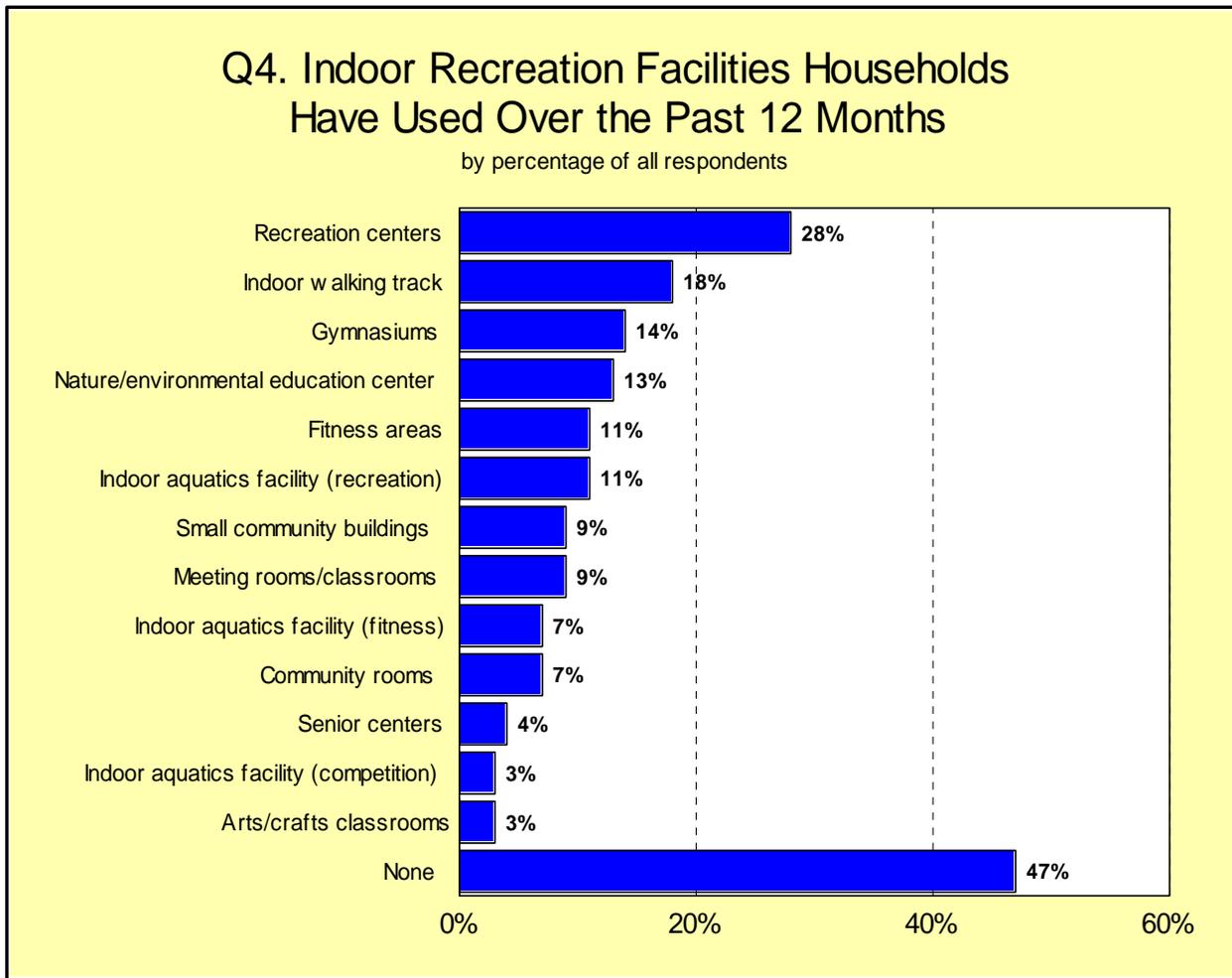
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ A little over 50% of household indicated they had used indoor recreation facilities over the past 12 months. Usage of indoor facilities is generally much lower than usage of outdoor facilities.
- ❖ Households with adults 20-54 years of age and no children visit indoor recreation centers the least.



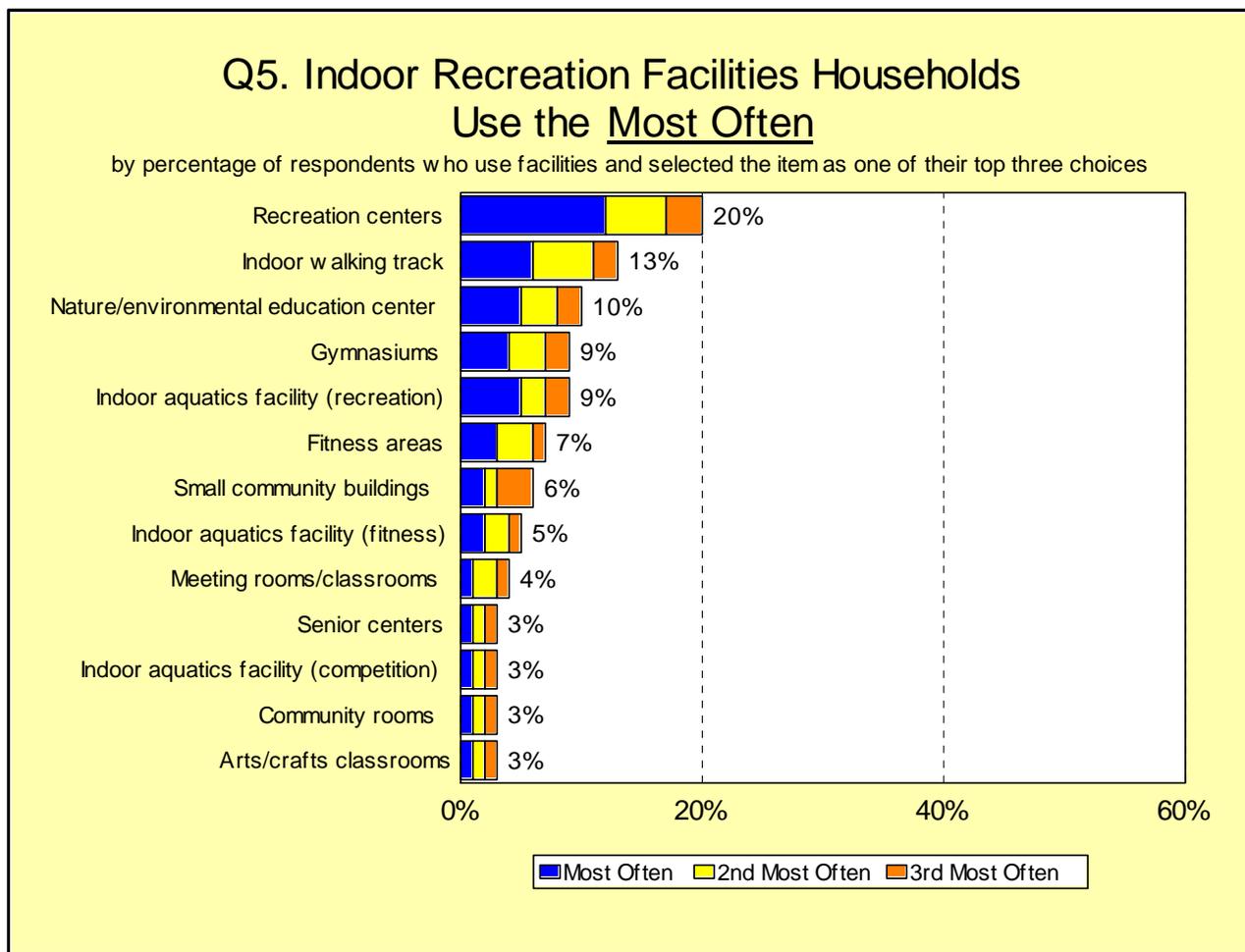
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ 28% of household indicated they had used indoor recreation facilities over the past 12 months and 18% used indoor walking tracks.
- ❖ 22% of households with adults 55 and over and no children have used indoor walking tracks.
- ❖ Over 37% of households with children have used recreation centers
- ❖ 13% of households with adults 55 and over and no children have used senior centers.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ Close to 30% of households with children use recreation centers most often.
- ❖ By a wide margin recreation centers are used the most often (20%), based on a sum of the three current indoor facilities used the most often. Other indoor facilities used frequently include indoor walking track (13%), nature environmental education center (10%), gymnasiums and indoor aquatics facilities for recreation (9%).

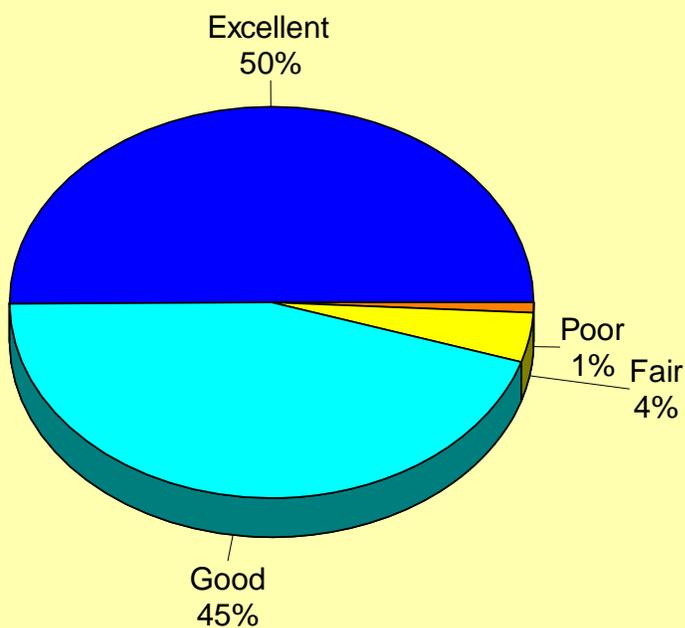


FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ 50% of households indicated the quality of the indoor facilities they used was excellent, which is an extremely high percent indicating excellent. An additional 45% indicated good.
- ❖ 56% of households with adults 55 and older and no children rate the overall quality as excellent.

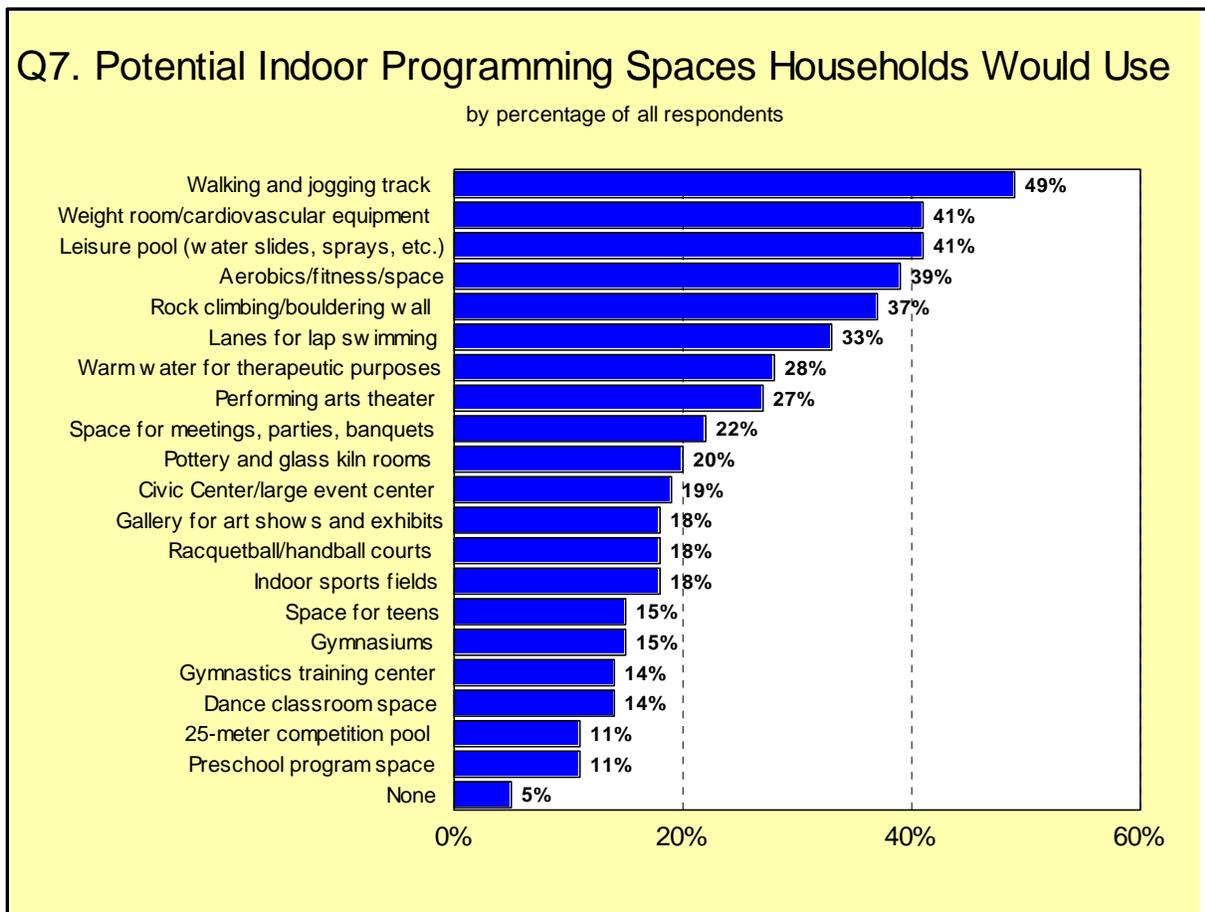
Q6. How Households Rate the Overall Quality of Indoor Recreation Facilities They Have Used Over the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents who used indoor facilities



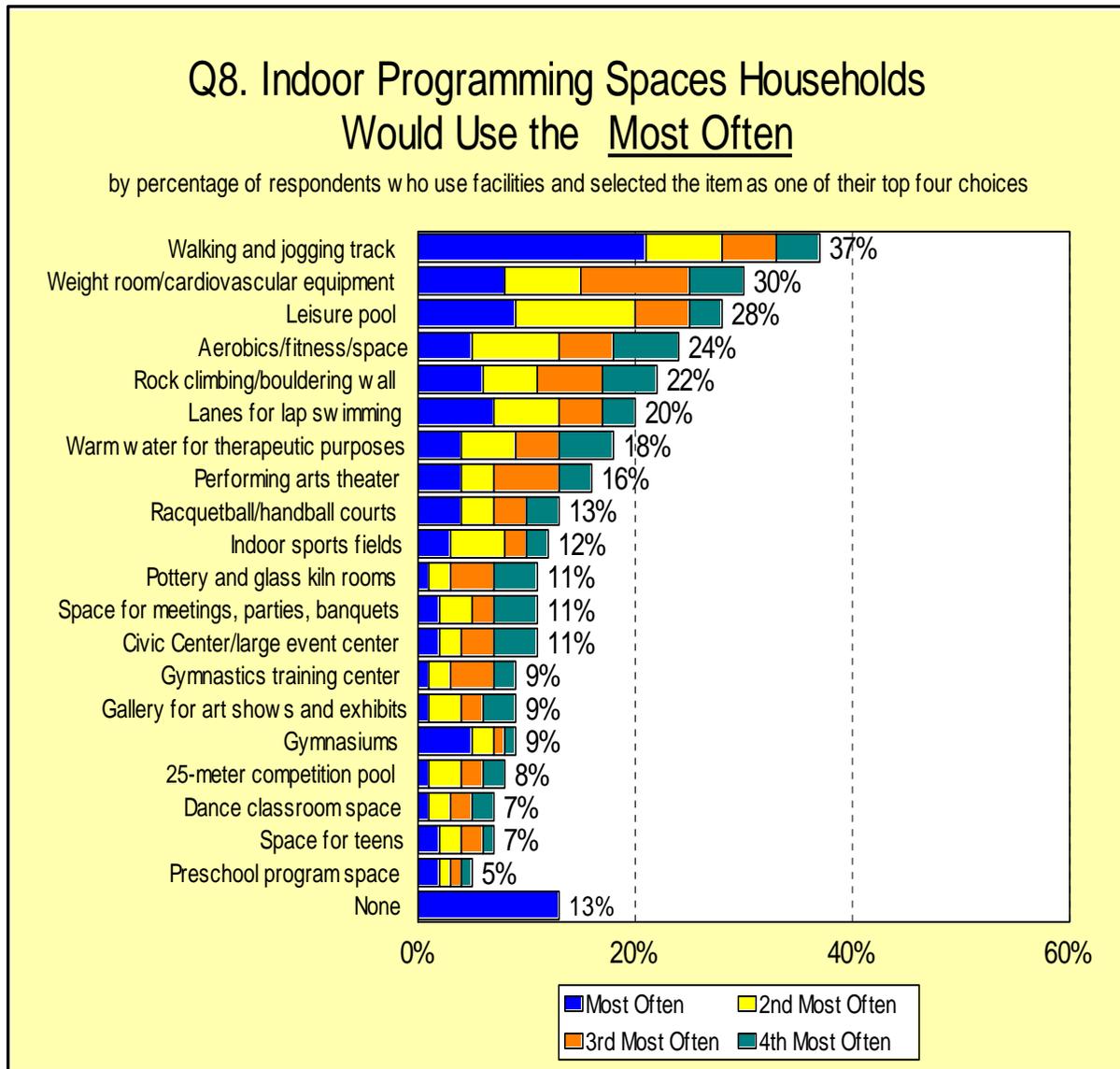
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ Usage of indoor facilities would increase significantly if more indoor facilities were developed of importance to respondents.
- ❖ 62% of households with adults 55 and over and no children indicated they would use the walking and jogging track.
- ❖ 52% of households with adults 20-54 and no children indicated they would use aerobics/fitness space.
- ❖ 66% of households with youth 9 and younger indicated they would use a leisure pool.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ By a wide margin, out of 20 potential new indoor spaces which could be developed, a walking and jogging track would have the first most often usage. The potential usage of indoor recreation facilities is much higher than present usage, but the right facilities need to be built.
- ❖ A weight room/cardiovascular area would have high use with households with and without children.

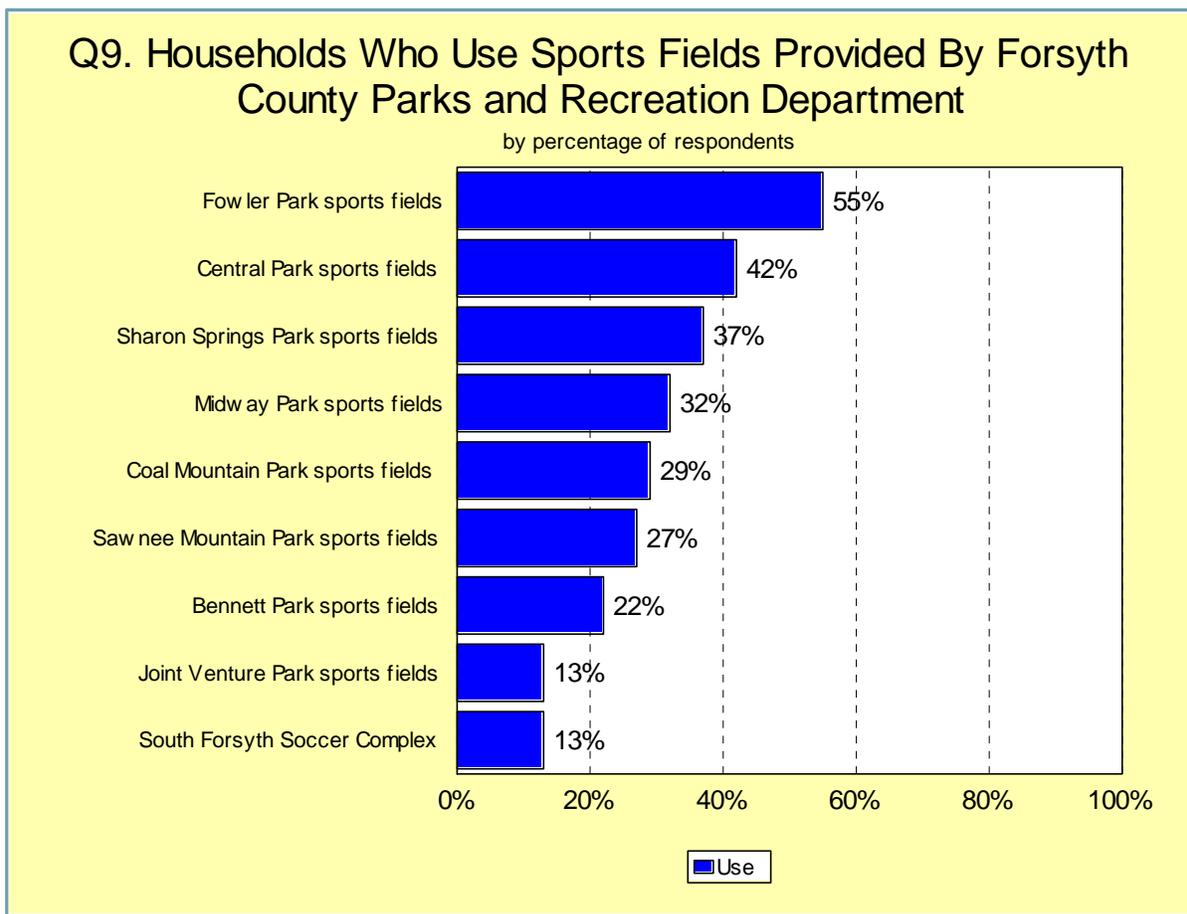


- ❖ A leisure pool would have significantly more use by households with children than without children.

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

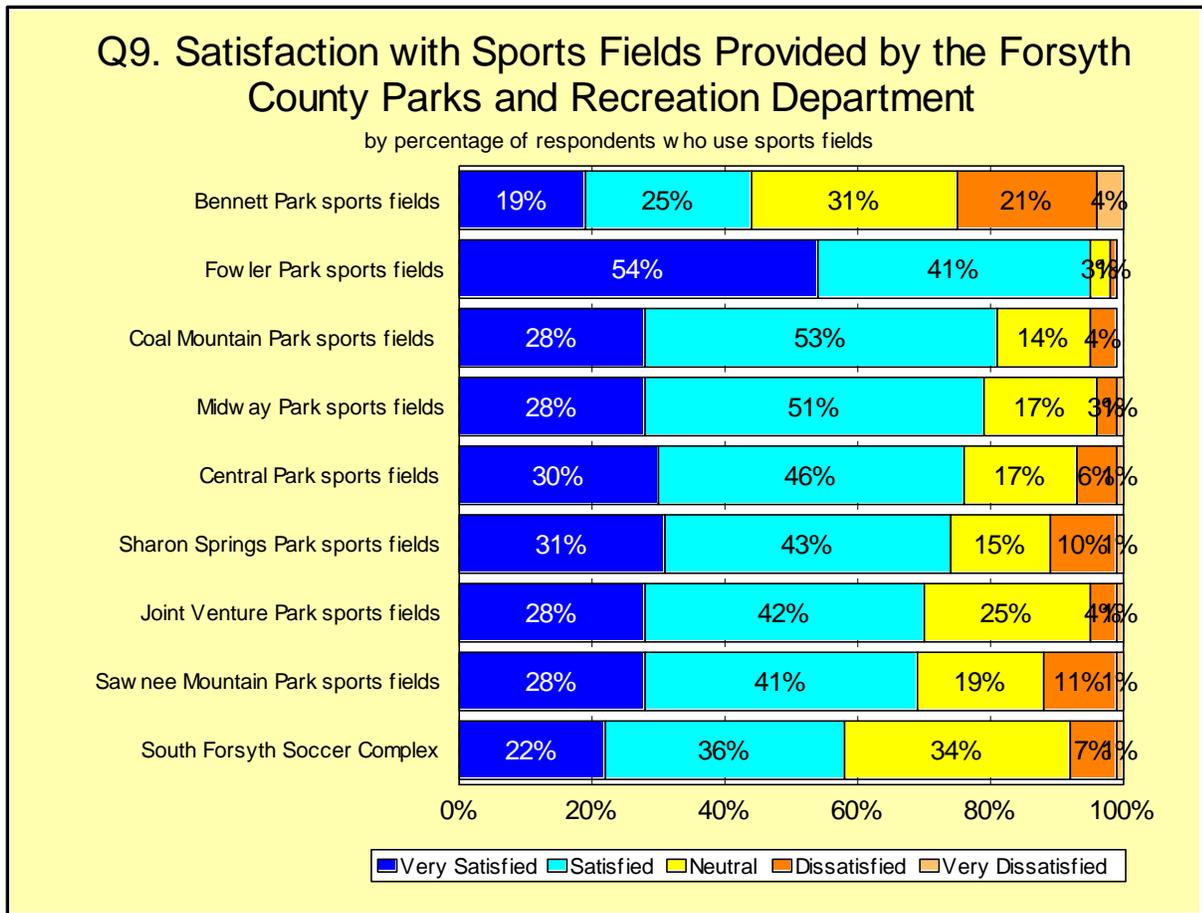
CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ The sports fields used most by residents included Fowler Park sports fields (55% used), Central Park sports fields (42%) and Sharon Springs Park sports fields (37%).
- ❖ Improvements to Central Park sports fields are the most supported potential improvement to sports fields for households willing to pay \$13-\$15 in additional taxes.
- ❖ Installing sports fields at a number of locations including Sharon Springs, Midway, Bennett, Coal Mountain, etc., is the most supported potential improvement to sports fields by households willing to pay \$10-\$12 per month.



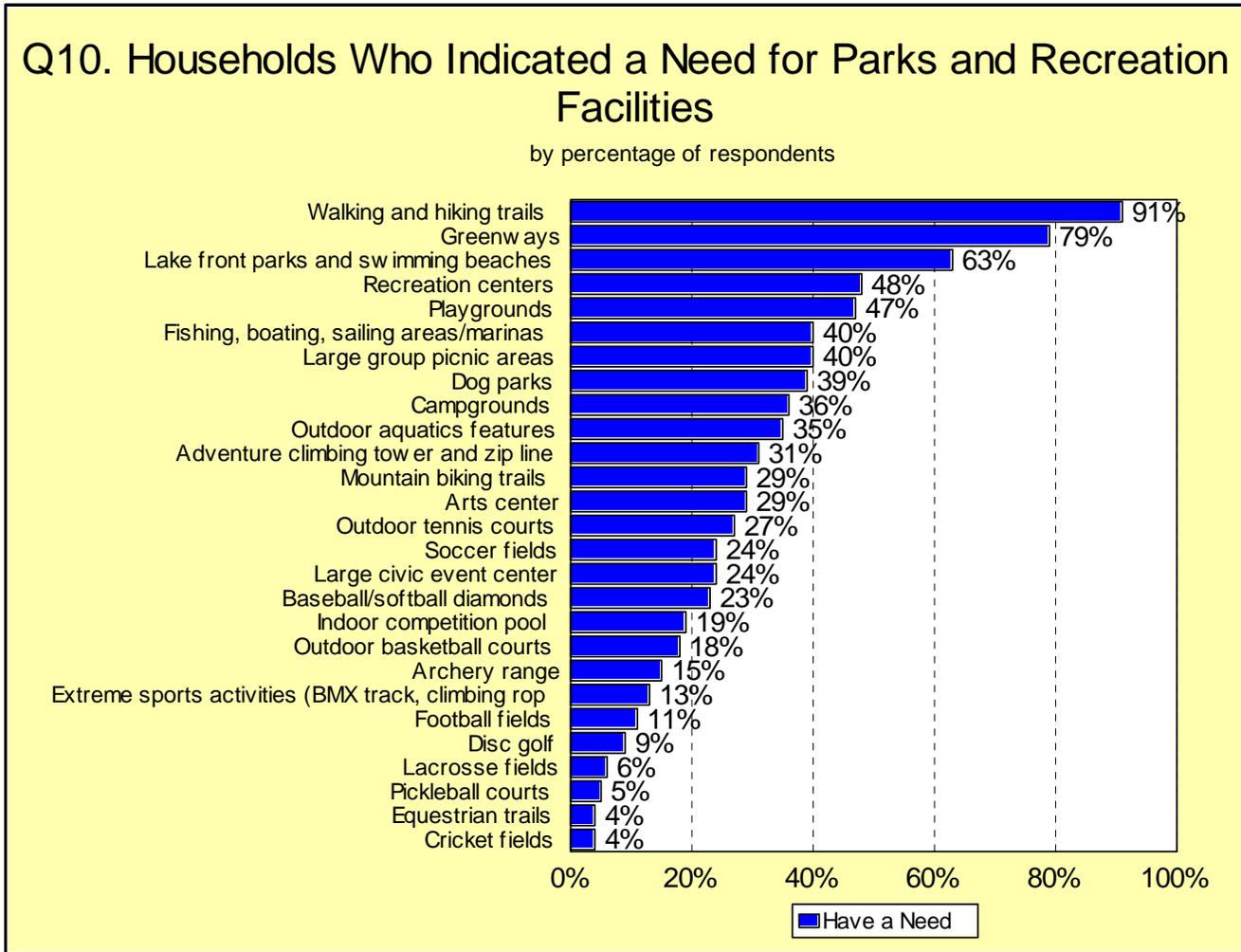
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ Very satisfied ratings are significantly higher for Flower Park Sports Field than any other fields. Generally, a park system should have a target of 30% or more of households using the fields rating them “very satisfied.
- ❖ Condition ratings with sports fields appear to be significantly lower than for other outdoor parks, trails or recreation facilities.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

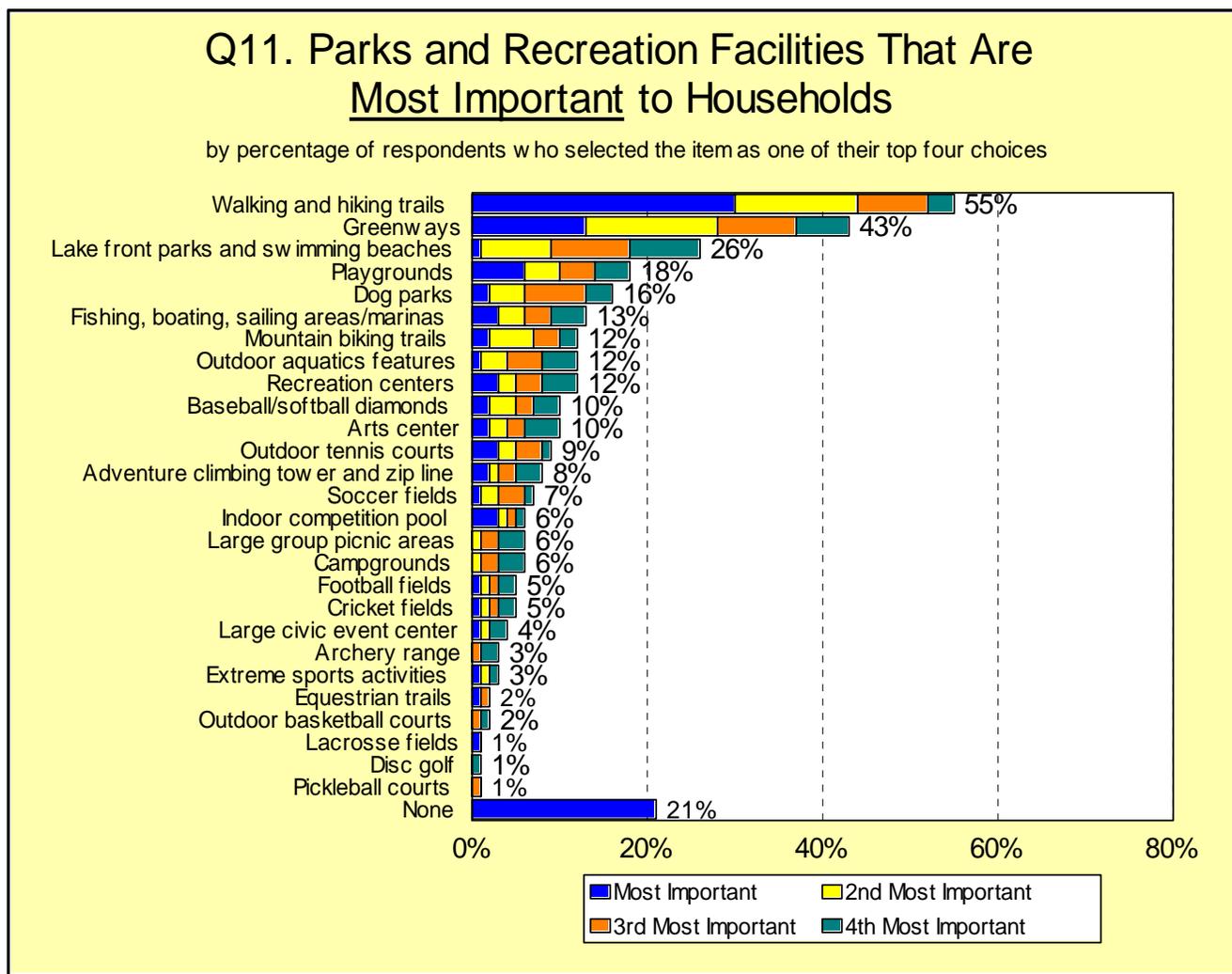
- ❖ Households have a need for a wide range of outdoor and indoor facilities. The highest percentage needs are for walking and biking trails (91%), greenways (79%), and lakefront parks and swimming beaches (63%).
- ❖ 83% of households who indicated they would pay \$13-\$15 per month in additional taxes for improvements most important to their household indicated a need for lake front parks and swimming beaches.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

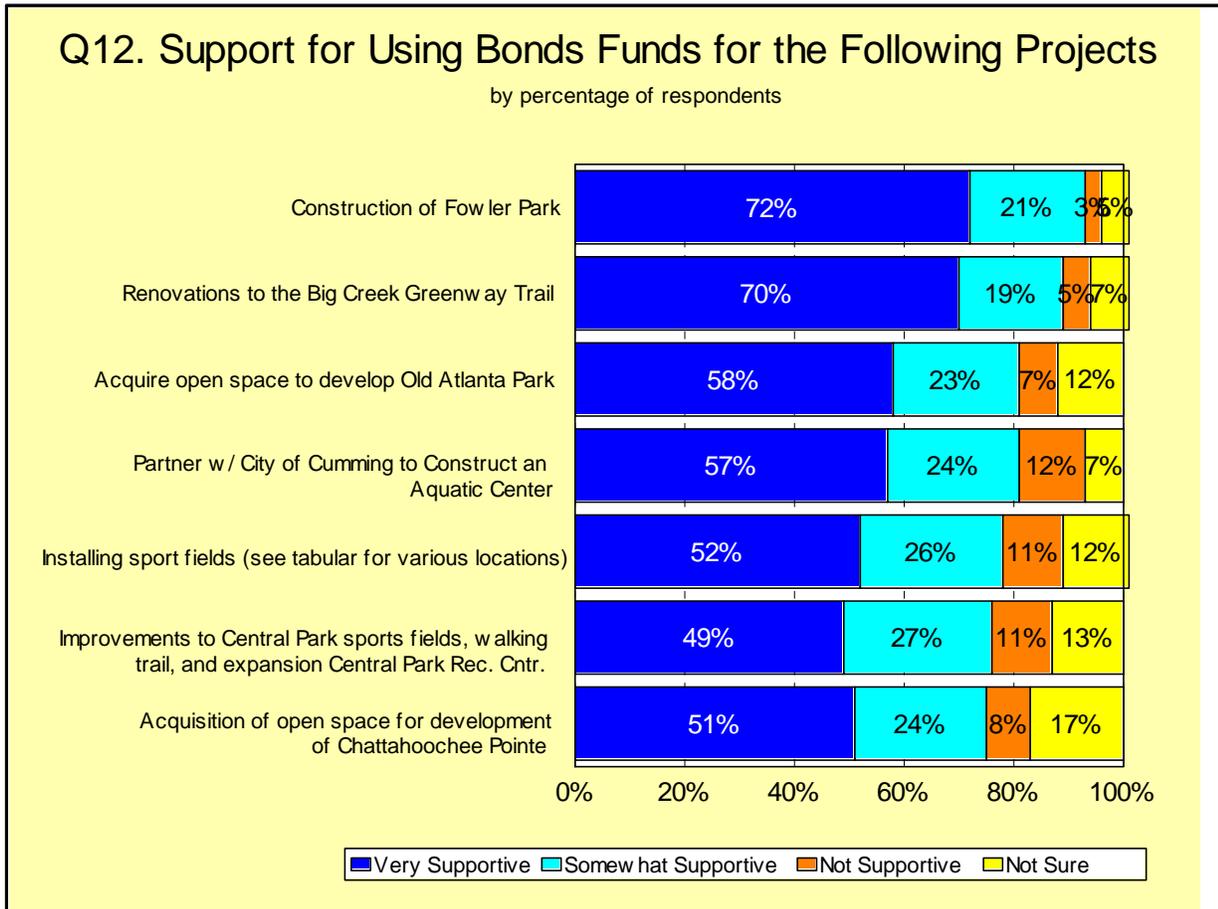
CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ Walking and biking trails are by a wide margin the 1st most important parks and recreation facility to households.
- ❖ Over 40% of households with children 9 or younger selected playgrounds as one of the four facilities they would use most often
- ❖ When asked to indicate which four of the 27 parks and recreation facilities were the most important for the County to provide, the facilities most frequently listed as first, second, third or fourth most important were walking and hiking trails (55% of all respondents), greenways (43%) and lake front parks and swimming beaches (26%).



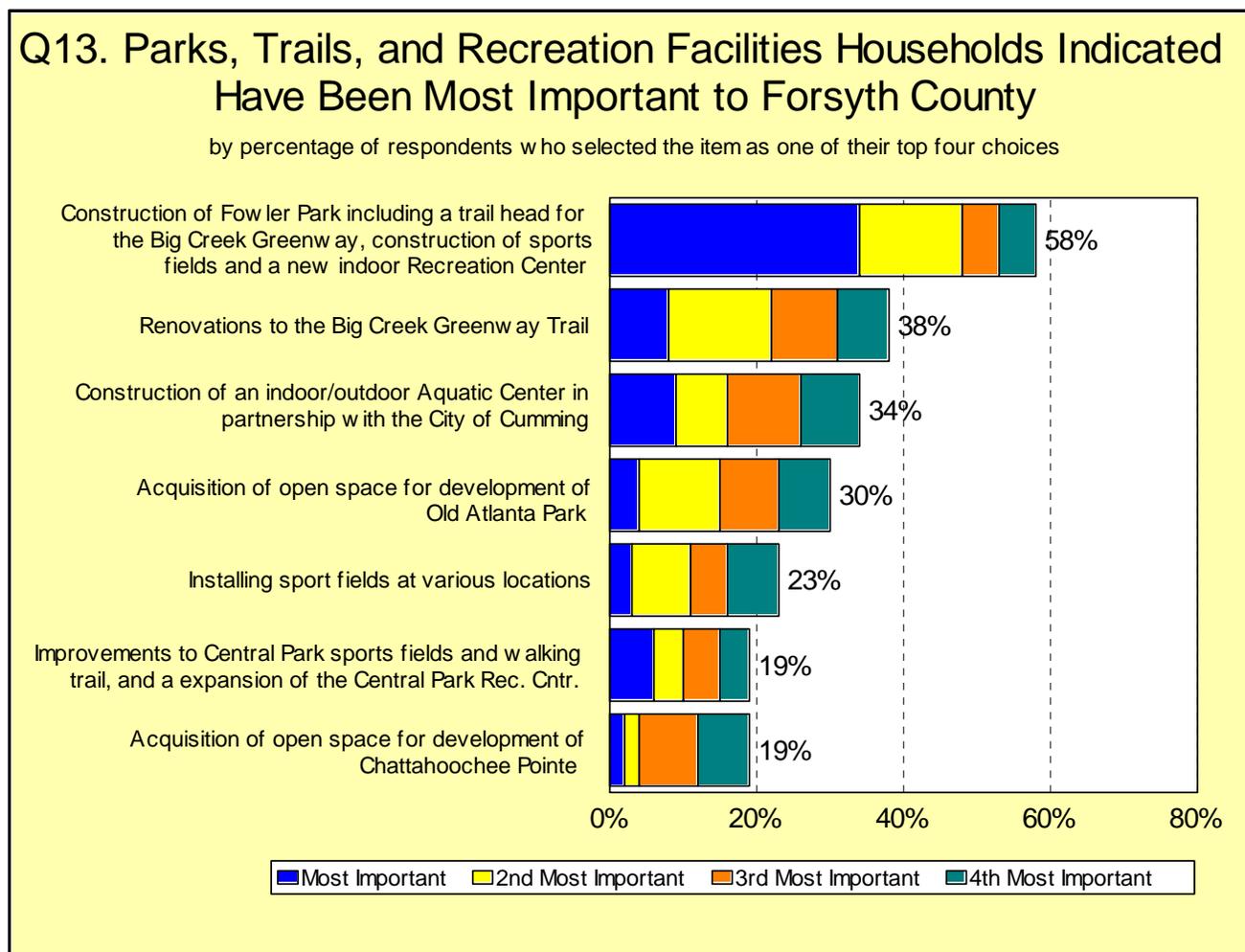
FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ Over 90% of respondents indicated that they were very or somewhat supportive of the County using Bond funds for the construction of Fowler Park (93%) and the renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail (89%).
- ❖ 78% of households were very or somewhat supportive of using bond funds for installing sports fields at various locations.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

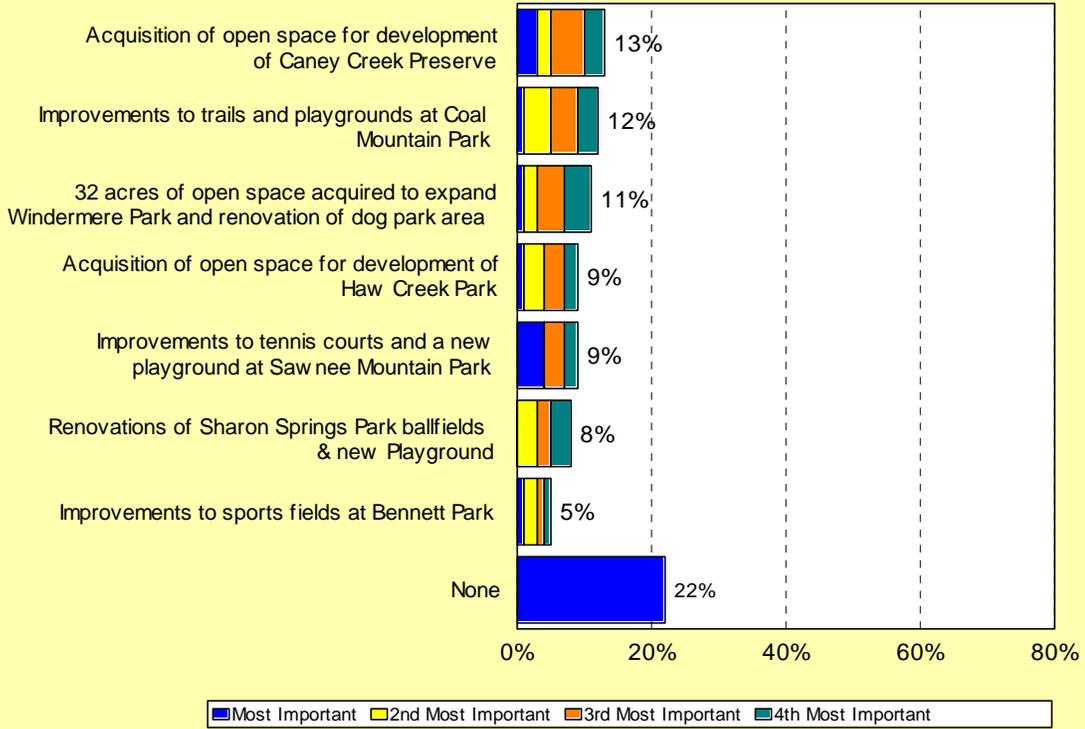
- ❖ 58% of respondents indicated the construction of Fowler was one of the four most important improvements from the 2008 bond election. 34% indicated it was the most important improvement. Other improvements of the highest importance included renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail (38%), construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center (34%), and acquisition of open space for development of Old Atlanta Park.
- ❖ Construction of Fowler Park was the most important improvement for both households with and without children.
- ❖ Construction of an indoor/outdoor aquatic facility was significantly more important to households with children than without children.
- ❖ Construction of Fowler Park was the most important improvement to all households paying any level of additional taxes for system improvements and even most important for households who would not pay any level of tax increase.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

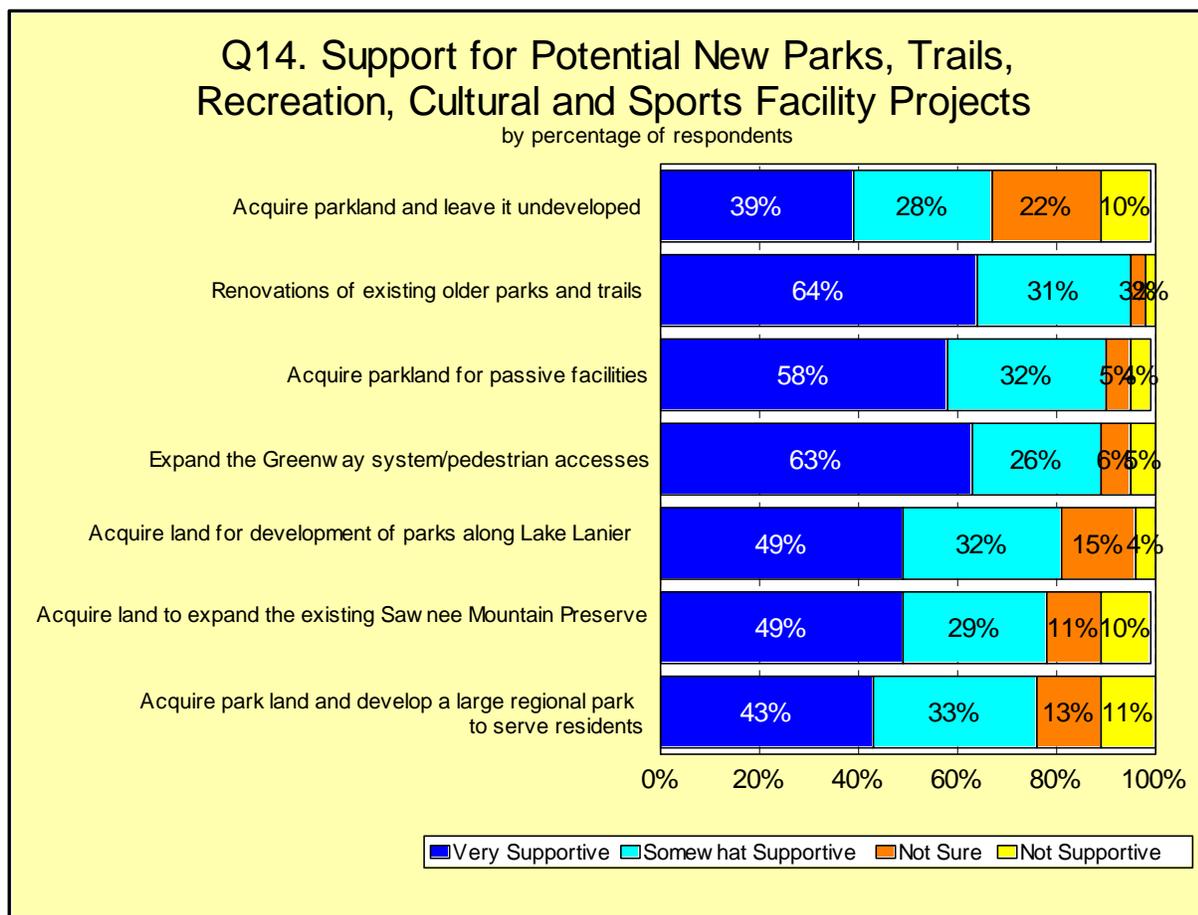
Q13. Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Households Indicated Have Been Most Important to Forsyth County Cont.

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

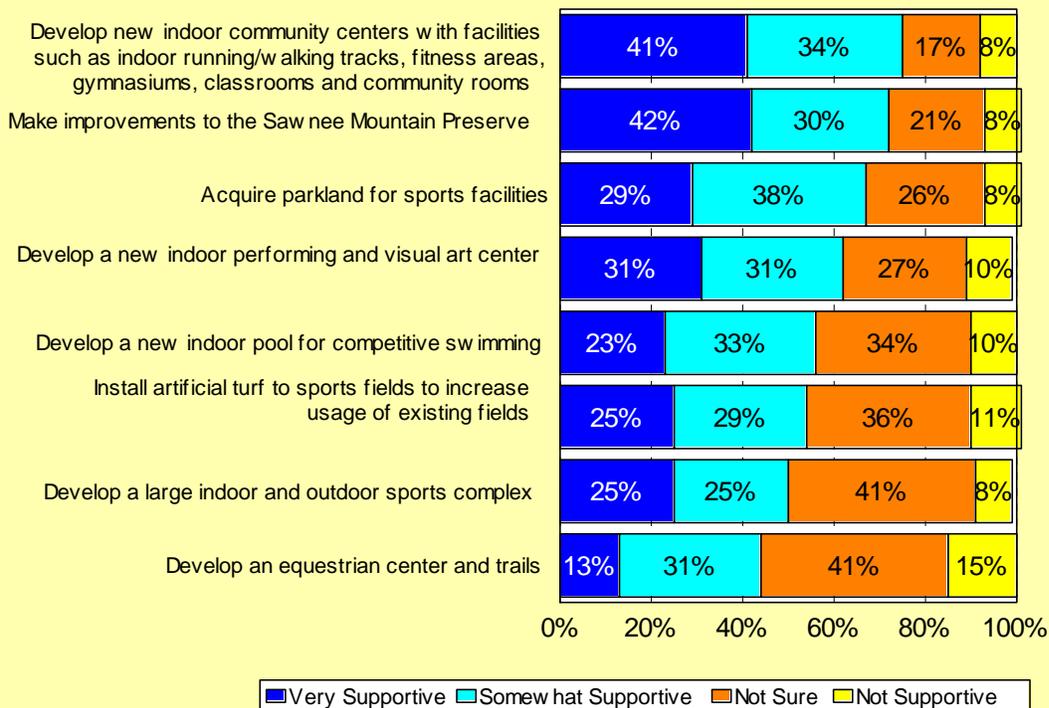
- ❖ A majority of respondents were very or somewhat supportive of 14 of the 15 potential major improvements that could be made to the Forsyth County Park system.
- ❖ Over 50% of households were very supportive of renovations to existing older parks and trails, acquiring parkland for passive facilities and expanding the greenway system.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

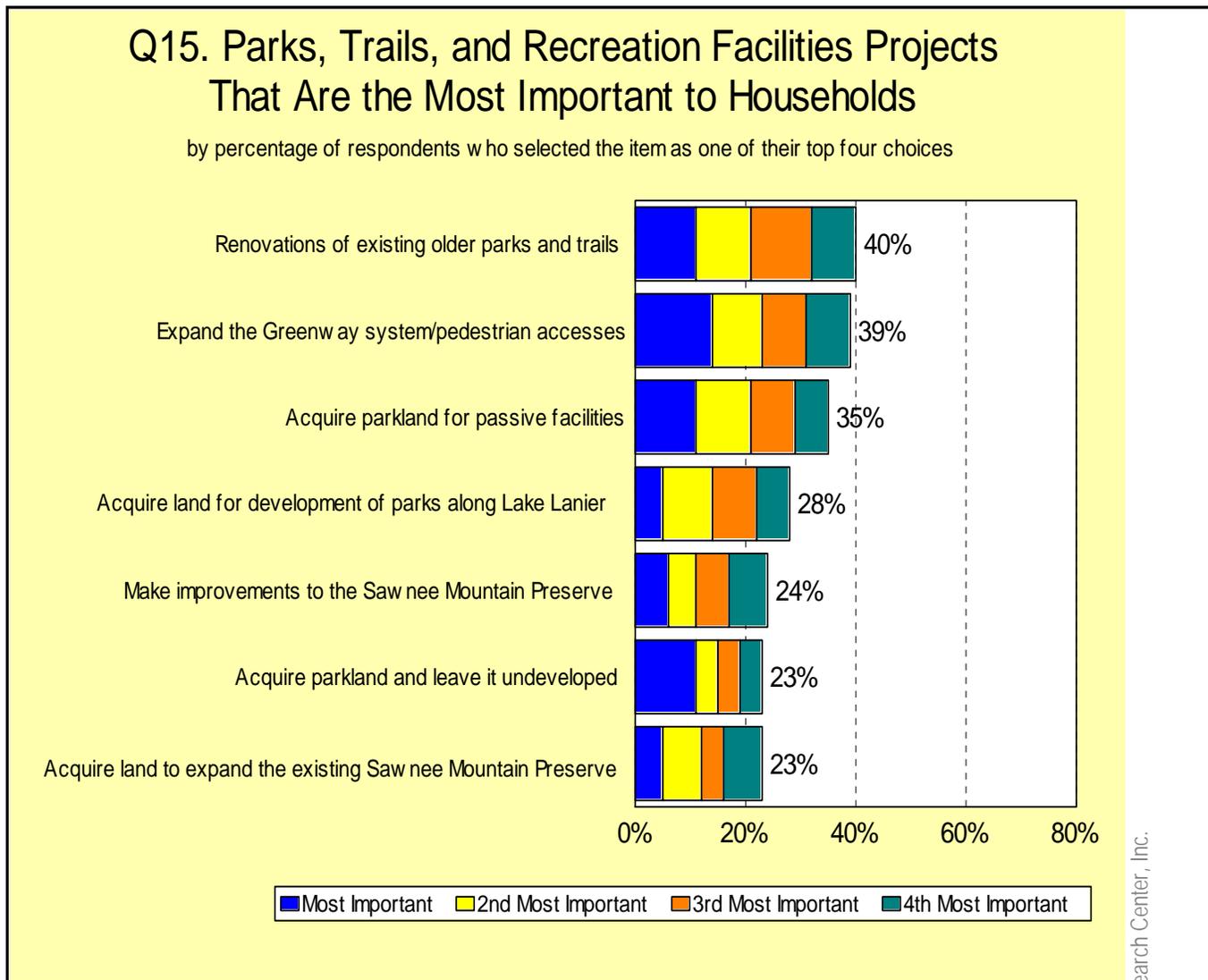
Q14. Support for Potential New Parks, Trails, Recreation, Cultural and Sports Facility Projects Cont.

by percentage of respondents



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

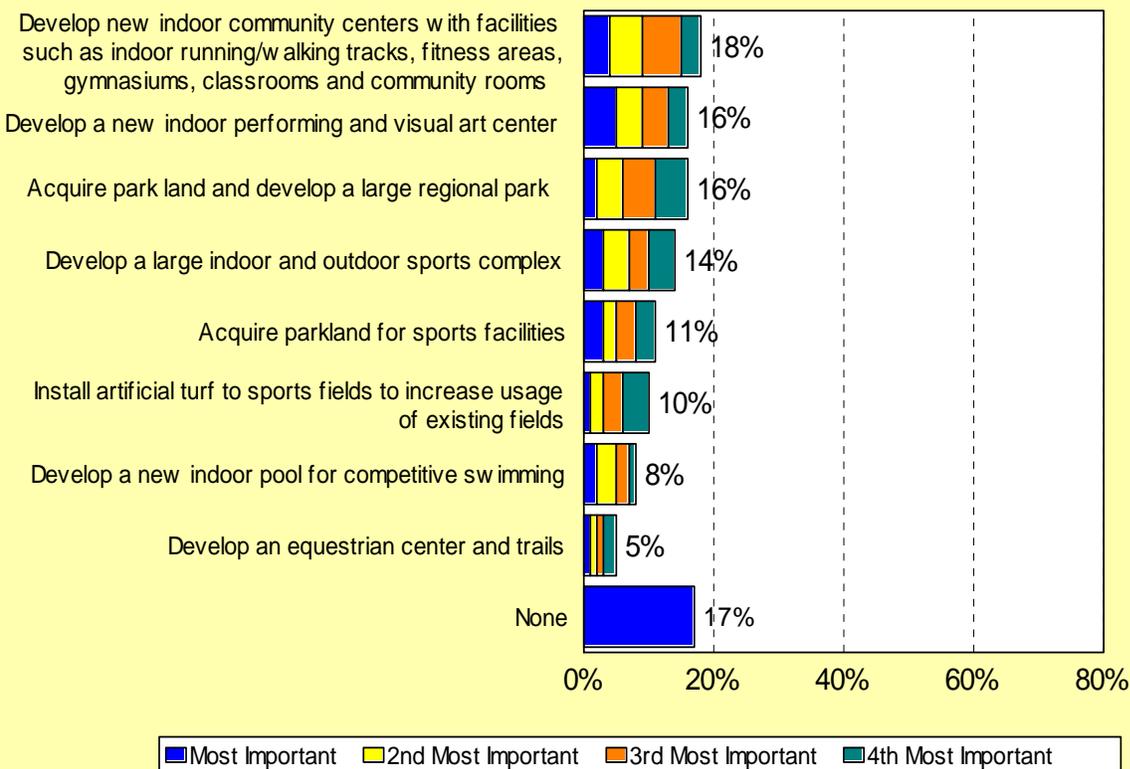
- ❖ Renovations of existing older parks and trails (40%), expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses (39%), and acquire parkland for passive facilities (35%) were the potential improvements to the Forsyth County park system that were most important to respondents.
- ❖ Importantly, these top 3 improvements indicate that respondents realize additional parkland is needed for the future growth of the County, new facilities are also needed for the growing population in the County, and aspects of the park the system are maturing requiring investments in existing facilities, parks, and trails.
- ❖ Renovations of existing older parks and trails are of high importance to both households with and without children.



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Q15. Parks, Trails, and Recreation Facilities Projects That Are the Most Important to Households Cont.

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices

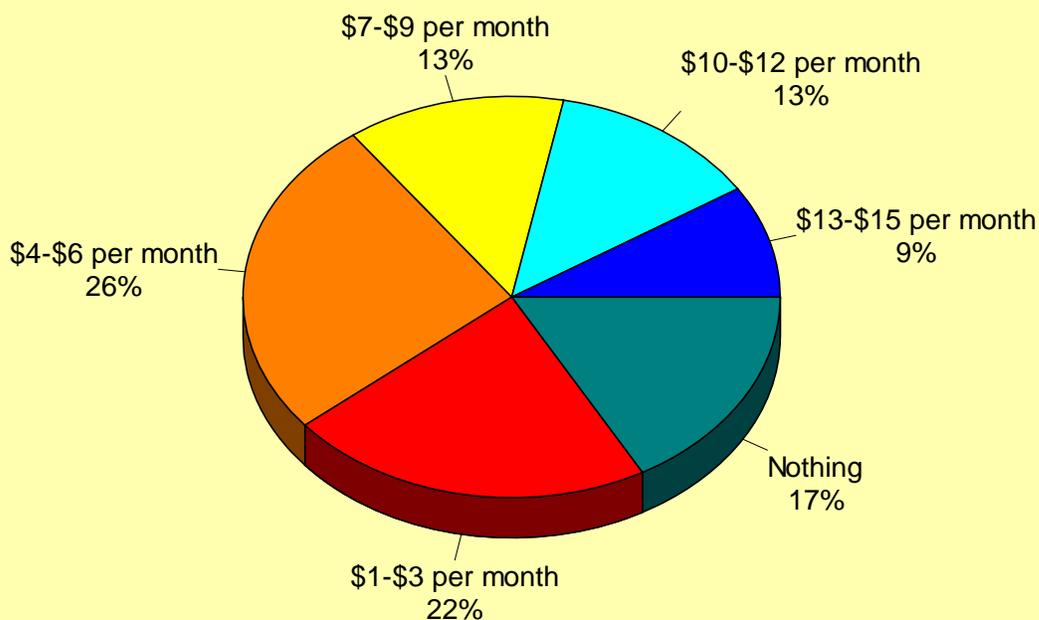


FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ 87% of respondents were willing to pay some level of taxes to fund the types of parkland acquisition, improvements to parks, and development of recreation facilities most important to them.
- ❖ At least 77% of households with and without children would pay some level of increased taxes for the types of parks, trails recreation facilities that are most important to them.
- ❖ Households with youngsters 10-19 years of age are most likely to pay \$10 to \$15 per month in additional taxes.

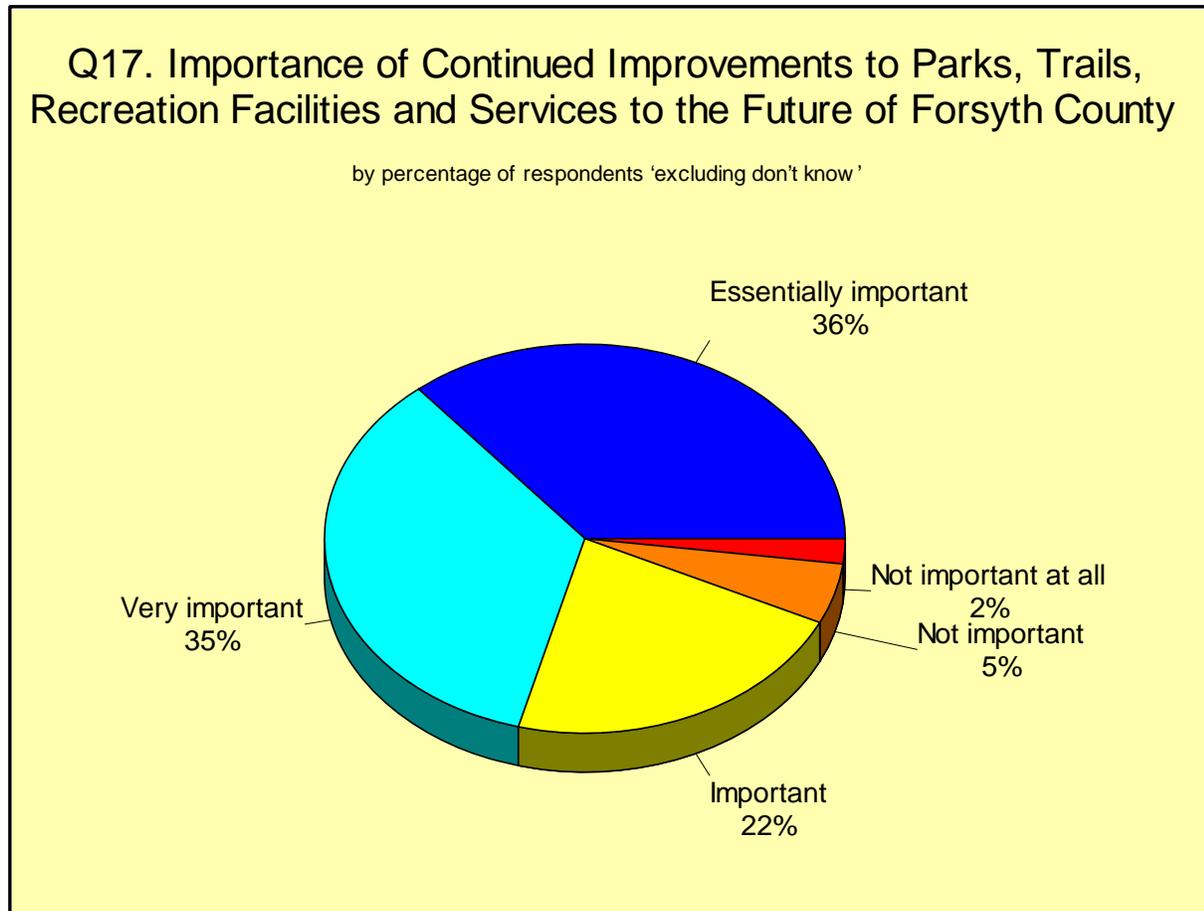
Q16. Additional Tax Funding Respondents Are Willing to Pay Per Month to Fund Parkland Acquisition, Improvements to Parks, and Development of Recreation Facilities Most Important to Them

by percentage of respondents



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

- ❖ 71% of respondents indicated that continued improvements to parks, trails, recreation facilities and services were either essentially important (36%) or very important (35%). These are very high percentages, with an additional 22% indicating continued improvements were important.
- ❖ 90% of households who indicated they would pay \$13-\$15 in additional taxes for park system improvements indicated continued improvements were “essentially important”.

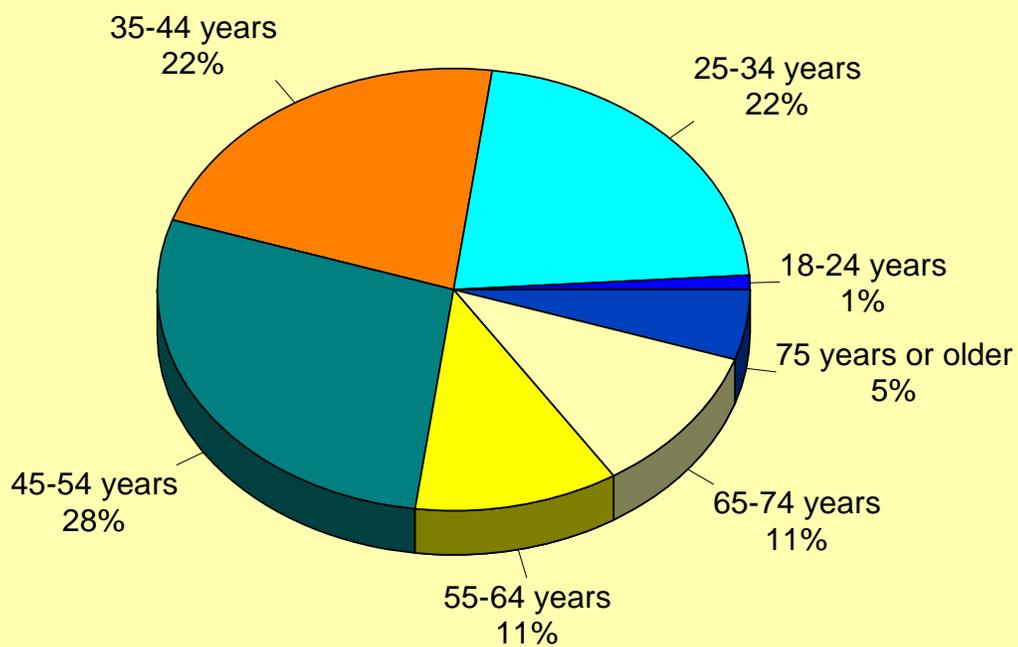


Demographics

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Q19. Demographics: Age of Respondent

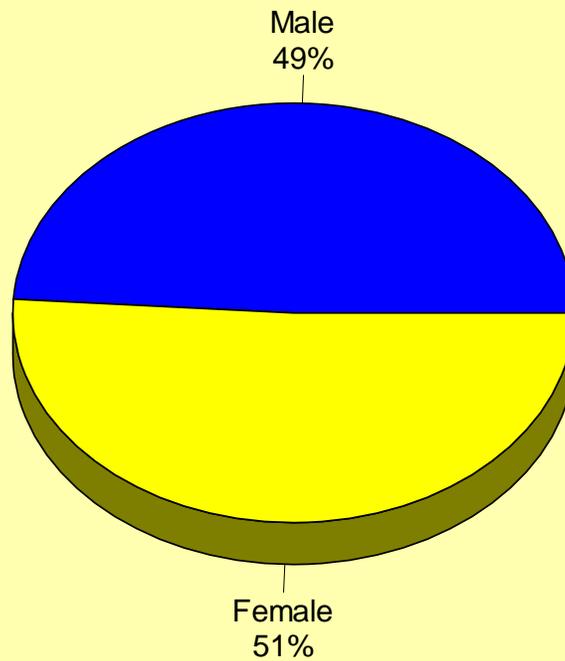
by percentage of respondents



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Q20. Demographics: Gender

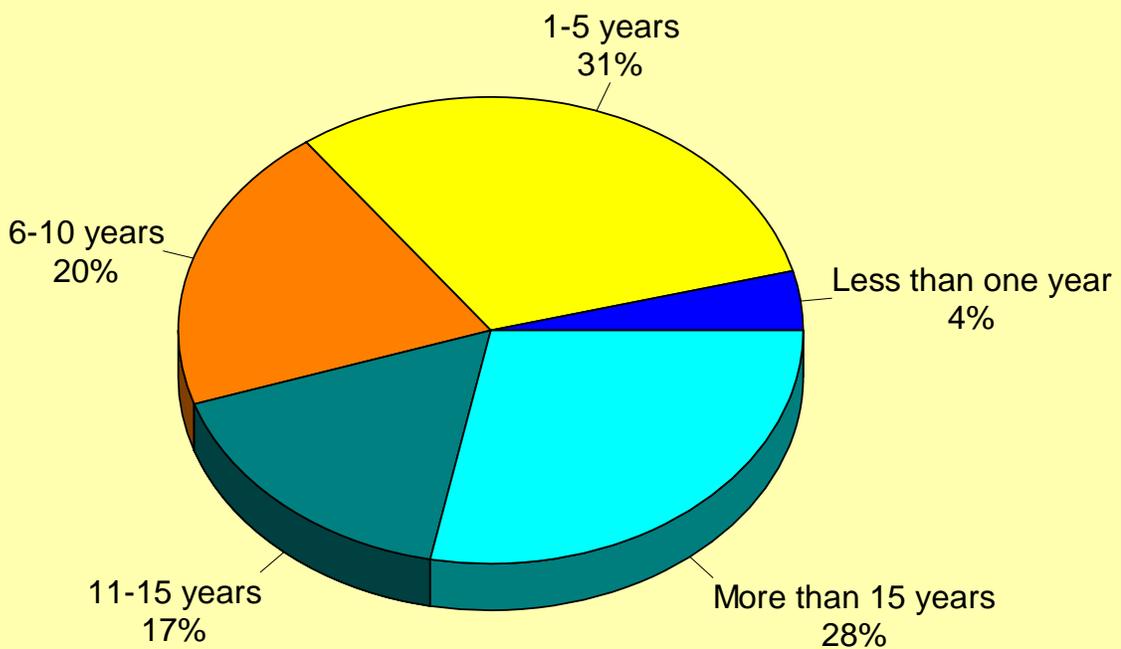
by percentage of respondents



FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN CITIZEN SURVEY

Q21. Demographics: Length of Residency

by percentage of respondents



Survey Appendices

Appendix A Complete Set of Responses.....2-25

Appendix B Verbatim Comments to Survey Questions.....26-33

Complete Set of Responses

The following tables include the percent and number of respondents for all survey questions. When questions included a “don’t know” or “unsure” option, the results are first reported with this option excluded, followed by a table that includes the option.

Table 1: Question 1

From the following list, please check ALL the OUTDOOR parks, trails and recreation facilities you or members of your household have used at Forsyth County parks in the past 12 months. Note: If you have not used any Forsyth County Parks in the past 12 months please check #18: None.	Percent	Number
Walking/nature trails	75%	N=394
Greenways	69%	N=359
Playgrounds	44%	N=229
Picnic shelters	34%	N=177
Pickleball courts	1%	N=5
Tennis courts	15%	N=77
Disc golf course	5%	N=24
Bocce courts	1%	N=3
Regulation multipurpose fields (soccer, football, lacrosse, etc.)	26%	N=134
Baseball/softball fields	19%	N=101
Skate park	6%	N=31
Splash pad/spray pad	16%	N=84
Mountain biking trails	15%	N=77
Dog parks	22%	N=116
Parks along Lake Lanier	48%	N=249
Open space and natural areas	36%	N=186
Fishing areas	15%	N=81
None	6%	N=33
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.		

Table 2: Question 2

Which THREE of the parks and recreation facilities listed in Question #1 do you and members of your household use the most often? [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices using the numbers in Question #1 above, or circle NONE.]	1st most often used		2nd most often used		3rd most often used	
Walking/nature trails	26%	N=139	18%	N=96	8%	N=43
Greenways	19%	N=102	18%	N=93	8%	N=41
Playgrounds	12%	N=61	9%	N=45	9%	N=45
Picnic shelters	1%	N=4	2%	N=13	5%	N=25
Pickleball courts	0%	N=1	NA	NA	0%	N=1
Tennis courts	3%	N=15	1%	N=7	2%	N=10
Disc golf course	0%	N=0	0%	N=2	1%	N=3
Bocce courts	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Regulation multipurpose fields (soccer, football, lacrosse, etc.)	5%	N=28	3%	N=17	3%	N=14
Baseball/softball fields	6%	N=33	2%	N=12	4%	N=20
Skate park	0%	N=1	1%	N=4	0%	N=2
Splash pad/spray pad	NA	NA	2%	N=8	3%	N=15
Mountain biking trails	1%	N=4	2%	N=10	1%	N=5
Dog parks	1%	N=6	3%	N=18	5%	N=29
Parks along Lake Lanier	5%	N=29	7%	N=35	11%	N=56
Open space and natural areas	1%	N=4	5%	N=24	6%	N=30
Fishing areas	1%	N=4	2%	N=9	2%	N=12
None	18%	N=94	25%	N=134	34%	N=178
Total	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526

Table 3: Question 2 - Percent Selecting as 1st, 2nd or 3rd Most Often Used

Which THREE of the parks and recreation facilities listed in Question #1 do you and members of your household use the most often? [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices using the numbers in Question #1 above, or circle NONE.]	Percent	Number
Walking/nature trails	53%	N=278
Greenways	44%	N=234
Playgrounds	29%	N=151
Picnic shelters	8%	N=41
Pickleball courts	0%	N=2
Tennis courts	6%	N=32
Disc golf course	1%	N=6
Bocce courts	NA	NA
Regulation multipurpose fields (soccer, football, lacrosse, etc.)	11%	N=59
Baseball/softball fields	12%	N=65
Skate park	1%	N=7
Splash pad/spray pad	4%	N=23
Mountain biking trails	4%	N=19
Dog parks	10%	N=52
Parks along Lake Lanier	23%	N=119
Open space and natural areas	11%	N=58
Fishing areas	5%	N=25
None	18%	N=94
Total		N=1264
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.		

Table 4: Question 3

Overall, how would you rate the physical condition of ALL the Forsyth County OUTDOOR parks, trails and recreation facilities you and members of your household have visited in the past 12 months?	Percent	Number
Excellent	47%	N=238
Good	47%	N=237
Fair	5%	N=23
Poor	1%	N=3
Total	100%	N=501

It should be noted that about 5% of all respondents skipped this question and did not provide an answer. The percentages shown are for those who had an opinion.

Table 5: Question 4

From the following list, please check ALL the INDOOR recreation facilities you or members of your household have used at Forsyth County parks in the past 12 months. Note: If you have not used any INDOOR recreation facilities in the past 12 months please check #14: None.	Percent	Number
Small community buildings	9%	N=48
Recreation centers	28%	N=143
Senior centers	4%	N=20
Gymnasiums	14%	N=70
Fitness areas	11%	N=56
Indoor walking track	18%	N=94
Indoor aquatics facility (recreation)	11%	N=59
Indoor aquatics facility (competition)	3%	N=17
Indoor aquatics facility (fitness)	7%	N=34
Meeting rooms/classrooms	9%	N=45
Community rooms	7%	N=37
Arts/crafts classrooms	3%	N=17
Nature/environmental education center	13%	N=69
None	47%	N=243
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.		

Table 6: Question 5

Which THREE of the INDOOR recreation facilities listed in Question #4 do you and members of your household use the most often? [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices using the numbers in Question #4 above, or circle NONE.]	1st most often used		2nd most often used		3rd most often used	
Small community buildings	2%	N=12	1%	N=4	3%	N=14
Recreation centers	12%	N=62	5%	N=28	3%	N=16
Senior centers	1%	N=6	1%	N=5	1%	N=5
Gymnasiums	4%	N=23	3%	N=14	2%	N=9
Fitness areas	3%	N=17	3%	N=14	1%	N=8
Indoor walking track	6%	N=29	5%	N=25	2%	N=10
Indoor aquatics facility (recreation)	5%	N=25	2%	N=13	2%	N=10
Indoor aquatics facility (competition)	1%	N=7	1%	N=5	1%	N=3
Indoor aquatics facility (fitness)	2%	N=11	2%	N=11	1%	N=6
Meeting rooms/classrooms	1%	N=7	2%	N=9	1%	N=6
Community rooms	1%	N=6	1%	N=5	1%	N=4
Arts/crafts classrooms	1%	N=4	1%	N=4	1%	N=4
Nature/environmental education center	5%	N=26	3%	N=14	2%	N=10
None	55%	N=291	71%	N=375	80%	N=421
Total	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526

Table 7: Question 5 - Percent Selecting as 1st, 2nd or 3rd Most Often Used

Which THREE of the INDOOR recreation facilities listed in Question #4 do you and members of your household use the most often? [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices using the numbers in Question #4 above, or circle NONE.]	Percent	Number
Small community buildings	6%	N=30
Recreation centers	20%	N=106
Senior centers	3%	N=16
Gymnasiums	9%	N=46
Fitness areas	7%	N=39
Indoor walking track	12%	N=64
Indoor aquatics facility (recreation)	9%	N=48
Indoor aquatics facility (competition)	3%	N=15
Indoor aquatics facility (fitness)	5%	N=28
Meeting rooms/classrooms	4%	N=23
Community rooms	3%	N=14
Arts/crafts classrooms	2%	N=12
Nature/environmental education center	10%	N=51
None	55%	N=291
Total		N=782

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.

Table 8: Question 6

Overall, how would you rate the physical condition of ALL the Forsyth County INDOOR recreation facilities you and members of your household have visited in the past 12 months?	Percent	Number
Excellent	50%	N=157
Good	45%	N=142
Fair	4%	N=11
Poor	1%	N=3
Total	100%	N=312

It should be noted that about 41% of all respondents skipped this question and did not provide an answer. The percentages shown are for those who had an opinion.

Table 9: Question 7

Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department is studying the possibility of developing new indoor programming spaces in Forsyth County. From the following list, please check ALL the potential indoor recreation programming spaces you and members of your household would use.	Percent	Number
Walking and jogging track	49%	N=255
Pottery and glass kiln rooms	20%	N=106
Aerobics/fitness/space	39%	N=206
Space for teens	15%	N=81
Weight room/cardiovascular equipment	41%	N=217
Lanes for lap swimming	33%	N=174
Leisure pool (water slides, sprays, etc.)	41%	N=217
25-meter competition pool	11%	N=57
Warm water for therapeutic purposes	28%	N=145
Gymnastics training center	14%	N=76
Gallery for art shows and exhibits	18%	N=96
Performing arts theater	27%	N=141
Dance classroom space	14%	N=73
Preschool program space	11%	N=57
Rock climbing/bouldering wall	37%	N=193
Racquetball/handball courts	18%	N=92
Indoor sports fields	18%	N=95
Gymnasiums	15%	N=77
Space for meetings, parties, banquets	22%	N=115
Civic Center/large event center	19%	N=99
None	5%	N=27

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.

Table 10: Question 8

Which FOUR of the indoor spaces from the list in Question #7 would you or members of your household use the MOST OFTEN? [Using the numbers in Question #7 above, please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices, or circle NONE.]	1st most often		2nd most often		3rd most often		4th most often	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Walking and jogging track	21%	N=110	7%	N=36	5%	N=28	4%	N=19
Pottery and glass kiln rooms	1%	N=7	2%	N=10	4%	N=20	4%	N=20
Aerobics/fitness/space	5%	N=28	8%	N=43	5%	N=26	6%	N=31
Space for teens	2%	N=11	2%	N=12	2%	N=9	1%	N=5
Weight room/cardiovascular equipment	8%	N=40	7%	N=38	10%	N=54	5%	N=25
Lanes for lap swimming	7%	N=35	6%	N=33	4%	N=20	3%	N=15
Leisure pool (water slides, sprays, etc.)	9%	N=46	11%	N=59	5%	N=26	3%	N=14
25-meter competition pool	1%	N=7	3%	N=13	2%	N=10	2%	N=10
Warm water for therapeutic purposes	4%	N=22	5%	N=29	4%	N=19	5%	N=26
Gymnastics training center	1%	N=4	2%	N=8	4%	N=22	2%	N=10
Gallery for art shows and exhibits	1%	N=7	3%	N=18	2%	N=13	3%	N=16
Performing arts theater	4%	N=20	3%	N=15	6%	N=33	3%	N=15
Dance classroom space	1%	N=4	2%	N=8	2%	N=8	2%	N=10
Preschool program space	2%	N=11	1%	N=6	1%	N=6	1%	N=6
Rock climbing/bouldering wall	6%	N=31	5%	N=24	6%	N=31	5%	N=28
Racquetball/handball courts	4%	N=19	3%	N=15	3%	N=14	3%	N=17
Indoor sports fields	3%	N=15	5%	N=24	2%	N=10	2%	N=11
Gymnasiums	5%	N=25	2%	N=11	1%	N=5	1%	N=6
Space for meetings, parties, banquets	2%	N=9	3%	N=15	2%	N=10	4%	N=20
Civic Center/large event center	2%	N=8	2%	N=13	3%	N=16	4%	N=22
None	13%	N=69	18%	N=95	28%	N=146	38%	N=201
Total	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526

Table 11: Question 8 - Percent Selecting as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Would Use Most Often

Which FOUR of the indoor spaces from the list in Question #7 would you or members of your household use the MOST OFTEN? [Using the numbers in Question #7 above, please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices, or circle NONE.]	Percent	Number
Walking and jogging track	37%	N=194
Pottery and glass kiln rooms	11%	N=57
Aerobics/fitness/space	24%	N=127
Space for teens	7%	N=37
Weight room/cardiovascular equipment	30%	N=157
Lanes for lap swimming	19%	N=102
Leisure pool (water slides, sprays, etc.)	27%	N=144
25-meter competition pool	8%	N=41
Warm water for therapeutic purposes	18%	N=96
Gymnastics training center	8%	N=44
Gallery for art shows and exhibits	10%	N=54
Performing arts theater	16%	N=82
Dance classroom space	6%	N=30
Preschool program space	5%	N=29
Rock climbing/bouldering wall	22%	N=115
Racquetball/handball courts	12%	N=64
Indoor sports fields	11%	N=59
Gymnasiums	9%	N=47
Space for meetings, parties, banquets	10%	N=54
Civic Center/large event center	11%	N=59
None	13%	N=69
Total		N=1659
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.		

Table 12: Question 9 - Users Only

Please use a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied," to rate your overall satisfaction with sports fields provided in the following parks provided by the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department. Note: If you don't use circle "9".	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Neutral		Dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Total	
Bennett Park sports fields	19%	N=19	25%	N=26	31%	N=32	21%	N=21	4%	N=4	100%	N=101
Coal Mountain Park sports fields	28%	N=39	53%	N=73	14%	N=20	4%	N=6	NA	NA	100%	N=137
Joint Venture Park sports fields	28%	N=17	42%	N=25	25%	N=15	4%	N=2	1%	N=1	100%	N=61
Midway Park sports fields	28%	N=42	51%	N=76	17%	N=25	3%	N=4	1%	N=1	100%	N=148
Sharon Springs Park sports fields	31%	N=54	43%	N=76	15%	N=27	10%	N=17	1%	N=2	100%	N=175
Central Park sports fields	30%	N=59	46%	N=91	17%	N=34	6%	N=12	1%	N=2	100%	N=198
Fowler Park sports fields	54%	N=146	41%	N=111	3%	N=8	1%	N=3	0%	N=1	100%	N=269
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	22%	N=13	36%	N=22	34%	N=21	7%	N=4	1%	N=1	100%	N=61
Sawnee Mountain Park sports fields	28%	N=36	41%	N=52	19%	N=23	11%	N=13	1%	N=2	100%	N=126

Table 13: Question 9 - All Respondents

Please use a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied," to rate your overall satisfaction with sports fields provided in the following parks provided by the Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department. Note: If you don't use circle "9".	Very satisfied		Satisfied		Neutral		Dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Don't use		Total	
Bennett Park sports fields	4%	N=19	6%	N=26	7%	N=32	5%	N=21	1%	N=4	78%	N=361	100%	N=462
Coal Mountain Park sports fields	8%	N=39	16%	N=73	4%	N=20	1%	N=6	NA	NA	71%	N=328	100%	N=465
Joint Venture Park sports fields	4%	N=17	5%	N=25	3%	N=15	1%	N=2	0%	N=1	87%	N=401	100%	N=462
Midway Park sports fields	9%	N=42	16%	N=76	5%	N=25	1%	N=4	0%	N=1	68%	N=319	100%	N=467
Sharon Springs Park sports fields	11%	N=54	16%	N=76	6%	N=27	4%	N=17	0%	N=2	63%	N=302	100%	N=477
Central Park sports fields	13%	N=59	19%	N=91	7%	N=34	2%	N=12	1%	N=2	58%	N=270	100%	N=469
Fowler Park sports fields	30%	N=146	23%	N=111	2%	N=8	1%	N=3	0%	N=1	45%	N=219	100%	N=488
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	3%	N=13	5%	N=22	4%	N=21	1%	N=4	0%	N=1	87%	N=402	100%	N=463
Sawnee Mountain Park sports fields	8%	N=36	11%	N=52	5%	N=23	3%	N=13	0%	N=2	73%	N=336	100%	N=462

Table 14: Question 10 - Have a Need

Please indicate if YOU or any member of your HOUSEHOLD have a need for each of the parks and recreational facilities listed below by circling the YES or NO next to the park/facility.	Yes		No		Total	
Walking and hiking trails	91%	N=456	9%	N=48	100%	N=504
Mountain biking trails	29%	N=148	71%	N=356	100%	N=504
Equestrian trails	4%	N=20	96%	N=484	100%	N=504
Greenways	79%	N=398	21%	N=106	100%	N=504
Baseball/softball diamonds	23%	N=117	77%	N=387	100%	N=504
Lacrosse fields	6%	N=29	94%	N=475	100%	N=504
Soccer fields	24%	N=119	76%	N=386	100%	N=504
Football fields	11%	N=55	89%	N=449	100%	N=504
Cricket fields	4%	N=18	96%	N=486	100%	N=504
Disc golf	9%	N=47	91%	N=457	100%	N=504
Dog parks	39%	N=195	61%	N=309	100%	N=504
Lake front parks and swimming beaches	63%	N=317	37%	N=187	100%	N=504
Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas	40%	N=203	60%	N=301	100%	N=504
Archery range	15%	N=75	85%	N=429	100%	N=504
Large group picnic areas	40%	N=200	60%	N=304	100%	N=504
Playgrounds	47%	N=236	53%	N=268	100%	N=504
Pickleball courts	5%	N=24	95%	N=480	100%	N=504
Outdoor aquatics features	35%	N=175	65%	N=329	100%	N=504
Campgrounds	36%	N=182	64%	N=322	100%	N=504
Outdoor tennis courts	27%	N=134	73%	N=370	100%	N=504
Outdoor basketball courts	18%	N=92	82%	N=412	100%	N=504
Extreme sports activities (BMX track, climbing ropes, skateboard park, etc.)	13%	N=64	87%	N=440	100%	N=504
Adventure climbing tower and zip line	31%	N=158	69%	N=346	100%	N=504
Arts center	29%	N=146	71%	N=358	100%	N=504
Indoor competition pool	19%	N=97	81%	N=407	100%	N=504
Recreation centers	48%	N=241	52%	N=263	100%	N=504
Large civic event center	24%	N=123	76%	N=381	100%	N=504

Table 15: Question 10 - Needs Being Met

If YES [you have a need], please rate ALL the following parks and recreation FACILITIES of this type in Forsyth County on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 means "100% Meets Needs" and 1 means "Does Not Meet Needs" of your household.	100% Met		75% Met		50% Met		25% Met		0% Met		Total	
Walking and hiking trails	42%	N=181	39%	N=169	15%	N=66	4%	N=15	1%	N=3	100%	N=434
Mountain biking trails	17%	N=22	24%	N=32	30%	N=41	17%	N=23	12%	N=15	100%	N=133
Equestrian trails	7%	N=1	7%	N=1	19%	N=4	23%	N=4	43%	N=8	100%	N=19
Greenways	49%	N=185	37%	N=139	11%	N=42	3%	N=11	0%	N=1	100%	N=379
Baseball/softball diamonds	43%	N=45	50%	N=54	5%	N=6	1%	N=1	1%	N=1	100%	N=107
Lacrosse fields	37%	N=10	29%	N=8	13%	N=3	14%	N=4	8%	N=2	100%	N=27
Soccer fields	44%	N=49	39%	N=43	9%	N=10	7%	N=8	2%	N=2	100%	N=112
Football fields	50%	N=25	42%	N=21	9%	N=4	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%	N=51
Cricket fields	NA	NA	10%	N=1	NA	NA	13%	N=2	77%	N=11	100%	N=14
Disc golf	14%	N=6	27%	N=11	30%	N=13	23%	N=9	6%	N=3	100%	N=41
Dog parks	17%	N=31	24%	N=44	38%	N=69	14%	N=25	7%	N=13	100%	N=182
Lake front parks and swimming beaches	19%	N=56	28%	N=84	33%	N=96	16%	N=46	4%	N=12	100%	N=294
Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas	24%	N=45	31%	N=59	29%	N=55	12%	N=24	4%	N=8	100%	N=191
Archery range	1%	N=1	11%	N=7	12%	N=8	17%	N=11	58%	N=37	100%	N=64
Large group picnic areas	30%	N=55	39%	N=70	22%	N=41	7%	N=12	2%	N=4	100%	N=182
Playgrounds	38%	N=83	38%	N=84	19%	N=42	4%	N=9	1%	N=3	100%	N=221
Pickleball courts	7%	N=1	26%	N=5	20%	N=4	11%	N=2	36%	N=7	100%	N=20
Outdoor aquatics features	17%	N=28	31%	N=49	24%	N=39	18%	N=28	9%	N=15	100%	N=160
Campgrounds	18%	N=31	34%	N=57	32%	N=54	14%	N=23	1%	N=2	100%	N=167
Outdoor tennis courts	32%	N=41	37%	N=48	22%	N=28	6%	N=8	3%	N=3	100%	N=129
Outdoor basketball courts	26%	N=22	21%	N=18	26%	N=22	14%	N=12	11%	N=9	100%	N=83
Extreme sports activities (BMX track, climbing ropes, skateboard park, etc.)	6%	N=4	16%	N=9	23%	N=14	34%	N=21	21%	N=13	100%	N=60
Adventure climbing tower and zip line	3%	N=4	7%	N=10	14%	N=19	20%	N=27	56%	N=77	100%	N=137
Arts center	6%	N=8	9%	N=12	15%	N=19	35%	N=43	34%	N=42	100%	N=124
Indoor competition pool	11%	N=10	16%	N=14	17%	N=15	24%	N=22	31%	N=28	100%	N=89
Recreation centers	27%	N=58	34%	N=74	27%	N=58	8%	N=18	4%	N=8	100%	N=217
Large civic event center	11%	N=12	8%	N=9	14%	N=16	19%	N=22	48%	N=54	100%	N=112

Table 16: Question 11

Which FOUR of the parks, trails and facilities from the list in Question #10 are most important for Forsyth County Parks & Recreation to provide for your household? [Using the letters or number in the left hand column of Question #10 above, please write in the letter or number below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices, or circle NONE.]	1st most important		2nd most important		3rd most important		4th most important	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Walking and hiking trails	30%	N=159	14%	N=72	8%	N=43	3%	N=17
Mountain biking trails	2%	N=8	5%	N=25	3%	N=14	2%	N=9
Equestrian trails	1%	N=3	0%	N=1	1%	N=7	NA	NA
Greenways	13%	N=69	15%	N=77	9%	N=49	6%	N=29
Baseball/softball diamonds	2%	N=9	3%	N=16	2%	N=13	3%	N=14
Lacrosse fields	1%	N=3	0%	N=3	NA	NA	0%	N=1
Soccer fields	1%	N=7	2%	N=11	3%	N=14	1%	N=3
Football fields	1%	N=3	1%	N=4	1%	N=6	2%	N=8
Cricket fields	1%	N=7	1%	N=3	1%	N=7	2%	N=10
Disc golf	0%	N=2	0%	N=2	0%	N=2	1%	N=3
Dog parks	2%	N=11	4%	N=23	7%	N=36	3%	N=15
Lake front parks and swimming beaches	1%	N=8	8%	N=43	9%	N=45	8%	N=41
Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas	3%	N=15	3%	N=14	3%	N=17	4%	N=23
Archery range	NA	NA	0%	N=2	1%	N=4	2%	N=12
Large group picnic areas	0%	N=1	1%	N=6	2%	N=9	3%	N=17
Playgrounds	6%	N=32	4%	N=21	4%	N=20	4%	N=19
Pickleball courts	0%	N=1	NA	NA	1%	N=3	0%	N=2
Outdoor aquatics features	1%	N=4	3%	N=17	4%	N=18	4%	N=19
Campgrounds	NA	NA	1%	N=5	2%	N=11	3%	N=18
Outdoor tennis courts	3%	N=13	2%	N=9	3%	N=14	1%	N=7
Outdoor basketball courts	NA	NA	0%	N=1	1%	N=4	1%	N=5
Extreme sports activities (BMX track, climbing ropes, skateboard park, etc.)	1%	N=4	1%	N=3	0%	N=2	1%	N=3
Adventure climbing tower and zip line	2%	N=8	1%	N=6	2%	N=10	3%	N=18
Arts center	2%	N=13	2%	N=10	2%	N=10	4%	N=18
Indoor competition pool	3%	N=15	1%	N=5	1%	N=4	1%	N=5
Recreation centers	3%	N=18	2%	N=12	3%	N=17	4%	N=18
Large civic event center	1%	N=3	1%	N=6	0%	N=1	2%	N=8
None	21%	N=109	25%	N=130	28%	N=147	34%	N=181
Total	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526

Table 17: Question 11 - Percent selecting as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4t

Table 18: Question 11 - Percent selecting as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Most Important

Which FOUR of the parks, trails and facilities from the list in Question #10 are most important for Forsyth County Parks & Recreation to provide for your household? [Using the letters or number in the left hand column of Question #10 above, please write in the letter or number below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices, or circle NONE.]	Percent	Number
Walking and hiking trails	55%	N=288
Mountain biking trails	11%	N=57
Equestrian trails	2%	N=11
Greenways	42%	N=222
Baseball/softball diamonds	10%	N=53
Lacrosse fields	1%	N=7
Soccer fields	7%	N=35
Football fields	4%	N=22
Cricket fields	5%	N=28
Disc golf	2%	N=9
Dog parks	16%	N=83
Lake front parks and swimming beaches	26%	N=137
Fishing, boating, sailing areas/marinas	13%	N=68
Archery range	3%	N=16
Large group picnic areas	6%	N=32
Playgrounds	18%	N=92
Pickleball courts	1%	N=6
Outdoor aquatics features	11%	N=58
Campgrounds	6%	N=34
Outdoor tennis courts	8%	N=43
Outdoor basketball courts	2%	N=10
Extreme sports activities (BMX track, climbing ropes, skateboard park, etc.)	2%	N=12
Adventure climbing tower and zip line	8%	N=43
Arts center	10%	N=51
Indoor competition pool	6%	N=29
Recreation centers	13%	N=66
Large civic event center	3%	N=17
None	21%	N=109
Total		N=1637

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.

Table 19: Question 12 - Excluding "Not Sure"

On February 5, 2008, Forsyth County voters approved the issuance of a \$100 million Parks/Recreation and Greenspace General Obligation Bond. 69% of voters countywide approved the issue. Following are listed major projects that are completed and were funded either totally or in part through the Parks/Recreation and Greenspace General Obligation Bond. For each project please indicate how supportive you are of the County having used Bond funds for the project by circling the corresponding number to the right of the project.	Very supportive		Somewhat supportive		Not supportive		Total	
Construction of Fowler Park including a trail head for the Big Creek Greenway, construction of sports fields and a new indoor Recreation Center	75%	N=350	22%	N=100	3%	N=15	100%	N=466
Acquisition of open space for development of Old Atlanta Park, including a Recreation Center, water spray pad, nature trails, pavilions and playgrounds	66%	N=280	26%	N=109	8%	N=35	100%	N=424
Acquisition of open space for development of Haw Creek Park, featuring natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and Playground	53%	N=200	37%	N=142	10%	N=39	100%	N=380
Acquisition of open space for development of Chattahoochee Pointe, featuring a canoe launch, natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and playground	62%	N=244	29%	N=113	10%	N=39	100%	N=396
Acquisition of open space for development of Caney Creek Preserve featuring picnic pavilions, dog park, playground and natural surface walking trail	51%	N=199	34%	N=133	15%	N=57	100%	N=390
Installing sport fields at Sharon Springs, Midway, Bennett, Coal Mountain, Fowler, Sawnee Mountain Parks and Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek	59%	N=247	29%	N=122	12%	N=51	100%	N=421
32 acres of open space acquired to expand Windermere Park and renovation of dog park area	45%	N=180	32%	N=129	22%	N=87	100%	N=397
Renovations of Sharon Springs Park ballfields & new Playground	50%	N=197	33%	N=132	17%	N=69	100%	N=398
Renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail	75%	N=337	20%	N=90	5%	N=24	100%	N=451
Improvements to sports fields at Bennett Park	42%	N=153	35%	N=128	23%	N=84	100%	N=365
Improvements to Central Park sports fields and walking trail, and a 15,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Central Park Recreation Center	57%	N=234	31%	N=127	12%	N=51	100%	N=412
Construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center in partnership with the City of Cumming	61%	N=273	26%	N=118	13%	N=58	100%	N=449
Improvements to trails and playgrounds at Coal Mountain Park	54%	N=206	33%	N=125	13%	N=49	100%	N=380
Improvements to tennis courts and a new playground at Sawnee Mountain Park	47%	N=181	34%	N=129	19%	N=73	100%	N=383

Table 20: Question 12

On February 5, 2008, Forsyth County voters approved the issuance of a \$100 million Parks/Recreation and Greenspace General Obligation Bond. 69% of voters countywide approved the issue. Following are listed major projects that are completed and were funded either totally or in part through the Parks/Recreation and Greenspace General Obligation Bond. For each project please indicate how supportive you are of the County having used Bond funds for the project by circling the corresponding number to the right of the project.	Very supportive		Somewhat supportive		Not supportive		Not sure		Total	
Construction of Fowler Park including a trail head for the Big Creek Greenway, construction of sports fields and a new indoor Recreation Center	72%	N=350	21%	N=100	3%	N=15	5%	N=24	100%	N=489
Acquisition of open space for development of Old Atlanta Park, including a Recreation Center, water spray pad, nature trails, pavilions and playgrounds	58%	N=280	23%	N=109	7%	N=35	12%	N=55	100%	N=480
Acquisition of open space for development of Haw Creek Park, featuring natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and Playground	42%	N=200	30%	N=142	8%	N=39	20%	N=96	100%	N=476
Acquisition of open space for development of Chattahoochee Pointe, featuring a canoe launch, natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and playground	51%	N=244	24%	N=113	8%	N=39	17%	N=81	100%	N=477
Acquisition of open space for development of Caney Creek Preserve featuring picnic pavilions, dog park, playground and natural surface walking trail	42%	N=199	28%	N=133	12%	N=57	18%	N=84	100%	N=474
Installing sport fields at Sharon Springs, Midway, Bennett, Coal Mountain, Fowler, Sawnee Mountain Parks and Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek	52%	N=247	26%	N=122	11%	N=51	12%	N=55	100%	N=476
32 acres of open space acquired to expand Windermere Park and renovation of dog park area	38%	N=180	27%	N=129	18%	N=87	17%	N=79	100%	N=476
Renovations of Sharon Springs Park ballfields & new Playground	42%	N=197	28%	N=132	15%	N=69	15%	N=73	100%	N=471
Renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail	70%	N=337	19%	N=90	5%	N=24	7%	N=32	100%	N=483
Improvements to sports fields at Bennett Park	32%	N=153	27%	N=128	18%	N=84	22%	N=106	100%	N=471
Improvements to Central Park sports fields and walking trail, and a 15,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Central Park Recreation Center	49%	N=234	27%	N=127	11%	N=51	13%	N=61	100%	N=473
Construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center in partnership with the City of Cumming	57%	N=273	24%	N=118	12%	N=58	7%	N=33	100%	N=482
Improvements to trails and playgrounds at Coal Mountain Park	43%	N=206	26%	N=125	10%	N=49	20%	N=95	100%	N=475
Improvements to tennis courts and a new playground at Sawnee Mountain Park	38%	N=181	27%	N=129	15%	N=73	19%	N=91	100%	N=474

Table 21: Question 13

Which FOUR of the parks, trails and recreation facilities projects listed in Question #12 do you think have been the most important additions to the Forsyth County park system. [Please write in the letters below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices using the letters from the list in Question #12 above or circle NONE.]	1st most important		2nd most important		3rd most important		4th most important	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Construction of Fowler Park including a trail head for the Big Creek Greenway, construction of sports fields and a new indoor Recreation Center	34%	N=179	14%	N=72	5%	N=24	5%	N=28
Acquisition of open space for development of Old Atlanta Park, including a Recreation Center, water spray pad, nature trails, pavilions and playgrounds	4%	N=22	11%	N=56	8%	N=40	7%	N=36
Acquisition of open space for development of Haw Creek Park, featuring natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and Playground	1%	N=3	3%	N=17	3%	N=16	2%	N=8
Acquisition of open space for development of Chattahoochee Pointe, featuring a canoe launch, natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and playground	2%	N=12	2%	N=12	8%	N=40	7%	N=35
Acquisition of open space for development of Caney Creek Preserve featuring picnic pavilions, dog park, playground and natural surface walking trail	3%	N=14	2%	N=10	5%	N=24	3%	N=17
Installing sport fields at Sharon Springs, Midway, Bennett, Coal Mountain, Fowler, Sawnee Mountain Parks and Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek	3%	N=16	8%	N=42	5%	N=25	7%	N=38
32 acres of open space acquired to expand Windermere Park and renovation of dog park area	1%	N=6	2%	N=11	4%	N=19	4%	N=19
Renovations of Sharon Springs Park ballfields & new Playground	0%	N=1	3%	N=17	2%	N=13	3%	N=16
Renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail	8%	N=42	14%	N=74	9%	N=46	7%	N=36
Improvements to sports fields at Bennett Park	1%	N=8	2%	N=8	1%	N=8	1%	N=7
Improvements to Central Park sports fields and walking trail, and a 15,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Central Park Recreation Center	6%	N=31	4%	N=20	5%	N=28	4%	N=22
Construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center in partnership with the City of Cumming	9%	N=48	7%	N=35	10%	N=50	8%	N=41
Improvements to trails and playgrounds at Coal Mountain Park	1%	N=7	4%	N=19	4%	N=20	3%	N=14
Improvements to tennis courts and a new playground at Sawnee Mountain Park	4%	N=22	0%	N=1	3%	N=15	2%	N=11
None	22%	N=115	26%	N=134	30%	N=158	38%	N=198
Total	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526

Table 22: Question 13 - Percent selecting as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Most Important

From the following list, please check ALL the OUTDOOR parks, trails and recreation facilities you or members of your household have used at Forsyth County parks in the past 12 months. Note: If you have not used any Forsyth County Parks in the past 12 months please check #18: None.	Percent	Number
Construction of Fowler Park including a trail head for the Big Creek Greenway, construction of sports fields and a new indoor Recreation Center	58%	N=304
Acquisition of open space for development of Old Atlanta Park, including a Recreation Center, water spray pad, nature trails, pavilions and playgrounds	29%	N=154
Acquisition of open space for development of Haw Creek Park, featuring natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and Playground	8%	N=44
Acquisition of open space for development of Chattahoochee Pointe, featuring a canoe launch, natural surface trails, picnic pavilion and playground	19%	N=99
Acquisition of open space for development of Caney Creek Preserve featuring picnic pavilions, dog park, playground and natural surface walking trail	12%	N=65
Installing sport fields at Sharon Springs, Midway, Bennett, Coal Mountain, Fowler, Sawnee Mountain Parks and Joint Venture Park at Daves Creek	23%	N=120
32 acres of open space acquired to expand Windermere Park and renovation of dog park area	11%	N=55
Renovations of Sharon Springs Park ballfields & new Playground	9%	N=47
Renovations to the Big Creek Greenway Trail	38%	N=197
Improvements to sports fields at Bennett Park	6%	N=31
Improvements to Central Park sports fields and walking trail, and a 15,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Central Park Recreation Center	19%	N=101
Construction of an indoor/outdoor Aquatic Center in partnership with the City of Cumming	33%	N=172
Improvements to trails and playgrounds at Coal Mountain Park	11%	N=60
Improvements to tennis courts and a new playground at Sawnee Mountain Park	9%	N=48
None	22%	N=115
Total		N=1611
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.		

Table 23: Question 14 - Excluding "Not Sure"

Through public input the following potential new parks, trails, recreation, cultural and sports facility projects have been identified to continue improving the Forsyth County Park and Recreation system. Please indicate how supportive you are of each project by circling the number to the right of the project.	Very supportive		Somewhat supportive		Not supportive		Total	
Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped	44%	N=187	32%	N=135	25%	N=105	100%	N=427
Acquire parkland for passive facilities (i.e. trails, picnic areas, etc.)	61%	N=284	33%	N=155	6%	N=26	100%	N=465
Acquire parkland for sports facilities (soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc.)	31%	N=137	41%	N=180	28%	N=122	100%	N=438
Renovations of existing older parks and trails	65%	N=313	32%	N=153	3%	N=13	100%	N=480
Install artificial turf to sports fields to increase usage of existing fields	28%	N=117	33%	N=138	40%	N=169	100%	N=424
Develop a new indoor performing and visual art center	35%	N=150	35%	N=152	31%	N=132	100%	N=434
Develop new indoor community centers with facilities such as indoor running/walking tracks, fitness areas, gymnasiums, classrooms and community rooms	45%	N=199	37%	N=166	18%	N=81	100%	N=446
Develop a new indoor pool for competitive swimming	25%	N=108	37%	N=158	38%	N=162	100%	N=429
Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve	54%	N=236	33%	N=142	13%	N=55	100%	N=433
Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses	66%	N=307	27%	N=127	6%	N=29	100%	N=462
Develop a large indoor and outdoor sports complex for use by residents and hosting major sports tournaments to promote tourism	27%	N=120	28%	N=121	45%	N=196	100%	N=437
Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (swimming beaches, fishing and boating areas, etc.)	51%	N=238	33%	N=153	16%	N=74	100%	N=465
Develop an equestrian center and trails	16%	N=63	37%	N=149	48%	N=194	100%	N=406
Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve including developing an adventure climbing tower and zip line	45%	N=202	32%	N=145	23%	N=101	100%	N=448
Acquire park land and develop a large regional park to serve residents throughout Forsyth County	48%	N=204	37%	N=160	15%	N=64	100%	N=427

Table 24: Question 14

Through public input the following potential new parks, trails, recreation, cultural and sports facility projects have been identified to continue improving the Forsyth County Park and Recreation system. Please indicate how supportive you are of each project by circling the number to the right of the project.	Very supportive		Somewhat supportive		Not supportive		Not sure		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped	39%	N=187	28%	N=135	22%	N=105	10%	N=49	100%	N=476
Acquire parkland for passive facilities (i.e. trails, picnic areas, etc.)	58%	N=284	32%	N=155	5%	N=26	4%	N=21	100%	N=486
Acquire parkland for sports facilities (soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc.)	29%	N=137	38%	N=180	26%	N=122	8%	N=36	100%	N=475
Renovations of existing older parks and trails	64%	N=313	31%	N=153	3%	N=13	2%	N=11	100%	N=491
Install artificial turf to sports fields to increase usage of existing fields	25%	N=117	29%	N=138	36%	N=169	11%	N=53	100%	N=477
Develop a new indoor performing and visual art center	31%	N=150	31%	N=152	27%	N=132	10%	N=50	100%	N=483
Develop new indoor community centers with facilities such as indoor running/walking tracks, fitness areas, gymnasiums, classrooms and community rooms	41%	N=199	34%	N=166	17%	N=81	8%	N=40	100%	N=486
Develop a new indoor pool for competitive swimming	23%	N=108	33%	N=158	34%	N=162	10%	N=50	100%	N=479
Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve	49%	N=236	29%	N=142	11%	N=55	10%	N=50	100%	N=483
Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses	63%	N=307	26%	N=127	6%	N=29	5%	N=25	100%	N=487
Develop a large indoor and outdoor sports complex for use by residents and hosting major sports tournaments to promote tourism	25%	N=120	25%	N=121	41%	N=196	8%	N=40	100%	N=478
Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (swimming beaches, fishing and boating areas, etc.)	49%	N=238	32%	N=153	15%	N=74	4%	N=19	100%	N=483
Develop an equestrian center and trails	13%	N=63	31%	N=149	41%	N=194	15%	N=72	100%	N=478
Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve including developing an adventure climbing tower and zip line	42%	N=202	30%	N=145	21%	N=101	8%	N=37	100%	N=485
Acquire park land and develop a large regional park to serve residents throughout Forsyth County	43%	N=204	33%	N=160	13%	N=64	11%	N=53	100%	N=480

Table 25: Question 15

Which FOUR of the parks, trails and recreation facilities projects listed in Question #14 do you think would be most important to you and members of your household? [Please write in the letters below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices using the letters from the list in Question #14 above or circle NONE.]	1st most important		2nd most important		3rd most important		4th most important	
Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped	11%	N=60	4%	N=21	4%	N=21	4%	N=22
Acquire parkland for passive facilities (i.e. trails, picnic areas, etc.)	11%	N=56	10%	N=55	8%	N=41	6%	N=32
Acquire parkland for sports facilities (soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc.)	3%	N=13	2%	N=10	3%	N=16	3%	N=18
Renovations of existing older parks and trails	11%	N=59	10%	N=54	11%	N=56	8%	N=41
Install artificial turf to sports fields to increase usage of existing fields	1%	N=5	2%	N=12	3%	N=18	4%	N=19
Develop a new indoor performing and visual art center	5%	N=26	4%	N=19	4%	N=20	3%	N=16
Develop new indoor community centers with facilities such as indoor running/walking tracks, fitness areas, gymnasiums, classrooms and community rooms	4%	N=19	5%	N=24	6%	N=33	3%	N=18
Develop a new indoor pool for competitive swimming	2%	N=12	3%	N=18	2%	N=12	1%	N=4
Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve	5%	N=25	7%	N=37	4%	N=22	7%	N=38
Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses	14%	N=72	9%	N=49	8%	N=42	8%	N=41
Develop a large indoor and outdoor sports complex for use by residents and hosting major sports tournaments to promote tourism	3%	N=13	4%	N=21	3%	N=16	4%	N=19
Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (swimming beaches, fishing and boating areas, etc.)	5%	N=28	9%	N=49	8%	N=40	6%	N=29
Develop an equestrian center and trails	1%	N=7	1%	N=5	1%	N=7	2%	N=8
Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve including developing an adventure climbing tower and zip line	6%	N=30	5%	N=25	6%	N=33	7%	N=38
Acquire park land and develop a large regional park to serve residents throughout Forsyth County	2%	N=9	4%	N=23	5%	N=24	5%	N=25
None	17%	N=92	19%	N=102	24%	N=125	30%	N=157
Total	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526	100%	N=526

Table 26: Question 15 - Percent selecting as 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th Most Important

Which FOUR of the parks, trails and recreation facilities projects listed in Question #14 do you think would be most important to you and members of your household? [Please write in the letters below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices using the letters from the list in Question #14 above or circle NONE.]	Percent	Number
Acquire parkland and leave it undeveloped	23%	N=122
Acquire parkland for passive facilities (i.e. trails, picnic areas, etc.)	35%	N=183
Acquire parkland for sports facilities (soccer, lacrosse, baseball, etc.)	11%	N=57
Renovations of existing older parks and trails	40%	N=210
Install artificial turf to sports fields to increase usage of existing fields	10%	N=54
Develop a new indoor performing and visual art center	16%	N=82
Develop new indoor community centers with facilities such as indoor running/walking tracks, fitness areas, gymnasiums, classrooms and community rooms	18%	N=94
Develop a new indoor pool for competitive swimming	9%	N=47
Acquire land to expand the existing Sawnee Mountain Preserve	23%	N=120
Expand the Greenway system/pedestrian accesses	39%	N=204
Develop a large indoor and outdoor sports complex for use by residents and hosting major sports tournaments to promote tourism	13%	N=70
Acquire land for development of parks along Lake Lanier (swimming beaches, fishing and boating areas, etc.)	28%	N=146
Develop an equestrian center and trails	5%	N=28
Make improvements to the Sawnee Mountain Preserve including developing an adventure climbing tower and zip line	24%	N=125
Acquire park land and develop a large regional park to serve residents throughout Forsyth County	15%	N=81
None	17%	N=92
Total		N=1715

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one answer.

Table 27: Question 16

Improvements to the Forsyth County Park and Recreation system may require some additional tax funding. How much in additional tax funding would you be willing to pay per month to fund the types of parkland acquisition, improvements to current parks and development of new recreation facilities that you indicated are most important to your household?	Percent	Number
\$13-\$15 per month	9%	N=47
\$10-\$12 per month	13%	N=65
\$7-\$9 per month	13%	N=65
\$4-\$6 per month	26%	N=134
\$1-\$3 per month	22%	N=113
Nothing	17%	N=87
Total	100%	N=510

Table 28: Question 17 - Excluding "Don't know"

How important are continued improvements to parks, trails, recreation facilities and services provided through the Forsyth County Park and Recreation Department to the future of Forsyth County?	Percent	Number
Essentially important	36%	N=183
Very important	35%	N=177
Important	22%	N=111
Not important	5%	N=25
Not important at all	2%	N=9
Total	100%	N=506

Table 29: Question 17

How important are continued improvements to parks, trails, recreation facilities and services provided through the Forsyth County Park and Recreation Department to the future of Forsyth County?	Percent	Number
Essentially important	35%	N=183
Very important	34%	N=177
Important	21%	N=111
Not important	5%	N=25
Not important at all	2%	N=9
Don't know	2%	N=11
Total	100%	N=516

Table 30: Question 18

Counting yourself, how many people in your household are?	0		1		2		3		Total	
Under 5 years	78%	N=384	15%	N=73	5%	N=24	2%	N=11	100%	N=492
5-9 years	78%	N=382	16%	N=78	6%	N=31	0%	N=1	100%	N=492
10-14 years	77%	N=376	17%	N=86	5%	N=26	1%	N=4	100%	N=492
15-19 years	84%	N=412	11%	N=55	4%	N=21	1%	N=3	100%	N=492
20-24 years	91%	N=448	6%	N=29	2%	N=12	1%	N=3	100%	N=492
25-34 years	72%	N=353	12%	N=59	16%	N=80	NA	NA	100%	N=492
35-44 years	70%	N=345	17%	N=86	12%	N=60	0%	N=1	100%	N=492
45-54 years	65%	N=318	18%	N=87	17%	N=86	0%	N=1	100%	N=492
55-64 years	81%	N=399	11%	N=56	8%	N=38	NA	NA	100%	N=492
65+ years	82%	N=404	7%	N=35	11%	N=52	0%	N=1	100%	N=492

Table 31: Question 18 - Households with youth 9 and younger

	Percent	Number
No	63%	N=309
Yes	37%	N=183
Total	100%	N=492

Table 32: Question 18 - Households with youth 10-19 years old

	Percent	Number
No	69%	N=340
Yes	31%	N=152
Total	100%	N=492

Table 33: Question 18 - Household has youth 19 and younger

	Percent	Number
No	42%	N=208
Yes	58%	N=284
Total	100%	N=492

Table 34: Question 18 - Households without youth and presence of adults ages 20-54

	Percent	Number
No	47%	N=97
Yes	53%	N=111
Total	100%	N=208

Table 35: Question 18 - Households without youth and presence of seniors

	Percent	Number
No	39%	N=82
Yes	61%	N=126
Total	100%	N=208

Table 36: Question 19

In which category is your age?	Percent	Number
18-24 years	1%	N=3
25-34 years	22%	N=115
35-44 years	22%	N=111
45-54 years	28%	N=142
55-64 years	11%	N=58
65-74 years	11%	N=56
75 years or older	5%	N=28
Total	100%	N=513

Table 37: Question 20

Your gender:	Percent	Number
Male	49%	N=253
Female	51%	N=261
Total	100%	N=514

Table 38: Question 21

How many years have you lived in Forsyth County?	Percent	Number
Less than one year	4%	N=19
1-5 years	31%	N=159
6-10 years	20%	N=103
11-15 years	17%	N=90
More than 15 years	28%	N=146
Total	100%	N=517

Comparing Survey Results by Respondent Subgroups

Among the parks and recreation results, a number of comparisons have been made. Select questions were compared by select survey questions, demographic characteristics of survey respondents and geographic location of households and are discussed and presented in *Appendix C, D and E*.

Appendix B: Verbatim Comments to Survey Questions

Verbatim responses to open-ended questions on the survey are included in this appendix. Because these responses were written by survey participants, they are presented here in verbatim form, including any typographical, grammar or other mistakes.

Question 22. Please share any additional comments that could assist Forsyth County Parks & Recreation in improving parks, trails, open space, or recreational facilities and services.

- (1) Continue Greenway beautification, control flooding of Big Creek Greenway by less less less high density housing development in area. (2) We have a county with low debt, plenty of money from existing home taxes, stop overbuilding so we can enjoy our parks.
- 1) Add'l trees to be planted in Fowler Park to provide shade (e.g, maple trees, cherry blossom). 2) Enclosed some picnic areas for privacy when holding b'day parties. 3) Maintain drinking fountain regularly at Fowler Park & other parks. 4) Install water fountain in the park similar to Suwanee where kids can play around esp. during summer.
- A large Civic Ctr. is needed. Our high school grads have to use the fairgrounds where it is dusty and stinky and hot. For a "fastest growing county" this is unacceptable and embarrassing. Impeach the mayor dishonest & corrupt SOB.
- A swimming complex in South Forsyth would be appreciated..
- Absolutely forbid speed biking on any Greenway and post many signs that say "recreational biking only no speed biking."
- Additional funds need to go towards the facility equipment & tools available for the local maintenance teams.
- All main highways in Forsyth need to be repaved, I have to dodge all the holes, it's very dangerous.
- All of this costs too much.
- All parking should be paved not gravel & dust!! All parks should have bathrooms male & female only and no transgenders allowed in bathroom of their alleged sex I will sue the county & state if any nut attacks me in.
- All people can walk, not everyone can do sports. Dogs should be allowed in Sawnee Mtn new acquisitions. Improvements such as the corp did to the park at the end of the Bethal are a disaster. I am a Forsyth Co. master gardener. We have problems Getty facilities for our classes that are big enough and available. We do a lot of good for Forsyth Co. but we need big classes to train people for our 40 projects. I am responsible for the master gardener program at Sawnee native plant garden after I was responsible for a large donation of funds.
- Any new facility should be such that it supports the traffic.
- Appreciate the staff as well.
- Are essentially important for the economic development of the county and the quality of life of its citizens.
- Areas of use such as the fowler park dog park are not being maintained. All residents in the county pay taxes so all usage areas should be maintained, not just the sports fields. A very large percentage of Forsyth county is aging and their needs should be looked after as well.
- As a senior, I would like activities for strength and balance available more than once a week.
- As seniors, we like benches here and there along walking trails to catch a breath. We once lived in Maine and your parks here are wonderful! great weather too. Thanks.
- Attention to safety. Witnessed a lady trip over uneven sidewalk at Bennett park last yr. wasn't serious, but could easily have been.
- Before all the land is used up for subdivisions & malls please plan parks & historic locations to preserve the county.
- Before we do anything to increase tourism, Forsyth County needs to improve our infrastructure.
- Bennett Park needs some help. There are not picnic areas, playground is out of reach to other parts & very small & no walk track.
- Better boat ramps & beach areas for families to enjoy outdoors together.
- Build some bocce courts at the parks.
- Calling Phase 5 a "Greenway" is a deception. It should be called a "Roadway". Why can't you spend a little extra on it and tunnel under Hwy 20 to get to land the county already shows as the Sawnee Mtn Preserve. We will never use a sidewalk that runs down noisy Hwy 20, Spot Rd. Connector and Spot Road with accompanying air pollution when there is woodland that could be used between Hwy 20 and the trails in the Preserve.
- Caney creek preserve is in dire need of erosion control in many locations. It would improve both land & water.
- Caney Park dog park is a muddy mess. Please improve the grass in the dog park area. Thank you!

- Classes to learn cooking & making things.
- Cleaner bathrooms on Greenway.
- Collect needed tax for additions & improvements from new residents only.
- Concentrate your efforts in expanding the Greenway along big creek Linear Park to connect with the Alpharetta Greenway # 1 priority!
- Nice that a survey has been fielded. Would like to see a rec center nearer the very south end of Forsyth Co.
- County needs to cut down on commercial development. Provide round about. Use developers money towards making Forsyth beautiful not tax payer's money. Having competitive pool closer than aquatic center for South Forsythians.
- County should manage parks/ recs w/ existing funds and not increase taxes to add additional parks/recs.
- Creating new spaces for children and young families essential in any county to grow and become more attractive for residents living in & for future commerce. Please expand for more activities. Lake Lanier is a gem in Forsyth County use it & create parks/recreational around it. Board walks invite hotels be creative!
- Cycling trails along major roads (fast cyclists) or wider shoulders on paved road for safety roads in county are too narrow for safe bicycling.
- Doing a great job so far. Proud to be a resident of Forsyth County!
- Doing a great job, enhancing life in Forsyth County.
- Doing a wonderful job! Lots of foresight for a growing county.
- Don't mess this up! Too many homes being built. At least have a green space, parks, outdoors that is significant and a model for Georgia and urban planning.
- Equestrian services Trails, arenas!!! Have to travel to other countries for horse shows Rabun county white county banks county, etc. Would love to have facilities in Forsyth County .
- Expanding trails/ Greenway and rec. center weight room/ cardio equipment options are huge.
- Extend the Green way from McFarland to Hayne bridge.
- Finish & open Greenway north of Bethelview. 2 years past original plan.
- Finish the Greenway and create feeder trails in South Forsyth! Develop trails along Chattahoochee.
- Forsyth as a wonderful P&R system. I am concerned with the growth there will not be enough infrastructure.
- Forsyth Co. is forward thinking!
- Forsyth County has some of the nicest, cleanest parks I've ever seen. Please continue to improve upon the existing parks & continue to build more. I am particularly supportive of plans to build zip lines, rock climbing, ropes courses, etc. in order to attract older kids to the facilities for reasons other than sports games. Thank you for this survey!
- Forsyth county is a wonderful place with many natural amenities controlled growth and development of the county is essential. Protection of natural areas is crucially important. We do not need huge tracts of development homes.
- Fowler Park playground needs shade covers. We would go there more in the summer but it's too hot!
- Fowler Park Playground really needs more shade & the mulch filled back in. The slides are too far off the ground now. And due to no shade it burns children's legs & arms if you go after 11 am. We love the park and would use it more if it was better maintained.
- Get a more reliable on-line survey
- Give me a break. Add no smoking signs, no smoking in the parks period. This includes employees of the park at Fowler clean/clear the Big Creek so the water runs off more quickly; lower the water level to help limit or prevent flooding of walk way.
- Golf driving range would be great.
- Good job!!
- Great grounds personnel at Midway Park!
- Green space is part of the draw of North Georgia. More open space is what people need. Not more shopping centers!!!!!!!!!!
- Greenspace can be multipurpose. From picnicks to kickball Greenspace provides a nice gathering place that is not sport specific.
- Greenway parking areas need video surveillance, we'd like to participate in festivals in local parks similar to whats held in John Creek Alpharetta & Roswell. (Arts & Crafts).
- Hosted a girl scouts lookout Aug, 2014 @ young Deer Creek. Never imagined the grass would be severely overgrown. Why spend \$ adding facilities when maintaining current ones isn't a priority? Was sorely disappointed.
- I am 83 years old and live close to my daughter and her family of 5 members, all in Forsyth County. I have lived and visited in much of the USA and Forsyth County is the nicest county in the USA and in part due to see back.
- I am a safety manager for a construction company and I have found many, many unsafe conditions that could injure or kill someone at our parks (all of them). These parks should be safe areas for our children. If you would like to contact me about these unsafe conditions, feel free.

- I am enjoying living in Forsyth, I have lived my whole life in Dekalb.
- I am impressed each time I utilize any P&R trail, Field or Greenway & how well maintained & cleaned. Our park & rec dept do a fantastic job and I am not related to anyone in the dept.
- I am proud to live in Forsyth County. All of these ideas would benefit us all.
- I am so grateful for all the wonderful facilities available in Forsyth County. My absolute favorite is the Greenway. My dog and I walk on it almost every day
- I am so pleased to be now living in Forsyth County (after 15 years in N.Fulton).
- I am supportive of parks, get there one more critical issues at hand. I wish you luck.
- I feel it's wrong to ask for a fee or "membership" fee to use indoor facilities (Walking Track). When my taxes have paid for the building. I have no problem paying for other activities or events.
- I find myself going to Johns Creek area for their parks because there are more smaller ones. It seems like Forsyth makes awful ropes course type playgrounds that small children can't use or have huge parks with sports complexes.
- I live in the Silver City area, and the closest park is Coal Mountain, about 10 minutes away. I know there is another park under construction on Wallace Tatum Road, which will be a little closer, but not much. We would love to see a passive use park in the Silver City area, with walking trails, picnic area, and playground. While I am happy to see parks go anywhere in the county, I feel our area is underserved. I know the money and density is in the south end, and that determines a lot of what goes in. I get that. But it's really not possible to walk in our area because there are no sidewalks, so having a park closer by would make it easier for folks in our area to get some exercise. No need for ball fields... We have plenty of those.
- I moved here because it was not so densely populated. It is now over crowded, Rt 141 should be run by the county, not the state. Are all of the Americans leaving of the county?? Too many housing developments ! HOA should be banned too many chemically treated lawns.
- I only wrote unsure about certain ones b/c I am not as familiar w/ that area but overall I support the parks of Forsyth County.
- I think a Greenway that would get to Central locations would be great. The Square in Cumming would be great to see it develop into what others have turned into.
- I think Forsyth County P&R is doing an excellent job! Just keep the momentum going. It is deeply appreciated!
- I think it is a waste of tax payer money.
- I think it is important but people on fixed incomes can't afford higher taxes.
- I think most important improvements would be to expand the greenway length and access further north and add recreational pools and water features for family play.
- I think you do a great job already. Thank you !
- I think you should use current tax money and allocate it appropriately.
- I vote Forsyth County excellent regarding its parks and recreation facilities. There is a need to expand some to accommodate the future increase in population.
- I wish there was a "community pool" in Southern Forsyth. Our family literally lived at the Cumming City Pool including swimming lessons. An outside pool would be great for our grandchildren.
- I would like to see a fishing pier offered in deeper waters, were large amounts of people could enjoy and not be so close to each others fishing lines. I would also like to see archery available with possible classes & competitions.
- I would like to see an indoor space at Midway park for various fitness classes. Today it is all about sports fields with no recreation center facility.
- I would like to see more sidewalks, bike lanes, trails along roads to make our county more friendly.
- I'd like to have swimming pool in old Atlanta recreation center. Also expand walking trail around the facility.
- I'd really like more hiking areas to be open for dogs on leashes. We go to the dog parks & Greenway, but most of the lake parks and Sawnee mountain don't allow them. Would be nice if newer parts of Sawnee mountain allowed on leashes. Also, not sure if you can purchase "Park Pass" that would enable better availability at Lake Alice & other spots that fill up quickly.
- I'm for any land acquisition for parks that will prevent further (out of control) residential development.
- I'm not a fan of the improvements at two mile creek at the end of Bethel rd.
- Improve older parks. Although they are kept up well, some of the older parks need repairing and new buildings. Also hire more people to keep up the parks. Many appear to be understaffed.
- Improved access to the Chattahoochee River for non-motorized boating activities including areas along the river to stop for rest while kayaking/canoeing.
- Improved funding for a cultural arts facility and space for high school graduations is in my opinion, the highest priority to meet unaddressed needs in Forsyth County.
- Improved parks in the SE portion of the county.

- In play areas for kids please add more fun stuff like water park indoor bigger slides.
- In the parks where dogs are allowed, even though baggies are provided, owners leave their dog's poop on the trails, So you can start raising funds for park improvements by giving fines to those dog owners.
- Instead of building more parks you need to do a better job of maintaining the ones we have. Central Park is in a huge need of improving grass, areas trees, & fitness center, everything!
- Instead of raising taxes do something to prevent multi generation families from putting home in grand parents name to prevent them from paying school tax when they have household members in school!
- It is time to take our tax payer dollars to improve the beauty of 141 If you drive into Forsyth Co. You judge by the beauty of the main roads. The parks are a hidden asset The main highways tell the public we are not a caring county. We look like we don't care about the beauty of Forsyth Co.
- It would be nice if day care was provided during group exercise programs or other programs offered at the rec center. This was the major decision of choosing the YMCA over the Forsyth rec center.
- It would be nice to have an RC Airplane field.
- Keep dogs off of walking trails.
- Keep Forsyth County from exploding: control growth.
- Keep up the good work.
- Less commercial development in S.Forsyth & more parks/greenspace!
- Less dogs on track, more restrictions.
- Like to see more sandy beach sandy/lake areas that are nicer & cleaner. Love the idea of large indoor/outdoor sports complex!
- Love our Parks and Rec! Would love to have an indoor play pool and somewhere for my girls to practice gymnastics more. Also, I wish the young employees at Central Park would stop driving the golf carts around like race, cars, especially around all the young kids!
- Love the boat ramps at Charleston & Young Deer. I have 4 jet skis.
- Love the parks! We use them often. We love the outdoors. The parks are beautiful!
- Love the parks. Wish I could use them more often.
- Love this hiking trails! Would like to see more canoe/kayak access to rivers & creeks. We have the best parks & Rec. Dept. around!
- Love using the Greenway bike riding & walking. Please continue to add wide sidewalks & extension of Greenway would be great!
- Lower tax, not more tax!
- Maintain what we have.
- Make dog parks at Windermere & Caney more than mud pit!! Indoor swimming pool (& Therapeutic) on South end of county needed by active adults over 40.
- Make it easier to reserve courts and fields for events.
- Make sure there are roads built before adding anymore facilities.
- Many of us who moved here 20+ years ago with young families now have grandchildren. Need facilities that attract young families.
- Minimize any development. We are suffocating!!!!
- More and better facilities for seniors.
- More batting cages, indoor and outdoor. Driving range for nonchalant golfers.
- More bike lanes throughout & Sidewalks as well.
- More boating facilities & beach facilities and improvement to old facilities such as Mary Alice Park & Sharon Springs Park.
- More Disc Golf Please.
- More dog parks on dog access. Some parks do not allow dogs.
- More facilities in North Forsyth ! We need past exit 17!
- More Greenways.
- More outdoor spaces need to be pet friendly. We do not use spaces that are not. Need to connect the different sections of the Greenway.
- More Parks in the Northwest part of Forsyth Co old Federal Rd.
- More supervision in parks. We witness trees climbed & abused, dogs loose & owners not clearing up after them.
- More trees/shade for all playgrounds playgrounds are unusable in the hot weather if there isn't any shade.
- More volleyball courts (indoor & outdoor grass & sand).
- Mountain Bike trails/Hiking trails/Lake access!
- My daughter loves the Splash pad at Old Atlanta Park more Splash pads in Forsyth would be great for my summer sanity.

- My kids are grown now, but we used to frequently use all the parks with: baseball, soccer and football games. The county is growing again. I see the need for improvements.
- My property taxes have increased exponentially in the last 3 years & it's already too much. The growth is a good & bad things I want to be able to live & not keep adding more costs.
- My property taxes in Forsyth went up 10% last year & I live on fixed income. Why would I need an increase in my taxes when I don't use any of this. They already spent a fortune on the new facilities & now they want more & they want senior citizens to help pay for it. No more tax increases enough! Let the people who use it pay for it!
- Need a facility for gymnastics.
- Need a large swimming pool with lap lane near Lambert High School (South Forsyth). We use life time fitness center daily at Johns Creek.
- Need areas for kids, who don't belong on a team to play, just kids who want to kick the ball around, need a place to play.
- Need money for more important things than playgrounds & places to walk dogs.
- Need more dog friendly areas in South Forsyth Lake land Sawnee Mountain trail should be made dog friendly land Forsyth needs an amphitheater like version in Alpharetta.
- Need more dog parks & trails that are dog friendly.
- Need to know where facilities are. Perhaps an on line map. I have trouble locating some venues.
- No additional tax funding. Live within your budget. Raise additional funds through private sources.
- None
- None
- North needs Park, South has too many & Indoor pool classes. Indoor classes available on weekends/for working people.
- Note most improvements suggested area to the South half of the county which has the most already. It would be nice to have access to walking & biking trails without having to drive 20 minutes.
- Nothing noted about a park for special needs/ handicapped children there is a great Park in Lakeland FLA that we could do here called (Common Ground).
- Now is the time to acquire additional property for future park development.
- Our community is beautiful and lets make it even better for next & future generation. Proud member of Forsyth!
- Our house is located on Lake Lanier, and is used for part time vacation home. We do support the upkeep of Forsyth Co Parks however, and are pleased with current state.
- Our park system is very good but attracts a lot of people not living in Forsyth Co. Becomes overrun & congested on roads & in parks. Too many new sub divisions & no roads built to handle the traffic. The peaceful living in the county is disappearing!
- Parking. Speed up the boat(small) access to the lake.
- Parks & recreation are an important part of our county & I support having them.
- Parks and Greenspace are so important to successful communities. Please continue to make this a priority for the county since it is growing so fast. Thank you!
- Parks are a key amenity to F.Co and help contribute to a well rounded healthy community.
- Parks are important & second are the libraries.
- Playgrounds in South Forsyth area need more swings for kids. Need a playground for 5 and under only with swings (add swings at old Atlanta park.)
- Please be sure to include a walking trail or two to each park. It would be nice for more trees and butterfly attracting bushes/ plants. Please connect all the Greenways!!!!
- Please clean around indoor exercise & fitness pool.
- Please consider aquatic type center of south side of Forsyth. Northern end already has a lot.
- Please keep expanding the greenways thought the county to include being able to safely cross Ga. 400 on foot or by bike. There are far more resources in the south part of the county than the north. It would be nice to access Greenways from points throught the entire county.
- Please maintain the existing parks before investing in new ones. Please do not let Fowler turn into Sharon Springs.
- Please make Sawnee Mountain trails pet friendly. Please don't build any trails that restrict dogs (on leash of course).
- Please note this survey is flawed, since those lists were letters and the survey would only accept numbers. I thus converted the letters to numbers (A=1, etc).
- Please reduce the number of construction permits given to high density developers.
- Please see all tennis courts are maintained properly.

- Please work on developing office policies on privacy and restrict giving out personal info to protect the children who participate in county registered activities.
- Proper maintenance of restrooms in timely manner.
- Public golf course?
- Public transportation, ie train up 400 to Dawsonville & south to N. Springs station.
- Recreation should be for all ages. I attend grandchildren's sport activities, enjoy walking (not too strenuous at my age) and would like to get involved in senior activities and art.
- Rectangle Field & Rec Centers (Gyms) most important taking care of existing parks/fields 2nd most.
- Respect for the environment is the key.
- Roswell parks & rec sponsors/hosts concerts the 1st Saturday of each month from May October at riverside park. We think this would be a great thing for Forsyth County parks & Rec to do at Fowler park or at central park.
- Senior adult friendly areas and activities.
- Senior Center with water aerobics in So. Forsyth Co. would be nice.
- Senior citizens are not receiving high quality cultural events! Gainesville has the Quinlan. Dawsonville has the Bowen Center for the arts, Burnett has the Hudgens Center for the arts, Fulton County has too many to recreation, Cherokee has the Cherokee County arts Center. We have nothing! only the old school house for plays/concerts. It's pathetic.
- Shouldn't be separated by the current organization of the Forsyth Co Gov.
- Six mile park could use some improvement.
- So far so good.
- Splash Park in North Forsyth.
- Stop allowing so many subdivisions to be built which is overpopulating the county. Allow dogs on the trails at Sawnee mountain preserve.
- Stop over development in Forsyth traffic & schools are overcrowded if it gets worse, we will move!
- Take your time and spend wisely.
- Thank you for being pro active in providing excellent parks & facilities!
- Thank you for your hard work I love our parks!
- Thank you for your hard work! Lets keep Forsyth the natural beauty that it is!
- The Baseball/Softball/Football field generate a large amount of revenue for county. I think it is important to keep amenities up to date in those areas (gates, concession, bathrooms).
- The central park play ground area is very well keep once clean. Thanks to that branch who maintains properly.
- The county is growing rapidly. There is a need for improvement of our parks and recreation. This should not be ignored.
- The county is in dire need of hiking trails & passive green space. No more ball fields! More dog parks are important as well. Preserve our natural spaces!
- The Greenway is terrible & needs to be fixed but we also need something similar in the northern part of the county.
- The Greenway w/ wooden bridges are not cyclist friendly. Road bike trails and/or roads w/ bike lanes is extremely important. A cyclist always take their life at risk on these roads.
- The lack of willingness to work with local businesses & non profits for road races & other events is appalling. We are losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in potential revenue by not supporting, encouraging & allowing these events.
- The N. West side of Forsyth has been left out as far as indoor facilities are concerned.
- The online survey is flawed. Question #6 is not appropriate if you answered none to the prior 2 questions and did not give an NA option. A few of the Questions asked to "write in a letter" yet the online survey would only accept numbers therefore you're likely not getting the correct information. Someone should have QAd this survey before administering. I would take this up with Qualtrics. Not the best use of tax dollars if the information collected is not going to be correct.
- The play grounds are over populated. Please consider expanding or building additional playgrounds. Thank you!
- The quality and quantity of facilities that FCP & R have is one of the most attractive selling point Forsyth County can offer.
- The south side of the county could really use a competition pool and additional park/playground space. We don't have the benefit of trails to walk like the big greenway. I am thrilled to be able to contribute to this research.
- The traffic has increased so much that we are wearing out the natural places Sawnee Mt. & the Greenway are 2 examples that are now always crowded. We need natural space to get away.
- There are more than enough taxes to expand use the taxes wisely!!!
- There are no Equestrian center. Only Soccer fields, Baseball fields which I have no need for.

- There are some very nice older parks in the county that need complete renovation. I like the idea of putting money in these to equate to new park. I love the idea of a large civic events center. The county is big enough to have one like Burnnett.
- There is not enough field space on artificial turf fields! We have so many youth sports that need practice time & game times on these fields: football, lacrosse & soccer.
- There needs to be more adventurous type of park in the northern part of the county including mountain climbing tower zip line, archery range an archery range would be used consistently.
- These facilities assist the appreciation of our home value. I'd like to see more senior water exercise sessions.
- This is a beautiful county. Love living here (except for increasing development & traffic).
- Too much \$ being spent on parks. Big creek wood bridge has been flooded ever since you built it. That creeks always floods! Duh!
- Traffic is terrible!! Stop building new things until the awful traffic is under control! Repair and improve what we have!
- Turning the grass fields to turf is great!!
- Very good job done!
- Very pleased with the work you are doing in the county.
- Walking trails at Bennett! Tennis courts at Bennett! It needs some TLC!
- Wasted tax payer money.
- We are extremely blessed to have the facilities & staff that run them. I think you do a great job and I look forward to what the future holds.
- We are very thankful to be getting the new playground in the Matt Area. We need to have an area for competitive bike riding so the bicycles have somewhere to ride besides on the highway.
- We don't need any more park!! Fix our roads and bridges North Forsyth Hwy 369.
- We don't need events that bring in a lot more traffic.
- We enjoy all the parks so much! Also it is great to finally have an indoor pool in Forsyth Co. Thank you!
- We have made thru then the existing parks several times over the years and they are empty not being used can we afford all your big dreams. How about staffing upkeep, how many more times does the Big Creek Greenway etc. have to flood!!! That was poor planing guess who paid for that to be repaired. As you can see I am not in favor of the county wanting to spend more and more of tax payer money!!
- We lack quality outdoor volleyball courts in Forsyth County. We are very supportive of having an outdoor sand volleyball court in every park. Right now we are travelling to Fulton county for playing volleyball.
- We like how Gary Pickle Park (not in Forsyth) has the covered play ground area.
- We love all the hiking trails! We'd love to see the development of fishing areas other than lake Lanier.
- We love Forsyth thank you for all you do!
- We love living in Forsyth County!
- We love living in Forsyth County!
- We love the green space and beauty of Forsyth and all the rural farms. We are sad to see all the development w/o consideration that the roads don't support it and all the beauty is going a way.
- We love the parks, trails and Greenway and use them often. It is something that makes this county such a great community. We would love to see more Greenway; trails, lake parks and a nature center!
- We love to go to the local playgrounds in the area but they are all too overcrowded, especially Fowler Park!! I would love to see new playgrounds, especially for children who may have disabilities or younger children who cant keep up with the older kids.
- We love using Caney Creek & Fowler Park but I wish they would more aggressively treat the many areas of standing/stagnant water for mosquitoes. There are tablets that are safe for the environment that should be used.
- We love what you are doing Please keep up the good job!
- We need a nice dog park at Central Park. There are SO many people that go there with dogs and kids. We don't need any more ball fields. A nice rolling hill with a few trees would be great for our furry friends!
- We need an indoor pool in the south end as well as more gymnasium in the South end. They are always full with rentals or tournaments.
- We need lots of hiking trails throughout the country. 1 to 99% of my hiking in Fulton because they have great ones! Greenways needs wider trails but preferably separated trail for bikes and motorized vehicles its just not pleasant for walkers & runners and dangerous! Also a few dog waste containers along the Greenway would be much appreciated and may be a few walkways to the river so people could enjoy looking at the river dogs could take a dip!

- We need to accommodate the population growth our county is experiencing, but I don't want Forsyth County to become overpopulated like Cobb & Gwinnett County. We choose Forsyth County over Cobb and Gwinnett because of its "home town" "feel and we like raising our kids in such that environment.
- We need to develop bike trails that connect neighborhoods to the Greenway. We need a bike trail along 400 (walking trails as well).
- We need to maintain and improve current facilities. Green space and keeping the natural beauty of Forsyth County is the most important thing we can do.
- We need to slow the growth of Forsyth County. Purchasing land and leaving it undeveloped is probably the best way to reduce growth. As it is going now we have school overcrowding (in new schools), traffic congestion and unchecked zoning issues that lead to an undesirable lifestyle in this county.
- We use Central Park most often and have supported my sons playing baseball there for 8 years. Unfortunately, the park does not measure up to that of other parks in my opinion for quality of the fields, aesthetic appearance, facilities, spectator areas, coered areas and overall experience.
- We would benefit tremendously with a dog park at Central Park or somewhere close to it. This is something I have been wanting for years. All dog parks seem to be in south of county. I live near Little Mill Middle School, & Bennett Park.
- We would love to have a performing arts center for community rental and professional tours. The High School facilities are well equipped, but not available enough for non school programming. Keep up the incredible work. Thank you!
- Went to both Lake Lanier and Sawnee Mtn. Preserve and we couldn't enjoy these places due to no dogs allowed. We would love more options for dog owners.
- What you have done with the parks is great. We enjoy going as a family! Thanks.
- When will the new section of Greenway be open people are using it on way. Put up signs saying bike helmets are required for kids & remind people to let others know they are going to pass by saying "on your left".
- Where the Greenway goes over busy roads make pedestrian bridges.
- Who decided to close Big Creek Greenway for the 2 busiest months of the year? Fail! Fail! Fail! Fail! Fail!
- Why don't we have a golf course, Hall has 2 even Sugar Hill has one. Everyone can't afford the polo grounds like the county planners.
- Would enjoy facilities for us old geezers. House shoes, lawn bowling board games, croquet (krow kay spelling), lectures, movie, music badminton.
- Would like a bathroom at McFarland Rd Greenway & any new paths please. Or at least a temporary bathroom for older folks.
- Would like an outdoor stage for concerts. (Similar to city of Woodstock) Back entrance to Fowler park off Shiloh or Fowler Rd.
- Would like indoor spin in South Forsyth also designated Yoga/Meditation room.
- Would like to see additional water areas/restrooms on Greenway.
- Would like to see covered seating areas for all fields like the park in Milton
- Would like to see money spent in North Forsyth. The county is continuing to grow and having amenities in place to accommodate the growth headed north is Essential!
- Would like to see Northward extension of Bethelview Trail opened. The children's play ground at Sharon Park not suitable for kid of any age (wasted facility).
- Would like to see some land (woods, meadows, creeks, hills) bought & left original.
- Would love to have racquetball courts.
- Would support a reservoir, with fishing, canoeing boating (electric only) similar to Hollis Q Lathem reservoir in Cherokee county.
- you can't cut down all the trees and put in parking lots call it green space
- You do a phenomenal job and we're so grateful to live in a county that is trying to save our greenspace; we have lost far too much already! Keep up the good work!
- You need to have a dog area in all your parks I can take my dog to a ballfield but I can't take him to a park where you can get out and walk. There are more people at ballfield than the other parks.
- Your survey is flawed. It will not accept letters in the priority spaces. You need to get on with completing Phase 4 of the BC Greenway. The current delay is embarrassing. Also, get on with Phase 5 including the segment along GA-20.



APPENDIX B: PUBLIC WORKSHOP RESULTS

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

What parks are you currently using?

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS	
Bennet Park	10
Big Creek Greenway	28
Caney Creek Preserve	2
Central Park	58
Charleston Park	17
Chattahoochee Pointe	2
Coal Mountain Park	29
Ducktown Community Park	2
Eagles Beak Park	1
Fowler Park	41
Haw Creek Park	9
Joint Venture Park at Daves	7
Lanierland	8
Matt Community Park	
Old Atlanta Park	5
Poole's Mill Park	18
Sawnee Mountain Park	33
Sawnee Mountain Preserve	34
Shady Grove Campground	10
Sharon Springs Park	14
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	
Windermere Park	9
Young Deer Creek Park	11
CITY OF CUMMING PARKS	1
City Park	2
Dobbs Creek	9
Others:	
Midway Park	9

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

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

Very Satisfied	9
Satisfied	44
Very Dissatisfied	

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

Yes	36
No	18

Are additional parks and recreation facilities needed?

Yes	48
No	3

If yes, what facilities are needed?

- Yes, Biking trails, with trail runners in reverse direction. (3)
- Need a home field for CFYLAX.
- Biking trails w/no pedestrians. (4)
- Cultural Arts Center similar to what they have in Cobb Co.
- Event facility with a place for fine arts and performing arts.
- I agree to the above, something like the Quinlan Center in Hall County would be great.
- More passive parks/park activities like disc golf, trails, etc.
- Walking trails. (2)
- Less impact on natural habitat, protect water quality
- More cycling opportunities including BMX, mountain biking (4)
- Connect trails!
- Pool
- Pavilion at Bennet Park
- More swimming opportunities
- Climbing wall
- Adv. Toner
- Passive open field for general public
- Disc Golf
- Parks along Lake/Rivers
- Arts facility- visual & Performing
- More pickleball (13)
- More indoor playing time
- More lacrosse fields
- Need home field for Central Forsyth Lacrosse CFYLAX
- Disc Golf
- BMX track

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Please identify the outdoor recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). **Please use your Green Dots for the highest priorities.**

Outdoor Facilities	Currently using	Would like to use or see expanded
Baseball fields	15 (O); 1 (G)	8 (G)
Cricket fields		
Football fields	4 (O)	1 (G)
Lacrosse fields	14 (O)	12 (G)
Soccer fields	11 (O)	4 (G)
Softball fields	25 (O)	18 (G)
Basketball courts (outdoor)	2 (O)	
Bocce courts	1 (G)	1 (O); 3 (G)
Pickleball courts	16 (O); 4 (G)	2 (O); 23 (G)
Tennis courts	12 (O)	2 (O); 5 (G)
Volleyball courts	1 (O)	1 (O)
Disc golf course	8 (O)	3 (O); 7 (G)
Playgrounds	20 (O)	3 (O); 10 (G)
Skate park	8 (O)	7 (G)
Outdoor swimming facility	5 (O); 1 (G)	2 (G)
Walking or biking trails	38 (O)	2 (O); 17 (G)
Mountain biking trails	15 (O)	19 (G)
BMX track		2 (O); 11 (G)
Equestrian trails		5 (O); 1 (G)
Dog parks	11 (O)	1 (O); 14 (G)
Nature study/observation areas	7 (O)	5 (G)
Open space or natural areas	9 (O); 1 (G)	4 (O); 10 (G)
Picnic shelters	9 (O)	3 (O); 1 (G)
Water access	15 (O)	14 (G)
Others:		

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Please identify the indoor recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). **Please use your Green Dots for the highest priorities.**

Indoor Facilities	Currently using	Would like to use or see expanded
Gymnasium	22 (O)	3 (G)
Fitness center	30 (O); 2 (G)	1 (O); 28 (G)
Racquetball court		1 (O); 9 (G)
Indoor walking track	13 (O); 1 (G)	3 (G)
Indoor aquatics facility	13 (O); 1 (G)	3 (G)
Senior center	3(O); 1 (G)	2 (G)
Classrooms/meeting rooms	8 (O)	3 (O); 3 (G)
Community room	6 (O)	2 (O)
Arts/crafts space	5 (O); 1 (G)	1 (O); 6 (G)
Nature center/environmental education	10 (O)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Civic Center/Arena		4 (O); 11 (G)
Others:		
Pickleball	9 (O)	19 (G)
Basketball	5 (O)	1 (G)
Fine Arts Center	2 (O); 1 (G)	2 (G)
Performing Arts Center – Theater	1 (O)	1 (G)
Indoor Soccer Facility		1 (G)

O = Orange Dot

G = Green Dot

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

How supportive would you be to paying additional taxes for park and recreation facilities you would like to see developed?

Very Supportive	25
Somewhat Supportive	26
Not Sure	3
Not Supportive	2

Which would you rather see capital funds go towards?

New Parks	6
Renovation of Existing Parks	27
Both	17
Neither	6
Programs (added)	3
Mountain Bike Trls (added)	3

Additional comments on this board:

- Arts Facility (4)
- Free designated tennis mixed doubles (adults) day/time
- Mountain bike trails w/trail hikers/runners in reverse (5)
- Dog trails (2)
- Cultural Arts Center
- Performing Arts Center as well as fine arts
- Indoor/outdoor pickleball (5)
- Maintain some minimal impact/natural areas
- Board games at the parks (indoor facilities)
- Ping pong at Central Park

**Forsyth County
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan**

Additional Comments

We desperately need an arts facility- maybe 2. One in N and one in S – not so large- small black box in one-gallery. Kiln space , teacher rooms – workshop space – Cobb has good ideas & plans on this.

Pickleball has been wonderful for the 25-75 people who are registered to play and the 25 people who play every day. We are all healthier because of it, move active & move socially connected. We need summer playing time.

We need nighttime summer pickleball time.

Fitness stations on walking trails.

More disc golf courses!!!

Need an open grassy field for general public to picnic, relax, toss Frisbee, hike around. The north has nothing like this.

I would really like to see some sort of cultural arts center for visual and performing arts. We have excellent sports facilities, but as our population ages we are less inclined to play soccer or basketball. Arts activities are recreational for us older folks.

We need a climbing wall and adventure tower!

At Central Park – more fitness classes: on Monday evening, on Saturday afternoon.

Would request permanent, dedicated pickleball courts (similar to other counties)! Some outdoor pickleball courts at Central Park.

There is a large group of pickleball players at Central – We need some dedicated courts indoors & mark tennis courts (outdoors) for pickleball. – Ann H.

Support more BMX – there are plenty of cyclist and business to sponsor racing here in our county vs. having to go outside county to be involved. Also a big fan for more water access! GET OUTDOORS ☺

Passive park with trails & access to water w/low dock for human powered craft. Outdoor pickleball at Central expanded. In & outdoor pickleball at Fowler. Eventually pickleball at Old Atl. We love Central Park and the welcome for pickleball.

We need more time for pickleball. Should be expanded to other gyms.

Pickleball is such a great sport for all especially seniors. Great for health and activity. Please make it possible at more parks.

P&R of Forsyth County does a great job and has, for the most part, wonderful facilities. A greater effort should be made to accommodate active seniors. It seems most senior activities in this area are shopping trips, eating out and just plain boring. Pickleball has come to Forsyth County and has really taken off. We need more courts, indoor and outdoor and maybe some evening hours. More exciting trips than going to the Goodwill store. It would be nice if the outdoor pool at the Aquatic Center could remain open for a while after school goes back in session for adults to have some fun without the screaming kids!

Lacrosse CFYLAX - We really need a home field for the Central Forsyth Youth Lacrosse program. Please give serious consideration to this issue. Thanks,

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

I would like to have a center for the arts that would include a theater & space for fine art exhibits, meetings & classes. Cumming Playhouse is too small.

More pickleball indoor and outdoor courts.

Need to develop walking/biking/equestrian trails so they are continuous to the south and northern Fulton Co. into western Forsyth and north into Dawson Co. and Dawson Forest area. Minimize removal of trees and forest to maximize protection of water quality and prevent erosion.

More spin classes at Central.

More classes with weights at Central Park.

BMX track – good exercise & fun for youth – only 1 in N. Georgia – great for participation & spectators.

Pickleball gym Fowler.

We need more BMX tracks! There are no close parks where you can go to ride or race. I have been involved in the sport since I was 5 and won state at 5. There wasn't anywhere to practice close by. I would love to see one in my county! There are more people for the sport than you think. The one park at Fowler is overcrowded. Thank you.

Outdoor racquetball courts would be awesome.

We need trails you can bring your dog to walk/run.

More pickleball time!

More weekly weight classes @ Central Park & weekend classes.

More weight classes @ central & weekend classes.

We need an event facility for student & graduation, performing arts, and fine arts – We do not have this. It could be splot (SP?) with both city and county. The facility could pay for itself. Dr. Linda Ledbetter.

More creek/pond/lake water access for fishing from banks. It's always easier to teach kids and others from the shore.

I'd love to see/help get Central Park disc golf up to Gwinnett County status. Little Mulberry Park is similar in size to CP and our course could be just as nice with some TLC from the county.

Upgrade fitness center "Central Park" Dispose of older outdated exercise machines. Upgrade to newer equipment similar to Fowler Park Fitness Center.

Would love to see more disc golf courses and upgrade existing courses.

Let's give kids and adults more places to participate in cycling including BMX racing and mountain biking. Windermere Park would be ideal for a BMX track.

Fowler Park needs more variety of class schedule for evening classes and add Saturday Morning. I want to say only 2 instructors are OUTSTANDING Stacy and Sandra – we will lose them if pay doesn't keep them.

Please increase ranger & police patrol of Fowler skate park in the evenings.

Do not like pickleball lines on tennis courts – too many lines.

I love Stacey!

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

What parks are you currently using?

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS	
Bennet Park	1
Big Creek Greenway	7
Caney Creek Preserve	1
Central Park	7
Charleston Park	
Chattahoochee Pointe	2
Coal Mountain Park	5
Ducktown Community Park	2
Eagles Beak Park	
Fowler Park	11
Haw Creek Park	
Joint Venture Park at Daves	1
Lanierland	1
Matt Community Park	
Old Atlanta Park	1
Poole's Mill Park	6
Sawnee Mountain Park	5
Sawnee Mountain Preserve	6
Shady Grove Campground	1
Sharon Springs Park	5
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	
Windermere Park	2
Young Deer Creek Park	
CITY OF CUMMING PARKS	
City Park	
Dobbs Creek	1
Others:	
Midway Park	4

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

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

Very Satisfied	2
Satisfied	11
Very Dissatisfied	1

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

Yes	5
No	10

Are additional parks and recreation facilities needed?

Yes	13
No	3

If yes, what facilities are needed?

Cultural Arts Center must be supported by P&R, and needs to be built in FoCo.

A Permanent home is needed for cultural arts, something that currently does not exist; however, neighboring communities (Fulton, Roswell, Alpharetta, Cobb, Canton) have such a space.

Continue greenway trail expansion and connectivity.

Expansion of pickleball needed.

Water Facility that supports sailing & kayaks.

Expand access to Chattahoochee at Chattahoochee Point Park.

Aquatic Center – swimming, therapy, water park.

Aquatic swim_____.

**Forsyth County
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan**

Please identify the outdoor recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). **Please use your Green Dots for the highest priorities.**

Outdoor Facilities	Currently using	Would like to use or see expanded
Baseball fields	1 (G); 1 (O)	
Cricket fields		
Football fields	1 (G); 1 (O)	
Lacrosse fields	1 (O)	2 (G)
Soccer fields	3 (O)	2 (G)
Softball fields	1 (O)	
Basketball courts (outdoor)	1 (O)	1 (O)
Bocce courts		2 (G)
Pickleball courts	5 (O)	5 (G)
Tennis courts	3 (O)	1 (O)
Volleyball courts	1 (O)	
Disc golf course		
Playgrounds	3 (O)	1 (O)
Skate park		
Outdoor swimming facility	2 (O)	1 (O); 1(G)
Walking or biking trails	8 (O)	2 (O); 2 (G)
Mountain biking trails	1 (O)	1 (O)
BMX track		
Equestrian trails		
Dog parks	1 (O)	2 (G)
Nature study/observation areas	4 (O)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Open space or natural areas	3 (O)	2(O); 3(G)
Picnic shelters	3 (O)	1 (G)
Water access	3 (O)	1 (O); 2 (G)
Others:		
Cultural Arts Center	1 (O)	2 (O); 2 (G)
Swim Facility		1 (G)
Campgrounds	1 (O)	1 (G)
Fishing		1 (G)

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Please identify the indoor recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). **Please use your Green Dots for the highest priorities.**

Indoor Facilities	Currently using	Would like to use or see expanded
Gymnasium	5 (O)	2 (G)
Fitness center	3 (O)	2 (G)
Racquetball court		1 (O)
Indoor walking track	3 (O)	3 (G)
Indoor aquatics facility	2 (O)	2(G)
Senior center	1 (O)	3 (O)
Classrooms/meeting rooms	1 (O)	1 (G)
Community room	2 (O)	1 (G)
Arts/crafts space		
Nature center/environmental education	3 (O)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Civic Center/Arena		2 (O)
Others:		
Pickleball	4 (O)	4 (G)
Cultural Arts Center		4 (G)

O = Orange Dot

G = Green Dot

**Forsyth County
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan**

How supportive would you be to paying additional taxes for park and recreation facilities you would like to see developed?

Very Supportive	9
Somewhat Supportive	3
Not Sure	
Not Supportive	4

Which would you rather see capital funds go towards?

New Parks	1
Renovation of Existing Parks	6
Both	8
Neither	1

Forsyth County
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan
Additional Comments

Arts create new business & supports existing businesses. (e.g. tourism, hotels, restaurants)

Arts improve the quality of life & has proven to improve healthcare, both mental & physical.

Arts spark creativity & innovation, and improve academic performance.

Arts strengthen the economy.

We need more swim & aquatics facilities.

I'd like to see more neighborhood parks – smaller, convenient.

Need County's first aquatic center, serves every age group/12 months per year.

Happy to live in county that is planning for a great future as a family community. To date the results are excellent. Walking trails, natural areas are wonderful treasures. Looking forward to the addition of more at Eagle Beach.

Better care of what we have already.

Culture & history of the area – display equipment, tool, etc. used in the past.

Better access to fish & kayak.

Expand outdoor summer camps for school age kids.

Parking at all fields needs expanding.

Picnic areas at Chattahoochee Point by the river. Drive up access to river.

Need equipment so residents can use the fields. i.e., soccer goals for resident use on soccer fields when soccer season is over. – Some soccer field access to equipment access even when it is soccer season.

Desperately need indoor & outdoor pickleball at Fowler. The back 2 tennis courts are seldom used & would be perfect.

Dog park in desperate need of help – major erosion problems. Also need benches & the Scouts & schools have offered to build them at no cost to the County.

Expand indoor & outdoor pickleball.

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

What parks are you currently using?

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS	
Bennet Park	2
Big Creek Greenway	33
Caney Creek Preserve	11
Central Park	16
Charleston Park	7
Chattahoochee Pointe	12
Coal Mountain Park	3
Ducktown Community Park	1
Eagles Beak Park	
Fowler Park	38
Haw Creek Park	15
Joint Venture Park at Daves	7
Lanierland	1
Matt Community Park	
Old Atlanta Park	36
Poole's Mill Park	2
Sawnee Mountain Park	11
Sawnee Mountain Preserve	22
Shady Grove Campground	10
Sharon Springs Park	55
South Forsyth Soccer Complex	9
Windermere Park	21
Young Deer Creek Park	3
CITY OF CUMMING PARKS	
City Park	2
Dobbs Creek	2
Others:	
Midway Park	12
Aquatic Center	22
Cultural Arts Center	10
Little Ridge Park	4

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

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

Very Satisfied	10
Satisfied	43
Very Dissatisfied	0

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

Yes	29
No	26

Are additional parks and recreation facilities needed?

Yes	52
No	1

If yes, what facilities are needed?

- Security at all (2)
- More Frisbee Golf (2)
- Pool (6)
- Community Theater (2)
- More BMX/MTB trails (9)
- A wonderful indoor competition pool (13)
- More natural surface running trails like Chattahoochee Point. The greenway (concrete, wood) is not a good surface for runners plus involves more up keep (5)
- Nature park – trees – wooded trails (2)
- Need Cricket Grounds (9)
- Pickleball courts indoor and outdoor S. Forsyth (5)
- Walls for lacrosse Practice of stick skills (wall ball) (2)
- Haw Creek playground – a real one (3)
- Indoor swimming pool for HS teams
- Cricket Grounds (21)
- Shuttle/badminton Indoor court (3)
- Cultural Arts Center (2)
- Indoor pool (3)
- Shady Grove Cabins (3)
- Dog Parks turfed like Newton (4)
- 5K/10K/half marathon trails for races (2)
- Indoor/outdoor pools/water park (14)

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Please identify the outdoor recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). **Please use your Green Dots for the highest priorities.**

Outdoor Facilities	Currently using	Would like to use or see expanded
Baseball fields	13 (O)	1 (G)
Cricket fields	49 (O); 3 (G)	43 (O); 84 (G)
Football fields	3 (O)	2 (O); 2 (G)
Lacrosse fields	4 (O)	3 (G)
Soccer fields	27 (O)	1 (G)
Softball fields	1 (O)	
Basketball courts (outdoor)	5 (O)	3 (O); 3 (G)
Bocce courts		3 (O); 1 (G)
Pickleball courts	5 (O)	5 (G)
Tennis courts	25 (O)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Volleyball courts	5 (O)	2 (G)
Disc golf course	5 (O)	1 (O); 4 (G)
Playgrounds	28 (O)	6 (G)
Skate park	5 (O)	4 (G)
Outdoor swimming facility	25 (O)	3 (O); 16 (G)
Walking or biking trails	39 (O)	2 (O); 7 (G)
Mountain biking trails	15 (O)	2 (O); 18 (G)
BMX track	5 (O)	2 (O); 12 (G)
Equestrian trails	1 (O)	1 (O)
Dog parks	18 (O)	3 (O); 6 (G)
Nature study/observation areas	3 (O)	2 (O); 3 (G)
Open space or natural areas	13 (O)	3 (O); 2 (G)
Picnic shelters	11 (O)	4 (O); 4 (G)
Water access	18 (O)	6 (G)
Others:		
Competition Pool	5 (O)	4 (O); 21 (G)
Sidewalk Access to Parks from Neighborhoods	2 (O)	4 (G)

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Please identify the indoor recreational facilities you are currently using (left column) and those you would like to see developed or expanded (right column). **Please use your Green Dots for the highest priorities.**

Indoor Facilities	Currently using	Would like to use or see expanded
Gymnasium	8 (O)	8 (G)
Fitness center	15 (O)	9 (G)
Racquetball court	1 (O)	3 (O); 6 (G)
Indoor walking track	15 (O)	1 (O); 3 (G)
Indoor aquatics facility	16 (O)	13 (O); 30 (G)
Senior center		8 (G)
Classrooms/meeting rooms	4 (O)	1 (G)
Community room	2 (O)	1 (O); 3 (G)
Arts/crafts space	3 (O)	3 (O); 5 (G)
Nature center/environmental education	6 (O)	3 (O); 7 (G)
Civic Center/Arena		1 (O); 7 (G)
Others:		
Cultural Arts Center	1 (O); 1 (G)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Basketball (indoor)	1 (O); 1 (G)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Junior Dance/Gymnastics	1 (O); 1 (G)	1 (O); 1 (G)
Multipurpose Indoor Rink (roller hockey, box lacrosse)		2 (G)
Shuttle Badminton (indoor)		6 (G)
Pickleball (indoor)	2 (O)	5 (G)

O = Orange Dot

G = Green Dot

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

How supportive would you be to paying additional taxes for park and recreation facilities you would like to see developed?

Very Supportive	46
Somewhat Supportive	22
Not Sure	3
Not Supportive	

Which would you rather see capital funds go towards?

New Parks	12
Renovation of Existing Parks	19 +maintenance
Both	41
Neither	1
Cultural Art Center	4

Forsyth County
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan
Additional Comments

Love Shady Grove.

Need more maintenance like mulch/plants at some parks.

More benches in playground area at Caney.

Expansion of sidewalks to the nearest parks, especially around the new communities which have been constructed recently.

Request you to add cricket pitches to the park. It is a great sport for kids both fitness wise and teamman ship. Please consider the request.

Lacrosse is the fastest growing sport in the country. There is a large portion of residents that play. WE NEEDED an expansion of fields, and walls for practice as well. Improved access to field space for the sport, at existing parks.

I would like to have more outdoor parks.

Recommendation to build cricket grounds, which can be shared with soccer. Johns Creek is doing it and every cricket playing nation does it.

Benches at Caney playground. Turf some dog parks like newton. General maintenance like mulch at Caney. 5K/10K + running trails for races.

Performing Arts – music, acting, dance, theater, young & senior programs. Cumming playhouse needs a replacement, not at historical building that is not flexible.

Build multiple cricket fields, many kids are playing. Indoor facilities are equally important for practicing in winter. They play and won tournaments in NC, NJ, MY, TX.

A performing arts center/auditorium is badly needed for this growing community.

I study at SFMS and I have come here to say and represent a vote for the promotion of cricket. I want more cricket grounds to help promote Atlanta's youth cricket.

Joe Appio – 6225 Sturbridge Ln. I am concerned about the traffic going to Sharon Springs Park. We just started baseball and it seems dangerous going in and exiting the park. Also – we always share field time and it's never enough for practices.

We have strong cricket lover. Our kids are struggling to use the limited resources they have. Request you to add cricket pitches to the parks. That way everyone can get to play.

Outdoor recreation is awesome! More mountain biking trails means more people & families enjoying the outdoors in our community. BMX track would offer our youth a public vicinity to practice & participate in an Olympic recognized sport. Bike trails=COOL!

More turf dog parks. Dog parks in northern portion of county.

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Would like to have indoor cricket.

We have a state champion swim team across the street from OARC. They are forced to swim shorter times, in crowded facility. They must travel far just to practice very early or very late with our growth, we need it here.

We need a performing arts center in Cumming for theater, Broadway shows, dance, acting, rooms for rehearsal for bands, orchestras, choral groups, etc.

Performing Arts Theater Now!! (agree 3)

Please add some more cricket pitches and fields because we have a USA team and we can practice if we have a field. Or Else!

Please consider a wonderful indoor competition pool. With so many high schools now in the county it is a very high priority to build soon. Thank you.

We have a very good cricket team and we would like to see more cricket fields to practice in.

Indoor nets for practicing cricket during weekdays and winters also for coaching cricket.

Indoor/outdoor pools.

Could I please have more competition pool because I am a swimmer and it takes a long time to drive to my pool. 😊 😊

Public indoor & outdoor swimming facility.

Greenway – finish the greenway – connect to the Alpharetta Greenway.

Expand on please... - dog park – picnic areas – outdoor areas – pools – trails, thank you! 😊 😊

Really appreciate the variety of parks in Forsyth. Only request would be for more soft surface natural trails for runners & walkers. They are much easier to maintain too. Also, mile markers would be great.

More running trails. Better marked & upkept.

Can you please build a cricket field? We have only one. 😊

Would like to see the indoor basketball court in Old Atlanta Recreation Center be developed as a shared facility to play shuttle badminton. Many folks in this area are desperately waiting for this to happen. Thanks!

Improvement to Windmere Dog Park. Very poor.

I would like to see more outdoor natural parks, playgrounds and outdoor/indoor swimming pool – thanks!

I would like to see more health care centers/gyms, Jonah.

Consider security and ample parking at all facilities.

Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan

Add more cricket fields, because we need to practice a lot to be a cricket superstar.

I would like to see more out and indoor pools to go swimming in. (4)

Would love sidewalk access to parks! (agree 4)

Cultural Arts Center will house all kinds of community arts – performing & etc.

I study at SFMS and I am friends with many people who want to play & practice cricket but can't find any place to play. There are also many leagues looking for pitches. So my recommendation is building more cricket pitches in parks in south Forsyth and all the parks.

Cultural Arts Center similar to Buford Community Theater & Amphitheater.

Pickleball – 1) expand by making current indoor/outdoor facilities available in South Forsyth (Sharon Springs/Fowler & Old Atlanta Rec). 2) Develop outdoor pickleball exclusive use courts.

More cricket fields.

I just drove 30 minutes from the Cumming Aquatic Center to vote for a pool closer to Lambert High School. The LHS swim team has won the GA State Meet 4 yrs. In a row & every season we drive 30 minutes to a pool. Please consider building one closer. Thank you so much.

Trees are disappearing with the explosive growth. Save some green space/wooded areas for trails. We need more areas to enjoy nature. We need a little Mulberry Park type park! Thank you! See Hog Mountain Rd. Gwinnett Co.

Cultural Arts Center – visual arts, dance, musical theater under one roof. Classrooms for dance, instrumental, and a theater for performances.

I would like a pool in South Forsyth indoor one with a big slide that twists.

I would like to see better maintenance: Examples: Sharon Springs playground washout – Chattahoochee Pointe parking ruts/drainage issues – Sharon Springs parking needs to be repaved. More sidewalks from neighborhoods to parks.

Cricket please.

Public pool for South Forsyth. 😊

Cultural Arts Center – a facility that could be used for local theater programs and music venues.

South Forsyth needs an indoor competitive swimming pool for the community and to support our high school swim teams.

Parks with indoor/outdoor pools.

**Forsyth County
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan**

We would really like to see another competition pool. My son has to travel to Cumming Aquatic Center (lots of traffic) 4x/week. It's really busy there and already 4 swim teams there.

Community Theater.



APPENDIX C: CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PARKS, OPEN SPACE & GREENWAYS

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

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

Nature Preserves/Passive Park

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

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

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

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire county
Acreage/Population Ratio:	Varies
Typical Size:	Sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed. Typically a minimum of 200 acres; up to 1,000 acres.

Typical Facilities:

Environmental Center	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Equestrian Center	Restrooms/Vending
Primitive Camping	Beach
Group Camping	Swimming
Recreational Vehicles Camping	Boating
Nature Trails	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks
Observation Deck	Parking
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Caretaker's House

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



Typical Passive Park

200 + Acres

Regional Parks

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

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

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

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

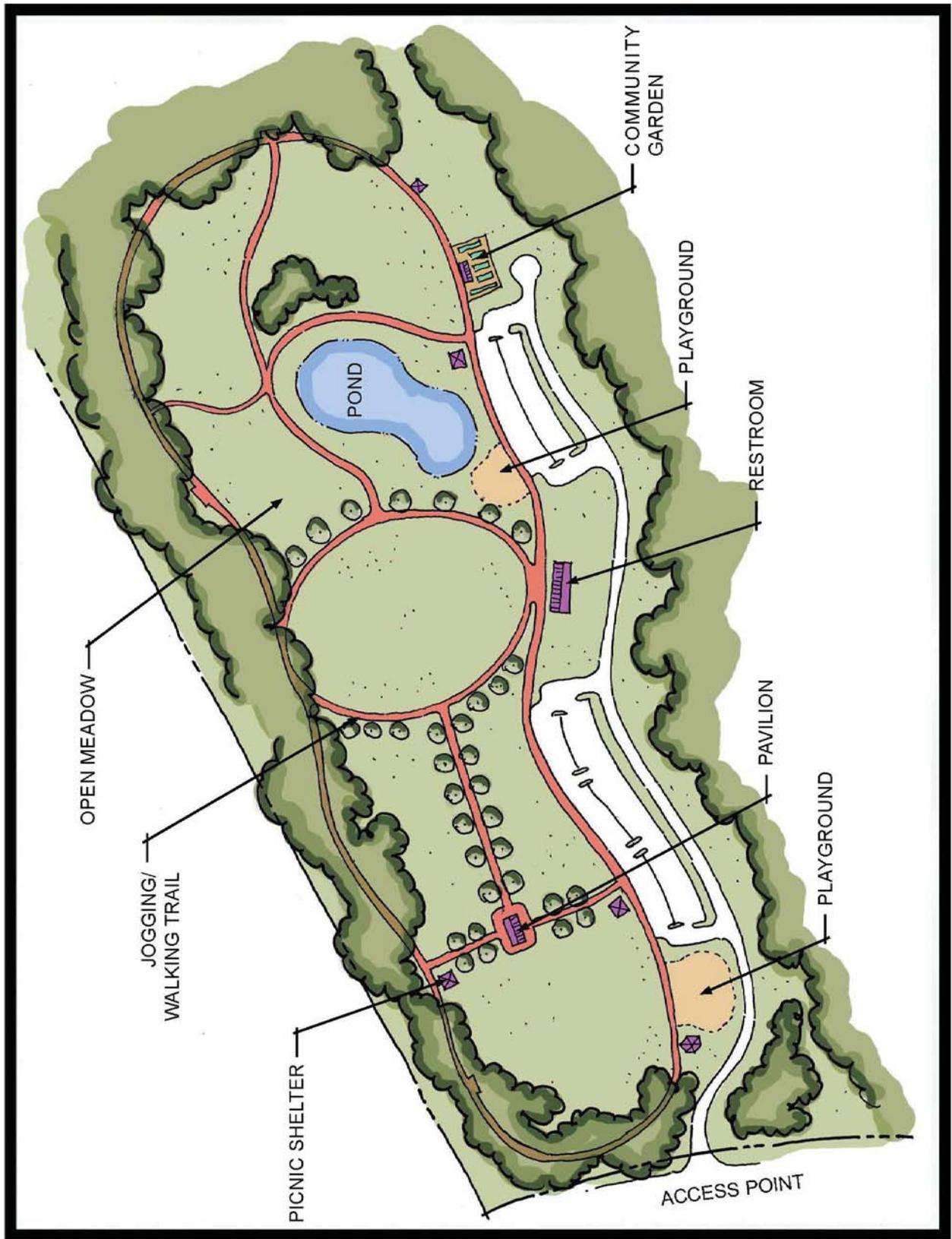
Typical Facilities:

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

Alternate Facilities:

Recreation Center	Amphitheater
Tennis Center	Observation Decks
Running Track	

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



Typical Regional Park

80-150 Acres

Community Parks

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

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

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

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

Typical Facilities:

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

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

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



Typical Community Park

30 - 50 Acres

Neighborhood Parks

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

The NRPA guidelines for Neighborhood Park development are as follows:

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

Neighborhood Parks are typically developed by municipalities.



Typical Neighborhood Park 5 - 10 Acres

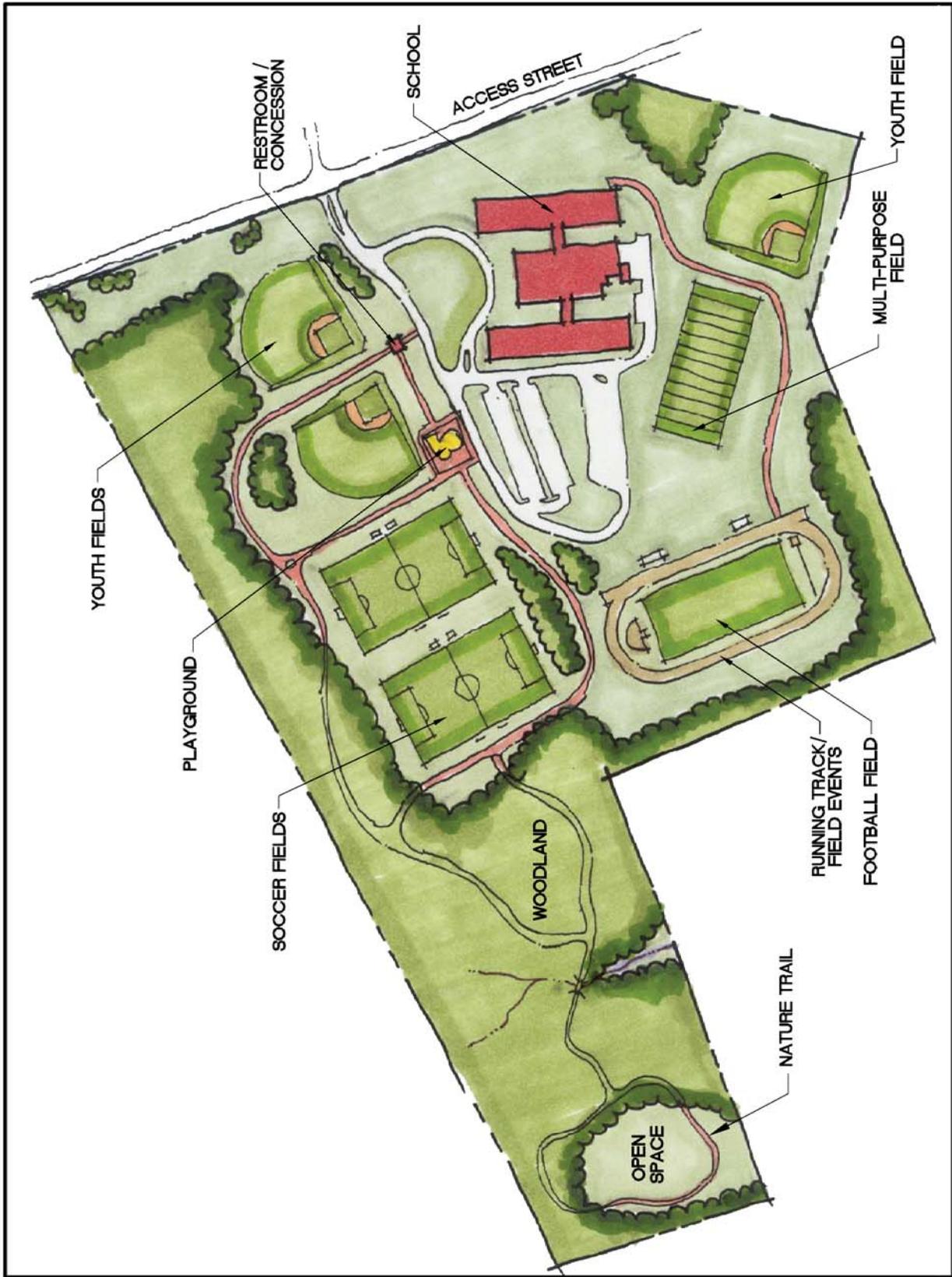
School Parks

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

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

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

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



± 50 Acres

Typical School Park

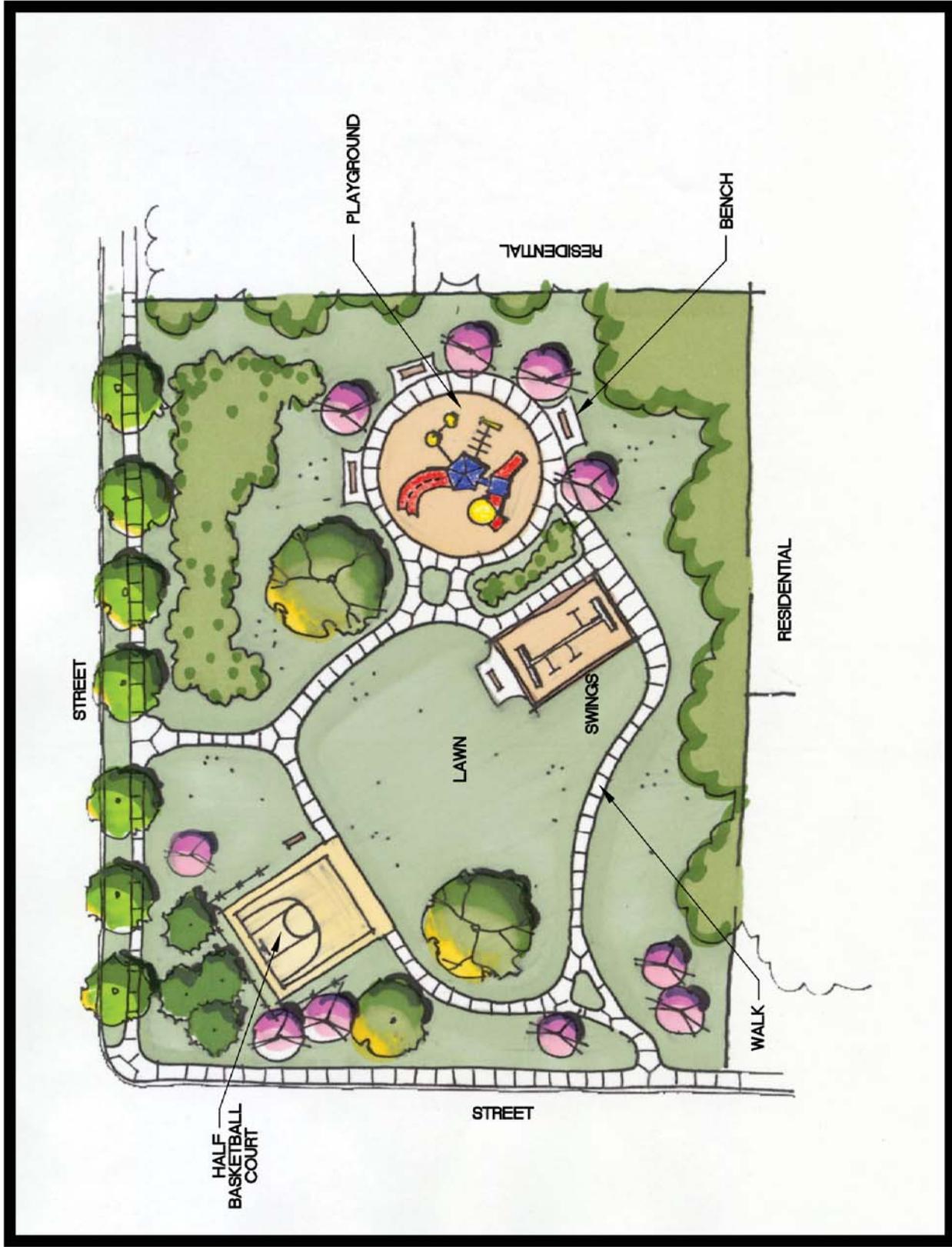
Mini Parks

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

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

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

Mini Parks are typically developed by municipalities.



Typical Mini Park

.25 - 1 Acres

Greenway Trails

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

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

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

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



