

APPENDIX E

*Parks and Recreation
Comprehensive Master Plan*

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SECTION 1

GETTING TO KNOW THE COMMUNITY

Getting to Know the Community

County History

Demographic Profile

Population Trends and Projections

SECTION 2

PARKS AND RECREATION INVENTORY

Parks and Recreation Inventory

Types of Park and Recreation Facilities

Brunswick County Recreation Facility Offerings

Brunswick County Recreation Program Offerings

Public Recreation Facility Offerings

Private Recreation Facility Offerings

SECTION 3

RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Recreation Needs Assessment

Public Input Needs Assessment

State and National Assessment

Evaluation of Park Land Needs

Evaluation of Amenity Needs

Evaluation of Staffing Needs

SECTION 4

GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Objectives

General Recommendations and Best Practices

Existing Facility Recommendations

Future Facility Recommendations

Amenity Proposals and Recommendations

Staffing Recommendations

Priorities for Development

SECTION 5

ACTION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Action Implementation Plan

Anticipated Future Recreational Project List

Funding Opportunities

Land Acquisition and Development

Plan Adoption

Moving Forward into the Future

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Maps

Appendix B

Visual Preferences Exercise Results

Appendix C

Community Survey Results

Appendix D

Focus Group Interviews

Appendix E

Opinion of Project Costs

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

Brunswick County Board of Commissioners

Frank Williams – Chairman, District 5
Randy Thompson – Vice Chairman, District 1
J. Martin (Marty) Cooke – Commissioner, District 2
Pat Sykes – Commissioner, District 3
Mike Forte – Commissioner, District 4

Brunswick County Recreation Advisory Board

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Laura Botto – District 2
Mike Sullivan – District 3
Teagan Perry-Hall – District 4
Dale Rabon – District 5

Brunswick County Recreation Steering Committee

Aaron Perkins – Director of Parks and Recreation
Melinda Johnson – Marketing and Community Events Coordinator
Brian Moore – Maintenance and Athletics Superintendent
Laura Botto – Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair
Kirste Dixon – Director of Planning Department
Helen Bunch – Zoning Administrator
Marc Pages – Principal Planner
Eric Dunham – Planning Board Chair
William Bittenbender (Bill) – Planning Board
Ron Medlin – Planning Board

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Executive Summary





Summary of Parks and Recreation Plans

Parks and recreation is an integral piece of any community. It provides people with high quality of life standards that include health and wellness benefits, the opportunity for leisure, and the ability to connect with other people and the surrounding natural resources. It is commonly accepted that physical activity through recreation activities and park use improves one's overall mental and physical health. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) states that, "The nation's public parks and recreation departments are leaders in improving the overall health and wellness of the nation. They are essential partners in combating some of the most complicated challenges our country faces – poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, and physical inactivity. Park and recreation agencies effectively improve health outcomes and thus should be supported through national and community-level funding and policies that enable them to continue to expand their efforts in making a positive change in the health and wellness of our nation." ("Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness: Position Statement: National Recreation and Park Association." Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness | Position Statement | National Recreation and Park Association, <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/role-of-parks-and-recreation-on-health-and-wellness/>.)

Brunswick County provides public recreation to its citizens as a means of supporting a high quality of life. Studies have shown that well-being is very important to residents and visitors. Extensive research also demonstrates the positive economic impact of recreation, parks, and tourism on local economies. Lively programs and events also have a major impact on community economic development and a sense of unity within a community. Brunswick County has the potential to attract new residents and businesses eager to experience the quality of life the County provides.

As the Covid-19 Pandemic affected the population on a global basis, parks and recreation became a critical outlet for many people. It provided for the necessary physical, mental, and social outlet for individuals. This trend has been a positive influence for communities as a whole; however, the negative impact on a parks and recreation system is the increased need for maintenance due to high usage. According to the NRPA

“THERE IS NOT A SINGLE SET OF STANDARDS FOR PARKS AND RECREATION BECAUSE DIFFERENT AGENCIES SERVE DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE UNIQUE NEEDS, DESIRES, AND CHALLENGES. ”

- 2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review

2020 National Report, 1 in 5 parks and recreation agencies are reducing operations spending by at least 33%, with 66% of agencies facing a median reduction of 10–19%. The County will need to evaluate their budget and determine what efficiencies may need to be incorporated.

The County recognizes the importance of *planning* as a means of improving recreation opportunities for all its residents and visitors. As a result, Brunswick County hired McGill Associates, PA (McGill) to assist with the creation of a ten-year Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Brunswick County's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2022–2032 provides guidance to assist Brunswick County's board and staff with future decision making. The model for this Master Plan is based upon conducting an inventory of the existing park system, recording site observations, discussing needs of County staff, and evaluating public comments made through community input. In addition, state and national standards were used as a guide to support the recommendations made for the County's recreation facilities. The assessment of existing park facilities, or lack thereof, will identify the immediate needs in the community and predict future needs.

Another purpose in developing the master plan is to analyze and recommend the addition or renovation of parks, programs, and recreational facilities. It also prioritizes certain projects, such as recommended park upgrades or possible expansion, by taking into consideration the identification of user population and the development of recreation standards. The Master Plan is action oriented and will provide Brunswick County with a practical guide for the enhancement of its facilities and programs for the next ten years. It is intended to maintain the type of location that fosters community spirit, activism, and bonding between local citizens.

Section 1 gives a synopsis of the local history, provides insight into the community, looks at the people that make up Brunswick County, and addresses population trends and projections.

Section 2 provides a detailed inventory of the recreational facilities in Brunswick County provided by both public and private entities.

Section 3 looks at the needs of the County through public input gathered by the community, state and national guidelines for recreation, and evaluation of the facilities, programs, and staff.

Section 4 provides goals and recommendations to improve upon the current parks and recreational offerings within Brunswick County.

Section 5 provides the County with actionable items to implement improvements as well as offer insight into funding opportunities.

Existing Park Facilities

Brunswick County provides multiple types of recreational facilities for both residents throughout the County and tourists who visit. These different types of facilities are attainable due to the varied environmental ecosystems throughout the County. Brunswick County is unique in that it has coastal woodlands, wetlands, rivers, streams, and ocean front beach access. Each of these environments provide different opportunities for recreation.



Brunswick Nature Park

Brunswick Nature Park is a 911-acre park located in eastern Brunswick County near the community of Winnabow, adjacent to Town Creek. This protected, undeveloped land is an environmental sanctuary allowing visitors the ability to observe natural beauty typical of the coastal region.



Cedar Grove Park

Cedar Grove Park, located in the central part of the County near the community of Supply, is a joint facility between the Brunswick County Parks & Recreation Department and Brunswick County Public Schools.



Dutchman Creek Park

Dutchman Creek Park is located on the waterfront of Dutchman Creek in Southport. This facility offers attractive views of the water as well as bank fishing, open space, a playground, and picnicking opportunities. The park is adjacent to an NC Wildlife boat launch location.



Leland Community Park

Leland Community Park provides a variety of recreation amenities to the community. This park is located in the northeastern part of Brunswick County.



Lockwood Folly District Park

Lockwood Folly District Park is a 20-acre district park located near the community of Supply in south central Brunswick County.



Navassa Park

Navassa Park is a small neighborhood park located in the northern part of Brunswick County.



Northwest District Park

Northwest District Park provides visitors with active recreational opportunities in an open setting located in northern Brunswick County near the community of Leland.



Ocean Isle Beach Park

Ocean Isle Beach Park is a large district park that provides visitors with access to multiple forms of active recreation. The park is located just north of Ocean Isle Beach in the southern portion of Brunswick County.



Shallotte Park

Shallotte Park is situated in the southern part of Brunswick County in the Town of Shallotte.



Smithville District Park

Smithville District Park is positioned in the southeastern part of Brunswick County near the City of Southport.



Town Creek District Park

Town Creek Park is a large district park that allows a wide array of both passive and active recreational opportunities. The park is located in central Brunswick County in the community of Winnabow.



Waccamaw Park

Waccamaw Park is a small district park located in central Brunswick County and is adjacent to Waccamaw Elementary School.



Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center

In partnership with Brunswick Community College, the County offers visitors access to the Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center. The campus and aquatic center are located in Bolivia in central Brunswick County.

Waterway Park (Planned) This facility located on the Intracoastal Waterway near Holden Beach and will feature day-use activities and waterway access via planned a transit dock for four small boats.

Population Trends and Projections

The people that make up a community play an integral role in how to plan and prepare for the future of a sustainable parks and recreation system. A study of the demographic profile of County residents is a key factor in making specific and accurate recommendations. According to the United States Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census the County's overall population estimate is 136,693 and the average age of residents within the County is 54 years old.

Along with demographics, understanding population trends and projections is an integral part of proposing future plans. The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (NC OSBM) projects that by the year 2030, 1 in 5 North Carolinians will be 65 years old or older. NC OSBM also projects that the County will have an increase in population of around 12% by the year 2031.

Another population of people to consider for Brunswick County are the tourists that flock to the coastal region and all that it has to offer. Determining how the seasonal population impacts the County can be difficult due to the range of factors that must be considered in estimating the peak population. While the permanent residents of Brunswick County are the key members to plan for, it is also important to understand that the seasonal population plays a big role in how the park facilities are used and any necessary recommendations must account for this large group of people.

Public Input

In preparing this Master Plan, the County guided McGill's team in the development of the public survey, plan goals, and recommendations. A key objective in the development of this Master Plan was the solicitation of community input, thereby identifying additional needs for County residents and visitors, such as renovation, construction, property acquisition, development, and operational policies, for both now and in the future. Community input, along with the comparison to state and national standards, are the initial steps in the process.

In addition to a public survey, there were multiple public meetings that provided important knowledge that aided in the process towards making recommendations for the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department.

Goals and Recommendations

The Master Plan emphasizes practical and more desirable improvements to the existing recreation system, including parks and recreational facilities. It is not designed to be exclusive but rather to enhance recreational opportunities in the community.

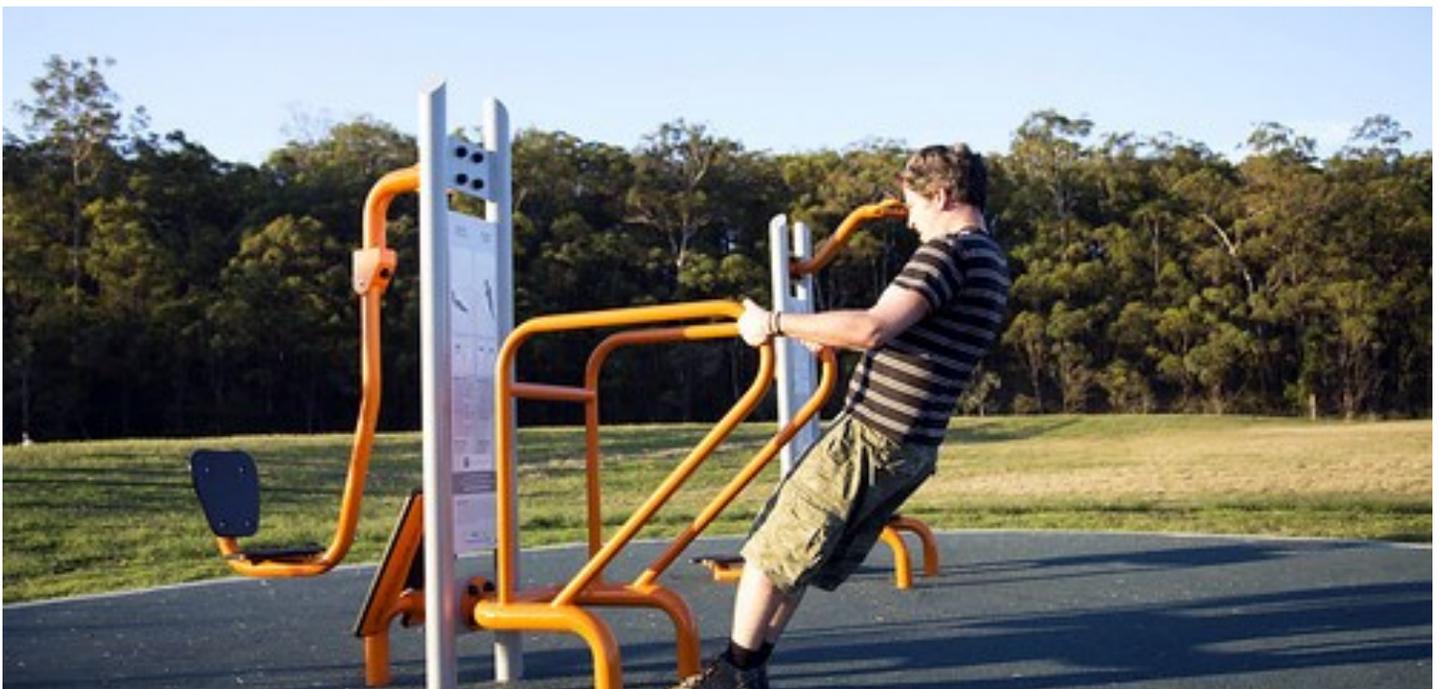
The Master Plan focuses on providing Brunswick County with an accurate, usable guide for decision making as the County begins to implement projects, such as:

- Renovating existing facilities currently owned by Brunswick County
- Exploring the possibilities for developing new facilities within Brunswick County
- Developing facilities and programming for future greenways that will promote walking and cycling
- Updating policy and ordinances to meet community needs and desires

An opinion of costs for the proposed improvements to existing facilities and the development of anticipated future projects is **\$46,274,000**, not including potential affects due to inflation or notable shifts in the construction market.

Implementation Plan

The County can leverage its many natural, historic, and recreational resources, as well as develop its visitor tourism, by improving public spaces, park facilities, programming, and events. Developers and community leaders recognize the importance of greenways and trails, open spaces, water-based recreation amenities, athletic facilities, and cultural programs. Recommendations provided in this Comprehensive Master Plan provide achievable actions that support Brunswick County's goals and ability to serve its residents.



VISION

MISSION

Brunswick County Parks & Recreation strives to promote quality of life for all by offering safe parks and facilities, creative recreational programs, quality community relations, while fostering a keen stewardship towards the natural environment.

GOALS

Ensure adequate parks and recreation opportunities for the community and visitors by maintaining and renovating existing County-owned facilities, exploring possibilities for developing new facilities and programs, and seeking funding opportunities and partnerships.

PROCESS

Discovery and Data Collection

Understanding the community requires looking at current demographics and inventorying County-owned recreation facilities and programs. Inventory and analysis of this information is used to improve the current parks and recreation system. Who the County is serving correlates directly to what improvements may be appropriate.

Assessment

The future of Brunswick County's parks and recreation is determined by listening and understanding what has worked in the past and what can be improved upon. After discovering who the community is and what facilities and programs exist, the needs of County residents and staff are considered. Through analysis of open conversations with residents, public survey input, staff input, and looking at typical standards, a picture of how to move forward with improvements and future expansion of County recreation facilities and services develops.

Recommendations

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



PLAN

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STAFF COMMITMENT

Getting to Know the Community





Getting to Know the Community

Brunswick County is located in eastern North Carolina with the border of South Carolina to the south. The coastal region of the County lends itself to beautiful terrain, amazing vistas, and provides an abundant variety of ecosystems. Brunswick County also provides a wide array of opportunities for outdoor recreation, including miles of coastline, public beach access locations, rivers, streams, and forests in addition to miles of various trail types for hiking, running, and cycling.

As of the 2020 Decennial Census, Brunswick County is home to 136,693 permanent residents. With the outdoor recreation opportunities provided by the surrounding environment, Brunswick County also has a large tourism industry. Brunswick County is located approximately 30 miles southwest of Wilmington, North Carolina and 50 miles northeast of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The County seat is Bolivia, North Carolina. Whatever the recreational activity, Brunswick County delivers a plethora of opportunities for both residents and visitors.

County History

On March 9, 1764, the governor of North Carolina signed the legislative act that created Brunswick County out of New Hanover and Bladen Counties. It was named after the Town of Brunswick, which was named in honor of King George I, who was the Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg. The County seat was first located at Brunswick Town, a town founded by Maurice Moore, son of Governor James Moore, located on the west bank of the Cape Fear River. In 1779, the County seat was moved to Lockwood Folly and in 1808, it was moved to Smithville, known today as Southport, where it would remain for 167 years. On July 19, 1975, a referendum passed, moving the County seat from Southport to its present location just below the Town of Bolivia.

Demographic Profile

A review of the demographic information for Brunswick County has been evaluated to better understand the characteristics of the community. It also serves as a tool to identify future trends and projections that may influence recreation and park planning. Information concerning age and gender are important factors in determining the needs for recreation in the community. The general demographic characteristics for full-time residents of Brunswick County has been obtained by the 2019 United States Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) and the 2020 United States Census Bureau Decennial Census.

SEX	POPULATION	PERCENT
Male	66,570	48.7%
Female	70,123	51.3%
TOTAL:	136,693	100%

AGE	POPULATION	PERCENT
0 to 9 years	10,799	7.9%
10 to 19 years	12,029	8.8%
20 to 34 years	17,770	13%
35 to 54 years	28,159	20.6%
55 to 74 years	53,857	39.4%
75 years and older	14,079	10.3%
TOTAL:	136,693	100%

RACE	POPULATION	PERCENT
White	114,685	83.9%
Black or African American	12,849	9.4%
Hispanic	6,698	4.9%
Asian	684	0.5%
American Indian / Alaskan	820	0.6%
Other	957	0.7%
TOTAL:	136,693	100%

Demographics from 2020 US Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimates and 2020 Decennial Census



Over the years, there has been an increase in population – a trend that is likely to continue as more individuals are attracted to the coastal lifestyle and the opportunities that it provides. When planning recreation, it is important to consider the impact of vacationers, visitors, and temporary residents visiting the community on a seasonal basis. Typically, the seasonal population has the greatest impact on services and resources from the end of May to the beginning of November.

Populations in coastal regions can vary throughout a given year. Determining how the seasonal population impacts the County can be difficult due to the range of factors that must be considered in estimating the peak population. In addition, year-round population figures established by the North Carolina State Demographer and the United States Census Bureau do not account for the seasonal population. While the permanent residents of Brunswick County are the key members to plan for, it is also important to understand that the seasonal population plays a big role in how the park facilities are used and any necessary recommendations must account for this large group of people.



Population Trends and Projections

According to the North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2020–2025, senior citizens comprise the fastest growing age group. The senior population is expected to have significant impacts throughout society due to income levels, population, and unique needs. NC OSBM projects that by the year 2030, 1 in 5 North Carolinians will be 65 years old or older.

This growing segment of the society is a significant user of recreational programming and facilities. The parks and recreation department will have to increase the number and type of activities and facilities to effectively serve this population, both now and in the future.

To meet the demands of residents and visitors, the County's parks and recreation department will have to continually evaluate its recreation and ancillary facilities, as well as offer more types of recreational programs as the population changes.

Much like seasonal and peak population estimates, population projections can vary widely due to intervening factors, such as the strength of the economy, availability of jobs, and housing prices. Population projections identify potential challenges and needs that may confront the community in the future.

NC OSBM also provides projections for County populations across the state. The state demographer's population growth estimate for Brunswick County indicates a population increase will mostly occur from migration into the County, while natural growth from births will have a minor change in the County's population. According to NC OSBM, in 2030 the permanent population of Brunswick County is projected to be 179,854 people. This is an increase of about 43,161 people or 31.6%.

Parks & Recreation Inventory





Parks and Recreation Inventory

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

- County-owned parks and other recreational facilities
- Publicly owned facilities (national, state, and local municipalities)
- Schools
- Privately owned facilities

Local municipalities successfully provide a wide mix of traditional recreation facilities and programs to residents of Brunswick County. In addition to providing parks and recreation services to those not living within local municipal areas and supporting recreation programming throughout the County, the department has a unique opportunity to compliment traditional recreation by promoting the natural environment and provide recreation enrichment though less traditional programs aimed to take advantage of the County's environmental assets, cultural heritage, and support trending outdoor activities.

This section will provide a brief analysis of Brunswick County's recreation facilities — noting any visible improvements needed for each County-owned facility. This method of study served as a guide for Brunswick County in its efforts to develop a plan for present and future needs.



Types of Parks and Recreation Facilities

A comprehensive park system is made up of a variety of park types ranging from small neighborhood playgrounds to larger parks with athletic fields, playgrounds, community centers, trails, greenways, and open space. The type of park reflects the differing recreational preferences of diverse users. Park models are used as guidelines for fulfilling the future recreational needs of communities. Not all of these types of parks are the responsibility of the County government; several agencies (federal, state, county, and other local municipalities) play roles in providing recreational opportunities as well. To further understand the County's role in providing recreation services to its citizens, it is necessary to understand the elements of a comprehensive park system. These types of parks and recreation facilities may or may not be included in comprehensive park systems and are delineated in the following pages of this section.



REGIONAL PARKS

DISTRICT PARKS

COMMUNITY PARKS

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

MINI PARKS

LINEAR PARKS / GREENWAYS

SPECIAL-USE FACILITIES

OPEN SPACE



Regional parks are typically very large sites. Fort Fisher State Recreation Area and Lake Waccamaw State Park, located near Brunswick County, serve as regional parks that provide recreational open space and historical and educational opportunities to its patrons. On these sites, the unique qualities that exemplify the natural features found there, such as diverse land formation, vegetation, and wildlife, are preserved. Most regional park facilities contain environmental centers, campsites, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. In addition, open fields for non-structured activities, such as frisbee throwing or kite flying, are also generally found there.

District parks function as the major source of active recreation for several neighborhoods within a community. Brunswick County offers four parks to the community that are typical of district parks. Northwest District Park and Smithville District Park deliver recreational opportunities that are similar in programming and scope and afford the members of the community and visitors the ability to play, relax, and enjoy the outdoors. District parks are intensely developed, offering a multitude of facilities in order to serve their intended geographic user area. Activities are balanced between active and passive recreation. District parks are typically developed to accommodate athletic league sporting events and tournament competition. Passive recreation opportunities, such as walking for pleasure, wildlife observation, and picnicking are found in the undisturbed areas, preferably within surrounding buffers. District parks present great opportunities for non-traditional types of recreation.

Community parks focus on meeting community-based recreational needs as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. Leland Community Park is one example of the many community parks provided by the County. This great community park provides visitors access to a variety of recreational resources. Compared to district parks, community parks have a smaller range of recreation facilities. They may host athletic league sports events and provide passive recreation.

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

Mini parks are small places typically located in urban areas or associated with residential or institutional developments. These facilities can serve to bring communities together with events, promote local history, or deliver beauty to both residents and visitors. The function of a mini park is to provide very limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs. They are typically located within walking distance of the area served.

Linear parks or greenways are areas developed for a variety of modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, and driving. Linear parks are developed for several reasons:

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

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

Special-use facilities are park types that exist for the sole purpose of enhancing or utilizing a special man-made or natural feature. They can include beaches, parkways, historical sites, sites of archeological significance, swimming pools, conservation easements, and floodplains. Minimum standards relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry for this category of park. A size that is sufficient to protect and interpret the resource, while providing optimum use, is considered desirable. The Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center is such an example of a special-use facility.

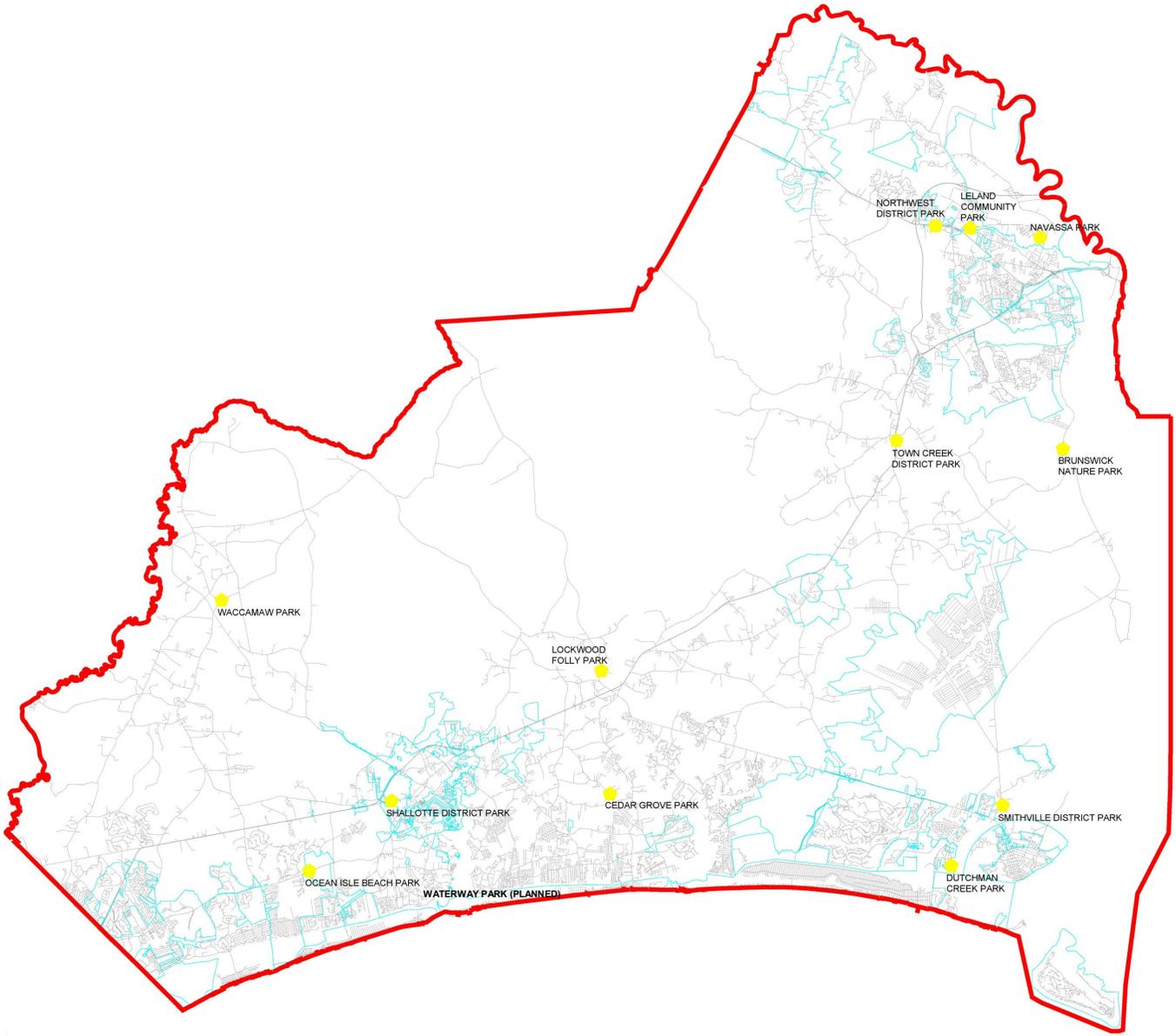
Public open space is defined as any land acquired for the purpose of keeping it in a primarily undeveloped state. The functions of open space include:

- Preservation of drainage areas for water supplies (watersheds)
- Protection of areas which are particularly well suited for growing crops (farmland preservation)
- Protection of communities to prevent urban sprawl (greenbelts)
- Protection of wildlife habitats (sanctuaries)
- Protection of approach and take-off areas near airports (clear zones)
- Protection of undevelopable land (landfills)
- Protection of areas aesthetically pleasing for a corridor (viewsheds)

While these areas are some of the more common open spaces, many others exist. The Brunswick County Park System currently offers natural open space at Brunswick Nature Park. The park is predominantly an open-space facility featuring water access, fishing, canoe/kayak launch, trails, and minimal day-use amenities, such as a picnic shelter and restrooms. This facility allows visitors to enjoy beautiful views of the surrounding flora and fauna, while providing parking and informational signage.

A more detailed definition of typical park types can be found in Appendix B.

Brunswick County RECREATION Facility Offerings



LEGEND

-  County Boundary
-  Existing Park
-  Existing Road Centerline
-  Existing Municipal Boundary

Brunswick County Existing Conditions
(See Appendix F for 11" x 17")



Brunswick Nature Park

Description:

Brunswick Nature Park is a 911-acre park located in eastern Brunswick County near the community of Winnabow, adjacent to Town Creek. This protected, undeveloped land is an environmental sanctuary allowing visitors the ability to observe natural beauty typical of the coastal region.

Amenities include:

Kayak / Canoe Launch

Fishing Pier

Picnic Pavilion Available to Rent

Restroom

Charcoal Grill

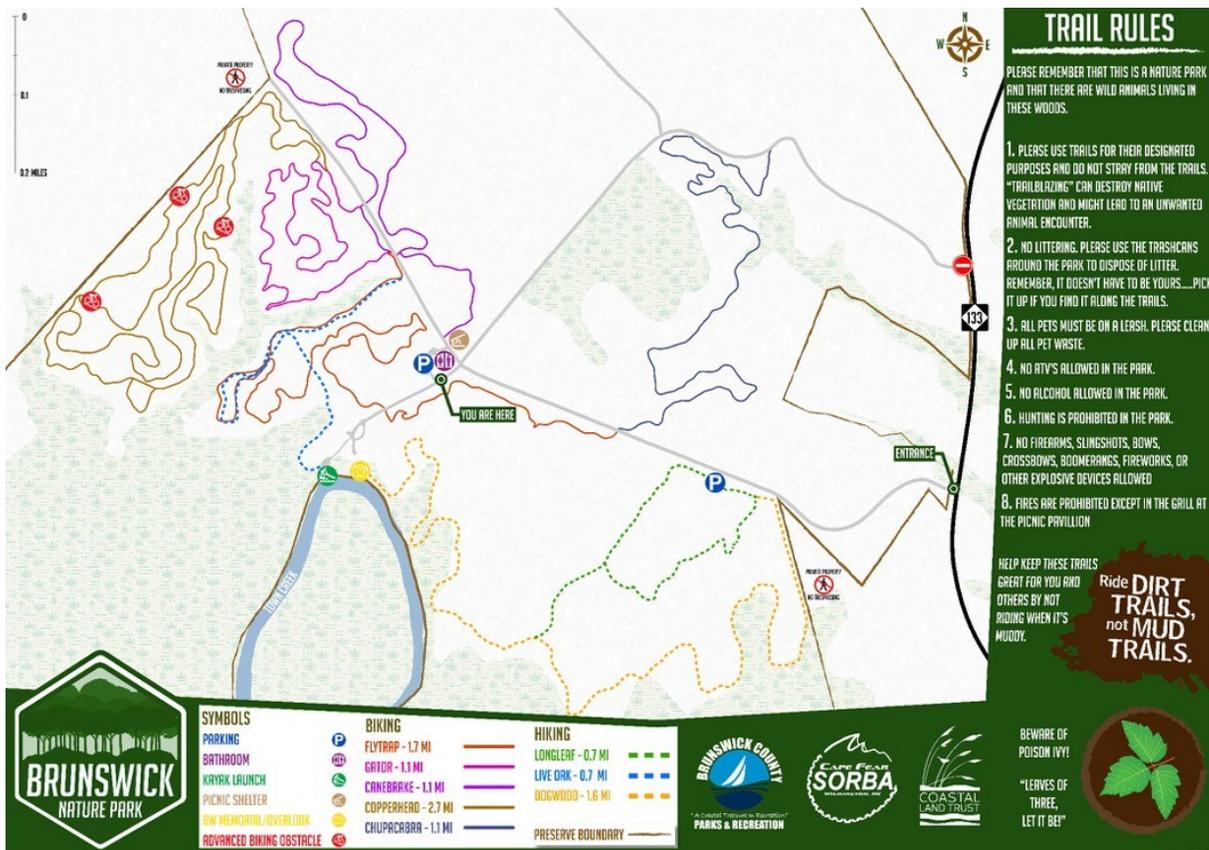
Hiking Trails / Bike Trails

Picnic Areas

Open 8 am to Dusk



The natural environment and miles of trails provide a relaxing destination for County residents.



Brunswick Nature Park Trail Map: bcparcs.recdesk.com

Cedar Grove Park

Description:

Cedar Grove Park is a 75-acre (161 acres total with school) facility. Located convenient to Supply, Shallotte, and Holden Beach, this park offers opportunities to enjoy nature, play, and have fun. The park is located directly behind Cedar Grove Middle School and serves as the school's main area for leisure and sports activities. It is the first of its kind in Brunswick County, where two organizations (Brunswick County Schools and Brunswick County) maximize space, land, and facilities.

Amenities include:

- (2) Tennis courts
- (2) Basketball courts
- Concession stand/Restrooms
- Soccer / football field
- (300') Softball field
- (300') Baseball field
- Field House
- 1 mile of walking trails around park & fields
- Multipurpose field



Cedar Grove Park is conveniently located adjacent to the Cedar Grove Middle School.



Cedar Grove Park aerial provided by Google Earth.

Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center

Description:

In partnership with Brunswick Community College, the County offers visitors access to the Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center. The campus and aquatic center are located in Bolivia in central Brunswick County. Visitors with small children also have access to a childcare facility. The fitness and aquatic center offers group exercise classes, fitness and sports camps, personal training, and swim lessons.

Amenities include:

(1) Indoor gym-style fitness center

(1) Indoor walking track

(1) Indoor gymnasium

(1) Aerobics studio

4,500-square-foot lap pool

1,584-square-foot shallow water pool

(1) Bike spin room

TRX suspension training

Massage therapy

Year-round aquatic and fitness programming



This facility provides a wide range of programs, services, and activities throughout the year.



Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center is part of the Brunswick Community College campus.

Dutchman Creek Park

Description:

This park is located on Fish Factory Road in Southport. It has 33 acres of partially developed land offering opportunities for fishing, picnicking, and a playground. There is also restroom facility at this park.

Amenities include:

Fishing

Picnic Areas

Restrooms

Walking Path

Playground



With beautiful views of Dutchman Creek, visitors are provided a large open area, park amenities, and restrooms to enjoy the park.



A bench swing provides an ideal spot to relax and enjoy the views of the water at Dutchman Creek.

Leland Community Park

Description:

Leland Community Park is an 11-acre facility located on Village Road in northeast Leland. This park offers a good mix of active and passive recreation amenities.

Amenities include:

(2) Baseball fields – (180' and 200')

Practice area / (2) batting cages

Field house with concession stand /restrooms

Storage building

(3) Picnic shelters – shelter #2 available to rent

Grills

Community building (Leland 5th District – 1,050 sq. ft., 75 person capacity)

Playground

Shuffleboard

Public recycle bin

Paved walking trail

Horseshoes



Leland Community Park offers a lively setting for an enjoyable outing.



Existing playground with pour-in-place rubber surfacing makes for a safer day at the playground.

Lockwood Folly District Park

Description:

Lockwood Folly District Park is on approximately 20 acres and is conveniently located off of Highway 17 on Green Swamp Road in Supply. There is also a community building in Lockwood Folly, not located at this park but can be found at 1691 Stanbury Road SW, Supply. 1,800 sq. ft., 115 person capacity, w/ kitchen.

Amenities include:

(3) Baseball / Softball fields – 2 @ 200', 1 @ 300'

(3) Press Boxes

Football / Soccer field

Playground / Swings

Concession stand / restrooms

(2) Tennis courts

Office / storage building

Basketball court

Restroom building

Public recycle bin

(4) Picnic shelters – #1 shelter available to rent

Batting cage



This facility offers fields and other amenities to support both active and passive recreation programming.



The picnic shelter under the shade of tall pines offers respite during rainy weather.

Navassa Park

Description:

This 8-acre park (five acres owned by Brunswick County and three acres owned by the Town of Navassa). This facility serves as an important element supporting the quality of life for area residents.

Amenities include:

Baseball Field - 300'

(2) Playgrounds

Basketball court

Concession stand/restrooms

Tennis court

Picnic shelter



The amenities of Navassa Park are an important resource that supports quality of life for the community.



Lighted ballfield and scoreboard at Navassa Park

Northwest District Park

Description:

This 37-acre park offers predominantly active recreation amenities but also serves to host small gatherings, such as family picnics.

Amenities include:

(5) Baseball/Softball Fields -- 2 @ 300', 2 @ 250', 1 @ 150'

Multi-purpose area

Concession stand/restrooms

(4) Tennis courts w/Pickleball striping

Swings

Batting Cage

(4) Picnic shelters – shelter #1 Available to rent

Football/Soccer field

(3) small Soccer fields

(2) Basketball courts

Restroom building

Playground

Public recycle bin

Bleachers



Northwest District Park offers many active recreation fields.



Basketball court at Northwest District Park

Ocean Isle Beach Park

Description:

This 58-acre park is located north of Town of Ocean Isle on Old Georgetown Road. This park offers a mix of active and passive recreation opportunities and is known for its outdoor amphitheater which hosts performing arts events.

Amenities include:

- (8) Tennis courts
- (6) Pickleball courts
- (2) Softball / Baseball fields (300')
- (2) Youth ball fields (200')
- Multipurpose field
- Walking trail
- Picnic shelter (#1 shelter available to rent)
- Press box / concession stand w/ restroom
- (2) Playgrounds / swings
- (2) Basketball courts
- Fitness stations
- Dog park
- 300 seat amphitheater -- available to rent
- Restroom building
- Public recycle bin
- Charcoal grill



With activities and amenities, this facility supports both residents and visitors to Ocean Isle Beach.



Aerial image of Ocean Isle Beach Park

Shalotte Park

Description:

Shalotte Park is located in the western portion of the Town of Shalotte's Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction. The park consists of 68-acres and offers mostly active recreation amenities.

Amenities include:

Multipurpose field

(2) Concession stand/restrooms

Basketball court

Playground

Swings

(4) Baseball/Softball fields -- 2 @ 200', 2 @ 300'

(2) Picnic shelters – shelter #3 available to rent

Gazebo

Office / storage building

(2) Tennis courts w/ Pickleball striping

Public recycle bin

(3) Batting cages

Dog park

(3) Press boxes



Ball sports are featured among other amenities at this park in the southwestern portion of Brunswick County.



Concession building at Shalotte Park

Smithville District Park

Description:

This 44-acre active recreation park is located at 8340 River Road SE near the Town of Southport.

Amenities include:

- (2) Baseball/Softball fields – 300' each
- Basketball court
- Football/Soccer field – 300'
- Storage building
- (2) Multi-purpose fields / Soccer fields
- Playground – ADA accessible w/ liberty swing
- (3) Concession stands with restrooms
- (8) Tennis courts
- (3) Additional youth ball fields – 200' each
- (3) Press boxes
- (5) Picnic shelters – #1 shelter available to rent
- (4) Pickleball courts
- (2) Batting cages



This park provides an excellent access to a number of active recreation activities.



Aerial image of Smithville District Park provided by Google Earth

Town Creek District Park

Description:

Town Creek Park consists of 44-acres of land and is predominantly an active recreation facility. It is conveniently located adjacent to Town Creek Middle School.

Amenities include:

- (5) Baseball/softball fields – (3) @ 200', (2) @ 300'
- (2) Story concession/press box building w/ restrooms
- (2) Basketball court
- (2) Soccer/multi-purpose fields
- Shuffleboard
- Dog park
- (2) Picnic shelters – #1 shelter available to rent
- Community building – (Available for rent, 2,000 sq. ft., 125 person capacity, w/ kitchen)
- (2) Playgrounds
- (2) Batting cage
- Paved walking trails w/ fitness stations
- (2) Tennis courts w/ Pickleball striping
- Bocce ball / horseshoes
- Nature trails
- Public recycle bin



Activities for both young and old support a healthy lifestyle for County residents.



With a community center and ample parking, Town Creek District Park hosts numerous different events and activities.

Waccamaw Park

Description:

This 37-acre park offers a mix of passive and active recreation amenities.

Amenities include:

- (4) Baseball / softball fields
- (2) Tennis courts
- (2) Basketball courts
- (1) Multipurpose field
- (1) Playground w/ picnic shelter (available for rent)
- (1) Picnic shelter
- Restrooms
- 9 hole frisbee golf course
- Concession w/ restroom
- Batting cage / (2) horseshoes
- (2) Bocce
- Recycle bin
- Community center (2000 sf w/ kitchen, 100 person capacity)



A wide range of active recreation elements are offered for County residents.



Waccamaw Park is adjacent to Waccamaw School.

Waterway Park (Planned)

This facility located on the Intracoastal Waterway near Holden Beach and will feature day-use activities and waterway access via planned a transit dock for four small boats.

Brunswick County Recreation Program Offerings

Recreational programs offered by the County are an integral part of a parks and recreation system. Programs can be special classes, regular classes, summer camps, and special events that celebrate holidays or important community celebrations. Each of these elements can create a feeling of unity and pride within a community. An inventory of the programs offered by Brunswick County was completed to gain an understanding of the offerings made available to the public.

Athletic Programming

- Adult softball
- Youth basketball
- Youth soccer
- Youth baseball
- Youth softball
- Youth cheerleading
- Youth football
- Cheerleading

Camps and Classes

- Camp Brunswick
- Athletic camps
- Shag dance
- Pickleball clinics
- Tennis lessons
- Instructional cheerleading
- Karate
- Knitting and crochet club
- Scrapbooking and card-making club

Senior Activities

- Softball
- Volleyball
- Day trips and holiday trips
- Basketball
- Senior games and silverarts

Special Events

- Summer Concert and Movie Series
- Candy Land Carnival
- Special Olympics Spring games
- Special Olympics Polar Plunge
- Night to Shine
- Annual holiday events (Easter/Halloween)

Special Populations

- Horseback riding
- Sports clinics (bowling, swimming, tennis, yoag)

Public Recreation Facility Offerings

Public lands located within Brunswick City play an active role in providing recreation opportunities to residents and visitor within the County. These public spaces are made available through multiple public land managers, such as local municipalities, the State of North Carolina, and national land management agencies.

Bald head Island

Marina Park

- Event space
- Kayak launch / Rentals
- Restrooms
- Viewing areas

Creek Access

- Gazebo
- Picnic Tables
- Canoe/Kayak launch
- Small Boat Launch
- Grill

Dog Park

- Separate Small/Dog Areas
- Seating Area

Village Common Park

- Gazebo/Stage
- Open Space Lawn
- Lighthouse Climbing Tower

Belville

Belville Riverwalk

- Boardwalk
- Riverwalk Trail
- Duke Educational Pavilion
- Fishing Pier
- Boat Ramp
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Jet Ski Slips
- Veterans Memorial
- Observation Deck
- Shuffleboard
- Playground
- Music Pavilion
- Farmers Market Pavilion
- Shelters
- Parking Lot
- Restrooms
- Extend the Brunswick Riverwalk to US 74/76 (Future)
- Outdoor Seating to Restaurant/

Food Trucks/& Picnics (Future)

- Marina with Canoe/kayak/ Rowboat Launch (Future)
- Social Plaza/Pavilion (Future)
- Outdoor Culture/History Educations (Future)
- Botanical and Rain Gardens (Future)
- Canoe/Kayak Rentals (Future)
- Food Truck Parking (Future)
- Amphitheater (Future)
- Community Center (Future)
- Splash Pad (Future)
- Dog Park (Future)

Boiling Spring Lakes

Alton Lennon Park

- Lake boat ramp
- Roped swimming area
- Picnic shelter
- Playground

North Lake Park

- Fishing dock
- Bench swings
- Dog friendly
- Restrooms (open summer months)

Bolivia

Unknown as of the time of this study

Calabash

Calabash Community Park

- Picnic Shelter
- Restrooms
- Playground
- Horseshoe
- Shuffleboard
- Bocce Ball

Unnamed Pocket Park

- Bench

Carolina Shores

Town of Carolina Shores Town Park

- Dog Parks
- Pickleball
- Restrooms
- Picnic Shelters
- Benches

Caswell Beach:

No public recreation facilities

Holden Beach:

Bridgeview Park

- Basketball Court
- Pickleball Court
- Open Green Space
- Splash Pad
- Picnic Shelter
- Playground
- Bocce Court
- Canoe/Kayak Launches
- Boat Dock
- Restrooms

Jordan Boulevard Pavilion

- Fishing Dock with shelter
- Picnic Pavilion
- Public WiFi
- Nature Observation
- Boating Access

Emergency Operations Center

- Room for Classes
- Kitchen

Sailfish Drive Park

- Fishing Dock
- Picnic Tables
- Nature Observation
- Sand Beach with water access

Sand Dollar Park

- Open Space
- Nature Observation
- Informal Canoe/Kayak Launch

Halstead Park

- Fishing Dock
- Picnic Shelter
- Seating
- Access to Olden Holden Bike Route

Holden Beach Pocket Park

- Seating
- Nature Observation
- Access to Olden Holden Bike Route

Holden Beach

- Fit Trail (9 Fitness Stations)

Padgett Garden

- Walking Path
- Seating

Butterfly Garden at Holden Beach Fire Station

- Picnic Table
- Seating

23 Public Beach Access Points**Leland****Cypress Cove Park**

- Kayak/Canoe Launch
- Floating Dock
- Fishing Pier
- Fire Pit
- Picnic Tables

Founders Park

- Walking Trails
- Playground
- Gazebo
- Community Garden
- Performance Stage
- Fitness Station (current & future)
- Amphitheater (Future)
- Splash Pad (future)
- Veterans Memorial (future)
- Restrooms (future)
- Natural Play Area (future)
- Shelters (future)

Loblolly Park

- Currently Undeveloped

Sturgeon Creek Park

- Currently Undeveloped

SweetBay Park

- Disc Golf (future)

Westgate Nature Park

- Playground
- Picnic Tables
- Walking Trail
- Outdoor Classroom Event Lawn

Navassa**Davis Creek Park: Public Estuarine Access Area**

- Walking paths
- Piers
- Boat ramp
- Canoe / kayak launch
- Gazebo
- Picnicking

Town Hall Park

- Picnicking

Phoenix Park

- Picnicking
- Horseshoes
- Playground
- Basketball court
- Baseball field

Northwest

- Concession Stand w Restroom
- Basketball Court
- Park Shelter
- 300 ft Softball Field
- Bleachers
- Community Building (Future)
- Outdoor Exercise Equipment (Future)
- Outdoor Playground Equipment (Future)
- Paved Walking Trail Around the Perimeter of the Park (Future)
- Organized Programs (Future)

Oak Island**Oak Island Recreation Center**

- Activity and Meeting Rooms
- Kitchen
- Fitness Facility with Cardio & Weight Room
- Basketball Court
- Nature Trail
- Kayak Launch
- Crosswalk
-

Middleton Park

- Restrooms
- Playground
- Splash pad
- Basketball court
- (4) Tennis courts
- (6) Pickleball courts
- Baseball field/tee ball field w/ concession stand
- Soccer field
- Performance stage / shelter
- Picnic shelters

Bill Smith Park

- (3) Baseball fields
- Softball field
- Small ball field
- Disc golf course
- Dog park
- Football field
- Kayak launch
- Picnic shelter
- Recreation building
- Soccer field
- Walking trail

Ocean Isle Beach**Town Center Park**

- Playground
- Interactive Fountain
- Bocce Court
- Tables/Chairs
- Benches
- Green Space
- Amphitheater
- Bike Racks
- Restrooms

Community Center

- Event Area
- Restrooms
- Picnic Tables
- Benches
- Covered Gazebo
- Beach Access
- Volleyball Court

Ferry Landing Park

- Viewing Area
- Walkway
- Informal Canoe/Kayak Entry to ICW

Sandy Creek

Unknown as of the time of this study

Shallotte

Mulberry Park

- Amphitheater
- Open-air Pavilion
- Playground
- Community Garden
- Walking Trails
- Bench Seating
- Picnic Shelter
- Restrooms

Mulberry Community Center

- Event Space

Rourk Gardens

- Gazebo
- Grassy Open Space

Riverside Park

- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Picnic Shelter
- Benches
- Observation Area

Shallotte Riverwalk

- Boardwalk
- Wildlife Viewing
- Fishing
- Covered Areas
- Benches
- Swings
- Walling Trails
- Connectivity to downtown and Mulberry Park

Southport

Southport: Alvin C. Caviness Park

- Half basketball court
- Playground
- Performance stage

Franklin Square Park

- Gazebo
- Open space

Keziah Park

- 800-year-old tree exhibit
- Gazebo

Kingsley Street Park

- Dock into the Intercoastal Waterway

Waterfront Park

- Cape Fear River access via fishing pier
- Walking path
- Covered picnic tables
- Water fountains
- Covered seating areas

St. James

- Community Center (Open to public and available for rent.)
- Private golf courses and clubhouses
- Day-use parks (Open to St. James residents only)

Sunset Beach

Sunset Beach Park

- Nature observation
- Open lawn space
- Veterans memorial

- Kayak Launch
- Public Boat Ramp
- Fishing pier
- Picnic shelter
- Seating
- Environmental education

Majestic Oaks Park

- Open lawn space
- Water access
- Seating
- Environmental education
- Picnic shelter
- Wildlife observation / fishing pier

Carl Bazemore Bird Walk at Twin Lakes

- Parking area
- Kayak launch
- Wildlife observation deck
- Benches
- Public binocular platform

Sunset Beach Public Beach Access Points

- 34 Public beach access points with three offering A.D.A. accessibility

Varnamtown

Jessie R. Caison Park

- Basketball Court
- Picnic Shelters
- Playground
- Baseball Field
- Restrooms

State Recreation Facilities

The State of North Carolina manages more than 250,000 acres through a variety of state agencies. Public lands within and in proximity to Brunswick County are made available to provide recreational opportunities as well as protect and conserve the natural heritage of North Carolina. These popular public destinations provide residents of Brunswick County with a variety of historical and educational opportunities that offer a wealth of knowledge.

Brunswick Town / Fort Anderson State Historic Site

- Historic site
- Walking trails
- Interpretive signage

Carolina Beach State Park (New Hanover County)

- Fishing access
- Camping
- Hiking
- Boating

- Swimming
- Picnicking

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area (New Hanover County)

- Hiking

- Fishing
- Swimming
- Picnicking
- Off-road vehicle access

Green Swamp Preserve

- 15,000-acre preserve
- Nature observation
- Nature trails

Lake Waccamaw State Park (Columbus County)

- Hiking
- Boating
- Picnicking

Federal Public Land

The United States manages millions of acres of public lands through four agencies: United States Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service. This public land is made available to provide recreational opportunities as well as protect and conserve the natural heritage of our nation.

National Park Service

Moore's Creek National Battlefield (Pender County)

- Open space
- Within 20 miles of Brunswick County
- Historical elements
- Educational opportunities

Brunswick County Public School System

Public school recreation facilities are made available for use by the community. The Brunswick County Public School System operates 38 public schools that have recreation facilities typical of most schools: playgrounds, baseball / softball fields, gymnasiums, etc. This includes 21 elementary schools, 8 middle school, and 9 high schools.

The North Carolina Community Schools Act (G.S. 115C Art. 13) was passed to allow “greater community use of public-school facilities.” Since school facilities represent an investment of the citizenry for the education of students and for the general benefit of the community and its citizens, their proper use and enjoyment shall be encouraged and permitted when such does not interfere with school activities.



Recreation Needs Assessment





Recreation Needs Assessment

The degree of need for parks, recreation, and open space is most directly influenced by the expectations of Brunswick County residents, relating strictly to the quality of life to which they aspire. This Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan addresses, as its first priority, the parks and recreation facility needs envisioned by the residents and visitors of Brunswick County.

This Master Plan inventories Brunswick County's existing park facilities as well as listing the recreation facilities available at local schools, County municipalities, and other recreation facilities either within the County or easily accessible by residents within the County. This detailed inventory includes the facilities which are available within each park to create a better understanding of the existing recreation opportunities within the County. The recreational trends also provide information needed to understand the expected growth of Brunswick County in the future. This Master Plan will be used as a guide for improving recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

Community input and recreation standards were used as the primary method in determining the adequate types and number of park facilities needed for Brunswick County. This Master Plan compares standards developed by the NRPA, an independent, nonprofit professional organization for parks and recreation departments nationwide.

Standards are guidelines, not requirements, for use by communities in estimating the demand for recreation in their given geographic areas. To ensure that the Brunswick County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan contains distinctiveness, yet versatility, input was sought from its integral components: Brunswick County staff, County Board of Commissioners, and citizen representatives.

Public Input Needs Assessment

Brunswick County's Planning and Parks and Recreation Departments have teamed on an initiative called Blueprint Brunswick 2040 to craft 2 new plans: a Comprehensive Land Use Plan and a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Together, these two new plans will guide future growth, decisions and investments in infrastructure. This planning effort covered the entire jurisdiction of Brunswick County outside municipal limits and was inclusive of participating municipalities.

The methodology used in establishing a Comprehensive Master Plan should always include citizen input. In order to ensure a successful study, it is vital that residents of Brunswick County have an opportunity to weigh-in on critical issues facing the County today and what possible solutions may exist, as well as help guide future planning decisions that will affect the quality of life in their community. For the community input process, a study was designed to allow residents to share their issues, needs, and desires.

Community input was gathered in several different ways, including a public survey, focus group meetings, interviews with individual residents, landowners, and County staff, as well as social media and community meetings.

Public Meetings

Five public meetings were conducted during the master plan process. Residents were not required to attend an in-person event to participate. Residents were asked to pre-register to attend a community meeting by either accessing the online registration section of the project webpage, call, or visit either the County planning or parks and recreation departments. All residents could submit their survey responses before, during, or after any community meeting.

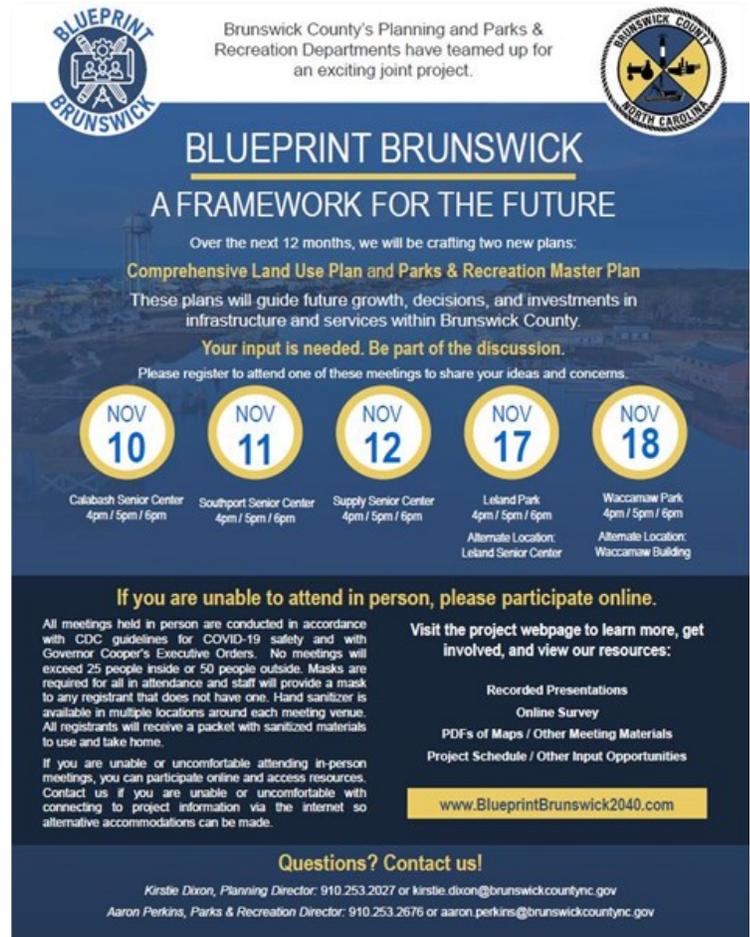
These 5 input sessions were held within each of the 5 electoral districts from November 10th, 2020 through November 18th, 2020. Locations included the Calabash Senior Center (11.10.20), Southport Senior Center (11.11.20), Supply Senior Center (11.12.20), Leland Park (11.17.20), and Waccamaw Park (11.18.20). All meetings offered 3 different time slots at 4 pm, 5 pm, and 6 pm.

The public meetings, along with the community survey, were advertised by the County on the official Brunswick County website, via the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 project webpage, local news announcements, County social media, flyers posted at County offices, libraries, parks, and County staff word of mouth. The promotion of the project webpage and community survey were also promoted via project marketing cards that were distributed at different locations throughout Brunswick County.

All meetings held in person were simulcast on Facebook Live and recorded for playback via local Focus Broadband community television for those individuals that were unable to attend or preferred to participate remotely.

Each meeting was comprised of an informative presentation made by project team members and concluded with open question/answer and comment sessions that included both in-person and online participants. Presentations offered background into County existing conditions, known issues, demographics, growth trends, and review of inventory and existing conditions analysis maps.

All public input sessions were conducted in accordance with CDC guidelines for COVID-19 safety and with Governor Cooper's Executive Orders. No meetings exceeded 25 people inside or 50 people outside. Masks were required for all attendees and staff provided a mask to any registrants that needed them. Hand sanitizer was available in multiple locations around each meeting venue and surfaces were sanitized prior to and after each meeting. All registrants received a packet with a sanitized survey and project marketing materials to use and take home.



The flyer features the 'Blueprint Brunswick' logo at the top left and the Brunswick County seal at the top right. The main title is 'BLUEPRINT BRUNSWICK' in large white letters, followed by the subtitle 'A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE'. Below this, it states 'Over the next 12 months, we will be crafting two new plans: Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Parks & Recreation Master Plan'. It emphasizes that these plans will guide future growth and that 'Your input is needed. Be part of the discussion.' A call to action asks residents to register for one of five public meetings. The meetings are listed in a row of five yellow circles, each with a date and location: NOV 10 at Calabash Senior Center, NOV 11 at Southport Senior Center, NOV 12 at Supply Senior Center, NOV 17 at Leland Park, and NOV 18 at Waccamaw Park. Each location also lists three time slots: 4pm / 5pm / 6pm. For the Leland Park and Waccamaw Park meetings, alternate locations (Leland Senior Center and Waccamaw Building) are also provided. A section titled 'If you are unable to attend in person, please participate online.' provides details on safety protocols (CDC guidelines, masks, hand sanitizer) and lists online resources: Recorded Presentations, Online Survey, PDFs of Maps / Other Meeting Materials, and Project Schedule / Other Input Opportunities. The website 'www.BlueprintBrunswick2040.com' is highlighted in a yellow box. At the bottom, contact information for Kirstie Dixon (Planning Director) and Aaron Perkins (Parks & Recreation Director) is provided.

Brundswick County's Planning and Parks & Recreation Departments have teamed up for an exciting joint project.

BLUEPRINT BRUNSWICK

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

Over the next 12 months, we will be crafting two new plans:
Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Parks & Recreation Master Plan

These plans will guide future growth, decisions, and investments in infrastructure and services within Brunswick County.

Your input is needed. Be part of the discussion.

Please register to attend one of these meetings to share your ideas and concerns.

NOV 10	NOV 11	NOV 12	NOV 17	NOV 18
Calabash Senior Center 4pm / 5pm / 6pm	Southport Senior Center 4pm / 5pm / 6pm	Supply Senior Center 4pm / 5pm / 6pm	Leland Park 4pm / 5pm / 6pm Alternate Location: Leland Senior Center	Waccamaw Park 4pm / 5pm / 6pm Alternate Location: Waccamaw Building

If you are unable to attend in person, please participate online.

All meetings held in person are conducted in accordance with CDC guidelines for COVID-19 safety and with Governor Cooper's Executive Orders. No meetings will exceed 25 people inside or 50 people outside. Masks are required for all in attendance and staff will provide a mask to any registrant that does not have one. Hand sanitizer is available in multiple locations around each meeting venue. All registrants will receive a packet with sanitized materials to use and take home.

If you are unable or uncomfortable attending in-person meetings, you can participate online and access resources. Contact us if you are unable or uncomfortable with connecting to project information via the internet so alternative accommodations can be made.

Visit the project webpage to learn more, get involved, and view our resources:

- Recorded Presentations
- Online Survey
- PDFs of Maps / Other Meeting Materials
- Project Schedule / Other Input Opportunities

www.BlueprintBrunswick2040.com

Questions? Contact us!

Kirstie Dixon, Planning Director: 910.253.2027 or kirstie.dixon@brunswickcountync.gov
Aaron Perkins, Parks & Recreation Director: 910.253.2676 or aaron.perkins@brunswickcountync.gov

Any residents that were uncomfortable attending in-person meetings could participate online and had access to the same resources available at the in-person meetings. Alternative accommodations were available for folks that requested them.

These meetings were safely conducted so that residents would be able to voice their opinions on a wide range of topics that included, but were not limited to, future growth and development, agriculture, transportation, infrastructure, utilities, recreation, housing, jobs, etc. The meetings encouraged attendees to interact and discuss their experience living in Brunswick County. Common themes mentioned by meeting participants were:

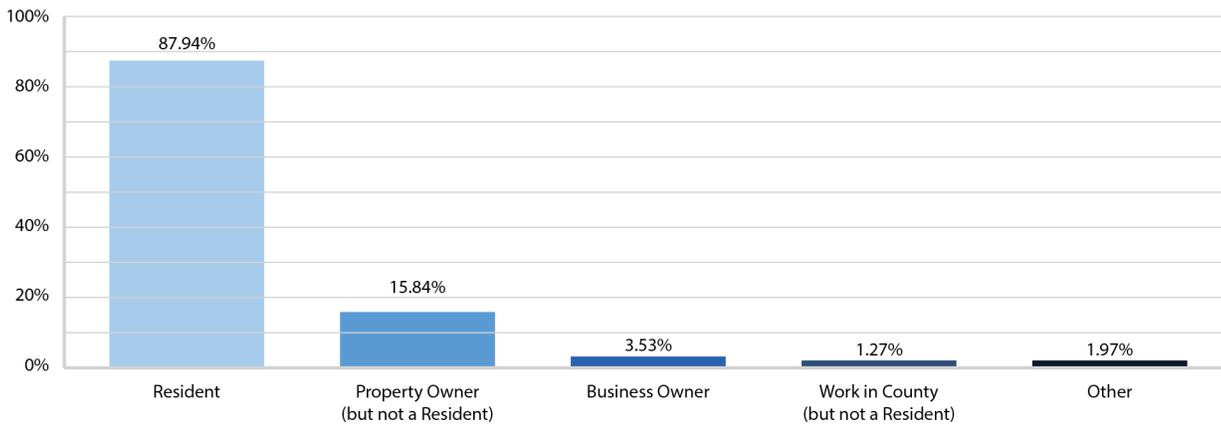
- Need of affordable housing
- Smart development practices
- Less road congestion
- Need for better stormwater mitigation
- Expansion of the recreation system (passive and active recreation)



Demographics

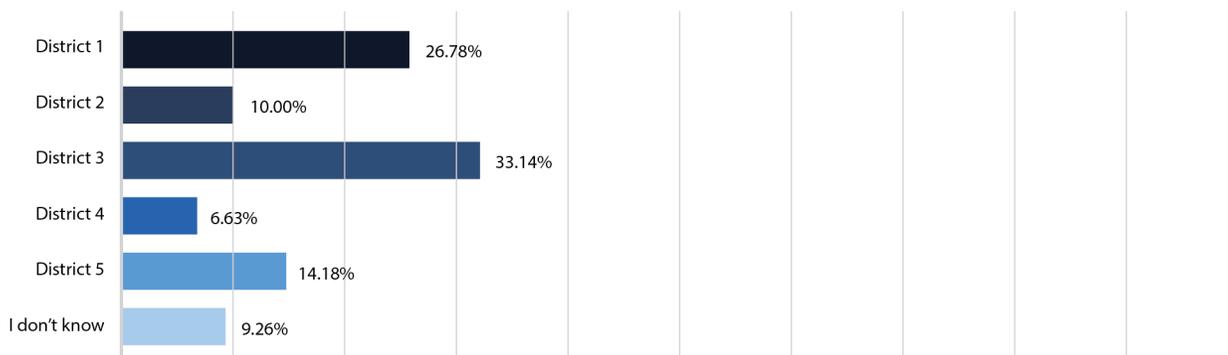
Q: Concerning the Brunswick County planning area, are you a (check all that apply):

Answered: 3,459 | Skipped: 15



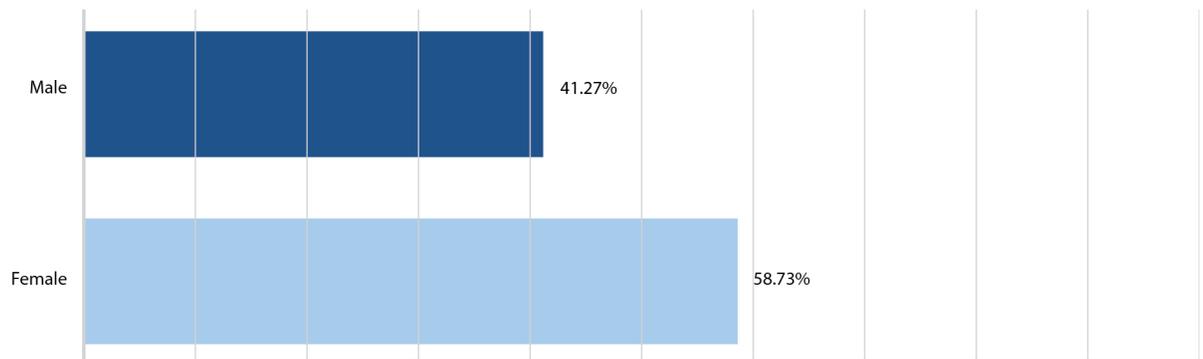
Q: Please select your electoral district from the list below:

Answered: 3,349 | Skipped: 125



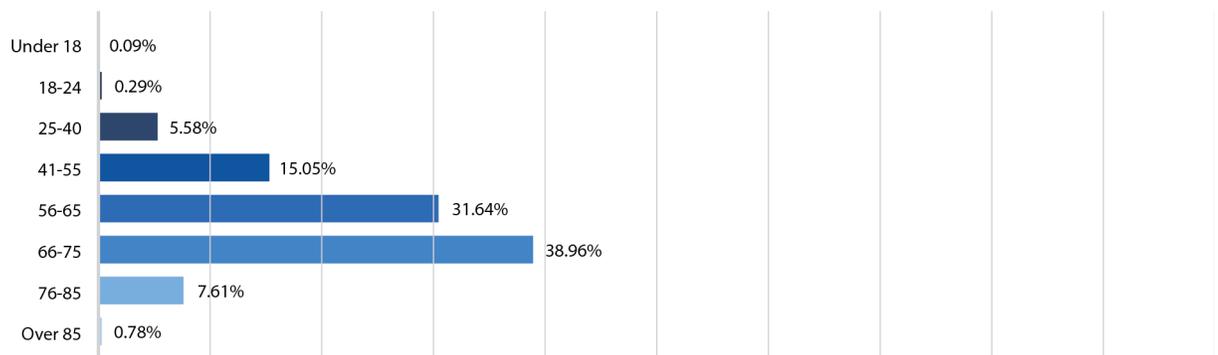
Q: What is your Gender?

Answered: 3,380 | Skipped: 94



Q: What is your age range?

Answered: 3,442 | Skipped: 32



Demographics

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

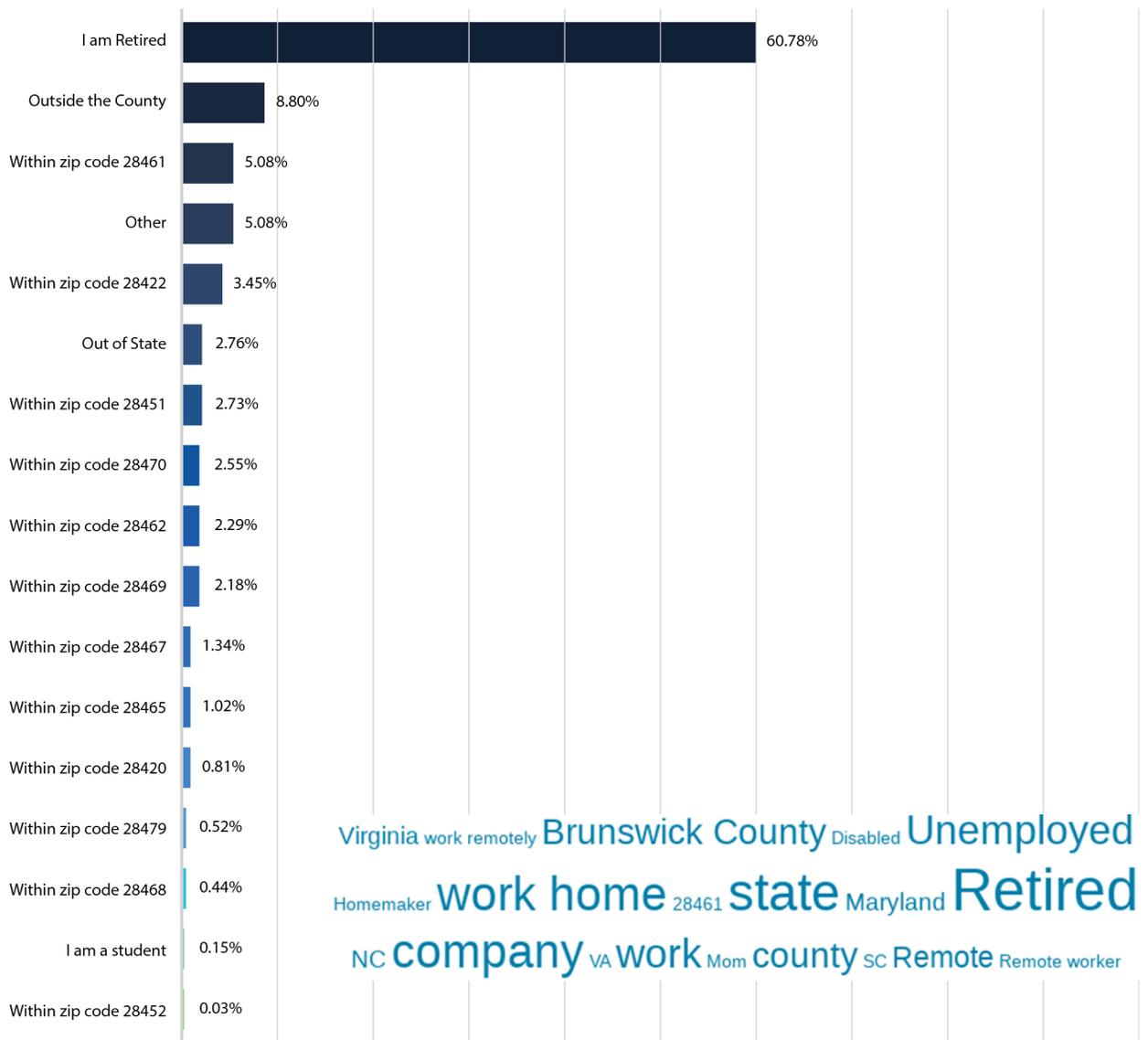
Answered: 3,438 | Skipped: 36

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL
61 and over	31.15% 772	67.84% 1,681	0.77% 19	0.16% 4	0.04% 1	0.04% 1	2,478
46-60 years old	53.91% 524	45.37% 441	0.62% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.10% 1	972
20-35 years old	62.86% 220	32.00% 112	2.57% 9	2.00% 7	0.00% 0	0.57% 2	350
36-45 years old	54.13% 177	44.34% 145	1.22% 4	0.31% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	327
6-12 years old	63.52% 148	28.76% 67	7.30% 17	0.43% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	233
13-16 years old	77.78% 147	19.58% 37	2.12% 4	0.53% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	189
5 years and younger	48.52% 82	43.20% 73	4.14% 7	1.78% 3	1.18% 2	1.18% 2	169
17-19 years old	86.15% 112	12.31% 16	0.77% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.77% 1	130

Clearly, families with children do make up a significant part of Brunswick County's overall population and this number is expected to increase. As with mature adults, children have unique needs which should be considered when planning for the future of the County.

Q: Where is your place of employment?

Answered: 3,445 | Skipped: 29



Nearly 60% of respondents report being retired, many survey participants report working outside the County. The word cloud shows the most common “other” responses provided. The larger / bolder the word, the more often it was mentioned by respondents.

Demographics

Physical Needs

Q: What do you like about Brunswick County? From the list of subjects below, please select which is most important to least important to you.

Answered: 3,480 | Skipped: 14

	MOST IMPORTANT	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	LEAST IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Beaches, Open-spaces, Waterways, and Natural landscapes	84.18% 2,869	12.76% 435	2.23% 76	0.82% 28	3,408
Quality of Life	85.91% 2,865	12.71% 424	1.11% 37	0.27% 9	3,335
Community appearance and quality of the built and natural environments	64.17% 2,138	31.24% 1,041	3.54% 118	1.05% 35	3,332
Parks, Trails, and Recreational opportunities	62.22% 2,083	28.38% 950	6.96% 233	2.45% 82	3,348
Cost of Living (Housing costs, Tax rates)	61.39% 2,043	30.32% 1,009	6.25% 208	2.04% 68	3,328
Sense of place and community character	46.03% 1,520	40.76% 1,346	10.30% 340	2.91% 96	3,302
Schools	32.59% 1,050	28.71% 925	17.69% 570	21.01% 677	3,222
Quality and availability of housing	30.88% 1,010	41.76% 1,366	19.17% 627	8.19% 268	3,271
Shopping choices	29.35% 969	40.55% 1,339	19.93% 658	10.18% 336	3,302
Opportunities of community involvement	25.04% 826	45.26% 1,493	23.40% 772	6.30% 208	3,299
Employment and Economic Opportunities	24.80% 818	35.23% 1,162	23.38% 771	16.59% 547	3,298
Heritage of Brunswick County	22.77% 754	36.15% 1,197	24.65% 816	16.43% 544	3,311

When asked what survey respondents liked best about Brunswick County, issues around – the beaches, open spaces, quality of life, and appearance were most mentioned, which point to the nature of the County’s demographics (largely retirees).

Q: Please select which is most important to least important to you.

Answered: 3,452 | Skipped: 12

	MOST IMPORTANT	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	LEAST IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Improving water quality in streams and waterways	81.03% 2,743	16.22% 549	2.22% 75	0.53% 18	3,385
Accessibility to healthcare	73.71% 2,478	21.39% 719	3.87% 130	1.04% 35	3,362
Conservation of wildlife and sensitive plant communities	58.84% 1,976	31.39% 1,054	7.83% 263	1.94% 65	3,358
Promoting a strong economy that enhances quality of life	56.73% 1,909	33.61% 1,131	7.79% 262	1.87% 63	3,365
Addressing the needs of seniors	52.83% 1,773	36.00% 1,208	8.82% 296	2.35% 79	3,356
Beautification of roadways and highways	43.78% 1,464	38.85% 1,299	13.70% 458	3.68% 123	3,344
Preservation of historic buildings and sites	35.97% 1,204	40.24% 1,347	16.67% 558	7.11% 238	3,347
Protection of agriculture and farmland	35.95% 1,198	42.23% 1,407	15.79% 526	6.03% 201	3,332
Attracting new businesses	35.37% 1,181	38.81% 1,296	17.52% 585	8.30% 277	3,339
Addressing the needs of youth and families	35.12% 1,169	43.44% 1,446	15.74% 524	5.71% 190	3,329
Ensuring a supply of housing that meets the needs of all age groups, income levels, and family needs	30.36% 1,016	37.88% 1,268	21.69% 726	10.07% 337	3,347
Having housing near commercial centers	10.07% 337	28.02% 938	35.72% 1,196	26.19% 877	3,348

Issues related to water quality, access to healthcare, and the natural environment were the top three most important issues to survey respondents.

Survey Responses

Q: From the list of subjects below, please select which is most important to least important to you.

Answered: 3,458 | Skipped: 15

	MOST IMPORTANT	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	LEAST IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Emergency Services (fire, police)	75.70% 2,548	21.09% 710	2.70% 91	0.51% 17	3,366
Access to Healthcare	72.34% 2,438	21.54% 726	4.90% 165	1.22% 41	3,370
Utilities (water, sewer, etc.)	67.43% 2,269	26.84% 903	4.52% 152	1.22% 41	3,365
Environmental Protection	66.29% 2,234	26.50% 893	6.05% 204	1.16% 39	3,370
Open Space, Parks and Recreation	63.07% 2,126	29.25% 986	5.78% 195	1.90% 64	3,371
Community Appearance	56.91% 1,906	36.73% 1,230	5.02% 168	1.34% 45	3,349
Transportation (roads, sidewalks, etc.)	51.39% 1,722	36.74% 1,231	9.49% 318	2.39% 80	3,351
Access to Education	32.62% 1,091	32.94% 1,102	20.21% 676	14.23% 476	3,345
Heritage and History	26.76% 891	41.06% 1,367	21.69% 722	10.48% 349	3,329
Housing (variety, quantity, quality)	22.64% 751	44.47% 1,475	24.24% 804	8.65% 287	3,317
Commercial Development	13.75% 461	40.57% 1,360	28.28% 948	17.39% 583	3,352

When asked what subjects were most important to respondents, emergency services topped the list, followed closely by access to healthcare, protection of the environment, utilities, recreation, and community appearance. The issues reported as relatively less important subjects included commercial development, housing, history, and access to education.

Q: Every community can identify opportunities for improvements. Which of the following do you think apply to Brunswick County? (Please select from most important to least important to you.)

Answered: 3,427 | Skipped: 47

	MOST IMPORTANT	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	LEAST IMPORTANT	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Utilities (Water & Sewer)	56.95% 1,873	29.71% 977	10.70% 352	2.65% 87	3,289	1.62
Traffic/Roads	55.41% 1,832	32.76% 1,083	9.32% 308	2.51% 83	3,306	1.61
Visual blight and clutter along roadways	48.35% 1,600	32.25% 1,067	14.54% 481	4.87% 161	3,309	1.81
Encroachment of development on agriculture and sensitive environmental areas	45.57% 1,498	32.83% 1,079	16.88% 555	4.72% 155	3,287	1.85
Lack of recreational opportunities	30.37% 988	41.04% 1,335	21.09% 686	7.50% 244	3,253	2.13
Lack of entertainment options	25.79% 852	34.03% 1,124	25.07% 828	15.11% 499	3,303	2.45
Lack of availability of some services and lack of after-hours options	22.95% 748	35.69% 1,163	28.14% 917	13.22% 431	3,259	2.45
Economic Disparities	22.97% 742	39.44% 1,274	25.85% 835	11.73% 379	3,230	2.38
Lack of employment opportunities	22.66% 738	36.20% 1,179	27.66% 901	13.48% 439	3,257	2.45
Too much commercial development	21.02% 680	29.00% 938	30.66% 992	19.32% 625	3,235	2.68
Housing (variety, quality, quantity)	19.89% 642	40.86% 1,319	29.83% 963	9.42% 304	3,228	2.38
Lack of affordable living	19.65% 637	32.49% 1,053	32.83% 1,064	15.03% 487	3,241	2.58
Lack of community character	18.19% 584	42.52% 1,365	27.51% 883	11.78% 378	3,210	2.45
Lack of commercial development	16.53% 540	34.05% 1,112	31.08% 1,015	18.34% 599	3,266	2.70

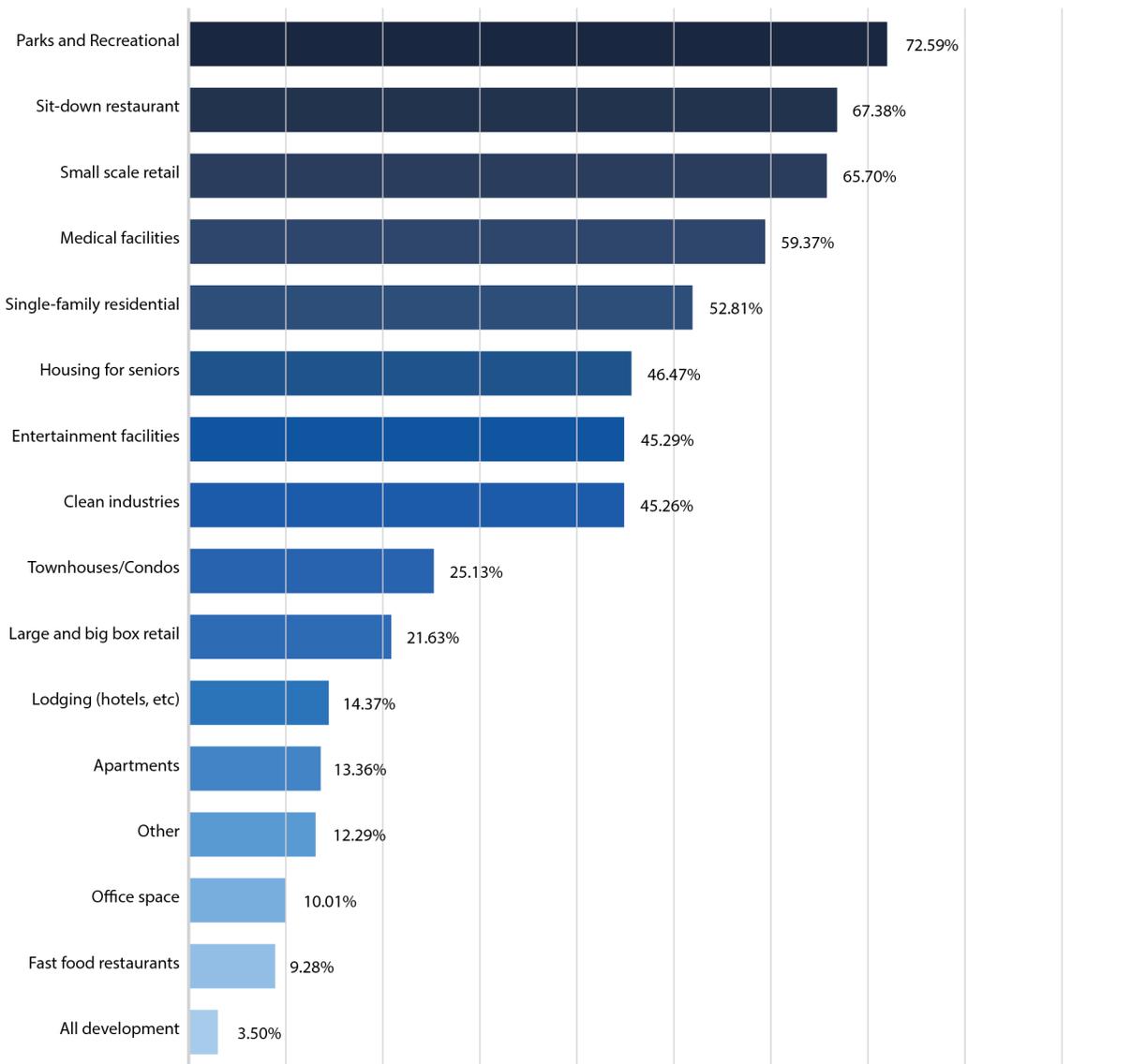
The top five items ranked by survey participants as most important opportunities for improvement within the County were:

1. Utilities (most important)
2. Traffic / roads
3. Development encroachment onto sensitive environmental / agricultural land
4. Visual blight / clutter along roadsides
5. Lack of recreational opportunities

Survey Responses

Q: In the future, what type of development should the County encourage?
(Check all that apply)

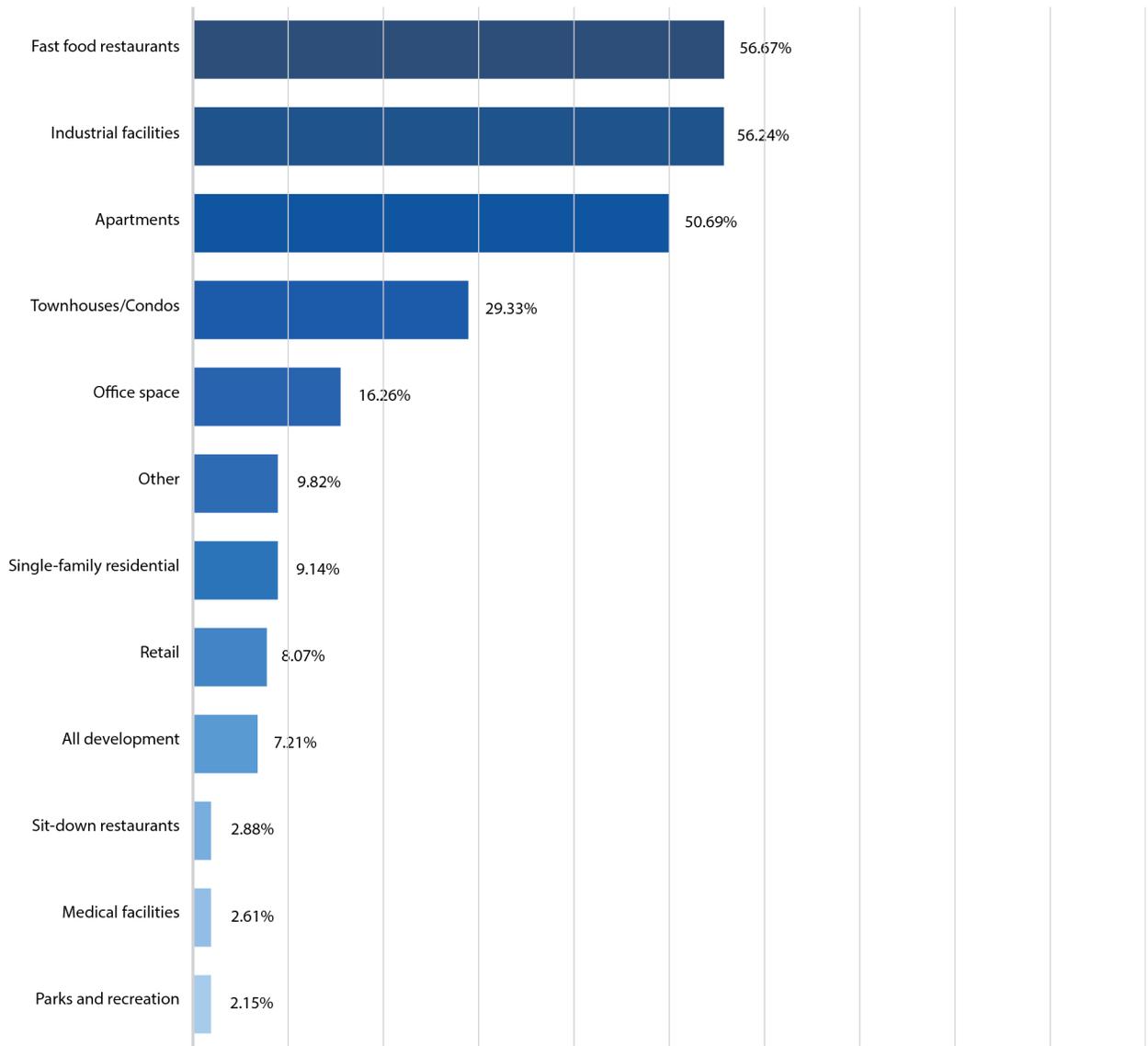
Answered: 3,458 | Skipped: 16



Survey participants listed parks and recreational facilities as the top type of development the County should encourage followed by sit-down restaurants, small-scale retail and open-air markets, medical facilities, and single-family residential development (in that order).

Q: In the future, what type of development should the County discourage? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 3,259 | Skipped: 215



Open-ended responses for question 12 asking survey respondents what the County should discourage included a range of responses.

Survey Responses

Q: Describe your vision for Brunswick County.

including commercial one especially quality life land improved use great
education going balance retail stay places natural beauty encourage
good schools Maintain limited services small businesses growing
recreation will safe environment plan residents Continue
Myrtle Beach families roads large beaches support
housing homes building many parks facilities
better increase Brunswick County fast food
county roadways community access area
nice need shopping development way keep
preserve clean well small town natural resources
growth less place live green space
opportunities lots business affordable see s living
much beautiful options developed infrastructure make
Better roads people ages town feel biking trails
affordable housing traffic provide big box seniors Southport
move jobs open space without etc nature clean water schools also
look

Open-ended responses for question 13 asking participants to describe their vision for Brunswick County (graphically described by the above word cloud) included maintaining the existing environmental appeal of the land, improvements to roads and utilities, mitigation of unchecked development in favor of smarter, affordable housing, and a variety of retail options, as well as safe and accessible healthcare with access to natural open spaces and well-maintained recreational facilities.

Q: Please list (2) things that could be done to make our county a better place to live, work, and play.

public Stop building facilities Better schools Develop local attract small business
Add litter jobs movie theater many restaurants bike paths new
roadways options growth safe Provide help planning control
make will Less homes increase Continue Clean water
maintain Better roads public transportation Encourage
one affordable housing live keep go
community walking trails building walking biking
county housing parks bike lanes areas use
Better work roads fast food need see
development housing developments Clean support
Improve shopping access drinking water beaches
especially businesses large retail bring
Brunswick County activities bike trails infrastructure
places water quality Stop opportunities residents schools
Improve roads affordable etc open space traffic allow services
Southport water well highway way seniors towns entertainment
employment opportunities people sidewalks Create including

Participant responses to things that could be done to make Brunswick County a better place to live, work, and play included a very diverse list of items. Most applaud the existing quality of life in Brunswick County but support continued development in a smart, environmentally responsible manner focusing on wise transportation improvements, encouragement of affordable housing alternatives, and quality of life of both senior citizens and growing families.

Survey Responses

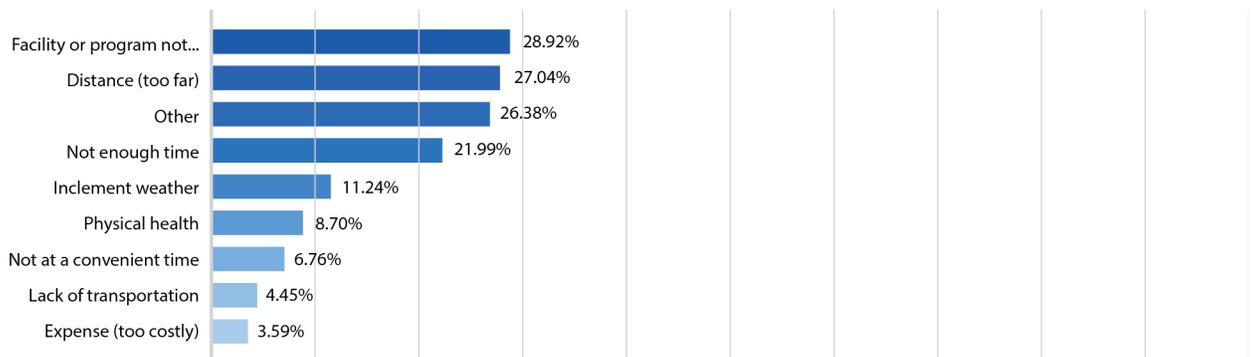
Q: Please share any additional input that you think is important to the future of Brunswick County.

S drive bring safe control local future developers great already Clean environment
parks land encourage things Please small town place also improve
moved growing allow None years water traffic going homes
businesses now infrastructure Southport make
Clean water people one roads want building focus
development protect better N Keep important
county become need maintain area seniors
Brunswick County retirees community us
growth much will look beaches way plan love
residents come many leave schools provide Stop etc
continue change Myrtle Beach help living access housing attract
don t must see towns think concerned work fast food increase population
develop County needs services new support education opportunities use

Additional input reiterated many of the desires for better infrastructure and support for environmentally sound development projects and not spoiling the existing natural beauty of the County. More mentions of the needs for growing families included interest in expanding schools, parks, and other public services.

Q: Current health risks related to COVID-19 affect participation and availability of many public recreation options. However, prior to the health crisis, what was the greatest barrier to your household’s regular use of public parks or recreation facilities?

Answered: 3,033 | Skipped: 441



The top 4 responses provided by participants regarding what barriers to regular use of public parks or recreational facilities were: (4) not enough time, (3) other, (2) distance to facilities, and (1) facility or program not offered. Most of these responses indicate the need to expand parks and recreation facilities and improve access and convenience for residents. The word cloud offers additional detail from the “other” category which was selected:



Survey Responses

Q: Prior to the need to socially distance (COVID-19), how frequently would you or others in your household have visited the following facilities in a typical year?

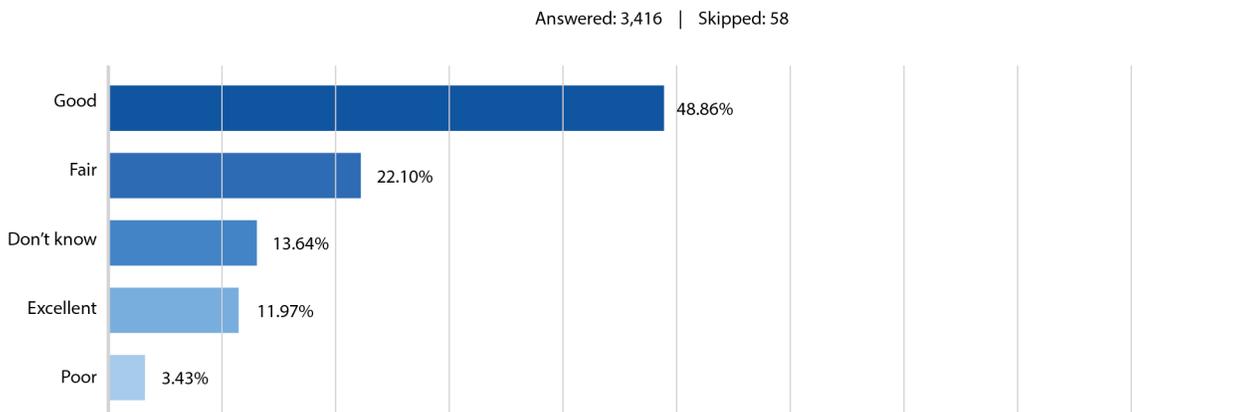
Answered: 3,428 | Skipped: 46

	REGULARLY	OCCASIONALLY	RARELY	NEVER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Eating out at area restaurants or visiting area breweries/distilleries	70.98% 2,422	23.27% 794	4.48% 153	1.26% 43	3,412	1.36
Brunswick Beaches	68.83% 2,171	23.84% 752	6.06% 191	1.27% 40	3,154	1.40
Area Farmer's/Artisan Markets	38.71% 1,312	40.90% 1,386	15.31% 519	5.08% 172	3,389	1.87
Area Golf Courses	30.41% 1,021	15.37% 516	14.53% 488	39.70% 1,333	3,358	2.64
Public River/Creek/Stream access points (dock/piers/observation platforms)	30.24% 991	39.49% 1,294	21.70% 711	8.57% 281	3,277	2.09
Area Greenways/Trails	23.98% 805	35.39% 1,188	22.19% 745	18.44% 619	3,357	2.35
Area Museums/Historical Sites	16.20% 545	46.49% 1,564	26.37% 887	10.94% 368	3,364	2.32
Area Canoe/Kayak launches	11.06% 372	23.69% 797	28.60% 962	36.65% 1,233	3,364	2.91
Area Ball Fields/Game Courts	10.99% 366	19.10% 636	27.93% 930	41.98% 1,398	3,330	3.01
Area Playgrounds	9.88% 329	21.31% 710	27.80% 926	41.01% 1,366	3,331	3.00
Area Public Picnic Shelters	6.79% 226	26.13% 870	33.28% 1,108	33.79% 1,125	3,329	2.94

When asked about what activities survey participants reported frequently visiting (prior to COVID-19 restrictions), eating out or visiting restaurants, breweries, etc. topped the list at nearly 71% tied with visiting Brunswick beaches. Below is an analysis of open-ended responses related to frequently visited facilities. These answers highlight the quality of life residents enjoy and would like to preserve as development continues. Other notable activities included visiting art and farmers markets and public water access points.

trails farmers markets access dogs bigger walking Need Brunswick
 Southport Music library senior center regularly Love
 visit greenways parks greenways trails area swimming
 beach use restaurants boating shopping events
 county enough good Center local one concerts Dog parks
 Boat Ramps

Q: Overall, how would you rate County Park facilities?



The above open-ended comments for how respondents would rate existing County park facilities supported desires for both active and passive recreation facilities for families and seniors.

around Ocean Isle Beach please clean well maintained addition Sunset Beach recreation
 Holden Beach fields bike paths dog little add seniors center renovations new wish also location
 OIB Park time love know clean greenway shade along much available beach
 maintained nice bigger county parks trees trails town use pickleball courts
 great bike trails facilities lots parks taxes need adults
 areas Lack better Leland county walking trails enough
 parks near dog parks limited access River many near playgrounds go
 ball fields especially Town Creek others space walk Calabash located always
 preserved offer way excellent update feel pool don't shelters kids pickle ball courts love see
 programming rarely use building Brunswick Nature Park keep Lockwood Folly park large

Q: Overall, how would you rate County Park facilities?

Answered: 3,386 | Skipped: 88

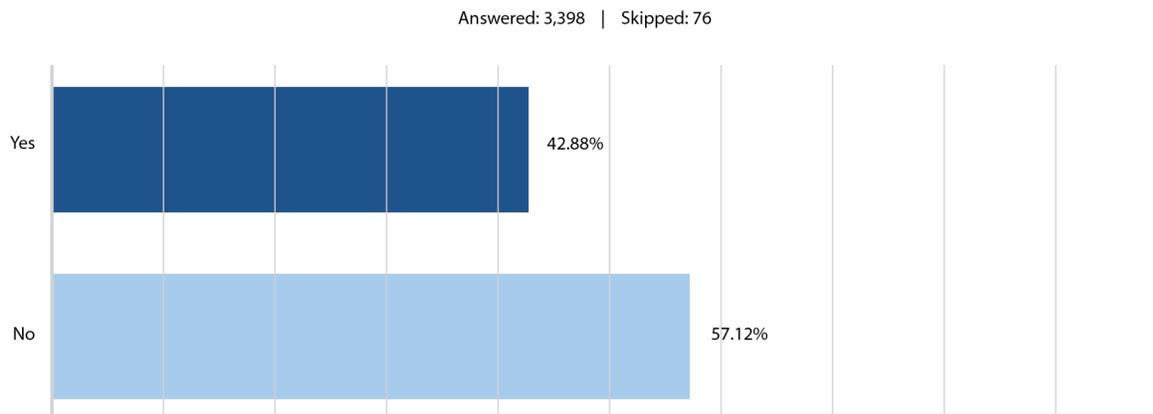
	REGULARLY	OCCASIONALLY	RARELY	NEVER	TOTAL
Ocean Isle Beach Park	15.50% 496	25.07% 802	18.07% 578	41.36% 1,323	3,199
Brunswick Nature Park or Park Picnic Pavilion	8.84% 284	29.28% 941	18.95% 609	42.94% 1,380	3,214
Shallotte Park	8.64% 272	19.85% 625	17.85% 562	53.65% 1,689	3,148
Town Creek Park	5.69% 175	13.37% 411	13.24% 407	67.71% 2,082	3,075
Smithville District Park	5.20% 158	9.42% 286	10.37% 315	75.01% 2,278	3,037
Dutchman Creek Park	4.35% 134	12.33% 380	11.59% 357	71.73% 2,210	3,081
Leland Community Park	4.04% 125	12.64% 391	12.80% 396	70.52% 2,182	3,094
Lockwood Folly Community Park	2.99% 92	9.74% 300	14.25% 439	73.03% 2,250	3,081
Northwest District Park	2.67% 80	4.10% 123	8.07% 242	85.15% 2,552	2,997
Waccamaw Park	2.04% 62	8.03% 244	11.82% 359	78.11% 2,373	3,038
Cedar Grove Park	1.78% 54	6.48% 197	11.44% 348	80.31% 2,443	3,042
Navassa Park	0.56% 17	2.94% 89	7.97% 241	88.53% 2,677	3,024

The top 5 park facilities survey respondents reported visiting in the past 24 months were:

1. Ocean Isle Beach Park
2. Brunswick Nature Park / Picnic Pavilion
3. Shallotte Park
4. Smithville District Park
5. Town Creek Park

Survey Responses

Q: Do you use any school or private facilities (fitness and aquatic center, private fitness clubs, etc) for recreation or leisure activities?

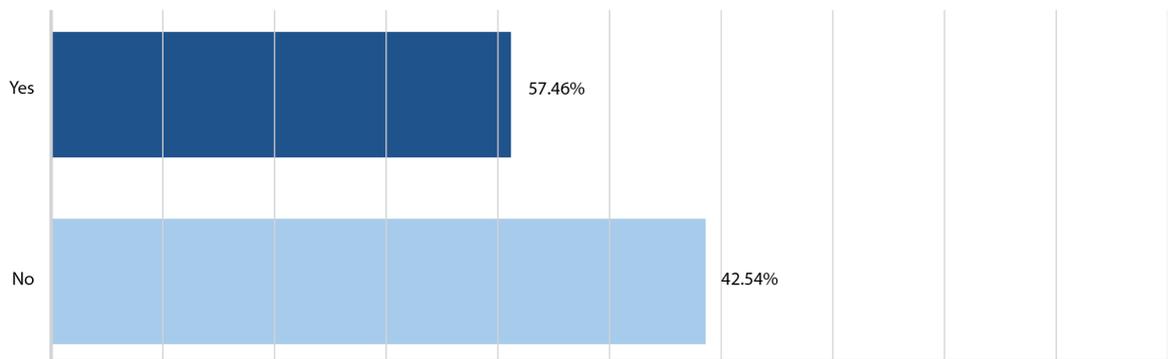


As a community with many senior residents, the responses about use of school or private facilities are narrow as a majority of those do not use any. However, a not so insignificant number of survey participants (41.32%) do report using school or private facilities for recreation. This points to the potential need to establish or reassess the need for shared use agreements with these alternative recreation providers. The following is an analysis of open-ended comments some participants provided with their answers. Several responses mentioned using either private recreation offered by exclusive neighborhoods or the community college pool.

Support Expansion to Parks and Recreation

Q: Do you feel there is a need for additional County owned park space?

Answered: 3,256 | Skipped: 218



Community bike hiking trails Walking biking trails use tennis courts know Green Swamp located disc golf fishing around Natural Hwy Nature Park preserve dog park good river maybe near near water Indoor pool bike paths outdoor location Leland places Calabash waterway pool nature walks Bike trails Bolivia sure along access swimming pool picnic Additional nature trails much nature activities facilities kayaking walking trails Skate park area green space park available county water trails Greenway Southport small need Natural areas space Southport Oak Island Beach fields open space water access large Hiking biking picnic areas fitness Indoor people Shallotte nice land indoor outdoor etc roads Close hiking center Supply playground NC walking anywhere Brunswick County Leland area town near Southport Holden Beach near beach open South Brunswick public biking walking trails kayak launch Waterfront park space walking biking

Please see above analysis of open-ended responses provided for the need for additional County-owned park space. A number of requests for additional trails linking existing parks and destinations with the County and other towns and municipalities were made.

Survey Responses

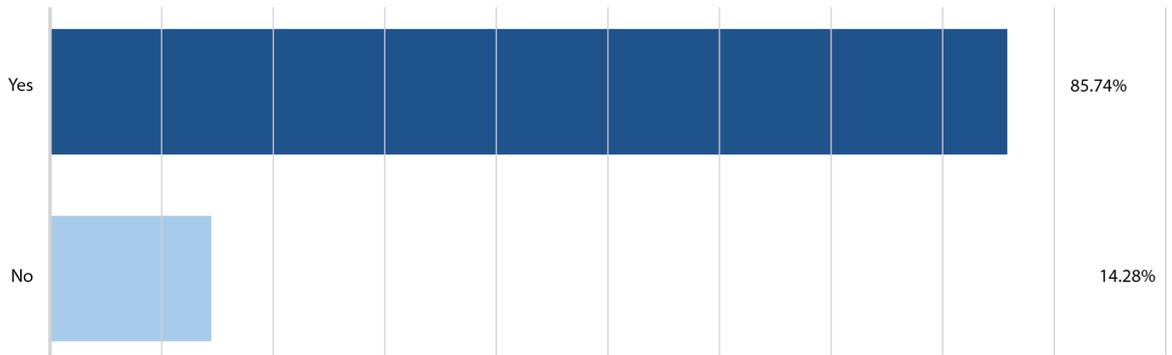
Q: Please list below, any recreation programs or special events that you would like to see offered or expanded within the Brunswick County Parks & Recreation system?

indoor swimming nature walks bike paths YMCA sure basketball adult opportunities
place Golf offerings Craft nature exercise classes expanded tournaments
Pickleball great arts lessons Dog parks trips kayaking anything need
Oak Island fishing pickleball courts youth groups N walking biking
county fitness classes farmers markets Tennis classes
use facilities center Bike trails dancing activities
public area local None Indoor pool events
swimming lessons programs markets park trails
seniors see concerts family indoor Na
outdoor ages community nature trails walking trails
arts crafts walks Brunswick county swimming pool leagues
festivals year round good softball kids Boating teens run etc play
Pickle ball birding beach swimming facility yoga think children access
Swimming free sports nice fitness organized water music events pool large
disc golf outdoor concerts

Responses to question 24 indicate that survey participants prefer a wide variety of recreation programs and special events, including traditional passive recreation, such as trails and open spaces, nature / water-based activities, and concerts. Indoor programs, such as fitness classes and senior activities, were also significant. Many participants indicated the desire for another indoor pool in the County.

Q: Would you start expanding recreational opportunities in Brunswick County?

Answered: 3,240 | Skipped: 234



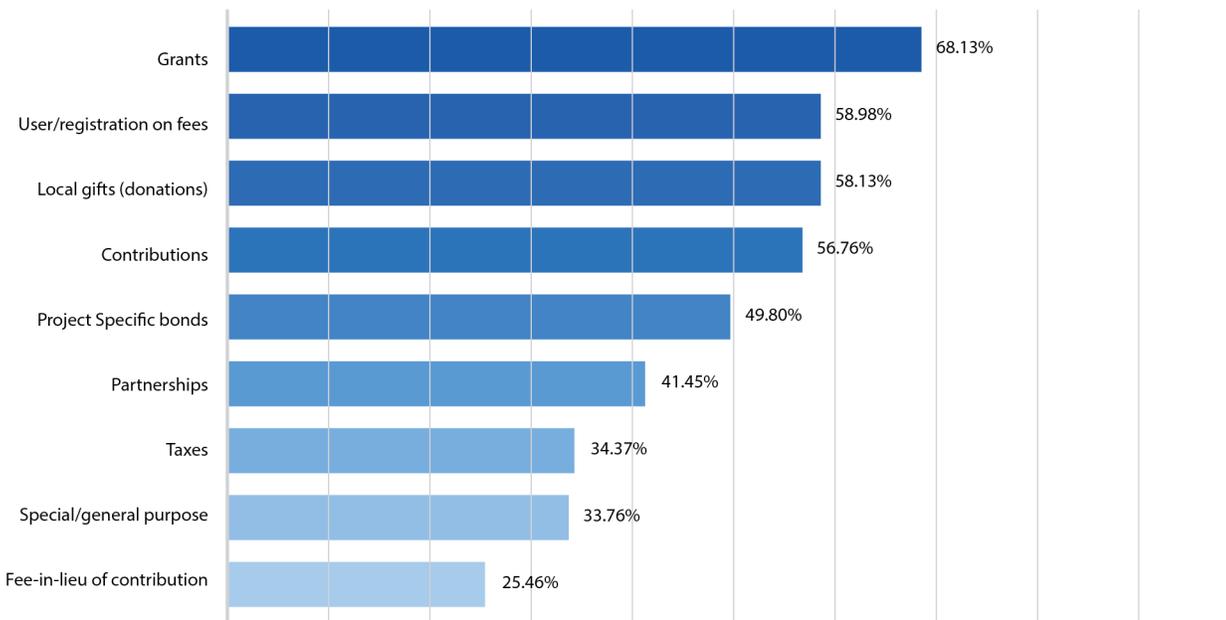
ages busy outdoor activities tourism pool stay offer already growth available
 everyone want provide beautiful Brunswick County Improve quality life much
 important health youth local children costs support growing recreational now
 facilities time expand public help many keep improves recreation
 space residents love exercise outdoor important
 Recreational activities area think people great
 opportunities build good nature need promotes
 community things county kids parks will
 activities life healthy enhance families citizens seniors
 one use teens quality life seems active fitness population us
 outdoors health People need encourage give lacking enjoy health fitness
 options Increases recreational opportunities access S always outside long
 benefit especially place together programs see make beach live enough

Please see above for the analysis of open-ended responses related to whether respondents would support expanding existing recreation opportunities. Several responses highlighted the positive benefits of recreation and its impact on quality of life in Brunswick County.

Survey Responses

Q: What funding sources are you willing to support for County recreation improvements (i.e. build new facilities, and/or programs)? Check all that apply.

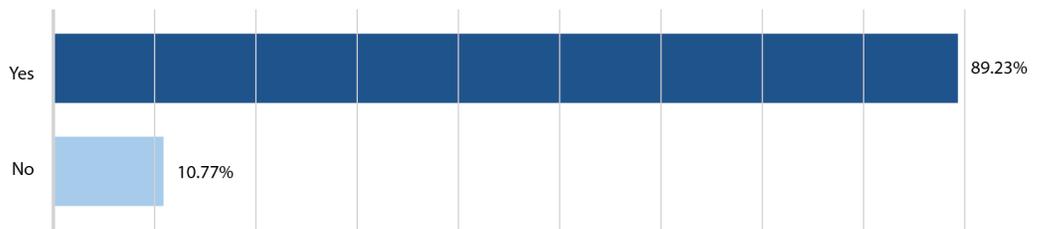
Answered: 3,291 | Skipped: 183



Clearly, survey participants prefer the use of grants and user fees to pay for County improvements followed by local gifts / donations and contributions. However, there was significant support for project-specific bond referendums as well.

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

Answered: 3,353 | Skipped: 121



Just over 89% of survey respondents would be willing to pay a nominal fee to attend an event or to use a special facility. The top three funding sources that participants are interested in are grants, contributions, and local gifts.

Survey Conclusions

Survey participants feel like the County offers a good quality of life, and there is an appreciation for the natural environment. Respondents support continued smart development, streamlined permitting processes, and adequate public services aimed at addressing the needs of the large senior and retiree population, but also desire more and better paying jobs and affordable housing to support the working families that keep the County such a pleasant place to live, work, and visit.

Survey participants understand the need and desire for plans to manage inevitable population growth. Concerns about traffic congestion, stormwater mitigation, and a want for more commercial / retail opportunities was evident. Quality of life was paramount with the expansion of parks and recreation facilities being of high importance.

Focus Group Interviews

Eighteen separate focus group categories were created, and relevant groups were invited to partake in virtual meetings over 2 separate days in October 2020 and 2 days in November. Some meetings were held at the same time by different members of the project team (consultants / County staff). Large groups were divided into three sub-groups (A, B, and C) to manage time and staffing. All meetings were virtual and began with formal introductions and project background presented by the consultants or County staff.

Please see Appendix D for a complete list of individuals and a summary of each group / sub-groups' conversation themes, concerns, and ideas. Overall, the focus groups were interested in how the County will deal with the anticipated population increases over the next ten years and how that growth will affect the culture of the County. Other concerns were how to deal with high costs, scarcity of affordable housing and middle-class jobs, and the equitable delivery of County services, such as recreation facilities. Suggested solutions included improvements to transportation, senior services, schools, and parks. The groups were in favor of easing policy hurdles for private development but also holding to high standards and sound environmental stewardship.

Recreation Department Staff Interviews

Two separate staff group interviews were conducted. The two groups included both recreation staff and facilities and maintenance personnel. These meetings occurred on December 8th, 2021 at 10 am and 11 am. The sessions were open ended and began with an introduction of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and some initial questions concerning participant opinions of the department, facilities, programs, and possible needed improvements. Responses from both groups reflected a desire for better wages, more up-to-date equipment, and additional funding to implement needed improvements to facilities. Additional findings included a desire for more staff to manage seasonal programs, better marketing of recreation program offerings, and additional maintenance resources as existing equipment was either in need of repair, difficult to transport, when needed, or simply in short supply. Other maintenance requests included the need for better management of on-site issues related to trash and recycling receptacles and the distractions often related to managing illegal dumping at parks.

Other County Public Outreach Efforts

In February of 2021, Brunswick County announced the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Art Contest to invite the youth to help shape the County's vision for the future! Through the support of Brunswick County Schools and a partnership with the Brunswick Arts Council, the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Art Contest was created to raise awareness and increase community engagement for the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Project in a fun interactive way. The contest invited the youth of Brunswick County to contribute to a significant County-wide planning process by helping shape the vision of the future.

The contest was open to students in grades K-12 or those homeschooled from ages 5 to 17 and invited schools from around the County to participate, including Brunswick County

Schools, homeschools, charter, and private schools. Participants were asked to show their vision of Brunswick County's future using mediums such as acrylic paint, watercolors, tempera paint, colored pencils, markers, and crayons with a submission deadline of March 31st.

Entries were separated into 4 grade level categories: grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards were given in each category with \$100 checks from the Brunswick Arts Council for the schools with the most submissions. Waccamaw School submitted the most submissions in the K-2 and 3-5 grade categories and tied with Leland Middle School in the 6-8 category. North Brunswick High School had the most submissions in the 9-12 grade category.

Local artists and members of the Brunswick County Planning and Parks and Recreation Departments judged the submissions and decided the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. In addition, the planning department and parks and recreation Department each picked their favorite. Contest winners were announced May 4th. Prizes for winners included gift cards, art supplies, and a framed award.

Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Youth Art Contest increased participation and engagement with the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Plan and promoted the arts in Brunswick County. The winning artwork was featured on June 19th, 2021 at the Soundstock Solstice by the Sea Festival at Middleton Park in Oak Island and is also in the Brunswick County Future Land Use Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Kids: Enter your artwork in the

Blueprint Brunswick 2040

Art Contest!

* * *

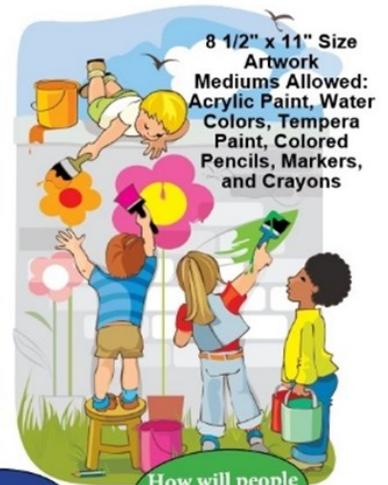
Brunswick County
in the year 2040 -your
design for the
future

What will Brunswick County be like
in the year 2040? Show us how you
imagine Brunswick County's future.

What will the
County look
like?

Where will
you live?

How will people
move around?



8 1/2" x 11" Size
Artwork
Mediums Allowed:
Acrylic Paint, Water
Colors, Tempera
Paint, Colored
Pencils, Markers,
and Crayons

The contest is open to children in grades K-12 or those homeschooled from ages 5 to 17. Deadline for entry is March 31st. Winners will be announced April 15th.

Contest Info and Rules and Entry Form at:

Brunswickcountync.gov/blueprintbrunswick/art-contest



BRUNSWICK
ARTS COUNCIL
CELEBRATE, CULTIVATE, COMMUNITY OUTREACH

State and National Assessments

Surveys that were designed to determine the demand for outdoor recreation and facilities have been conducted on both the federal and state levels by private, nonprofit, and governmental agencies. This information is important as it sets a precedent for what popular activities may be expected by typical park users.

The top 5 most popular outdoor recreational activities nationwide based on the 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report generated by the Outdoor Foundation are:

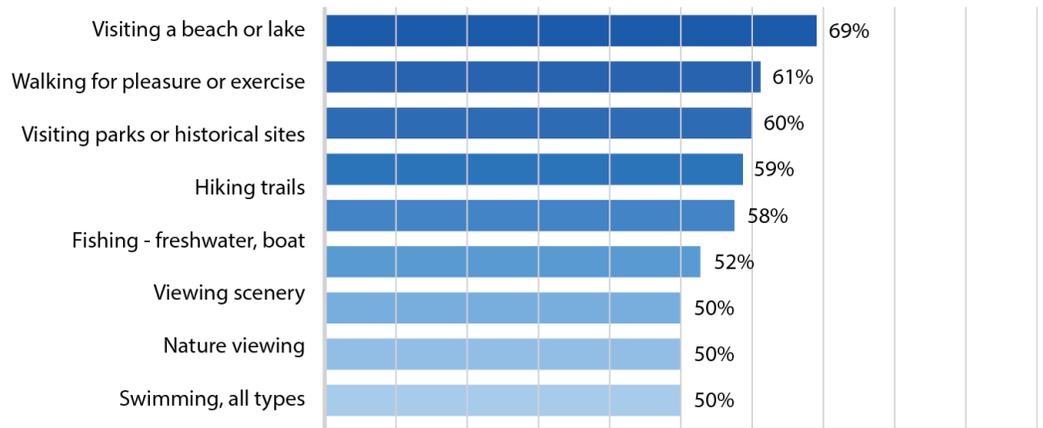
1. Running, jogging, and trail running
2. Hiking
3. Freshwater, saltwater, and fly fishing
4. Road biking, mountain biking, and BMX
5. Car, backyard, backpacking, and RV camping

MOST POPULAR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BY PARTICIPATION RATE

1	RUNNING, JOGGING AND TRAIL RUNNING	21.0% of Americans	63.8 million participants
2	HIKING	19.0% of Americans	57.8 million participants
3	FRESHWATER, SALTWATER AND FLY FISHING	18.0% of Americans	54.7 million participants
4	ROAD BIKING, MOUNTAIN BIKING AND BMX	17.3% of Americans	52.7 million participants
5	CAR, BACKYARD, BACKPACKING AND RV CAMPING	15.8% of Americans	47.9 million participants

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

1. Visiting a beach or lake
2. Walking for pleasure or exercise
3. Visiting parks or historical sites
4. Hiking trails
5. Freshwater fishing from a bank or pier
6. Viewing scenery
7. Fishing from a boat
8. Nature viewing
9. Swimming, all types



Percentage of respondents participating | 2020-2025 NC SCORP

Local governments (cities, towns, and counties) provide 39% of the public recreational opportunities in the United States. However, due to their proximity to the population density, they provide key access to public recreational opportunities.

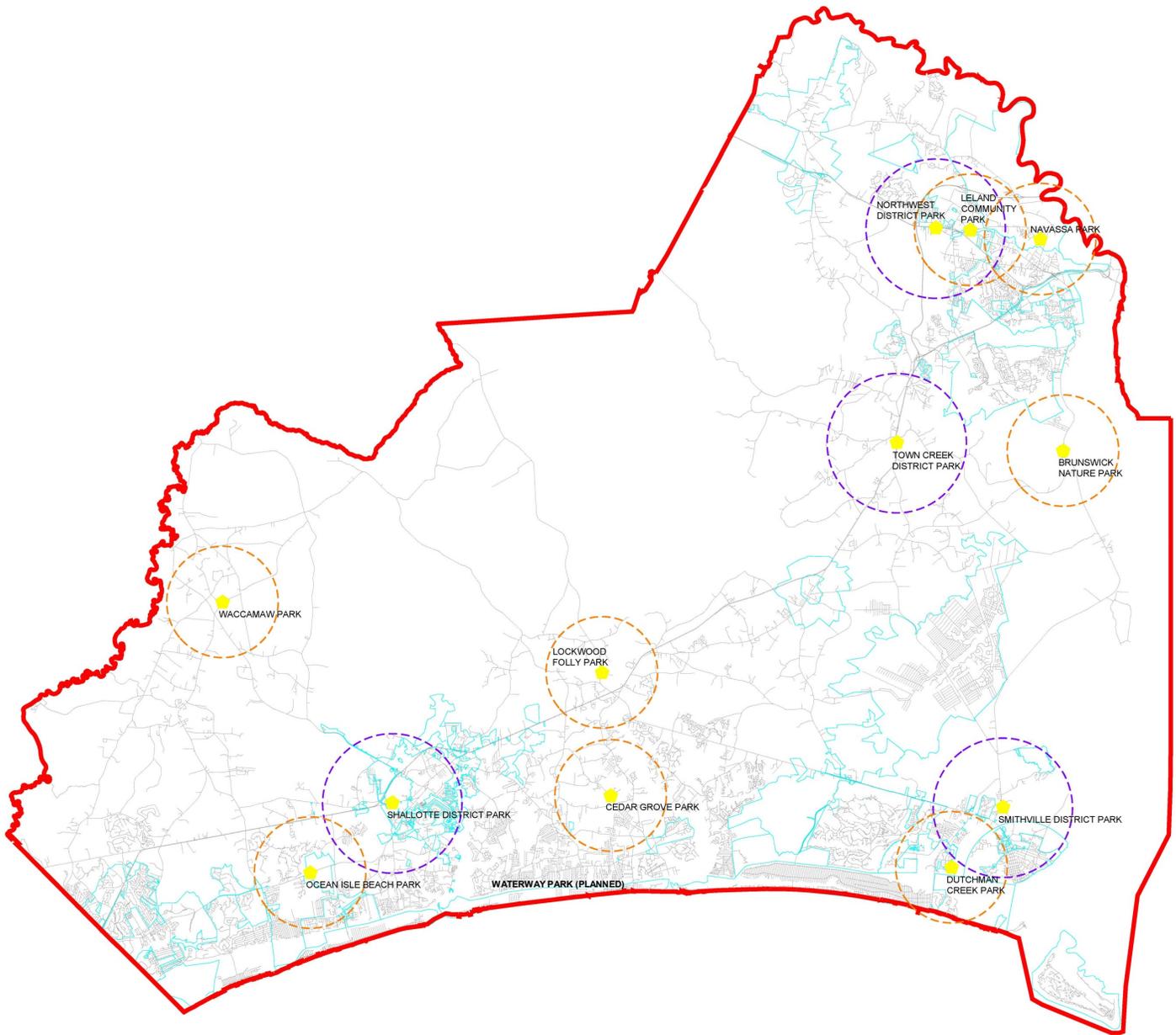
Evaluation of Park Land Needs

To better understand what recreation resources a community has and how accessible those facilities and programs may be to the general population, this study looked at typical service areas. Map 3.1 illustrates what portions of the community lie within or near the typical recreation service areas. The outcome of this exercise reveals that portions of the community live far enough from recreational facilities that they cannot easily access them. Populations typically affected include children and seniors that do not drive. Both user groups generally have greater leisure time and can directly benefit from access to parks and recreation facilities.

Solutions to improving recreation in Brunswick County include providing facilities and amenities that residents desire and need. It also considers where such facilities and amenities should be located. The existing recreation service locations illustrated indicate that the locations outside of the core of municipalities have the least access to parks. Planning for a future parks and recreation system expansion should consider developing facilities outside of the County's core where access to recreational services is most limited as well as in those areas where anticipated new development may occur. As new residential and large commercial developments are planned, the County should take an active role in working with developers on what types of recreation amenities should be provided per the County's planning department requirements. Where possible, existing County-owned land should be considered along with land acquired through Federal Emergency Management Agency buy outs prior to purchasing land. However, land acquisition and purchase may be needed to meet future demand.

Brunswick County's Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan considers community workshops, recreation survey findings, projected demand, service area analysis, and County staff input as the primary guides in prescribing the current and future recommendations for Brunswick County parks and recreation development. This information should be considered when planning any new park development.

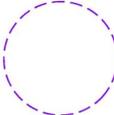




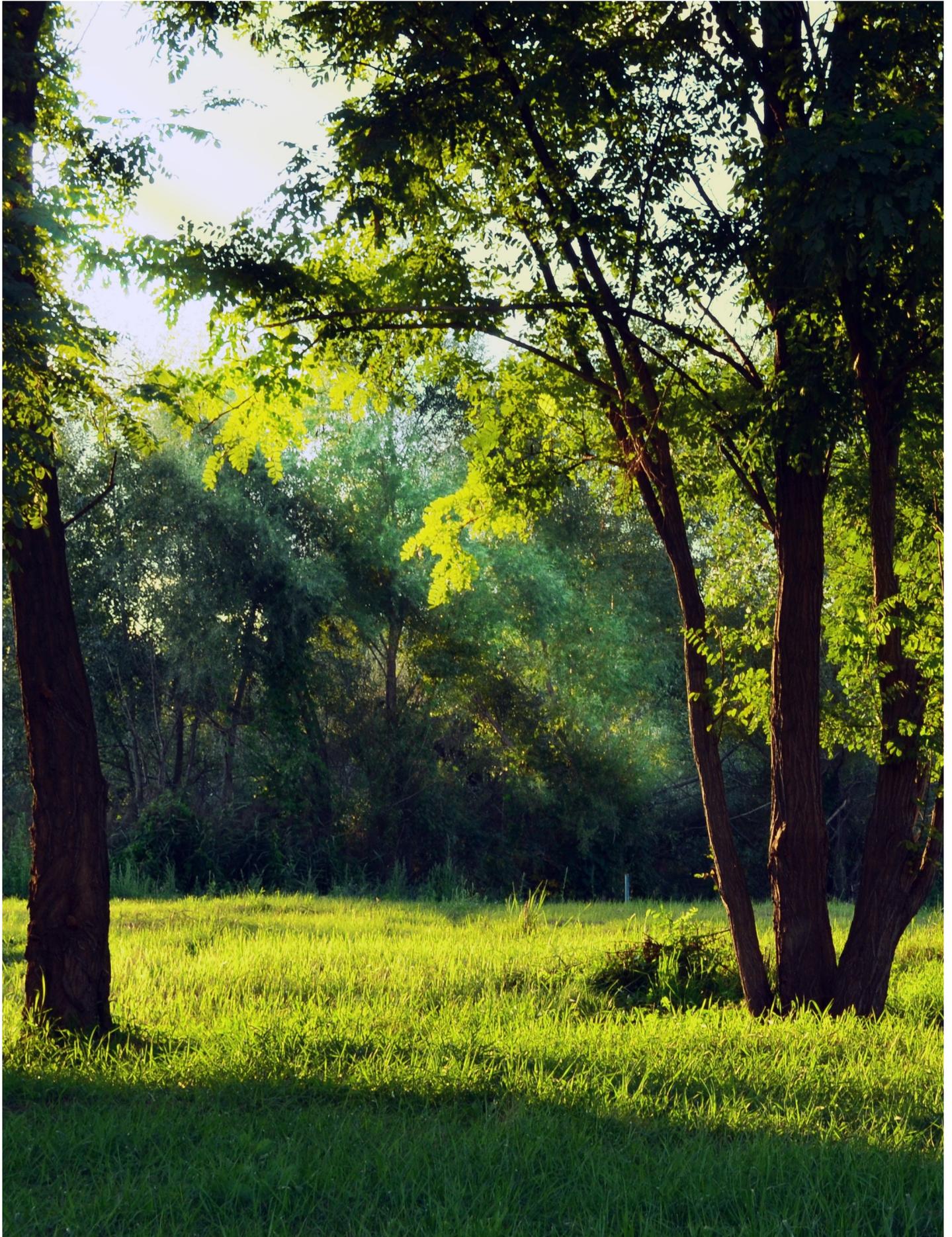
LEGEND

TYPICAL SERVICE AREAS

-  County Boundary
-  Existing Park
-  Existing Road Centerline
-  Existing Municipal Boundary

-  2.5 Mile
(Existing District Park)
-  2.0 Mile
(Existing Community Park)
-  1 Mile
(Existing Neighborhood Park)
-  0.5 Mile
(Existing Mini Park)

Brunswick County existing service area (See Appendix F for 11" x 17")



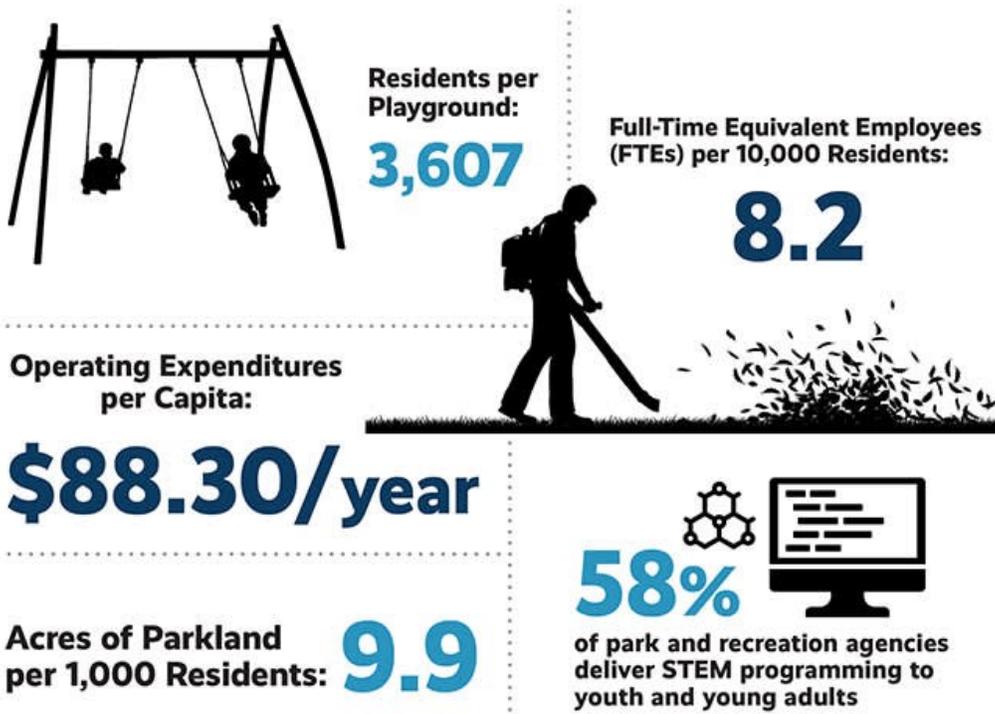
When comparing a park system to national standards, one method is to examine the total acreage of the park system. The NRPA park land guidelines (in acres) for the total service population of Brunswick County are provided in Tables 3.1 and 3.2. Population figures in this analysis, estimated at 61,053, include the estimated population of residents in the County as of 2021. The acreage requirement is based on the population ratio method (acres of park land per population of 1,000) pre-established for each classification of park.

Based on the information contained in Table 3.1, Brunswick County does not meet the national standard guidelines for any of the park acreage needs. However, due to the rural nature of the County and the amenities provided by the local municipalities and federal land managers in the County, the acreage listed above is not required for immediate implementation. The community workshops and the recreation survey will be used as the primary guides in prescribing the specific recommendations for Brunswick County parks and recreation development, for both now and the future.

Presently, Brunswick County’s recreational facilities serve as the main provider of recreation services for most County residents. These facilities are a mix of active and passive recreation facilities and a broad range of programs and special events. Regional park resources typically are provided by North Carolina’s State Park System and in Brunswick County, those responsibilities are provided by the Nature Conservancy and state facilities that are within and in proximity to the County.

Based on the information contained in Table 4.1, Brunswick County greatly exceeds the standards set forth in this study for community park acreage needs but falls short in the other acreage needs, such as in district parks. However, due to the scale and variety of amenities offered at the existing facilities defined as community parks, those district park functions are largely being met.

2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review Key Findings



TYPE OF PARK	Existing Brunswick County Acreage	Recommended for 2022 Population 136,693	Recommended for 2032 Population 179,854	(Surplus) / Deficit for 2022 Population
REGIONAL PARK (NPS & NC) 1,000 acres or 10 acres / 1,000 persons	911 acres	1,367 acres	1,799 acres	456 acre deficit
DISTRICT PARK 200 acres or 5 acres / 1,500 persons	81 acres	455 acres	600 acres	374 acre deficit
COMMUNITY PARK 2.5 acres / 4,000 persons	354 acres	85 acres	112 acres	268 acre surplus
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK 2 acres / 4,000 persons	0 acres	68 acres	90 acres	68 acre deficit
MINI PARK 0.5 acres / 4,000 persons	0 acres	17 acres	23 acres	17 acre deficit

Table 3.1 Brunswick County existing park acreage by classification

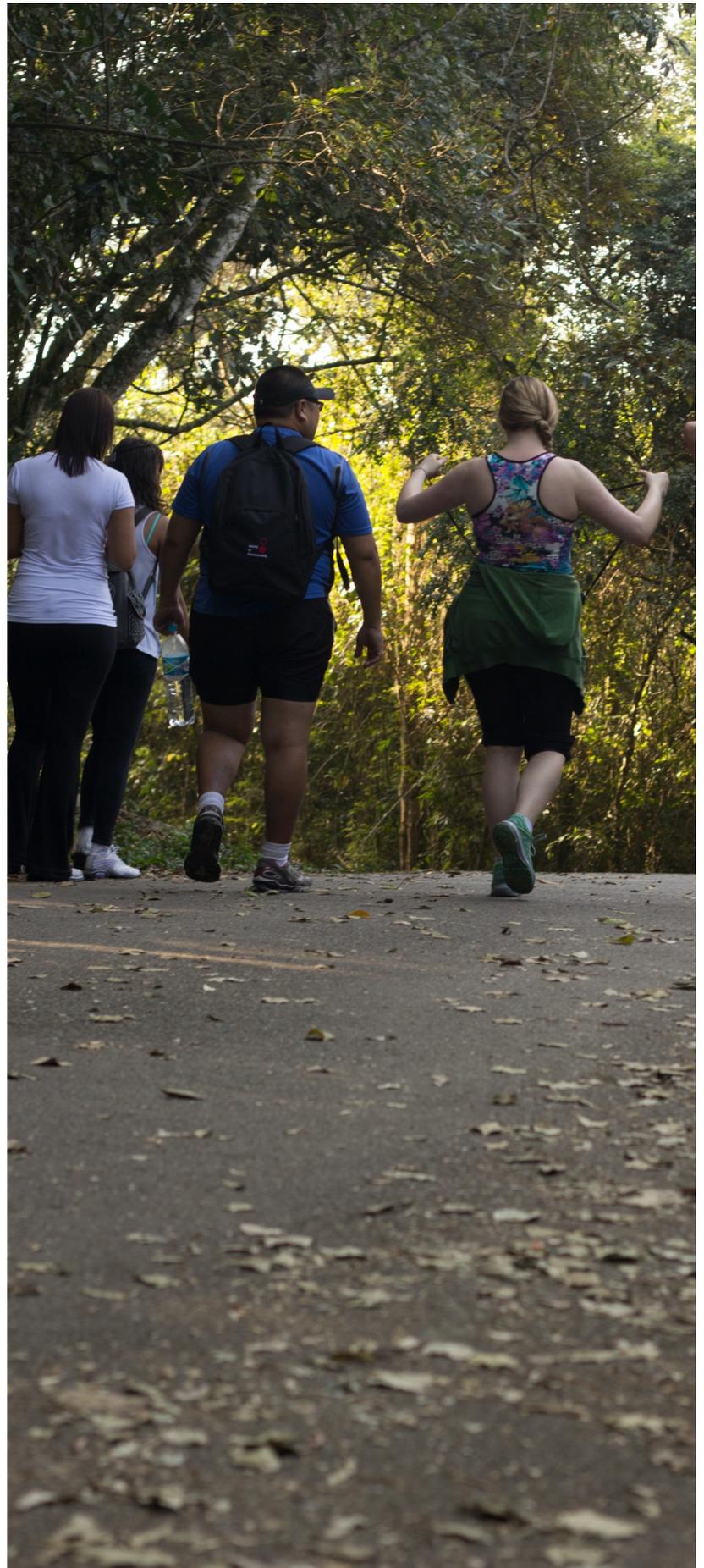
BRUNSWICK COUNTY EXISTING PARKS	
Brunswick Nature Park (regional)	911 acres
Northwest District Park (district)	37 acres
Smithville District Park (district)	44 acres
Cedar Grove Park (community)	75 acres
Dutchman Creek Park (community)	33 acres
Leland Community Park (community)	11 acres
Lockwood Folly Park (district)	20 acres
Navassa Park (community)	8 acres
Ocean Isle Beach Park (community)	58 acres
Shalotte Park (community)	68 acres
Town Creek Park (district)	44 acres
Waccamaw Park (community)	37 acres
BRUNSWICK COUNTY PARK ACREAGE	1,346 acres

Table 3.2 Brunswick County existing park acreage

10-Minute Walk

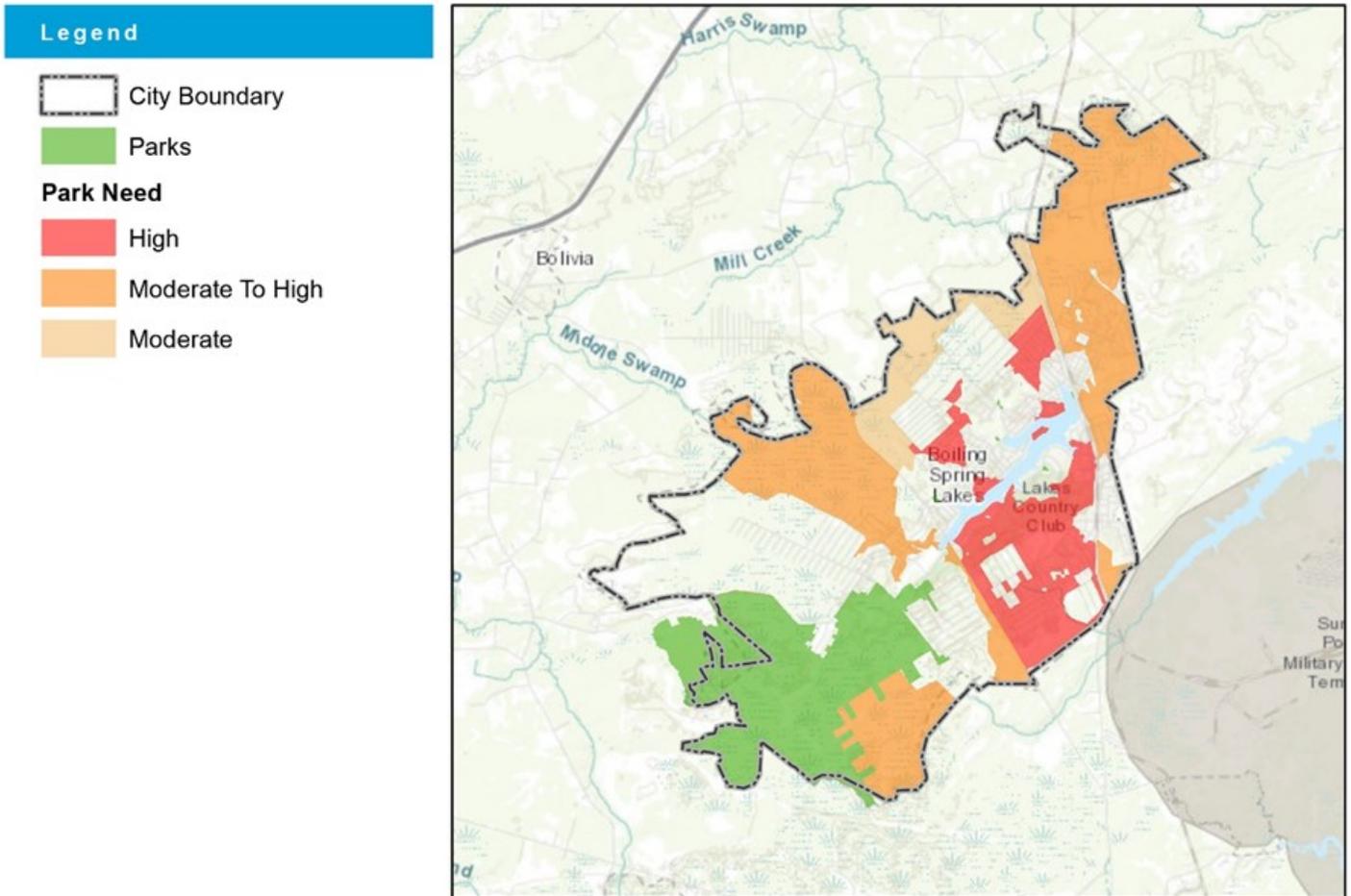
The NRPA, the Trust for Public Land, and the Urban Land Institute have joined together for a nationwide movement to help people have greater access to parks and green spaces while transforming communities. They have set a goal to provide safe, equitable access to 100% of people in United States cities by 2050.

The Trust for Public Land has created an online tool called ParkServe®. ParkServe® uses GIS databases and demographics to analyze the percentage of residents within a community who have access to parks and green space. Reports are generated for local communities to gain insight into how they are doing. While the report only provides information for local municipalities, it can give insight into how a county is servicing residents and is another tool to show where gaps within a recreation system are. The following information was generated using the ParkServe® tool for the communities within Brunswick County where enough information was made available. The full reports can be found in Appendix E.



Boiling Spring Lakes

According to ParkServe®, the City of Boiling Spring Lakes has 2,356 acres of parks and green space. The total population is 6,379 and the population within a 10-minute walk is 2,566 or 40.2%.

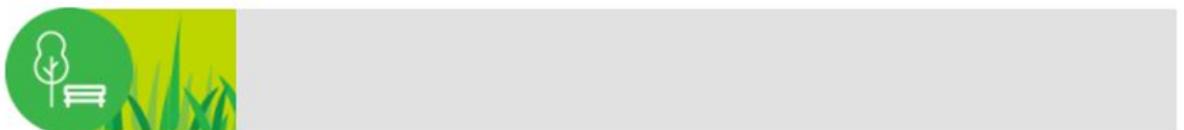


40% of residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park.



National average **55%**

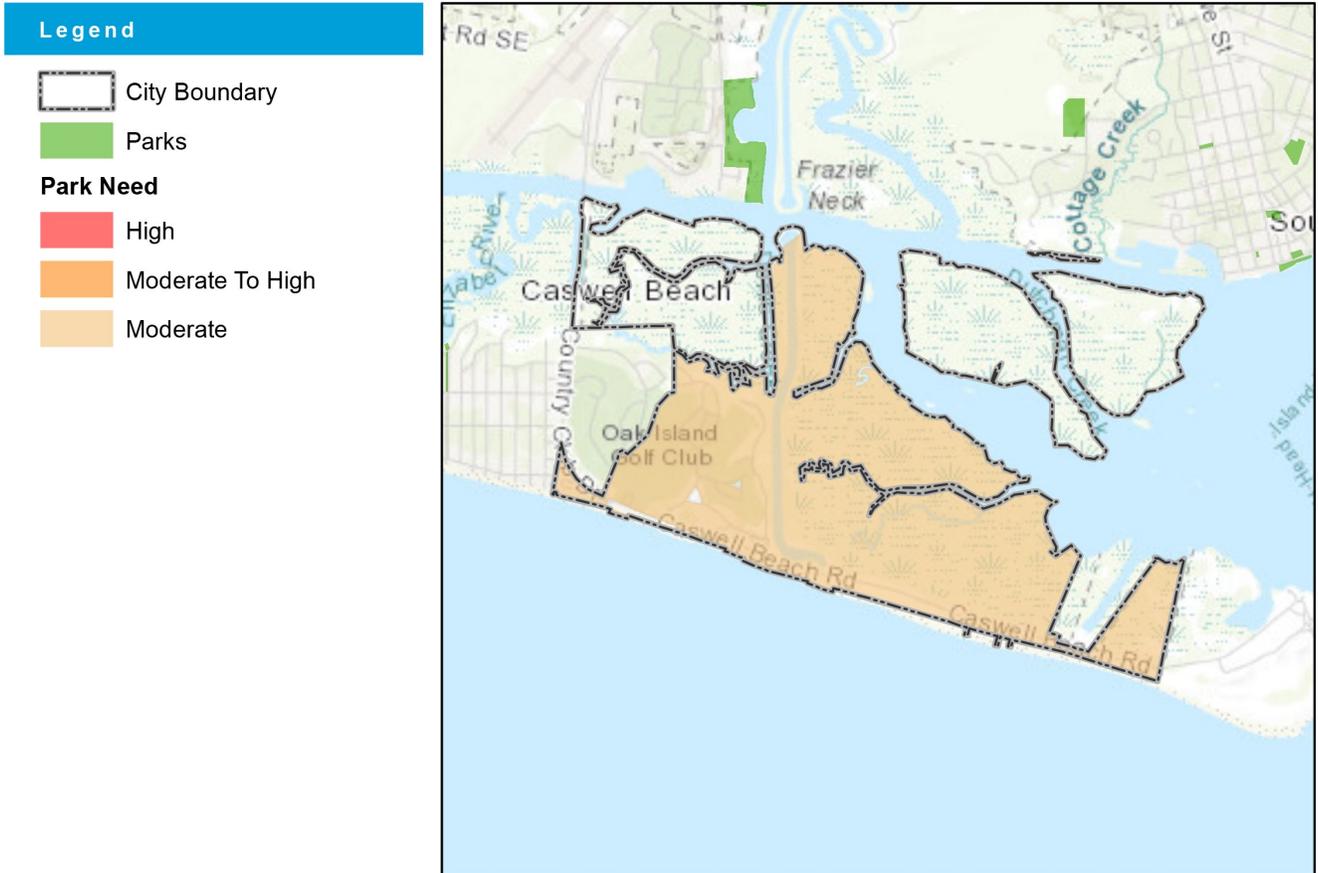
15% of Boiling Spring Lakes's city land is used for parks and recreation.



National median **15%**

Caswell Beach

According to ParkServe®, the Town of Caswell Beach has 0 acres of parks and green space. The total population is 439 and the population within a 10-minute walk is 1 or 0.2%.



0% of residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park.



National average **55%**

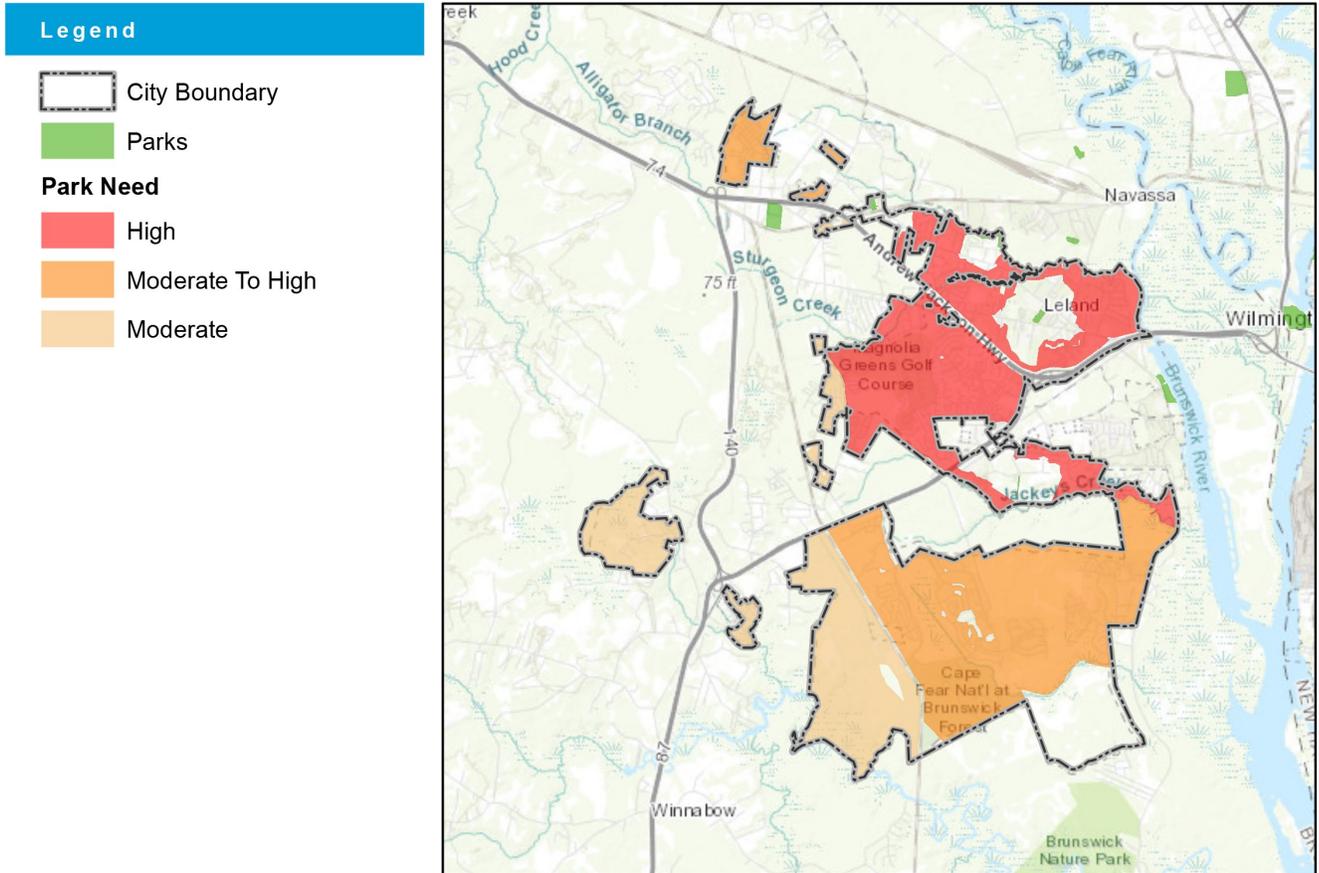
0% of Caswell Beach's city land is used for parks and recreation.



National median **15%**

Leland

According to ParkServe®, the Town of Leland has 41 acres of parks and green space. The total population is 19,751 and the population within a 10-minute walk is 2,998 or 15.2%.



15% of residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park.



National average **55%**

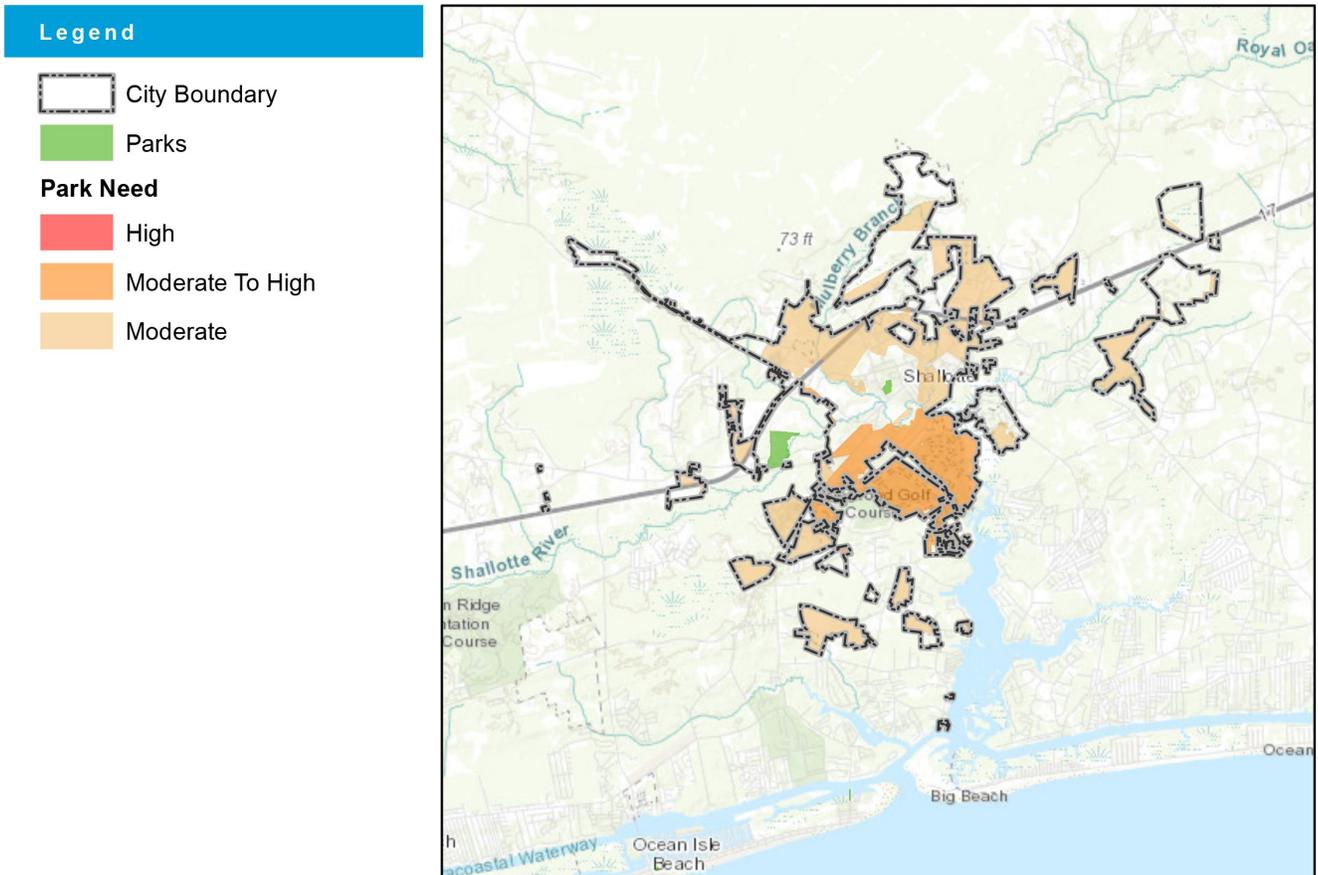
0% of Leland's city land is used for parks and recreation.



National median **15%**

Shallotte

According to ParkServe®, the Town of Shallotte has 10-acres of parks and green space. The total population is 5,022 and the population within a 10-minute walk is 248 or 4.9%.



5% of residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park.



National average **55%**

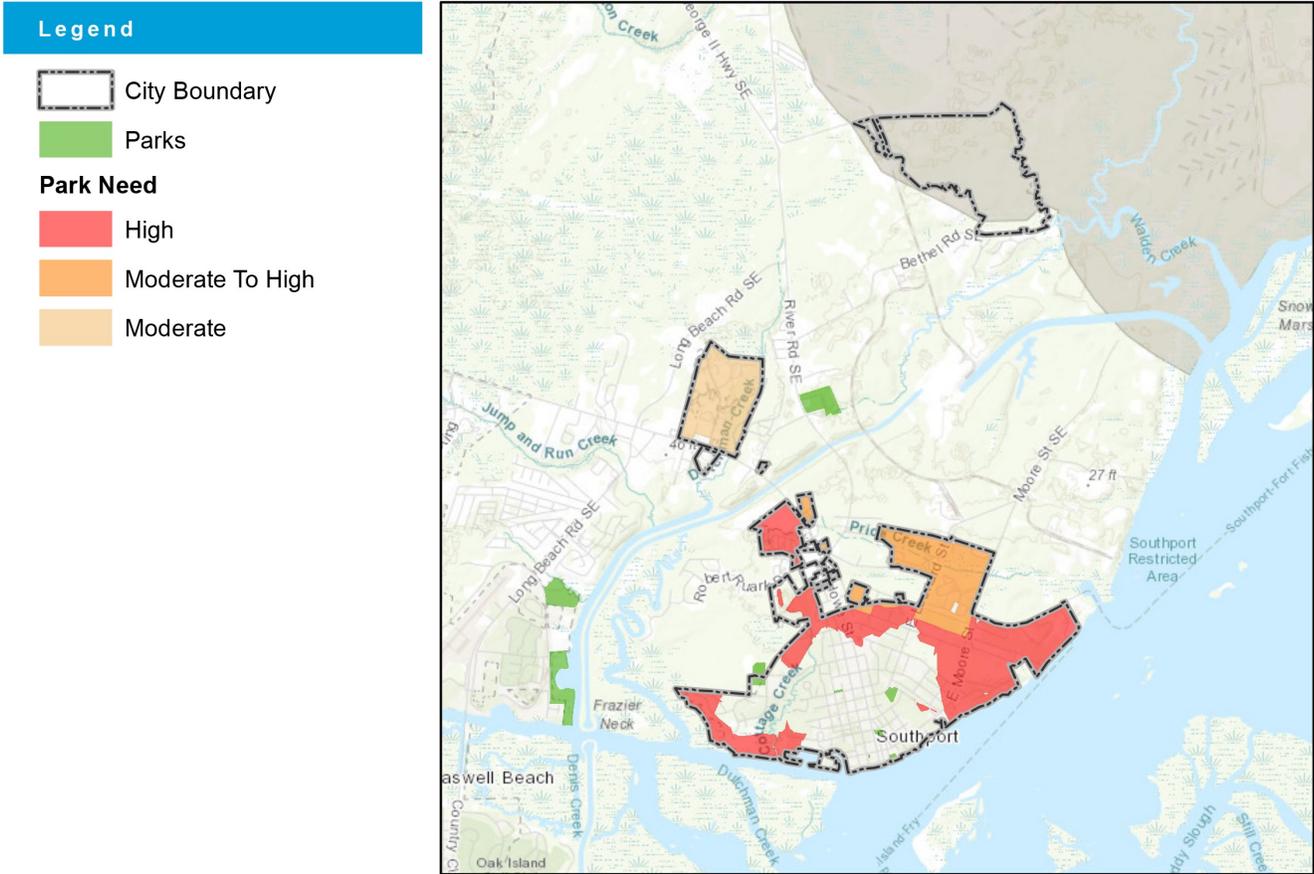
0% of Shallotte's city land is used for parks and recreation.



National median **15%**

Southport

According to ParkServe®, the City of Southport has 13-acres of parks and green space. The total population is 4,133 and the population within a 10-minute walk is 2,228 or 53.9%.



54% of residents live within a 10 minute walk of a park.



National average **55%**

1% of Southport's city land is used for parks and recreation.



National median **15%**

Evaluation of Amenity Needs

Standards were established based upon information gathered from NRPA and historical evidence from past projects. An inventory of the existing amenities is shown in Table 3.3. Recommendations for what is needed can be found in Section 4 under the subtitle, “Amenity Proposals and Recommendations,” in Table 4.1.

In the 2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review, a list of outdoor park and recreation amenities was given with the median number of residents per amenity. This data is one more way to see how Brunswick County is meeting the needs of the community. The public meetings and the recreation survey were used as the primary guides in prescribing the specific needs for County parks and recreation development, both now and for the future.

FIGURE 3: OUTDOOR PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES – POPULATION PER FACILITY (BY PREVALENCE AND POPULATION PER FACILITY)

Type of Facilities		Median Number of Residents per Facility					
		Population of Jurisdiction					
	Percent of Agencies	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More than 250,000
Playgrounds	94.4%	3,607	2,132	2,961	3,672	4,804	8,271
Basketball courts	87.4	7,187	4,051	7,000	8,790	8,477	11,632
Tennis courts (outdoor only)	81.4	5,089	2,748	4,819	5,726	5,818	9,997
Diamond fields: baseball – youth	78.0	6,763	3,000	5,099	7,560	12,914	23,619
Rectangular fields: multipurpose	66.4	8,750	3,895	7,400	11,212	10,792	22,538
Diamond fields: softball – adult	65.5	13,510	5,663	11,184	16,250	28,081	35,875
Dog parks	64.9	46,000	11,148	27,528	58,926	76,610	129,506
Diamond fields: softball – youth	59.3	11,287	5,447	9,891	11,884	26,073	43,670
Swimming pools (outdoor only)	51.5	37,569	8,591	25,402	43,100	67,004	93,534
Diamond fields: baseball – adult	51.3	20,159	7,989	20,522	22,366	38,899	48,657
Rectangular fields: soccer – youth	48.9	7,192	3,433	5,833	8,291	12,646	32,649
Community gardens	48.3	31,175	9,001	25,480	51,197	72,238	96,322
Tot lots	45.1	11,000	6,194	8,974	13,701	19,122	22,163
Multiuse courts: basketball, volleyball	44.6	20,000	6,200	18,850	24,644	36,979	70,287
Rectangular fields: soccer – adult	43.6	12,943	7,541	11,161	12,800	20,000	30,092
Skate parks	39.3	49,750	11,000	31,248	66,672	109,798	247,664
Rectangular fields: football	36.5	25,977	7,917	16,584	31,972	51,719	78,656
Multipurpose synthetic fields	21.0	38,328	13,200	22,041	40,305	53,550	112,707
Ice rinks (outdoor only)	17.9	16,664	10,000	13,049	29,386	112,000	472,688
Rectangular fields: cricket	12.1	128,393	ISD*	29,404	62,958	110,936	370,119
Rectangular fields: lacrosse	11.2	29,000	7,051	13,333	33,437	63,250	174,861
Overlay fields	8.7	15,385	4,385	8,935	10,724	42,139	87,438
Rectangular fields: field hockey	3.5	23,270	ISD*	15,007	ISD*	110,558	ISD*

*ISD = Insufficient Data

2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review: Median population per recreation amenity provided by parks and recreation agencies across the nation

Amenity	McGill Recommended Standards	Existing Amenities Currently Provided by Brunswick County
Brunswick County Amenities		
Adult Baseball Field > 220 feet	1/22,000	30
Adult Softball Field > 220 feet	1/15,000	30
Youth Baseball Field < 220 feet	1/7,500	2
Youth Softball Field < 220 feet	1/12,000	2
Multipurpose Athletic Field	1/10,000	10
Indoor / Outdoor Basketball Court	1/10,000	11
Tennis Court	1/10,000	31
Pickleball Court	1/15,000	14
Volleyball Court	1/20,000	0
Lawn Games (horseshoes / cornhole)	1/20,000	3
Shuffleboard / Bocce	1/20,000	4
Picnic Shelter	1/7,500	21
Picnic Station (unsheltered)	1/7,500	multiple
Playground	1/7,500	12
Walking / Running Trails	0.25 miles/1,000	11.1 miles
Dog Park	1/15,000	3
Community Center	1/30,000	4
Outdoor Amphitheater	1/65,000	1
Swimming Pool (Dinah E. Gore)	1/65,000	1
Splash Pad	1/40,000	0
Disc Golf Course	1/40,000	1
Skate Park	1/40,000	0
Water / Fishing Access	1/40,000	2

Table 3.3 Brunswick County existing amenities and recommendations

Evaluation of Staffing Needs

The people that make up a parks and recreation department are what makes a successful agency. Everyone from the parks and recreation director, to athletic specialists, to maintenance staff work together to provide quality offerings to the community and visitors to the area.

Brunswick County has 26 full-time employees and 52 part-time employees that work to create the quality of life environment for users of the parks system. Brunswick County’s estimated population is 136,693 and the current staffing levels are on par with the average of typical agencies serving similar population sizes. Based on the 2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the median full-time staff equivalent (FTE) for parks and recreation departments across the country is 8 per 10,000 residents. If the County chose to utilize this guidance, a minimum of 45 full-time staff members would be employed within the parks and recreation department to match the lower quartile of agencies serving populations between 100,000 and 250,000.

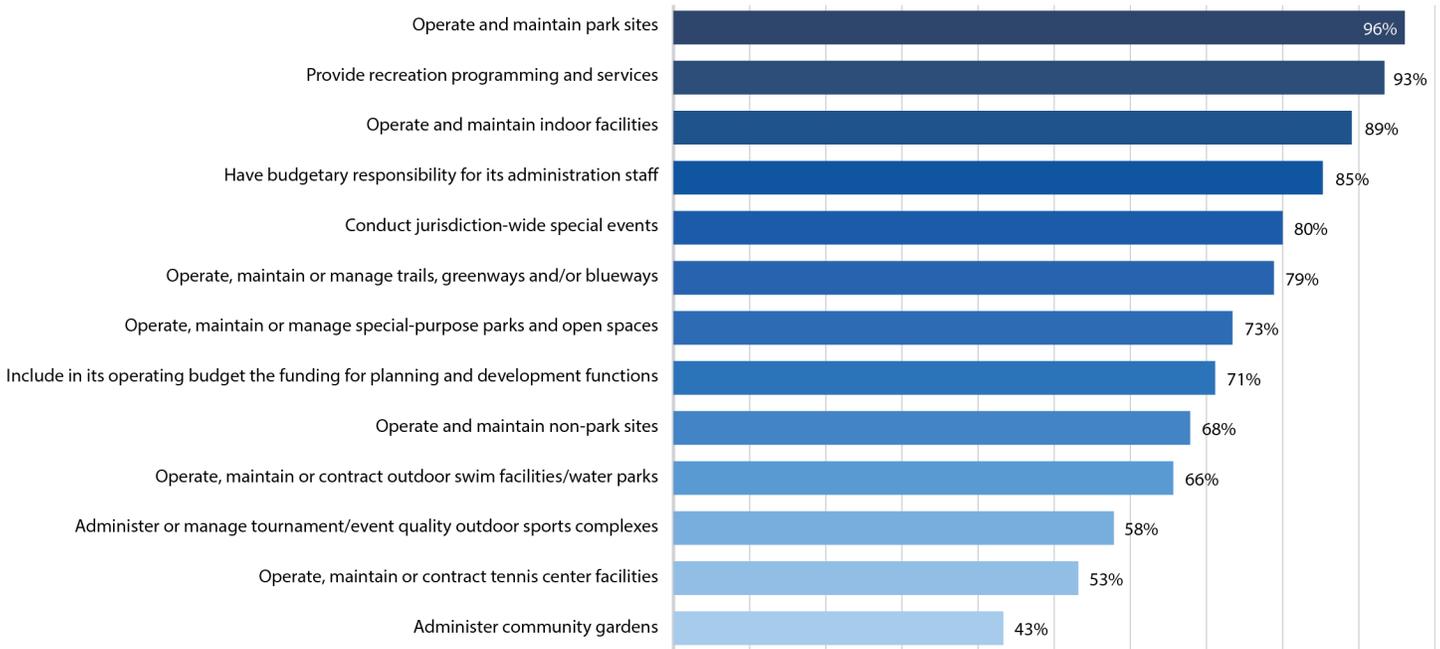
Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Current Staffing

Full-Time Positions

26

Part-Time / Seasonal Positions

52



2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review: The key responsibilities of park and recreation agencies across the country.

Key Responsibilities of Parks & Recreation Agencies (Percent of Agencies)

45.1 FTE

The minimum number of Full-Time Employees (FTEs) equivalent is 5.1 per 10,000 residents based on the NRPA staffing guidelines for Brunswick County's current population of **136,693**.

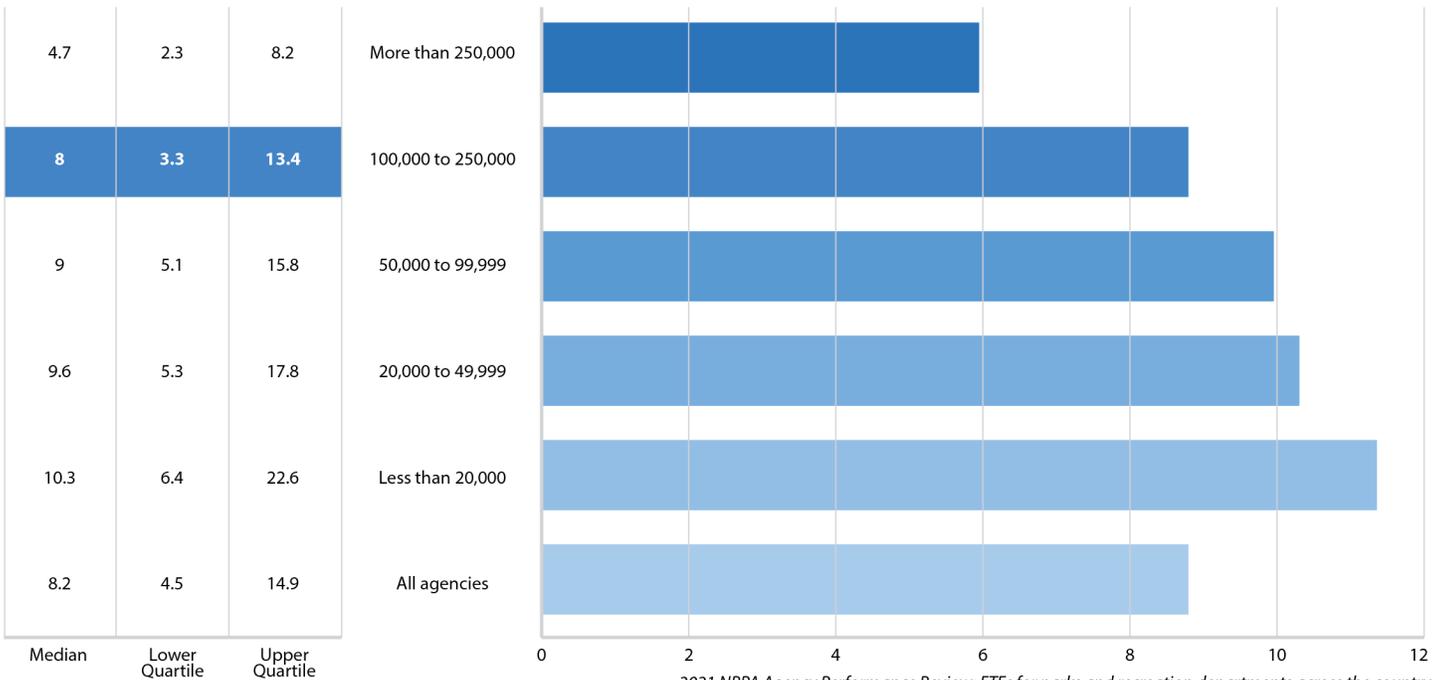
27.5 FTE

(Based on 1 PT = 20 hours/week)

The current number of full-time staff equivalents provided by Brunswick County to support the recreational needs for the present population of **136,693**.



Finding qualified maintenance staff is critical to providing quality services.



Parks & Recreation FTEs per 10,000 Residents (By Jurisdiction Population)

Goals and Recommendations





Objectives

The Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department provides recreational opportunities, both through facilities and programming, for residents and visitors to the County.

Understanding the needs and desires of the residents and County leaders is essential before making recommendations to the existing park system and expansion possibilities. Public meetings, County staff discussions, and the recreation survey were integral in helping identify the primary interests and concerns of County residents.

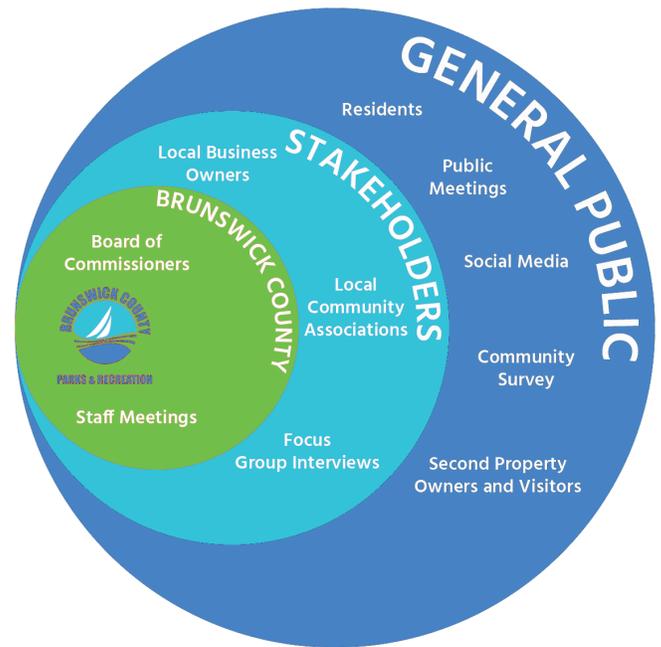
Brunswick County Parks and Recreation should strive to provide the community with a range of quality facilities and programs that will bolster the economy, promote health and wellness, and provide recreational programs that enrich the quality of life for all our citizens and visitors. The recreation needs assessment was an important component of gathering information.

An analysis of input from Brunswick County staff, Brunswick County Board of Commissioners, citizen representatives, and state and national guidelines aided the process in providing recommendations.

Objectives derived from these methods of input include the following:

- Ensure the parks and recreation department is incorporating measures across the County that will meet the health, safety, and well-being of the citizens and visitors
- Provide appropriate recreation improvements and expansion of existing recreation facilities
- Provide additional recreation land in the form of district, community, and neighborhood parks which are convenient and accessible to all residents
- Gauge the recreation needs of the community and provide the necessary amenities to fulfill them
- Provide the community with creative and inclusive recreation, leisure, and cultural programs that are accessible and affordable to all citizens
- Ensure adequate staffing for park facility maintenance and recreation programming commiserate to the needs of the County
- Solicit creative funding strategies and apply for state and local grants for recreation, leisure, and cultural arts facilities and programs
- Strengthen and build partnerships that will aid in providing recreational facilities and programs for the community

PLAN INPUT



Input from both the County and the public were invaluable in guiding the objectives and recommendations for the 2022 Brunswick County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

This Master Plan serves as a map for the future development of existing recreation facilities for Brunswick County. The plan provides recommendations to accomplish plan objectives. To effectively implement the 2022 Brunswick County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the County should annually evaluate population growth and recreation demand and regularly assess the topics related to successfully meeting department objectives. Increased recreation department staffing, funding for facility improvements, and well-planned system-wide expansion. Strong partnerships with private, nonprofit, and other public recreation providers will be integral in meeting the recommendations provided for this Master Plan.

Topic	Objective
<p>General Recommendations and Best Practices</p>	<p>Ensure the parks and recreation department is incorporating measures across the County that will meet the health, safety, and well-being standards of citizens and visitors</p>
<p>Existing Facilities</p>	<p>Provide appropriate recreation improvements and expansion of existing recreation facilities</p>
<p>Future Facilities</p>	<p>Provide additional recreational land in the form of district, community, and neighborhood parks which are convenient and accessible to all residents</p>
<p>Existing Amenities</p>	<p>Gauge the recreation needs of the community and provide the necessary amenities to fulfill them</p>
<p>Programming</p>	<p>Provide the community with creative and inclusive recreation, leisure, and cultural programs that are accessible and affordable to all citizens</p>
<p>Staffing</p>	<p>Ensure adequate staffing for park facility maintenance and recreation programming commiserate to the needs of the County</p>
<p>Funding</p>	<p>Solicit creative funding strategies and apply for state and local grants for recreation, leisure, and cultural arts programs</p>
<p>Partnerships</p>	<p>Strengthen and build partnerships that will aid in providing recreational facilities and programs for the community</p>
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Develop a department marketing plan to inform the public of County recreation facilities, programs, and seasonal events</p>

General Recommendations and Best Practices

General recommendations are based on professional experience and review of national and state recreational best practices. They are intended to provide guidance for the operations, administration, and growth of Brunswick County Parks and Recreation. They provide advice on elements ranging from policy, safety, maintenance, and other general issues. These general recommendations are intended to inform future decision making. Many of these recommendations depend upon collaboration between County departments and other recreation partners. They are not specific to any single facility or program initiative.

Recommendation #1: Facility and Program Accessibility

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

Recommendation #2: Design and Daily Maintenance

The facilities owned and operated by Brunswick County should appeal to residents of the County and visitors to the area. Priority should be given to improving the design of facilities so that they are architecturally, functionally, and ecologically progressive. Daily maintenance practices should be implemented to improve the cleanliness and longevity of all facilities.

Master planning should always be completed for park improvements or new facilities prior to final budgeting and / or design; thereby, making the phasing / development more transitional and of higher quality. Design (and redesign) of all facilities should embrace ecologically responsible elements and methods, such as the use of native plants for landscaping, the incorporation of wildlife habitats, the use of permeable surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff, where possible, and green building practices for structures.

Recommendation #3: Walkable Communities

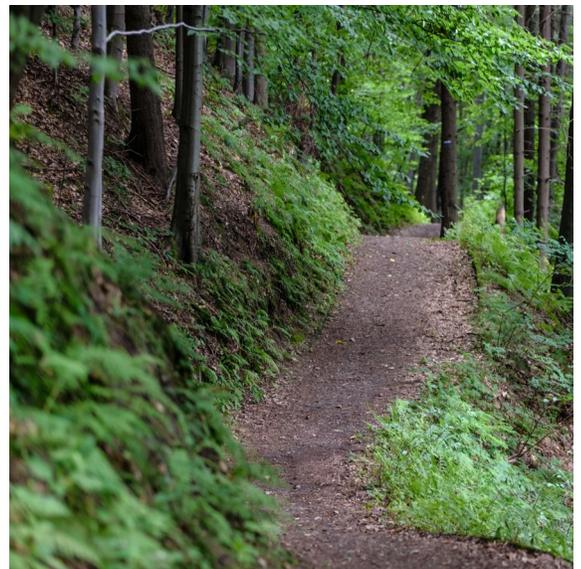
Brunswick County should promote land uses and site designs that make walking and bicycling convenient and enjoyable. They should also encourage the inclusion of public greenways or trails in private developments and the establishment of connectivity to and / or between both current and future public schools, parks, and other public destinations.

Recommendation #4: 10-Minute Walk Movement

NRPA, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) have partnered together to promote safe, equitable park access for United States citizens. The goal is to provide 100% of people access to a quality park or green space within a 10-minute walk of their homes by 2050. Brunswick County should encourage municipalities within the County to pledge their support to the 10-Minute Walk Mission. For more information, visit 10minutewalk.org.

Recommendation #5: Greenways / Multiuse Trails

Based on state and national studies, walking and biking are highly desired activities, which are increasing by leaps and bounds. North Carolina's 2020–2025 North Carolina



Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan SCORP found that 67% of survey participants reported that linear parks are the most needed facility within their park systems. SCORP also found that 61% of respondents viewed walking for pleasure to be a common outdoor recreational activity.

Brunswick County should encourage the coordination and planning for future utility easements with greenway facilities. The easements should be established to allow for the inclusion of recreation facilities, where possible. Where new development occurs, the County should work with the developer to provide rights-of-way or easements for proposed and future greenway facilities.

Recommendation #6: Greenway Funding

Brunswick County should consider including language in a development ordinance for fee in-lieu of sidewalk to fund greenway land acquisition and construction where the need for pedestrian connections cannot rely on the timing of private property development.

Recommendation #7: Bicycle Facilities

Given the high cost of fuel for vehicular transportation, air quality concerns, and the need to increase the health and fitness of the population, a planned network of bike trails, bike lanes, and shared roadways should be developed to support alternative transportation to recreation facilities and travel within Brunswick County. Future roadway construction within the County should include provisions to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel. This network should connect both existing parks as well as future park facilities and greenways. In addition, bike racks (sheltered at schools and other potential high-use areas) should be installed at all publicly owned facilities within the County. The County should work with NCDOT to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian facilities are provided as much as possible to promote alternative modes of transportation. In addition, the County should refer to the Cape Fear Regional Bike Plan for recommended bicycle projects.

Recommendation #8: Entrance and Wayfinding Signage

To provide uniformity throughout the park system, Brunswick County should consider providing signage that is uniform and consistent promoting uniform parks and recreation standards. Entrance signage is the face of parks and, therefore, the face of the County's parks and recreation facilities. To provide visitors with ease of navigation throughout the park system, wayfinding signage should also be installed to improve the parks and provide consistency throughout the parks system.

Brunswick County should also consider utilizing guide pamphlets and kiosks to promote parks and recreation facilities. The County should consider adding an interactive map as well as general descriptions of existing facilities on their website. Highlighting and mapping the existing park facilities will provide people with an opportunity to locate the facilities throughout the County.

Recommendation #9: Interpretative Signage

Brunswick County should consider placing signage that would identify historic and natural landmarks along pedestrian corridors. This type of signage would not only enhance the pedestrian experience but also provide educational and cultural information to greenway users.

Recommendation #10: Intergovernmental Cooperation

Brunswick County should seek to coordinate planning efforts with the Brunswick County Public Schools, local municipalities, County planning department, and state land managers to provide greenway and park facilities. Representatives of the County and these agencies should meet periodically to discuss development and recreation projects that are planned or are underway within the area. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss upcoming project opportunities and development trends in demographics and growth, newly identified citizen needs in recreation and open space, and recreation master plan updates for local municipalities and adjacent counties. This will also ensure that redundancy in services is prevented and that all opportunities for partnerships and connectivity are being utilized.

Recommendation #11: Developers

Continue requiring new developments in Brunswick County to incorporate open space into their development plans. The inclusion of public greenways, trails, and bike lanes in private developments should also be encouraged. If no suitable land for park or greenway development is available, the County should consider allowing developers to pay into a fee-in-lieu of parkland dedication.

Recommendation #12: Partnership Agreement

It is recommended that the County staff meet with existing and potential partners, such as local hospitals, not-for-profit organizations, local churches, and athletic associations to determine needs and possible partnership opportunities. All partner agreements need an annual review to critique how well things are working and identify and/or negotiate any areas of concern. Each entity involved needs to have the ultimate support from the top of their organizations. Equity of usage and costs for usage should be considered for all partner entities. Pricing of usage needs should be determined by the cost to provide the services with annual reevaluations possible.

Recommendation #13: Educational and Stewardship Programming

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

Recommendation #14: Green Building

It is recommended that the County implement green building components into existing and future parks facilities. Green building techniques consist of building materials and construction practices which reduce environmental impacts (greenhouse gases, water pollution, and air pollution) and promote energy efficient building materials and methods. These efforts will improve environmental stewardship for park facilities and also educate park users.

Recommendation #15: Contiguous Property Acquisition

When property contiguous to existing parks becomes available, reasonable efforts should be made for acquisition. Large acreage parks offer recreation amenities that can only be achieved on large sites. The acquisition of contiguous property next to County parks should be of high priority. Efforts should be made immediately to seek the first option on all contiguous properties. At the time these options are sought, other possibilities should be presented to the property owner as well. Some property owners may be receptive to conservation easements while retaining the title to the property. Conservation easements will allow the County the opportunity to use properties for recreation while providing the immediate benefits of preservation. Numerous grant sources can be used for land acquisition. Extreme care should be exercised in choosing the correct means and timing for acquisition to meet the full potential afforded by grants.

Recommendation #16: Acceptance of Fee Simple Land Donation

If land is offered to Brunswick County as donation by fee simple title with no restrictions, the property should be surveyed for natural heritage significance and relationship to existing plans and parks. If the land contains no environmental hazards, restrictive covenants, or restrictive easements, it can be useful and beneficial for the County to assume ownership. Not all donated land has to be developed into a park to be useful. Any land donation to the County serves a great public need even if it is banked for the future because the development and public needs of the distant future (over 50 years) is unknown. If donated property is properly managed, the revenue and future significance of the property would far exceed its current contribution to the tax base. If the County chooses not to accept land donation of a particular property, efforts should be made to assist the property owner

with contacting an agency that accepts land donations or conservation easements. Land donations (which the County has no interest in owning) could be donated to the local parks foundation.

Recommendation #17: Natural and Cultural Heritage Inventory

Brunswick County should refer to the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program's Natural Area Inventory of Brunswick County, North Carolina. The intent of this study is to identify areas deemed to be significant natural resources, which should be evaluated for consideration of preservation and future use as recreational resources.

Recommendation #18: Technology Access

As the culture continues to move towards information accessibility, providing access to wi-fi connectivity within the parks is an amenity that can elevate the usership of park facilities. Brunswick County should identify the locations within their park facilities to install the necessary equipment that will provide users the ability to access wi-fi connectivity.

Recommendation #19: Programs and Classes

To expand recreation programming, the County should continue to provide recreation classes and programs in appropriate County parks and facilities. The County should assess the need to contract future programming offerings out to concessionaires. This could extend the programs offered by non-profits and private recreation providers into future County-owned facilities, which may be more accessible to residents who are not currently served. The County should strive to increase programming options by starting new contract programs and activities in the following service areas: health and fitness, swim safety classes, environmental education, nature-based outdoor recreation, non-sports interest classes, and fine / cultural arts programs.



Recommendation #20: Facility Marketing Campaign

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

Recommendation #21: Mitigation of Asset Obsolescence

All County facilities, equipment, and items needed to provide the public with safe and adequate recreation services should be evaluated annually to ensure they meet appropriate standards of service. Assets should be replaced at the end of their useful life.

Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Brunswick Nature Park

Description:

Brunswick Nature Park is a 911-acre park located in eastern Brunswick County near the community of Winnabow adjacent to Town Creek. This protected, undeveloped land is an environmental sanctuary allowing visitors the ability to observe natural beauty typical of the coastal region.

Recommendations

- Promote the park via a marketing effort to highlight the County's natural beauty and recreation
- Add a picnic pavilion near the river
- Add a nature education building with restrooms exploring the local flora / fauna
- Add additional fishing / wildlife observation platform near river
- Develop wayfinding signage and trail map that denotes trail lengths and nodal destinations
- Consider additional parking area with informational kiosk and trailhead amenities (bike repair station, water fountain, seating, shade, etc.).
- Develop bike pump course / mountain bike skills course (seek partnership with local mountain biking group)
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



endations

Cedar Grove Park

Description:

Cedar Grove Park is the newest addition to the Brunswick County Park System. Located convenient to Supply, Shallotte, and Holden Beach, this park offers opportunities to enjoy, play, and have fun. The park is located directly behind Cedar Grove Middle School and serves as the school's main area for leisure and sports activities. Cedar Grove Park is the first of its kind in Brunswick County where two organizations (the school board and the Brunswick County Recreation Department) have sought to maximize shared space, land, and facilities.

Recommendations

- Add shade sail structures at all the bleachers located at the baseball fields, multipurpose fields, basketball courts, and tennis courts
- Add field lighting for the multipurpose fields



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center

Description:

In partnership with Brunswick Community College, the County offers visitors access to the Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center. The campus and aquatics center are located in Bolivia in central Brunswick County. Visitors with small children also have access to a childcare facility. The fitness and aquatics center offers group exercise classes, fitness and sports camps, personal training, and swim lessons.

Recommendations

- Continue community college / County parks and recreation partnership
- Advertise public access to pool in marketing materials aimed at new residents and the senior population
- Consider development of a therapy pool (thermal area)



endations

Dutchman Creek Park

Description:

This park is located on Fish Factory Road in Southport. It has 33-acres of partially developed land offering opportunities for fishing, picnicking, and a playground. There is also a restroom facility at this park.

Recommendations

- Add a picnic pavilion near the waterway
- Develop a paved walking path around the park property with connections to the restroom building, playground, and picnic pavilion
- Add benches and bench swing along the trail near the waterway
- Add two fishing / wildlife observation platforms near the waterway
- Provide additional picnic tables with grills
- Add paved accessible parking spaces in the gravel parking lot
- Add a paved sidewalk to restrooms from the parking area
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Leland Community Park

Description:

Leland Community Park (11-acres) is located on Village Road in Northeast Leland. This park offers a good mix of active and passive recreation amenities.

Recommendations

- Upgrade game courts
- Add accessible sidewalk connections from parking lot to playground and picnic shelters
- Improve batting cages
- Add shade sails to ballfield bleachers
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



endations

Lockwood Folly Park

Description:

Lockwood Folly District Park is on approximately 20-acres and is conveniently located off of Highway 17 on Green Swamp Road in Supply.

Recommendations

- General maintenance at ball fields
- Repave asphalt parking lot
- Replace parking lot split-rail fencing
- Improve drainage of ball fields
- Add shade sail structures to bleachers
- Expand existing sidewalk network at ballfields to link with south parking area and connect with the eastern portion of the park near the playground
- Resurface existing basketball and tennis courts
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Navassa Park

Description:

This 8-acre park offers active recreation amenities in the heart of the Town of Navassa. This facility serves as an important element supporting the quality of life for area residents.

Recommendations

- Develop trail to river with connectivity to parking area and playgrounds
- Add canoe / kayak launch at river
- Signage on trail (distance, educational)
- Resurface basketball and tennis courts
- Update playground equipment
- Add pour-in-place playground surfacing
- Assess ballfield fencing for possible repair / replacement
- Pave driveway and add designated parking area
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



endations

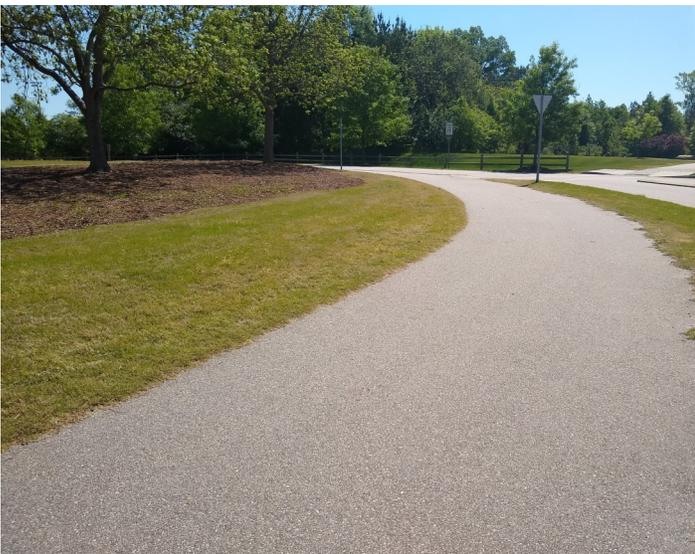
Northwest District Park

Description:

This 37-acre park offers predominantly active recreation amenities but also serves to host small gatherings, such as family picnics.

Recommendations

- Assess drainage of ball fields for needed improvements
- Add shade sail structures to bleachers
- Upgrade batting cage
- Develop paved walking path around park connecting amenities
- Consider partnership with Leland to expand park boundary into adjacent Town-owned property to the west
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Ocean Isle Beach Park

Description:

This 58-acre park is located on the mainland side of the Town of Ocean Isle on Old Georgetown Road. This park offers a mix of active and passive recreation opportunities and is known for its outdoor amphitheater.

Recommendations

- Develop natural surface / mountain biking trails in wooded (northern) portion of the park property
- Consider adding disc golf course in northern portion of park property
- Expand walking trail around perimeter of park (where possible) and connect with all park amenities not already served by sidewalk



endations

Shallotte Park

Description:

Shallotte Park is located just outside of the Town of Shallotte. The park consists of 68-acres and offers mostly active recreation amenities.

Recommendations

- Update existing restrooms
- Add accessible sidewalk to restrooms from parking areas
- Assess ball fields for drainage improvements
- Upgrade existing concession building
- Add shade sail structures to bleachers
- Develop walking path
- Consider acquisition of adjacent property for future park expansion
- Improve accessibility (ADA)



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

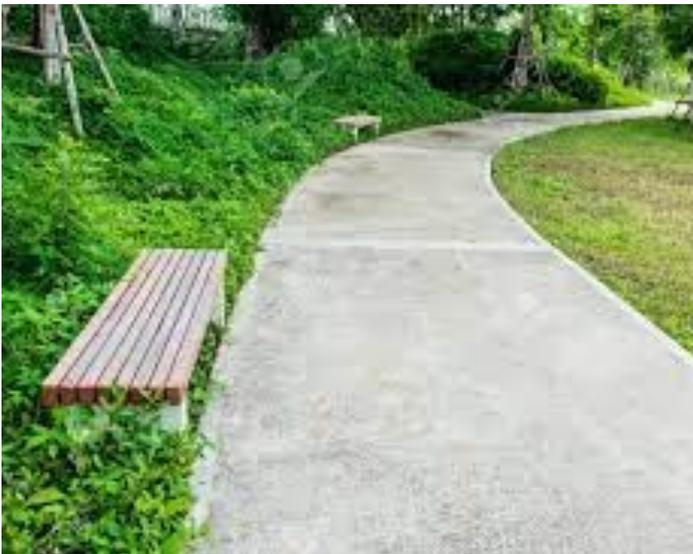
Smithville District Park

Description:

This 44-acre active recreation park is located at 8340 River Road SE near the Town of Southport.

Recommendations

- Develop paved walking path around park property with connections to park amenities
- Add fitness par-course in open area to the west of existing small ball fields
- Add tot lot near ball fields



endations

Town Creek District Park

Description:

Town Creek Park, on 44-acres, is predominantly an active recreation facility and is conveniently located adjacent to Town Creek Middle School.

Recommendations

- Add shade sail structures to ballfield bleachers and bleachers between multipurpose fields



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Waccamaw Park

Description:

This 37-acre park offers a mix of passive and active recreation amenities.

Recommendations

- Ongoing maintenance



endations

A broad range of recreation programs provide opportunities for multi-generational sharing of ideas.



Brunswick County Facility Recomm

Future Facility Recommendations

Geographic equity of park access is also an important consideration to provide short-distance access and service to all Brunswick County residents. An analysis of recreation service areas can be used to make land acquisition recommendations for both current and future needs (see Section 4). Future park site acquisitions should be balanced and proportional to service populations in all areas of the County. This plan supports the development of public water access locations. Where county-owned land has waterfront, efforts to provide public water access should be considered.

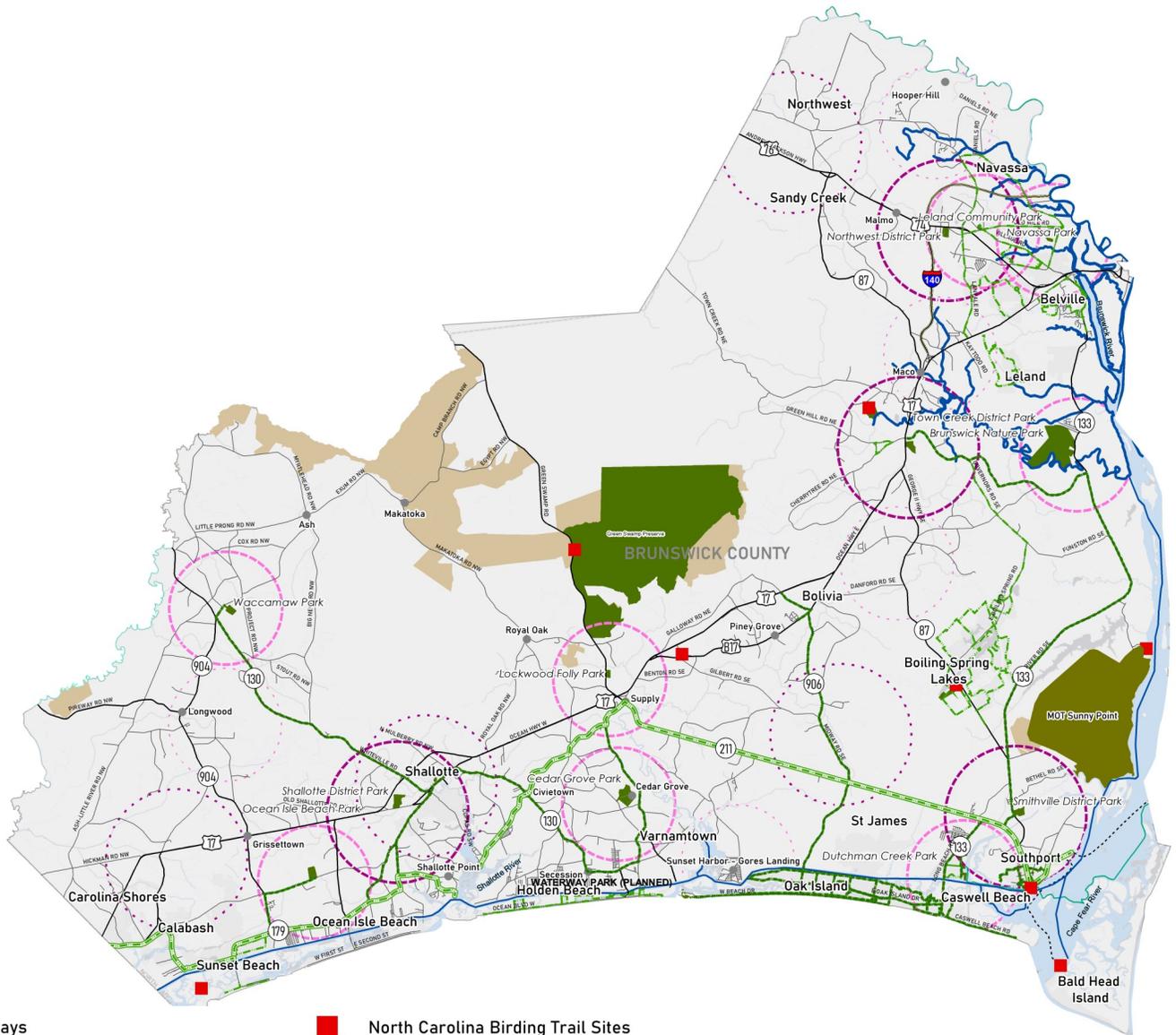
The Existing Service Area Map in the preceding section clearly demonstrates where County recreation services are made available to residents and where park inequities may exist due to geographic distance between facilities and where people live. Providing recreation facilities in gap areas must consider not only where people are living currently but where anticipated development will occur. In recent years, land values have risen, adding to the complexity of providing County recreation services where gaps have been identified. Brunswick County still has opportunities should it choose to pursue future land acquisition and park development. A preview of these opportunities are illustrated on Map 5.1. The full sized version (11x17”) of the Proposed Service Areas Map can be found in Appendix A.

Map 5.1 illustrates where proposed park projects could be sited to meet anticipated future recreation demand, based on existing need and where future development will likely occur. This plan proposes four additional district parks and eight new community parks to meet the projected ten-year population increases. These new facilities would provide active and passive recreation programming but would need to be carefully planned to meet the specific recreation needs and desires of local user groups. The type of amenities and programs offered should be based on public input, known demographics, and recreation staff knowledge.

Connectivity between where people live and the recreation facilities that the County offers is important. This plan also recommends that Brunswick County seek to expand the existing trails network and seek partnerships and funding opportunities needed to provide adequate accessibility to existing and proposed County recreation facilities.

It should also be noted that as development continues to occur, homeowner association-based recreation amenities may be able to offset some of the anticipated need for community park-type amenities. This situation would need to be planned early on in the development process and close coordination between the developer and County planning and recreation staff.

endations



- Blueways
- North Brunswick Blueway
- Coastal Plain Paddle Trail**
- Cape Fear River Trail
- Waccamaw River Trail
- Park Service Areas**
- - - Existing Community Park (2.0 mi)
- - - - Proposed Community Park (2.0 mi)
- - - Existing District Park (2.5 mi)
- - - - Proposed District Park (2.5 mi)
- North Carolina Birding Trail Sites
- Parks
- Game Lands
- Ferry Route
- NCDOT Bike Routes
- East Coast Greenway
- Other Bike Routes & Greenways

Brunswick County proposed service area (See Appendix F for 11" x 17")

Amenity Proposals and Recommendations

Amenity	Proposed Standards	Existing Amenity	2022 Recommended per Population	Needed for 2022	2032 Recommended per Population	Needed for 2032
Brunswick County Amenities			Population: 136,693		Projected Population: 179,854	
Adult Baseball Field	1/22,000	30	6	0	8	0
Adult Softball Field	1/15,000	30	9	0	12	0
Youth Baseball Field	1/7,500	2	18	16	24	22
Youth Softball Field	1/12,000	2	11	9	15	13
Multipurpose Field	1/10,000	10	14	4	18	8
Basketball Court	1/10,000	11	14	3	18	7
Tennis Court	1/15,000	31	9	0	12	0
Pickleball Court	1/10,000	14	14	0	18	4
Volleyball Court	1/20,000	0	7	7	9	9
Lawn Games	1/20,000	3	7	5	9	7
Shuffleboard / Bocce	1/20,000	4	7	3	9	5
Picnic Shelter	1/7,500	21	18	0	24	6
Picnic Station	1/7,500	Multiple	18	-	24	-
Playground	1/7,500	12	18	5	24	11
Walking / Running Trails	.25 miles/1,000	11.1 miles	34 miles	22.9 miles	45 miles	33.9 miles
Dog Park	1/15,000	3	9	7	12	10
Community Center	1/30,000	4	5	0	6	1
Outdoor Amphitheater	1/65,000	1	2	0	3	1
Swimming Pool	1/65,000	1	2	1	3	2
Splash Pad	1/40,000	0	3	3	5	5
Disc Golf Course	1/40,000	1	3	3	5	5
Skate Park	1/40,000	0	3	3	5	5
Water / Fishing Access	1/40,000	2	3	2	5	4

Table 4.1 Brunswick County existing amenities and recommendations

Based on the information contained in Table 4.1, the County does not meet the recommended recreation service standards for some of the typical recreational facilities for their permanent population. As recreation trends and public needs vary over time, recommended amenities may not be necessary for immediate implementation. The recommendations are intended to meet the anticipated recreation service needs over a ten-year period, but implementation of specific projects may depend on available funding, land acquisition, and periodic reevaluation of recreation needs. It is important to note that County residents' recreational needs are also being provided by local municipalities, state and federal public lands, and other private recreational facilities, as well as through shared use agreements with County schools. The community workshops and the recreation survey will be used as the primary guides in prescribing the specific needs for Brunswick County parks and recreation development, both now and for the future.



Staffing Recommendations

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

Multiple factors may come to influence what the future staffing needs of the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department will encompass. Those may include population growth, available tax dollars, capital improvement plans, and development of tourism efforts. Staff compensation should be fair and based on market precedents. Maintaining adequate staffing for parks and recreation facilities and programs will be necessary to foster a good quality of life for County residents and prospective businesses that may seek to locate to Brunswick County.

Brunswick County should continue to strive to provide a higher level of maintenance service to meet the current and future demands anticipated at County-operated recreation facilities. The County's population is growing, and parks and facilities will continue to see increased use. Brunswick County must provide adequate programming and maintenance to continue providing safe and enjoyable recreation services.

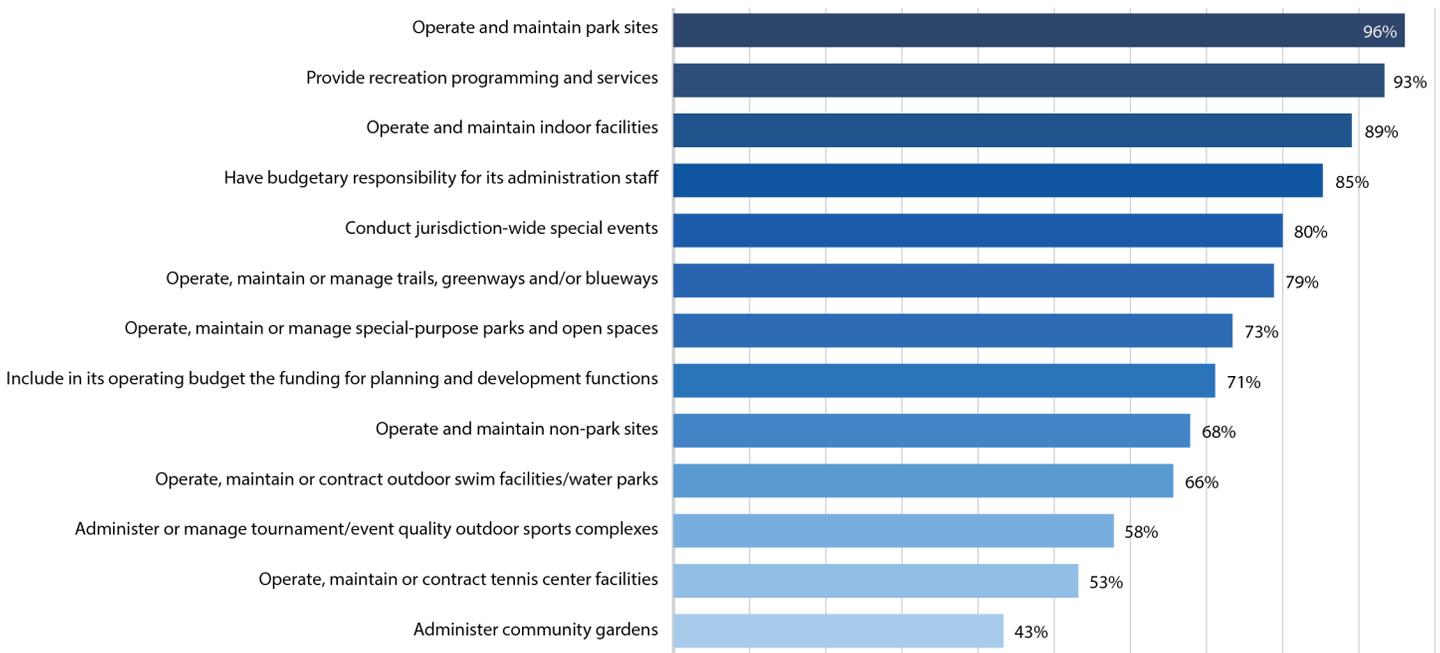
Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Proposed Staffing

Full-Time Positions

- Assistant Director – 1
- Recreation Superintendent – 1
- Athletic Coordinator – 1
- Recreation Coordinator – 1
- Maintenance Technicians – 4

Part-Time / Seasonal Positions

As needed to properly staff programming events



2021 NRPA Agency Performance Review: The key responsibilities of park and recreation agencies across the country.

Key Responsibilities of Park & Recreation Agencies (Percent of Agencies)

109.4 FTE

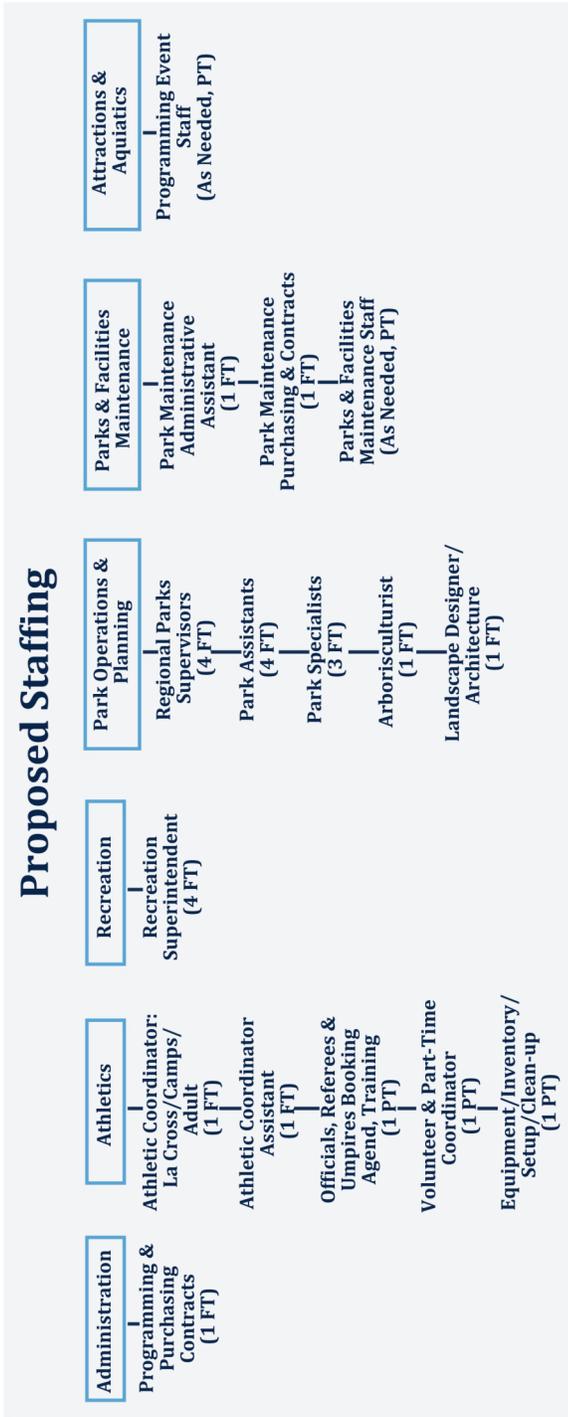
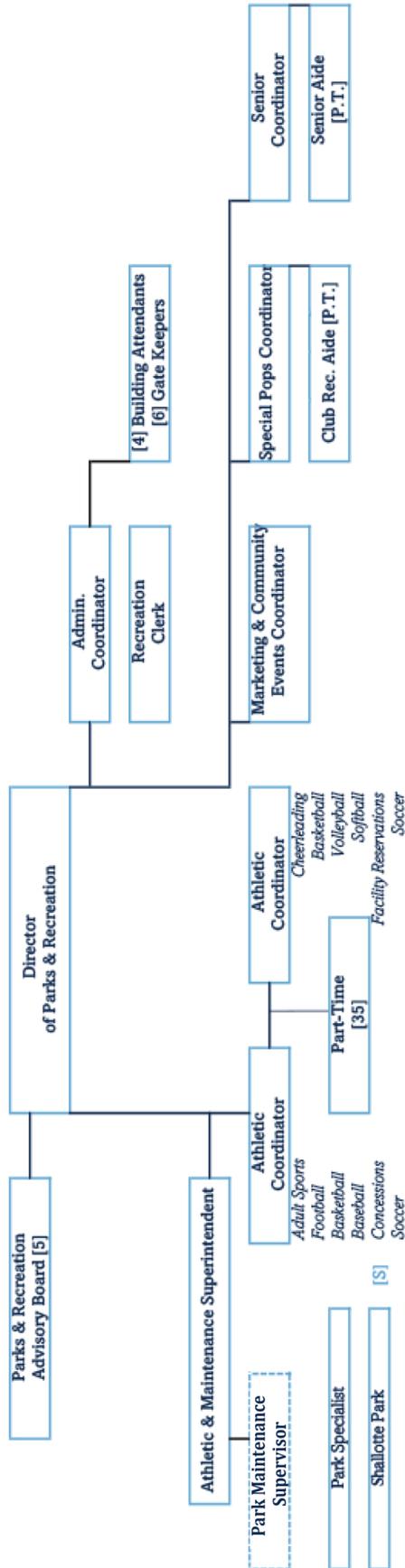
Median number of FTE is 8 per 10,000 residents based on the NRPA staffing guidelines for Brunswick County's current population of 136,693



STAFFING FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (BASED ON 2021 NRPA REPORT)	RECOMMENDED FOR 2022 POPULATION 136,693	DEFICIT FOR 2022 POPULATION (BASED ON CURRENT 78 FTE)	RECOMMENDED FOR 2032 POPULATION 179,854	DEFICIT FOR 2032 POPULATION (BASED ON CURRENT 78 FTE)
LOWER QUARTILE (3.3 per 10,000 residents)	45.1 FTE	(13.4) FTE	59.4 FTE	0.9 FTE
MEDIAN (8 per 10,000 residents)	109.4 FTE	50.9 FTE	143.9 FTE	85.4 FTE
UPPER QUARTILE (13.4 per 10,000 residents)	183.2 FTE	124.7 FTE	241 FTE	182.5 FTE

Please see organizational staffing chart with existing and proposed positions on the following page.

Brunswick County Parks and Recreation



Parks & Recreation Advisory Board	[5]
Athletic & Maintenance Superintendent	
Athletic Coordinator	Adult Sports Football Basketball Baseball Soccer
Athletic Coordinator	Cheerleading Basketball Volleyball Softball Soccer
Part-Time	[35] Facility Reservations Soccer
Park Specialist	
Shallotte Park	[S]
Lockwood Folly Park	[S]
BNP/DCP	[S]
Duchman Creek Park	[S]
Waccamaw Park	[S]
Cedar Grove Park	[S]
Smithville Park	[S]
Leland Park	[S]
Town Creek Park	[S]
Northwest Park	[S]
Waccamaw Park	[P.A.]
Smithville Park	[P.A.]
Northwest Park	[P.A.]
Shallotte Park	[P.A.]
Town Creek Park	[P.A.]
O.I.B. Park	[P.A.]
Seasonal Part Time	[6]

[S] Park Maintenance Lead
[P.A.] Park Assistant



Priorities for Development

The park system for Brunswick County should continue to grow and respond to changes in County demographics. Future planned facilities should be implemented incrementally to provide for these changes. The following factors guided the prioritization of individual segments of this Master Plan and were derived from input and desires specified by the residents of Brunswick County:

- Needed improvements to existing Brunswick County-owned facilities
- Development of planned facilities to meet the *current* needs of recreation for County residents
- Development of planned facilities to meet the *future* needs of recreation for County residents

The park facility prioritization is an essential tool that provides the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department with a breakdown of the priority for each capital improvement. Given the magnitude of the budgets for improvements to existing parks and for new park and greenway facilities, prioritization of these needs is important.

2023–2027

General Recommendations:

- Secure recommended staffing per plan recommendations, as needed, as facilities and programs grow
- Dedicate appropriate maintenance staff and equipment for parks and recreation facilities
- Dedicate recreation staff for youth and adult athletic programming
- Improve accessibility (ADA) at all County-owned recreation facilities
- Assess athletic field drainage issues at all facilities on a regular basis
- Consider public wi-fi access at all County-owned facilities
- Assess need for security cameras at all County-owned park facilities
- Continue to implement established park signage standards for consistency
- Based on significant public interest in classes on arts and skills programming, the County should expand program offerings that reflect the interests revealed in the latest public polls and offered at appropriate locations
- Implement a marketing plan to improve public awareness of both County-owned facilities and program offerings utilizing relevant media platforms to reach the broadest audience
- Identify new locations within the County for water access (canoe / kayak, fishing, etc.)

Brunswick Nature Park:

- Promote the park via a marketing effort to highlight the County's natural beauty and recreation
- Add a picnic pavilion near the river
- Add additional fishing / wildlife observation platform near river
- Develop wayfinding signage and trail map that denotes trail lengths and nodal destinations
- Develop bike pump course / mountain bike skills course (seek partnership with local mountain biking group)

Cedar Grove Park:

- Add shade sail structures at all the bleachers located at the baseball fields, multipurpose fields, basketball courts, and tennis courts

Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center:

- Continue community college / County parks and recreation partnership
- Advertise public access to pool in marketing materials aimed at new residents and the senior population

Dutchman Creek Park:

- Add a picnic pavilion near the waterway
- Develop a paved walking path around the park property with connections to the restroom building, playground, and picnic pavilion
- Add benches and bench swing along the trail near the waterway

Leland Community Park:

- Upgrade yard games
- Add accessible sidewalk connections from parking lot to playground and picnic shelters
- Add shade sails to ballfield bleachers

Lockwood Folly District Park:

- General maintenance at ball fields
- Repave asphalt parking lot
- Replace parking lot split-rail fencing
- Improve drainage of ball fields
- Add shade sail structures to bleachers
- Resurface existing basketball and tennis courts

Navassa Park:

- Resurface basketball and tennis courts
- Update playground equipment
- Add pour-in-place playground surfacing
- Pave driveway and add designated parking area

Northwest District Park:

- Assess drainage of ball fields for needed improvements
- Add shade sail structures to bleachers
- Upgrade batting cage
- Develop paved walking path around park connecting amenities

Ocean Isle Beach Park:

- Develop natural surface / mountain biking trails in wooded (northern) portion of the park property
- Consider adding disc golf course in northern portion of park property

Shalotte District Park:

- Update existing restrooms
- Add accessible sidewalk to restrooms from parking areas as part of a walking path through park
- Assess ball fields for drainage improvements
- Add shade sail structures to bleachers

Smithville District Park:

- Develop paved walking path around park property with connections to park amenities
- Add fitness par-course in open area to the west of existing small ball fields

Town Creek District Park:

- Add shade sail structures to ballfield bleachers and bleachers between multipurpose fields
- Add trail milage walked signage

Waccamaw Park:

- Assess and implement playground surfacing for needed playground repairs

2028-2033

Combined Recommendations:

- Secure recommended staffing per plan recommendations as needed
- Improve accessibility (ADA) at all County-owned recreation facilities
- Assess need for, and implement public safety improvements at all County-owned recreation facilities
- Acquire land for proposed future facilities, and begin site master planning efforts for those parks

Brunswick Nature Park:

- Add a nature education building with restrooms exploring the local flora / fauna
- Consider additional parking area with informational kiosk and trail head amenities (bike repair station, water fountain, seating, shade, etc.).

Cedar Grove Park:

- Add field lighting for the soccer field (west side of parking)

Dinah E. Gore Pool:

- Consider development of a therapy pool (thermal area)

Dutchman Creek Park:

- Add two fishing / wildlife observation platforms near the waterway
- Provide additional picnic tables with grills
- Add paved accessible parking spaces in the gravel parking lot
- Add a paved sidewalk to restrooms from the parking area

Leland Community Park:

- Improve batting cages

Lockwood Folly District Park:

- Expand existing sidewalk network at ballfields to link with south parking area and connect with the eastern portion of the park near the playground

Navassa Park:

- Develop trail to river with connectivity to parking area and playgrounds
- Add canoe / kayak launch at river
- Signage on trail (distance, educational)
- Assess ballfield fencing for possible repair / replacement

Northwest District Park:

- Consider partnership with Leland to expand park boundary into adjacent Town-owned property to the west

Ocean Isle Beach Park:

- Expand walking trail around perimeter of park (where possible) and connect with all park amenities not already served by sidewalk

Shalotte District Park:

- Upgrade existing concession building
- Consider acquisition of adjacent property for future park expansion

Smithville District Park:

- Add tot lot near ball fields

Town Creek District Park:

- Assess and implement playground surfacing for needed playground repairs



Action Implementation Plan





Action Implementation Plan

This section describes how Brunswick County can implement a safe, convenient, and usable park and recreation system through the execution of the established goals in this Master Plan. The strategy for achieving goals involves the recommended park and recreation facilities and programs and this section exhibits strategies and opportunities, key implementation steps and policies, necessary staffing, and methods for developing the facilities. Together, these sections form the implementation program.

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

REVIEW THE STUDY AREA ANALYZE THE EXISTING FACILITIES GATHER PUBLIC INPUT REVIEW RECREATION STANDARDS

Implementing the recommendations of this Comprehensive Master Plan will require a combination of funding sources that include local, state, federal, and private money. This section provides a listing of the most commonly used funds for park and greenway facility projects in North Carolina. Fortunately, the benefits of protected greenways and parks are many and varied. This allows programs in Brunswick County to access money earmarked for a variety of purposes, including water quality, hazard mitigation, recreation, air quality, alternative transportation, wildlife protection, community health, and economic development. Competition is always stiff for state and federal funds. It becomes imperative that local governments work together to create multi-jurisdictional partnerships and to develop their own local sources of funding. These sources can then be used to leverage outside assistance. The long-term success of this plan will almost certainly depend on the dedication of a local revenue stream for park and greenway projects.

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

Anticipated Future Recreation Project List

A recreation capital improvement program for the development of park facilities is designed to encompass, at a minimum, a ten-year period of the Brunswick County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. To assist the County in determining those needs, this study provides a list of anticipated recreation projects based on plan recommendations. The proposed recreational project list provides costs based on recent (2020–2022) material and labor costs. The provided opinion of probable costs includes assumed general expenditures, such as site preparation, building structures, access, site utilities, parking, and specific recreation improvements. The list provided also includes estimates for planning or design fees.

The proposed anticipated future recreational project list would cover a ten-year period and would serve to set recreation expenses for each fiscal year for implementation of specific projects. The opinions of cost are preliminary in nature and are for planning purposes only. As the time approaches to consider the recommended improvements, it will be necessary to receive up to date opinions of cost.

The total anticipated recreational project cost for both the proposed existing facility improvements, and future facilities is **\$46,274,000**. This is a cumulative figure to be spent for park and recreation development, improvements, and renovations by the year 2033. The total figure does not consider an inflation rate over the ten-year period through the year 2033 (See Appendix E for the anticipated future recreational project list).



Funding Opportunities

Identification of sufficient funding is a crucial element required to implement this Master Plan. The North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (NC SCORP) is a guide by which funding sources for park and recreation facilities may be identified. Funding for future projects will be a key issue that will need to be addressed in the upcoming years if governments continue to provide basic minimum services.

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



Park and Recreation Capital Expenditures

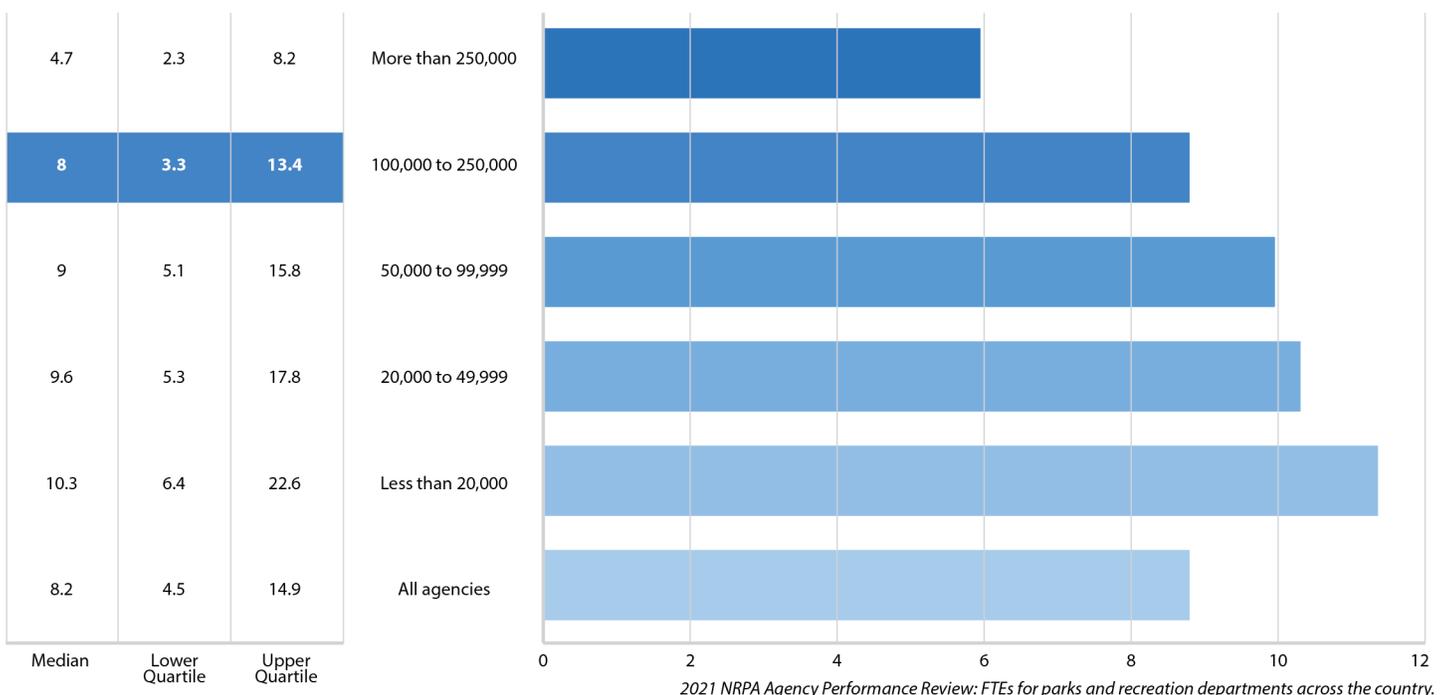
The latest reliable recreation expense data per population (2018) has been used. The population estimates used in this report were certified county and municipal estimates on April 18, 2019, by Raleigh News & Observer - *US Census data for County and Metropolitan Area Estimates*. The budget figures were provided by NC OSBM facts and figures [Log Into North Carolina (LINC) data system] for cultural and recreation expenses.

Table 5.1 North Carolina counties with populations between 58,500 and 68,500

Counties with Populations Similar to Brunswick County	Population Estimate 2018	Per Capita Expenditures 2018
Randolph County	143,118	\$36.17
Rowan County	140,296	\$27.71
Harnett County	132,283	\$50.99
Brunswick County	131,815	\$154.17
Wayne County	123,603	\$127.92
Henderson County	114,913	\$23.69
Craven County	102,491	\$31.54

According to the NRPA 2021 Agency Performance Review, recreation department operating expenditures per capita for populations from 5100,000 to 250,000 were between \$45.33 and \$136.76 with a median of \$74.67 per capita.

There is a wide range of recreation departments with a diverse mix of facilities, programs, and other services. For this reason, we recommend the comparison analysis of other similar sized North Carolina counties (Table 5.1).



Operating Expenditures Per Capita (By Jurisdiction Population)

Economic Development Initiative

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

Parks

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

Multiuse Trails

Multiuse trails are extremely popular amenities for vacationing bicyclists and pedestrians. Tourists and visitors to the area often return to communities that provide places which are safely removed from busy roads for walking and bicycling. Multiuse trails offer scenic recreation, which is suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities. Many times, lodging is in proximity to popular trails, thereby increasing occupancy for the owner. For residents in these locales, investments in trails and greenways can increase property values and improve the overall livability of a community, as well as attract, retain, and expand tourism and the associated revenues.



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

Multiuse trails, having vegetated buffers located adjacent to waterways, act as filters to clean the water, trapping nonpoint source pollutants. These pollutants, including sediment, pesticides, fertilizers, oil, gas, and other chemicals, are transported into streams, rivers, and / or lakes by stormwater when rain or snow events occur.

Trail Development

The ongoing construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities is proving to be a wise economic investment for the communities through which they pass. The Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department should annually assess and include funding towards the maintenance of popular County trails to preserve the value that they contribute to the community. Trails and pathways have a positive effect on nearby property values with homebuyers and business owners realizing the benefit that such facilities bring to a community. According to research by the Rails to Trails Conservancy, there are vast amounts of people using rail trails. It is easy to understand how communities can profit economically by meeting the needs of trail users. Entrepreneurs who invest in restaurants, convenience stores, bicycle and other merchandise shops, campgrounds, and alternate lodging attribute the location of a nearby trail to at least a portion of their success. Realtors and homebuyers alike are recognizing the benefits of properties located near trails. Both locally and nationally, the construction of trails has proven to be a cost-effective use of public funds. Multiuse trails allow more visitors and residents to replace automobile trips with non-motorized trips, thereby moving the citizenry closer to achieving public health objectives, including increased opportunities for physical exercise.

Increased Property Value

The real estate market consistently demonstrates that residents throughout the country are willing to invest larger amounts of money in properties that are located close to parks and open space areas than they would for homes that do not offer these types of amenities. The higher values of these homes produce higher property taxes in the affected area. In some instances, additional property taxes are sufficient to recoup the annual debt charges on bonds, which were originally used to finance park acquisition and development.

Research has shown that property values typically increase when parks or outdoor facilities, such as outdoor festivals, movies, and restaurants, are in the immediate locale. Studies indicate that commercial asking rents near park property exceed rents in surrounding submarkets.

Revitalization of Businesses

In recent years, there has been a trend to revitalize inner-county and urban areas to improve their quality of life. The success of this revitalization has included the addition of parks and recreational activity in County areas. Generally speaking, people do not want to live or work in an environment where they have no refuge from County buildings without having any place to go for a stroll, walk the dog, or just enjoy the outdoors. In studies of County revitalizations, the top recommendations include the dramatic expansion of parks and open spaces.

Tourism

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

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

Dedicated Source of Local Funding

In order to leverage and provide matching funds for many of the programs listed, Brunswick County should evaluate the existing departmental budget and funding for capital improvements.

Property / Sales Tax Revenues

General tax revenues traditionally provide sources for operations and maintenance of park systems for local governments. Parks and recreation development considers health, public safety, utilities, etc. in regular budgets established by the County. Assessed valuation of real and personal property tax and sales tax provides the framework for the major portion of the tax base for the County.

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

General Obligation Bonds

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



General obligation bonds are the preferred financing approach of the North Carolina Local Government Commission and the general securities market because these instruments are backed by the full faith and credit of the issuer. That simply means the bonds represent an encumbrance against the property tax base of the issuing jurisdiction and therefore offer the best available security to the bond holder. The State of North Carolina gives the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). In view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, the County may consider continuing to use general obligation bonds to develop new facilities. Total bonding capacities for local government is limited for parks and recreation to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

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

- In North Carolina, the issuance of general obligation bonds requires a referendum of the voters within the issuing jurisdiction.
- The term of the debt may be extended to 20–30 years.
- The debt is publicly sold, so there are costs associated with the sale. These costs generally total 3% to 5% of the total bond principal. The issuance costs offset the lower interest rate; therefore, this instrument becomes more attractive as the size of the issuance increases and the issuance costs are spread over the larger debt.
- Generally, prepayment of the debt cannot be accomplished until reaching a call date. This usually is around 75% of debt retirement.

Failure of the general obligation bond to be ratified by referendum could mean that the County could not go forward with an alternative approach to financing without substantially changing the scope of the project.

Fee In-Lieu of Contributions

The County should consider providing developers with an option to pay a fee in-lieu of rather than to dedicate land for open space or recreation within conventional subdivisions. This program has proven to be successful for many local governments in providing a dedicated source of revenue earmarked for park development.

User Fees / Registration Fees

Communities throughout the nation employ a wide variety of user fees for public recreational programs and services within their recreation departments. The amount of the fee is usually determined by a portion of the recreation costs needed for improvements and operations. These user fees are typically levied for special facilities, such as water parks and golf courses; however, they can also be charged for the use of trails and ball fields. Brunswick County should continue to generate revenue by charging user fees for use of facilities, such as picnic shelters, in order to cover operations and administrative costs. In addition, the County should continue to have a separate fee rate structure for residents and non-residents. As the park system continues to develop, the County should examine their fee structure to identify opportunities and additional revenue. The current user fees appear to be fair and reasonable for a majority of the County residents and non-residents. Elected officials should determine the fees and changes based on departmental input; the fees should not be so high that persons of modest income would ultimately be denied the use of park facilities.

Grants

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



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



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

RTP is a reimbursement grant program. Funds must be spent and then reimbursed upon completion of deliverables. Eligible applicants must be a state, federal, or local government agency or qualified non-profit organization. All applications are reviewed by the North Carolina Trails Committee and recommendations are made to the Secretary of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The secretary makes the final determination on grant awards.



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

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federally funded program that was established for local and state governments in 1965 as a funding source for outdoor recreational development and land acquisition. LWCF monies are derived from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources, primarily offshore oil and gas leases and surplus federal land sales. Acquisition and development grants may be used for a wide variety of outdoor projects, such as parks, tennis courts, bike trails, outdoor swimming pools, and support facilities (roads, water supply, et cetera.) Facility design must be basic rather than elaborate and must remain accessible to the general public. No more than 50% of the project cost may be federally funded by LWCF, although all or part of the project sponsor's matching share may be obtained from certain other federal assistance programs.



The Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) Program is a federal aid program of the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The program is a sub-program of the Transportation Alternatives Program, falling under the Surface Transportation Program. Under TAP, the SRTS Program is combined with RTP to provide financial assistance to projects that fall under alternative transportation. Communities must come up with 20% of a project cost while the remaining 80% is funded through grant competitions. All TAP projects are administered by state departments of transportation. The federal program provides funds to the states to improve the ability of primary and middle school students to walk and bicycle to school safely. The purposes of the SRTS Program are outlined below:

SafeRoutes



For more information on North Carolina's SRTS Program, visit <https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/BikePed/pages/safe-routes-to-school.aspx>.

- To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
- To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity (approximately 2 miles) of primary and middle schools (grades K– 8)

EEG

The Environmental Enhancement Grant Program (EEG) is used to fund projects that address environmental needs of North Carolina, specifically to protect water quality as well as conserve natural areas. To be eligible applicants must be non-profit organizations or government entities for projects in North Carolina, with preference for programs focused on the eastern part of the state. The types of grants included are land acquisitions and easements, construction, remediation, restoration, and research, planning, education. The maximum award available is \$500,000 to be completed in 3 years from the date of the fully executed memorandum of understanding.

From agreement: “obtain environmental easements, construct, or maintain wetlands, and other such environmental purposes, as the Attorney General deems appropriate.”



The North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF) was created in 1996 by the North Carolina General Assembly and previously referred to the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF), grants monies to local governments, state agencies, and not-for-profit conservation groups. The money is to help finance projects that specifically address water pollution issues. NCLWF will fund projects that contribute toward a network of riparian buffers and greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational benefits.



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

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



The Division of Coastal Management (DCM) provides grant funding to local governments in the 20-county coastal area that grant funding is available for public beach and waterfront access projects through the Coastal Management Beach and Waterfront Access Program (CAMA). The DCM awards about \$1 million a year in matching grants to local governments for projects to improve pedestrian access to the state's beaches and waterways. Local governments may use access grants to construct low-cost public access facilities, including parking areas, restrooms, dune crossovers and piers. Projects range in size from small, local access areas to regional access sites with amenities, such as large parking lots, bathrooms, and picnic shelters.



Cities and counties may also use the grants to replace aging access facilities, help acquire land for access sites, or to revitalize urban waterfronts. Funding for the Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Program comes from North Carolina PARTF.

Contributions

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

Park Foundations

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



Partnerships

To implement the recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Master Plan, Brunswick County should expand their partnership agreements with other public agencies and private sector organizations. There are many different types of partnerships that can be formed to achieve the goals established by the County. Many local governments throughout the nation are utilizing partnerships with public and private sector interests to accomplish community goals.

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

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

Brunswick County's Recreation Department is currently participating in partnerships with Brunswick County Public Schools, Brunswick Community College, and the YMCA. The County should pursue a possible partnership with the Brunswick County Chapter of the NAACP to provide support and assistance for the future North Carolina Gullah Geechee Greenway / Blueway Heritage Trail. The County should evaluate forming additional partnerships which address the needs of a comprehensive park system. Direct requests should be made to meet potential partners – inviting them to evaluate the possible benefits of partnering. This step should be made to generate interest and agreement prior to solidifying any responsibilities for each participating party.

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



Land Acquisition and Development

These donations, typically in the form of land, cash, labor, and materials, could be solicited to assist Brunswick County with its enhancement program. Corporations, civic organizations, individuals, and other groups generally donate to a specific park project; however, donations may also be solicited for multiple project improvements or additions. NRPA recommends the use of private, not-for-profit, tax-exempt foundations as a means of accepting and administering private gifts to a public park system.

Life Estate

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

Local Gifts

Donations of land, money, labor and construction can have significant impact on the acquisition and development of park property. The solicitation of local gifts is highly recommended and should be organized thoroughly, with the utilization of very specific strategic methods. This often untapped source of obtaining funds requires the contacting of potential donors, such as individuals, institutions, foundations, and service clubs.

Long-Term Option

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



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

Easement

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

Fee Simple Purchase

Fee simple purchase is the most common method used to acquire municipal property for park facilities. Although it has the advantage of simplifying justification to the general public, fee simple purchase is the most difficult method to pursue due to limited monetary resources.

Fee Simple with Lease-Back or Resale

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



Plan Adoption

The first step in the implementation of the Brunswick County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan is adoption of the plan by Brunswick County. By adopting the Master Plan, the community is able to help shape larger regional decisions so they fit within the goals of the plan. The County also gives itself greater authority in shaping local land use decisions so they achieve the goals and vision of this plan. In addition, the adoption of this Master Plan is essential to maximize available grant opportunities.

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

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

Action Steps

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

1. Secure a dedicated source of revenue to address the ten-year and beyond anticipated future recreational project list and address the goals of the Master Plan
2. Provide staffing necessary to support and oversee the implementation of this plan and the proper maintenance and operation of the facilities that are proposed
3. Develop and implement educational and awareness programs, such as public events and promotion of parks awareness by civic and environmental advocacy groups; these programs can be used to announce new park facilities and upcoming projects
4. Begin working on the recommendations that are listed in the ten-year and beyond anticipated future recreational project list; from these opportunities come the framework for an initial implementation strategy. These recommendations include:
 - Aggressively begin to establish potential funding mechanisms for future park expansions; this high priority goal is essential for realizing the proposed recommendations for the future growth and development of all Brunswick County Parks and Recreation facilities
 - Use the nucleus of park patrons to expand the awareness of the amenities and programming of the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation System
 - Expand and modify the existing park system into a comprehensive, multiuse system, distributed so that it better meets the needs of the community, provides opportunities to all, and enhances the current park system
 - Continue making the critical pedestrian and bicycle connections between destination points that will allow for preservation of open space and offer an alternative mode of transportation

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

The County needs to ensure that facility planning is integrated with other regional planning efforts at the state and local levels and with long-range and current land use; economic development; and parks, environmental, and community planning. The following are mechanisms to achieve this action step:

1. Expand local capital improvements program for yearly appropriation for greenway and park development
2. Set aside money for future land acquisition, construction, and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities
3. Pursue and request pedestrian / bicycle projects to be added to NCDOT TIP
4. Pursue development and expansion of existing and new partnerships
5. Apply for PARTF grants and other related recreation grants for future parks and recreation projects
6. Seek other sources of revenue funding for parks and greenway improvements, such as including local assessment districts and developer exactions
7. Pursue funding from other sources listed in this section



Moving Forward into the Future

Brunswick County Parks & Recreation strives to promote quality of life for all by offering safe parks and facilities, creative recreational programs, quality community relations, while fostering a keen stewardship towards the natural environment.

In order to continue to fulfill this mission, Brunswick County has pursued planning as a way to improve the parks and recreation system throughout the County. This Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan has laid out a set of strategies for expanding and developing a safe, convenient, and usable park system. The plan provides an assessment of the study area, analyzed the existing facilities, received and analyzed community input, reviewed recreation standards, developed recommendations, and provided strategies for implementing the plan. The Brunswick County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a guide to be used in the improvement and enhancement of the park system for Brunswick County.



Quality of Life

Health and Wellness

Community

