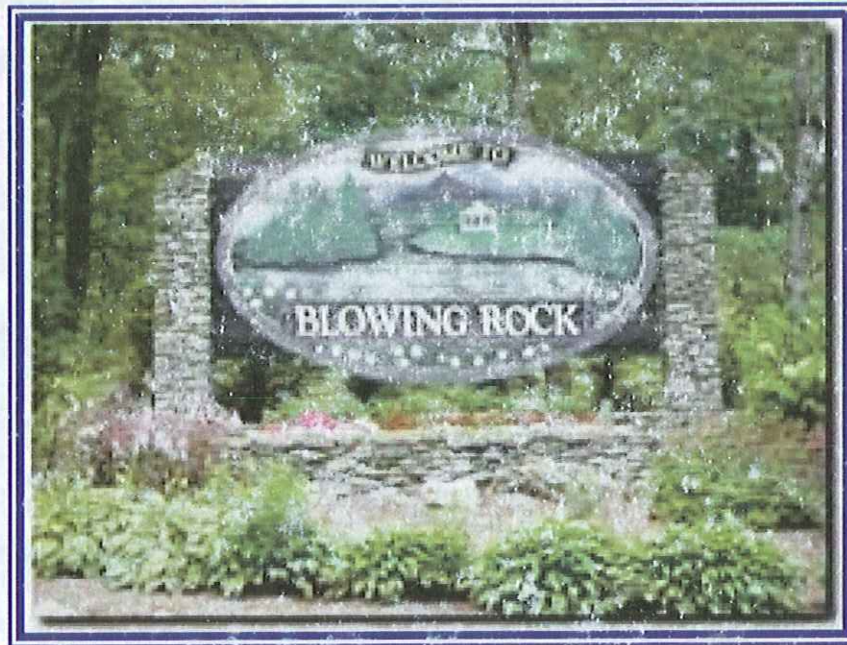


Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2005-2025



Town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina

January, 2005

Michael J. Norris, ASLA



Engineering • Planning • Finance
Post Office 1236
Hickory, North Carolina 28603

RESOLUTION NO. 2005-03

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK
2005-2025 PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, a parks and recreation comprehensive master plan is a policy document created to assist in guiding decisions concerning the short-range and long-range planning for the development of recreation, parks, open space resources and leisure services in the community; and

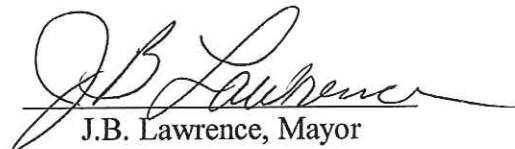
WHEREAS, a parks and recreation comprehensive master plan is used as a guide for local government policy decisions, and serves as a means to identify, prioritize, and plan for recreational capital improvements; and

WHEREAS, a parks and recreation comprehensive master plan provides guidance to citizens and anyone concerned with recreational opportunities in the community; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners, the Parks and Recreation Department, Town Staff and Town of Blowing Rock citizens have worked to develop a comprehensive master plan to address recreational facilities' renovation, acquisition and development, park and recreational programming strategies over the next 20 years, and an action implementation plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, that the 2005-2025 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan is hereby adopted by this Resolution.

Adopted this the 11th day of January, 2005.


J.B. Lawrence, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Sharon Greene, Town Clerk

SECTION I OVERVIEW and INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Town of Blowing Rock sits on the Eastern Continental Divide of the United States at an elevation of approximately 4,000 feet. Located in portions of both Caldwell County and Watauga County in Western North Carolina, it is approximately 18 miles to the north of Lenoir - Caldwell County's Government Seat, and approximately 8 miles to the south of Boone - Watauga County's Government Seat (See attached map located in the Appendix). The Town is also located adjacent to the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway, which attracts visitors and provides additional recreational amenities for residents and tourists of the area.

In 1977, a Parks and Recreation Plan was approved for the Town of Blowing Rock, which provided general guidance for the development of recreation, parks, open space resources, and leisure services in the community. The scope of the plan included the later quarter of the 20th century and also the beginning of the 21st century. The Town Council, Staff, and the Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Department now envisions an updated plan which was recommended in the Town's 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan would give them direction and purpose as they strive to meet the recreational needs of its citizenry – both now and in the future. The Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan 2005 to 2025 addresses their vision by identifying specific goals and objectives.

The mission statement for the Parks and Recreation Department is “to provide and enhance recreational and cultural opportunities for our residents and visitors.” Many of the goals and objectives stress strong support for cultural and recreational opportunities among the residential, business communities, and Town government. In addition, the Town recommends programs be designed primarily for permanent residents, seasonal residents, and other area residents.

The Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan 2005-2025 (hereafter called Master Plan) provides the framework for guiding the Town Council and Staff in both its current evaluation of- and long-range planning for the Parks and Recreation System for the Town of Blowing Rock. This framework is based upon conducting an inventory of the existing park system, recording the observations, and recommending the addition/renovation of parks and/or recreational facilities. Not only does the Master Plan include recommendations, but it also prioritizes specific projects – taking into consideration the identification of user population and the development of recreation standards. The Master Plan is intended to be action-oriented and designed to provide the Town of Blowing Rock with a practical guide for its enhancement of the Parks and Recreation System for the next twenty (20) years.

In preparing the Master Plan, *State and National Parks and Recreation Standards* were used as a guide to support the recommendations made for the parks and recreational facilities for the Town of Blowing Rock. Using these standard guidelines, McGill Associates developed a plan, which applied specifically to the resident and non-resident users of the Parks and Recreation System.

1.2 Purposes and Goals

The Blowing Rock Town Council, Town Staff, and the Parks and Recreation Department have recognized the need to prepare a new Comprehensive Master Plan. McGill Associates was selected by the Town of Blowing Rock to evaluate its existing park and recreational facilities and to develop a Master Plan as a guideline for implementation of recommendations designed to meet the needs of the population for a span of twenty (20) years. In preparing the Master Plan, McGill Associates worked closely with the Town of Blowing Rock's Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Planning Committee, which was comprised of representatives from the Parks and Recreation Department, the Town Council, and the Town Staff. A key objective in the development of the Master Plan was the solicitation of community input – thereby, identifying additional needs for the Town of Blowing Rock (renovation, construction, and/or land purchase & development) – both now and in the future.

The Master Plan focuses on providing the Town of Blowing Rock with an accurate, usable guide for decision-making as the Town begins to implement items, such as the following:

- Park renovations, acquisitions, and developments
- Facility renovations, acquisitions, and developments
- Recreation programming strategies
- Implementation of improvements

The Master Plan is divided into five major component sections, which are listed below:

Section 2 - Population Trends and Projections

Section 3 - Existing Park Facilities

Section 4 – Recreation Needs Assessment

Section 5 - Goals and Recommendations

Section 6 – Implementation Plan

1.3 Acknowledgements

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

Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Planning Committee

2005-2025

Town Council

Mr. J. B. Lawrence, Mayor
Mr. Terry Lentz, Mayor Pro-Tem
Ms. Barbara Ball
Mr. Keith Tester
Ms. Rita Wiseman
Mr. David Wray

Town Staff

Mr. Scott Hildebran, Town Manager
Ms. Jamie Saitta, Parks and Recreation Director
Mr. Kevin Rothrock, Planning Director
Mr. Tom Shelley, Parks Maintenance Technician

Consultant

McGill Associates, P.A.
1236 19th Street Lane, NW
Hickory, North Carolina 28601
(828) 328-2024

--End of Section--

SECTION 2 POPULATION TRENDS and PROJECTIONS

2.1 Demographics

The Town of Blowing Rock's 2000 census population was 1,418; however, the census data does not reflect the seasonal population. Based on water demand data, the effective seasonal population is estimated at 10,000 people. This effective population is comprised of seasonal residents, lodging within the Town limits and day visitors. However, despite seasonal periods of peak population – with the visionary leadership of elected officials and staff, the Town of Blowing Rock has been able to hold true to its character.

The following table contains the general demographic characteristics for full-time residents of the Town of Blowing Rock - as ascertained by Census 2000.

CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT
SEX		
Male	659	46.5
Female	759	53.5
Total:	1,418	100.0
AGE		
Under 9 years	84	6.0
10-19 years	145	10.2
20-34 years	172	12.1
35-59 years	554	39.1
Over 60 years	463	32.7
Total:	1,418	100.0
RACE		
White	1,389	98.0
Black	5	0.4
Native Indian/Alaskan	3	0.2
Asian	10	0.7
Hispanic	10	0.7
Other	1	Less than 0.1
Total:	1,418	100.0

The 2000 census population results revealed a significant characteristic of the Town of Blowing Rock's population: 32% are over the age of 60. This fact is unique, when compared to other municipalities across the state, and will impact the demand and desire for recreation facilities.

2.2 Population Projections

Statistics from the Region "D" (High Country) Council of Governments indicate that there was less than a 1.12% increase in the population of full-time residents of the Town of Blowing Rock in the ten year period from 1990 (1,263) to 2000 (1,418). Likewise, a very small population increase is projected for 2000 to 2020.

The effective seasonal population of the Town of Blowing Rock will increase as well. With constraints such as rugged terrain to the south, National Park Service lands to the north, and a limited water supply, dramatic population increases are not expected. Yet Blowing Rock has a strong appeal to tourists and part-time residents. Therefore, the projected growth rate for the full-time and effective seasonal population is 2.0% per year, as summarized in the table below:

Year	Full-time residents	Part-time & Full-time (Peak Periods)
1990	1,263	8,900
2000	1,418	10,000
2010	1,694	11,942
2020	2,064	14,555

The Town should develop a method for monitoring the seasonal population trends within the Town of Blowing Rock to determine a more accurate seasonal population and when these peak periods occur.

2.3 Population Trends

The population trends of residents of the Town of Blowing Rock are unique compared to towns of similar size and population. There is a large population of senior adults, which typically results in more personal time for leisure activities. Biking and walking are popular recreational activities for senior adults and can be easily incorporated into a daily routine.

According to the *North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan for 1995-2000*, children and senior citizens comprise two of the fastest growing groups, who are in need of more recreation. The senior population is expected to have significant impacts throughout society because of income levels, population, and unique recreation needs.



In addition, the *Outdoor Recreation Plan* mentioned that the number of children between the ages of 5 and 14 will continue to increase. This phenomenon is known as the “eco-boom”: the parents of these children have delayed childbirth until a later age - in favor of starting their careers.

Developing trends and peak seasonal population are impacting the need for additional recreational services for full/part-time residents. The Town of Blowing Rock and the entire mountain region of North Carolina continues to increase in popularity as destinations for visitors nationwide. To attract, and meet the needs of residents and visitors, the Town of Blowing Rock’s Park and Recreation System will have to continually evaluate its recreation and ancillary facilities, as well as offer more types of recreational opportunities to the public.

-- End of Section --

SECTION 3

EXISTING PARK FACILITIES

3.1 Introduction

McGill Associates performed an inventory of the Town of Blowing Rock parks and recreation facilities. Site visits were made to each park facility, with observations being recorded. A brief analysis of each recreation facility was performed - noting any visible improvements needed for that facility. This method of study serves as a “guide” for the Town of Blowing Rock in its efforts to develop a plan for present and future needs.

The Town of Blowing Rock full-time/part-time residents and visitors have many of their recreation needs met through a variety of facility offerings owned by the Town. In addition to the facilities owned by the Town, the National Park Service is a tremendous asset – providing numerous resources to the Town’s immediate area. School recreation facilities, owned and operated by Watauga County government are also made available for use by the public. Many private resources are also available in the area.

The following is a specific list of existing park facilities in the Town of Blowing Rock and its immediate area – grouped according to owner type – as observed during the inventory process:

TOWN-OWNED AND OPERATED PARKS & FACILITIES

Neighborhood Parks

Memorial Park
Broyhill Park
Davant Field

Special Facilities

Robbins Swimming Pool
Annie Cannon Memorial Park
Glen Burney Trail
Marty Koerschner Garden

OTHER-OWNED AND OPERATED PARKS & FACILITIES

Regional Parks

Moses H. Cone Memorial Park – National Park Service
Julian Price Memorial Park – National Park Service
Blue Ridge Parkway Hwy. 221 Picnic Area – National Park Service

Watauga County

Blowing Rock Elementary School
Watauga County Parks and Recreation

Private Facilities

- Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds
- Blowing Rock Country Club
- Blowing Rock Equestrian Preserve
- Chetola Resort
- Local Churches
- The Wellness Center-Watauga Medical Center
- Appalachian Ski Mountain
- Tweetsie Railroad
- The Blowing Rock

3.2 Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks offer the public a convenient source of recreation – while serving as the recreational and social focus of neighborhoods. Usually located within walking distance of the area serviced, neighborhood parks provide both active and passive recreation, which is of interest to all age groups. The “smaller size” of neighborhood parks requires intense development, with fifty percent of each site remaining undisturbed and thereby serving as a buffer between the park and adjacent property owners.

MEMORIAL PARK

Memorial Park is located on Main Street in the center of Downtown Blowing Rock. This park not only serves as a center for various recreational activities, but is also one of the Town’s most accessible amenities for citizens and visitors. Downtown shoppers can relax on one of the park benches, picnic tables or in the gazebo. Adjacent to the park is the Parks and Recreation Administration office which also includes a recreation center. In addition, the park offers two tennis courts, two basketball courts, a volleyball court, and two horseshoe pits. The Town has recently constructed new playground equipment including swings, a children’s rock climbing wall, and two multi-purpose playground components. The park also has a Veterans Memorial dedicated to those that served in the armed forces.



Active Recreation

- Basketball Courts
- Tennis Courts
- Volleyball Court
- Horseshoe Pits
- Playgrounds

Passive Recreation

- Picnic Tables
- Sidewalks
- Gazebo

New, low-maintenance playground equipment was recently installed and is not yet ADA compliant. Pedestrian areas around the park require continual maintenance and need paving improvements to safeguard pedestrians. The tennis courts are also in need of repair.

Facilities

- Recreation Center
- Gazebo
- Maintenance Building
- Restrooms
- Parking



BROYHILL PARK



The recreation at Broyhill Park is predominately passive in nature with Mayview Lake serving as the central focal point. This neighborhood park has walking trails surrounding the park and allows users to leisurely walk around the lake and view the lush landscaping. A gazebo and observation deck are located adjacent to the lake - offering users an area to enjoy fishing or simply to view the park. A memorial dedicated to J.E. Broyhill is centrally located in the park and adjacent to the memorial is a gazebo, where concerts and other events may be held. Benches and seating areas are located throughout the park. The facilities within Broyhill Park are in good condition and are well maintained.

Passive Recreation

- Walking Trails
- Fishing
- Benches

Facilities

- Gazebo
- Observation Deck
- Parking

Miscellaneous

- Lake
- Stream



DAVANT PARK (Davant Field)

Davant Park is the only facility in the Town of Blowing Rock with an athletic field. The field is primarily used for youth baseball, soccer and football. The complex also has a maintenance building, restroom facility, and the Rotary Pavilion which is used for picnics, meeting area and observation platform. The Rufus Hallmark Memorial dedicated in 2002 by the Hallmark family and the Blowing Rock Rotary Club is located near the pavilion. A walking trail surrounds the park and connects to the adjacent Broyhill Park.

The parking areas, restroom, and storm drainage need improvements and the trail connecting to Broyhill Park requires continual maintenance. Additional paving, striping, and storm water management would assist in the maintenance of these areas while providing more efficient parking.



Active Recreation

(1) Baseball/Soccer Field

Passive Recreation

Walking Trail

Facilities

Rotary Pavilion

Maintenance Building

Restroom

Parking



3.3 Special Facilities

The *unique* or *special use facilities* are park types that exist for the sole purpose of enhancing or utilizing a special man-made or natural feature. They can include beaches, parkways, historical sites, sites of archeological significance, swimming pools, conservation easements, flood plains, etc.

GROVER C. ROBBINS MEMORIAL SWIMMING POOL

Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool is located adjacent to Broyhill Park. The facility, built in the 1950's, has been maintained very well. Longtime residents mentioned that the pool once allowed night swimming. The facility includes a heated swimming pool, kiddie pool, pump house, and a building, which offers restrooms, showers, and dressing rooms. A picnic area with tables is also available.

Due to the age of the structure, maintenance has been an issue and repeated repairs have been needed. The pool house is dated and needs many interior and exterior improvements such as plumbing, restroom facilities and a new roof. In addition, the facility does not offer the recreational opportunities that are provided with leisure pool amenities.



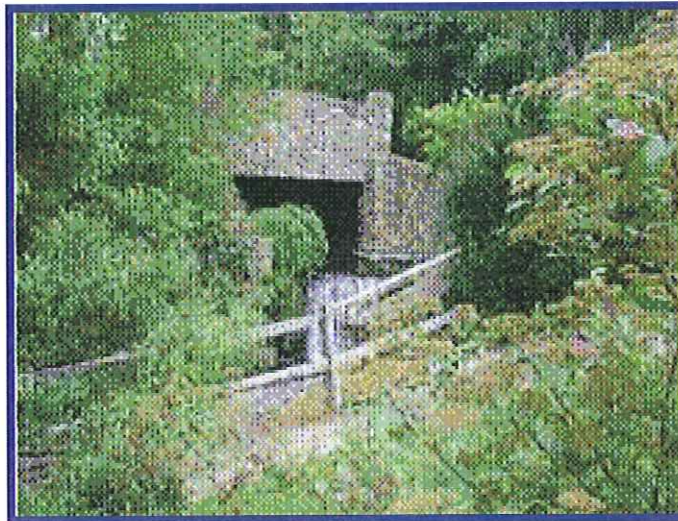
Exterior Facilities
Swimming Pool
Kiddie Pool
Picnic Area
Pump House
Parking

Interior Facilities
Restrooms
Showers
Dressing Rooms



ANNIE L. CANNON MEMORIAL PARK

Located across Laurel Lane from Broyhill Park, Annie Cannon Memorial Park offers visitors a variety of ornamental landscaping and also a meandering walking path that leads to an observation deck overlooking New Year's Creek. The spillway for Mayview Lake creates a scenic view of the waterfall. A small amphitheater, built just recently, offers opportunities for outdoor theater, small concerts and recreation programming.



The drinking fountain and fountain pool are in need of repair. Also, park access does not meet ADA requirements.

Exterior Facilities

- Amphitheatre
- Observation Deck
- Fountain
- Parking
- Drinking Fountain
- Fountain Pool



GLEN BURNEY WALKING TRAIL



The Glen Burney Walking Trail, which begins at the Annie Cannon Memorial Park, offers hiking opportunities to residents and visitors and allows them to observe the natural beauty of the mountain forest. Physically strenuous, the trail has many scenic views of mature trees, creeks, and a waterfall. The Glen Burney Walking Trail is a valuable amenity for the Town of Blowing Rock and continues to gain popularity with residents and visitors.

Town staff has addressed that the trail has hazardous areas which should be repaired. Also, the trail signage is aged and in need of repair.



Active Recreation
Hiking

MARTY KOERSCHNER MEMORIAL GARDEN



Located on the corner of Laurel Lane and Wallingford Street, the Marty Koerschner Garden is a passive recreation area (dedicated in memory of Marty Koerschner by family members) with a short walking path through ornamental landscaping. The seating area allows for visitors to sit and relax while enjoying the natural surroundings.

Passive Recreation

Seating Area
Walking Path

3.4 Regional Parks

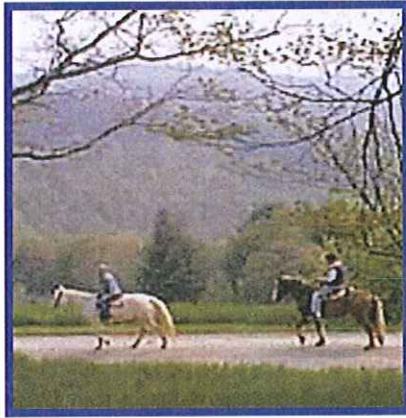
Regional parks are typically very large sites. On these sites, the unique qualities that exemplify the natural features found (such as the diverse land formation, vegetation, and wildlife) are “preserved”. Parks containing environmental centers, campsites, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas are examples of the types of facilities that are usually provided in regional parks.

MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL PARK BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



Moses H. Cone, owner of a large textile factory, purchased 3,600 acres of land near Blowing Rock in the late 1800's, where he built his country estate, Flat Top Manor. Cone created lakes, an orchard, and trails including a 20 mile loop trail, which he used daily. The estate was eventually donated to the National Park Service after his death.

The Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, provides park users with great natural and cultural resources. Bass Lake is within walking distance of Downtown Blowing Rock and is a popular destination for residents. The manor house offers visitors the opportunity of touring the mansion and visiting its craft shop. The Cone Estate contains miles of trails for hiking, jogging, fishing, and horseback riding, as well as a visitor's center.



Passive Recreation

Two Lakes
Sitting Areas

Active Recreation

Hiking
Jogging/Running
Horseback riding

Facilities

Visitor Center/Craft Center
Restroom
Walking Trails
Equestrian Trails

**JULIAN PRICE MEMORIAL PARK
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

Like Moses Cone Park, Julian Price Memorial Park is a regional park. It is located on the Blue Ridge Parkway and was donated to the National Park Service by Julian Price, an insurance executive, in the late 1930's and early 1940's. He had originally bought several thousand acres of land near the Town of Blowing Rock - creating a getaway retreat for the employees of the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company.

Today, Julian Price Memorial Park encompasses approximately 4,344 acres and offers a wide range of recreational activities. The park, which is located on both sides of the Blue Ridge Parkway, includes open areas, picnic areas, restrooms, a camping area, boating, fishing, trails, and a lake.



Passive Recreation

Walking Trails
Hiking Trails
Camping
Fishing
Picnic Areas

Active Recreation

Open Areas

Miscellaneous

Lake
Amphitheatre
Restrooms

3.5 Watauga County

Watauga County and the Town of Blowing Rock have an existing partnership, which offers programs and facilities for Town residents. The Town partners with the Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department for athletic programs offered throughout the year. The Town also partners with the school system by using facilities at Blowing Rock Elementary. This unilateral use of programs and facilities creates more recreational opportunities for Town residents without the Town needing to implement facilities.

BLOWING ROCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Department partners with the Watauga County School System to provide programs at the Blowing Rock Elementary School gymnasium. Programs provided include Summer Day Camp, basketball and volleyball.



WATAUGA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

The Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Department partners with the Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department to provide youth athletic programs. Facilities are located throughout Watauga County. Some of these facilities include a gym, a community clubhouse, athletic fields, parks, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, picnic shelters, an outdoor and an indoor pool.



3.6 Private Facilities

BLOWING ROCK ASSEMBLY GROUNDS

The Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Department also provides basketball programs at the gymnasium located at the Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds (BRAG). BRAG is located on the northeast side of Blowing Rock on Goforth Road just outside the town limits. BRAG's facilities offer accommodations for conferences and overnight stays.

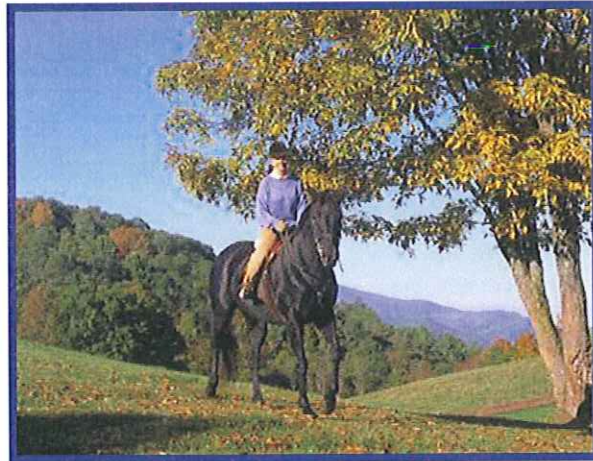


BLOWING ROCK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

Blowing Rock Golf and Country Club is a private club, which offers golf and/or tennis to its members at yearly rates.

BLOWING ROCK EQUESTRAIN PRESERVE

Home of the Blowing Rock Charity Horse Show, America's oldest continuous running horse show, the Blowing Rock Equestrian Preserve is open year round and offers great opportunities for horseback riders. The Preserve also offers stables for horses. Located adjacent to Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, the facility has easy access to 26 miles of carriage trails.



CHETOLA RESORT



Chetola Resort is a private development, which offers a variety of recreational activities and facilities to its full- and part-time residents, as well as vacationers. Chetola Lake serves as one of the main recreation areas for the resort with activities, which include paddle boats, flat-bottom boats, canoes, and fishing. In

addition to providing a children's playground, Chetola also offers such active recreation as tennis, billiards, and ping-pong. Its indoor facilities include a heated swimming pool, fitness center, sauna, massage therapy, children's activity room, cardio/multi-purpose exercise room, and video game room. Chetola Resort offers "Kid's Camp", as well as other children/adult programs.

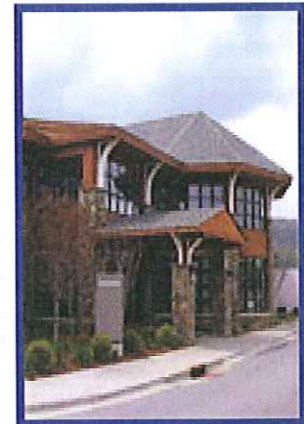
CHURCHES

First Baptist Church offers an after-school program for middle school-aged children on Wednesdays and also a nine-week Summer Day Camp for elementary school-aged children. Middle school- and high school-aged students may participate in church-sponsored retreats/missions. First Baptist Church offers a Bible School as well.

Rumple Memorial Presbyterian Church hosts Bible School for children during one week in June. Several groups have been formed, which function as follows: the Rumple Rovers (senior citizens) travel monthly to various locations; the Salt Shakers meet for socials/suppers; and the Out to Lunch Bunch have lunches together. There is a small playground structure, which was just recently installed.

THE WELLNESS CENTER – WATAUGA MEDICAL CENTER

The Wellness Center at Watauga Medical Center offers programs and facilities that promote health wellness and preventative healthcare. The facility, located in Boone offers programs such as personal training, nutrition classes and wellness programs. Aerobic equipment, racquetball court, indoor track, and weight training are available. A new indoor pool is currently under construction.



APPALACHIAN SKI MOUNTAIN

This North Carolina resort, located north of Blowing Rock off Hwy. 321, offers skiing for people of all abilities and offers many other outdoor activities. For skiers, the mountain has five lifts and nine trails and also welcomes snowboarders and ice skaters. In addition, the resort has a base lodge with dining.

THE BLOWING ROCK

The Blowing Rock, North Carolina's oldest travel attraction since 1933, is an immense cliff 4,000 feet above sea level overhanging Johns River Gorge 3,000 feet below. The phenomenon is so called because the rocky walls of the gorge form a flume through which the northwest wind sweeps with such force that it returns light objects cast over the void. The tourist attraction is open all year weather permitting.

TWEETSIE RAILROAD

North Carolina's first theme park offers plenty of special events throughout the season in addition to its exciting everyday attractions. These exciting events are all in addition to the ability to meet cowboys in an Old West town, enjoy amusement rides, take in lively western shows and go for a ride on the famed steam-powered Tweetsie train.

3.7 Summary Spreadsheet

A detailed inventory has been compiled into a spreadsheet, which summarizes the existing parks and facilities that the Town of Blowing Rock owns and operates:

Existing Recreation Facilities: Town of Blowing Rock

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS				SPECIAL FACILITIES		
Facility	Memorial Park	Broyhill Park	Davant Field	Annie Cannon	Glen Burney	Robbins Pool
Softball						
Youth Baseball			1			
Football			1*			
Soccer			1*			
Basketball	2					
Tennis	2					
Volleyball	1					
Shuffleboard						
Horseshoe	2					
Picnic Shelters			1			
Picnic Tables	8		10			8
Playground Area	4					
Walking Trails	0.5 mile	1 mile	0.3 mile	0.1 mile	1.4 mile	
Bike Trails						
Mountain Bike Trails						
Water Fountain	1		1	1		
Equestrian Area						
Camping						
Swimming Pool						1
Lake		1				
Grills						
Restrooms	1		1			1
Gymnasium						
Community Center	1					
Vending/Concession	1					1
Maintenance Bldg.	1		1			1

*The baseball field at Davant Field is also used for football and soccer.

3.8 Existing Programs and Special Events

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a wealth of programs and special events throughout the year for Town residents and visitors. The activities and programs are very popular not only with Blowing Rock residents but also with non-residents and tourists who live in the surrounding area.

The programs offered are important and allow year-round recreation opportunities for people of all ages. Included in the recreation activities and events are a summer day camp, a pool program, recreation programs, special community events, and other related activities. Parks and Recreation programs continue to increase in attendance each year, and include both Blowing Rock taxpayers and non-taxpayer participants.

The following are program activities that have associated fees, which are offered by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Swim Lessons	Member - \$35	
	Non-Member - \$55	
	Private Swim Lessons - \$100	
Summer Day Camp		
1 st & 2 nd Grades	Taxpayer - \$40	Non- Taxpayer - \$95
3 rd – 7 th Grades	Taxpayer - \$50	Non- Taxpayer - \$110
Kinder Soccer	Taxpayer - \$30	Non- Taxpayer - \$40
Kinder T-ball	Taxpayer - \$30	Non- Taxpayer - \$40
Kinder Basketball	Taxpayer - \$30	Non- Taxpayer - \$40
Jr. NBA Basketball	Taxpayer - \$30	Non- Taxpayer - \$40
Senior Trips	\$2 Fee only for transportation	
Clogging	\$80 (Blowing Rock leases space for clogging program)	
Dog Training	\$100 (Blowing Rock contracts services for this program)	
Adult Art	\$100 (Blowing Rock contracts services for this program)	

Blowing Rock is the only Recreation facility offering Kinder programs for children ages 3-5, in Watauga County. When the programs began, only one session of 20 children each season was offered. Currently two full sessions are offered each season, with a waiting list of children wanting to participate. Kinder programs include Basketball, Soccer and T-ball. The same applies to the Jr. NBA Basketball program, which has seen a 100% participation increase from 2001 to 2003. Recreation leagues for older children are offered and coordinated by the Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department. Davant Field is used for recreation league play through these County programs.

The Parks & Recreation Department and the Tourism Development Authority organizes/sponsors special events annually that are very popular with residents and visitors, particularly during holidays, as follows:

4 th of July Festival	Farm House Live	Blowing Rock Trout Derby
Halloween Festival	Golden Easter Egg Hunt	Christmas in the Park Festival

SECTION 4 RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

4.1 Introduction

The Town of Blowing Rock, Watauga County Parks & Recreation, and the National Park Service are the primary providers of parks, recreation, and public open spaces in the Town and the surrounding community. The degree of need for parks/open spaces is most directly influenced by the expectations of the residents of the Town of Blowing Rock – related strictly to the “quality” to which they aspire. Although the Master Plan also addresses the needs of a high populace during seasonal periods, its first priority is to envision appropriate parks and recreation facilities for all residents of the Town of Blowing Rock.

Many of the park, recreation, and open-space needs for seasonal tourists are being met via the National Park Service. Moses Cone Memorial Park and Julian Price Park *surpass* the NRPA regional park standard guidelines for acreage and activities for the area. However, these facilities do not meet all the park and recreation needs for full-time residents and part-time residents *within* the Town of Blowing Rock. Evidence suggests - by observation, citizen input, and the number of applicants for recreation programs - that many of the park and recreation needs of residents, much less visitors, could be enhanced.

The recently adopted Blowing Rock 2004 Comprehensive Master Plan has already established goals and objectives promoting the enhancement of its parks/recreational facilities. This Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be used as a “department specific” guide for improving recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

Community input and recreation standards were used as the primary method in determining the adequate *type* and *amount* of park facilities needed for the Town of Blowing Rock. This Master Plan compares standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). NRPA is an independent, non-profit professional organization for Parks and Recreation. In 1996, NRPA published a manual entitled, *Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines*, which is a widely accepted reference standard for municipalities.

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

4.2 Public Input Needs Assessment

The methodology used in establishing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for municipalities should always include citizen input. In order to ensure a successful study, it is *vital* that the public users of recreational facilities be able to share their issues, needs, and desires.

Town Meetings

To facilitate community input in the Town of Blowing Rock, two public workshops were conducted early in the Master Plan process. These workshops, held at the American Legion Facility in the Town of Blowing Rock, offered community residents an opportunity to voice their opinions on the topic of recreation. The workshops were held on September 16th and September 28th, 2004, respectively.

As part of the workshop, participants were asked to discuss improvements needed for the *existing* park facilities as well as the need for *new* land property acquisition, land development, and/or facilities. In addition, workshop attendees delineated various other amenities that they desired implementing in their Park and Recreation System - both now and in the future.

In addition to the community workshops, a work session with Town Council and Town Staff was held on November 23, 2004 to comment on the proposed recommendations and answer any questions concerning the Master Plan. This also allowed the Council to hear the results from the community workshops and questionnaire. Also, a public hearing was held on December 14th for the presentation of the Master Plan, which further citizen input.

The following is an outline of “combined” notes taken at the Community Workshops - Numbers One (1) and Two (2):

Town of Blowing Rock Master Plan Community Workshops

September 16, 2004; 6:00-7:30 pm

September 28, 2004; 6:00-7:30 pm

COMMUNITY SUGGESTIONS FOR PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM

1. Signage/Accessibility
 - A. All signage needs to be consistent throughout the park system, including Glen Burney Trail.

- B. Signs are very important because the Blowing Rock residents, themselves, are not even aware of all the parks in the system.
 - C. Maps should be available that give descriptions and locations of existing parks and facilities.
 - D. Signage/maps would also help with the “connectivity” of the parks.
 - E. Accessibility needs to be addressed and updated at all of the facilities.
2. Pool
- A. There is concern with the pool policy, which excludes children twelve (12) years of age and under, from participating unless an adult chaperone is present.
 - B. New swimming pool, possibly including:
 - 1. Extra “splash” elements
 - 2. Zero-depth entry
 - 3. Shade/greenspace
 - C. Add a cover to the existing pool to make it an indoor aquatics facility.
3. Teen Center, with some and/or all of the following features:
- A. Large enough for both active and passive recreation and programming.
 - B. Great place for children of tourists to come and meet other children.
 - C. Teen Center should have the atmosphere of a “lodge” – fireplace, couches, big-screen television – a place for teenagers to “hang out” after school.
 - D. A multi-functional space could be rented by the public for special events, such as meeting, receptions, etc., and would attract more people to the area as well as generate revenue.
 - E. Offer special programs on “snow” days.
4. Programming/Facilities
- A. There is nothing offered for children of ages eleven (11) to fifteen (15). They simply have to “hang out” in parks that were constructed for much younger children.
 - B. A summer day camp should be available for adolescents (there is one). Participation in the current summer day camp program is limited due to the “higher” non-taxpayer rate that is charged.
 - C. Transport children from school to after-school activities.
 - D. Need programs for 6th graders.
 - E. More volleyball courts are needed.
 - F. Need more flat surfaces for skating.
 - G. A recreation room (at one or more of the facilities) would be good, containing an arcade with (non-violent) video games.
 - H. Build a greenway, which connects the Town of Blowing Rock with Bass Lake and also provides a crosswalk for Hwy. 221.

- I. Athletic participation by older children in Blowing Rock, who are not able to participate in County functions due to distance and time constraints.
 - J. Transport children to area skate parks as “field trips”.
5. Tennis Courts
- A. With backboard (The senior tennis group is willing to fund this if being allowed to install it.)
 - B. Renovation, especially surface cracks.
 - C. The number of courts in the area have decreased through the years. Need more courts; the Senior tennis league is growing and would like more space to play.
 - D. Participants at times have to wait a long time for courts.
6. Bike Park (BMX)/Skate Park Combo
- A. Families/Children travel out of the area to use skate parks.
 - B. Blowing Rock would attract this type of sport/user.
 - C. Skate Park should contain all of the various skate levels.
 - D. Children and teenagers are losing their board/bike privileges due to skating in forbidden areas.
 - E. Modular would be successful; it is not permanent and can be moved.
 - F. “Town Plaza” would be popular, set up like a park and used for passive recreation when not being skated on. With the shift toward “street skating”, a plaza design would be perfect (with curbs, rails, and benches).
 - G. Inventory current facilities. Find out which ones are rarely used and convert to a skate park.
 - H. Get skaters involved in the “planning” process.
 - I. Property on Clark St., across from the pool, could be a possible location.
 - J. Private or school properties could be shared with the Town.
 - K. Skateboard community does not want to wait; willing to work to make something happen now.
 - L. Danger is associated with “street” skating.
 - M. Bike/Skate Park would be a good, healthy, social activity for children of all ages.
7. Disc Golf Course
- A. A minimum of 5 acres is needed.
 - B. Floodplains or areas not prone to development are good for parks.
 - C. The limited amount of land in Town will affect this outcome.
 - D. Portable goals could be brought in – Davant Field is a possibility.

8. Cardio Facility
 - A. Would encourage wellness in the community.
 - B. Exercise machines in Blowing Rock would be nice.

9. Other
 - A. Get local families involved with Parks & Recreation special events and programs. (Most of the participants are tourists.)

 - B. Methods for increased local participation should include:
 1. Improved marketing
 2. Website
 3. Churches
 4. Email lists
 5. School announcements
 6. Children communicating with each other

 - C. Memorial Park
 1. More toddler swings (only one swing at this time)
 2. Tennis court renovation
 3. Add backboard for solo tennis practice
 4. The park is “over-used”. There is not enough awareness of other parks in the area.
 5. Signage and access are important.

 - D. Davant Field
 1. Add a batting cage.
 2. No lights. Lights are invasive to neighborhoods. There is no buffer between the field and homes in the area.
 3. Improve existing facilities before adding more.
 4. Create maintenance fund for repairs and upkeep.

 - E. Dog Park
 1. Put up a fence at Davant outfield and make remaining area a fenced-in dog park.
 2. There are no facilities that allow pets now. Dog owners already use Davant Field a lot – since it is not posted otherwise.
 3. There is concern with dog “messes” in public areas, exposed to children.
 4. Even with “postings”, the “No Dogs Allowed” signs are hard to enforce.

 - F. Greenways/Trail System
 1. Middlefork greenway/trail system proposed to connect Blowing Rock and Boone.

2. Connectors are very important.
3. Lots of supporters of this project.
4. Connectivity of churches, schools, downtown, etc.
5. Improve parking situations.

Community Survey

The active participation of residents in the town was crucial in developing a Master Plan that reflects the true needs for the Town of Blowing Rock. With this in mind, community input was solicited throughout the entire planning process. To gather further public input a mail-out survey was distributed to all of the Town's water customers and made available on the Town web page. This section summarizes the results of the mail-out survey.

Approximately 600 of the mail-out surveys were returned - with the full-time and part-time residents being approximately equal in number and adequately reflecting a representative cross section of the Town of Blowing Rock in terms of age and household size.

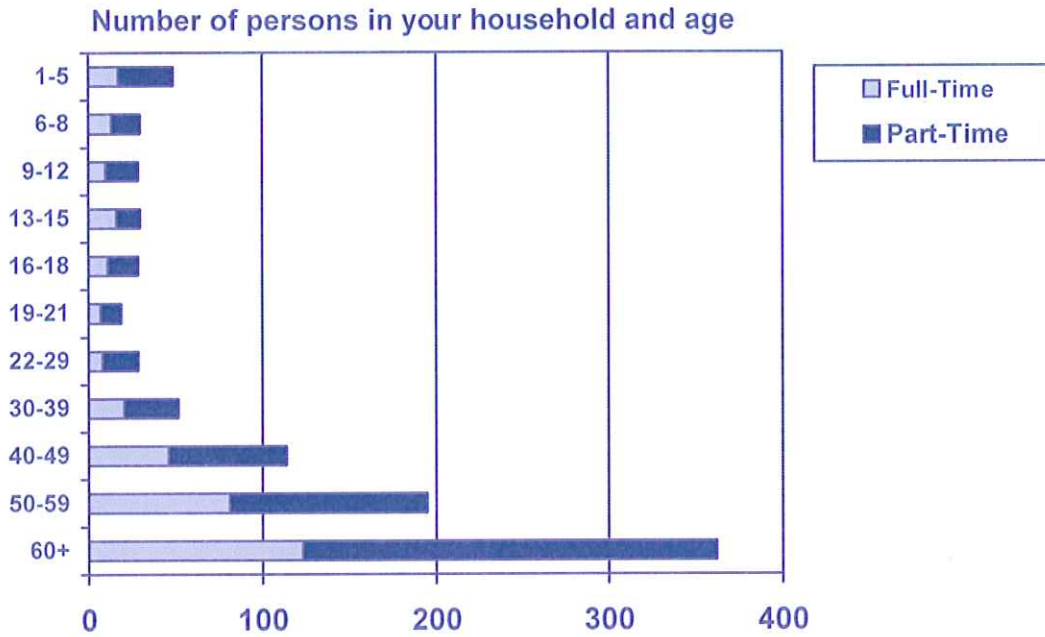
The two-page survey asked a series of questions and also included a section where respondents rated their participation in existing programs and use of existing facilities. The survey also asked respondents to rank the programs and facilities in order of importance to their household and asked them to list the facilities they would like to see added to the park and recreation system.

To determine the profile of respondents, a series of demographic questions were also asked - including questions such as age, number of children, children's ages, etc.

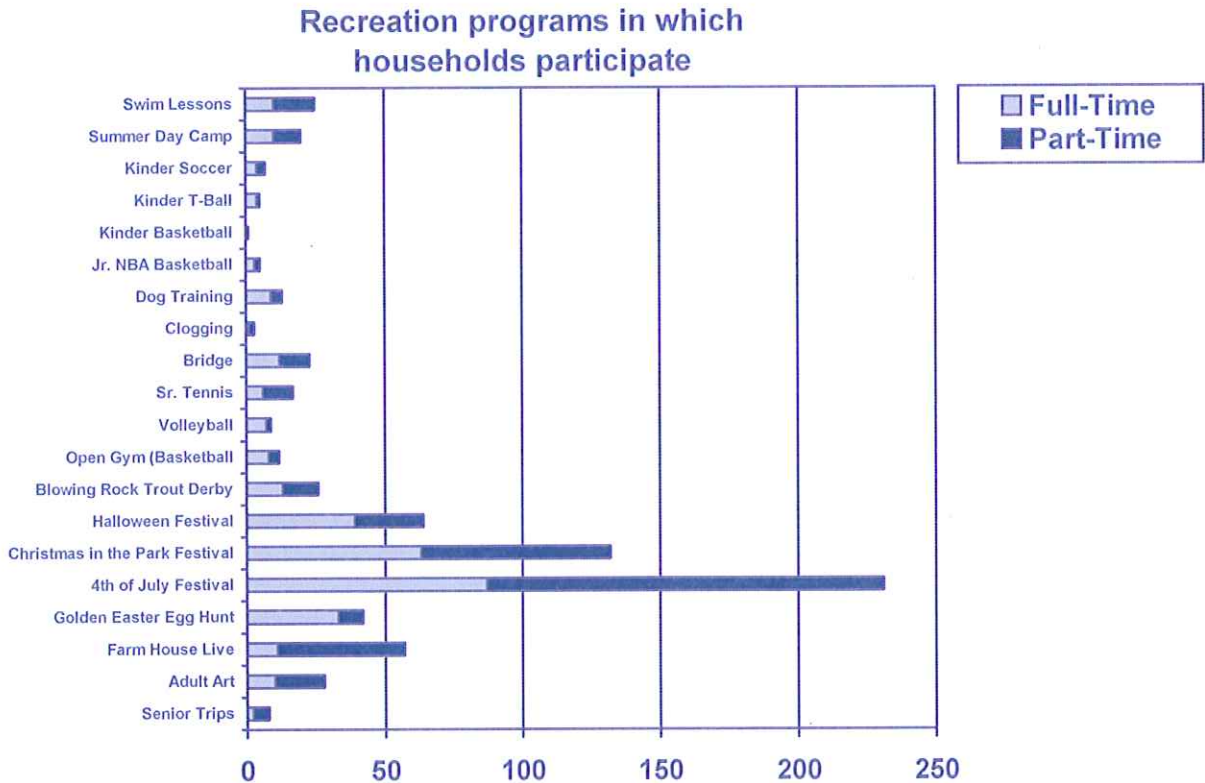
The following summary addresses the major findings of the mail-out survey. A detailed description of the results is included in the Appendix along with a copy of the survey itself.

- Resident's response to surveys represents a cross section of Blowing Rock in terms of age and household size.
- Residents rated the programs offered by the Town as predominately good to excellent.
- Residents rated the facilities offered by the Town as predominately good to excellent.
- Blowing Rock and nearby residents significantly utilize available parks and recreation facilities.
- Residents are able to take advantage of the variety of programs available through the Town.

The chart below outlines the age demographics of respondents to the survey based on resident status:

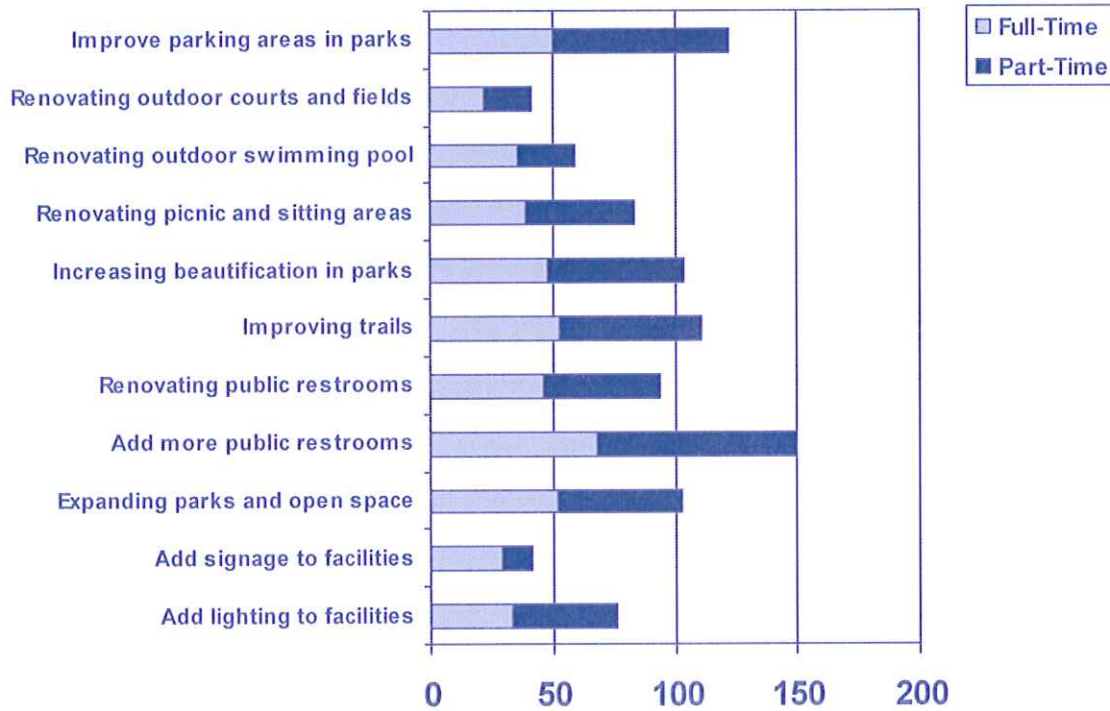


Respondents were asked which programs and special events their household has participated in. Results indicated high participation in seasonal/holiday events.

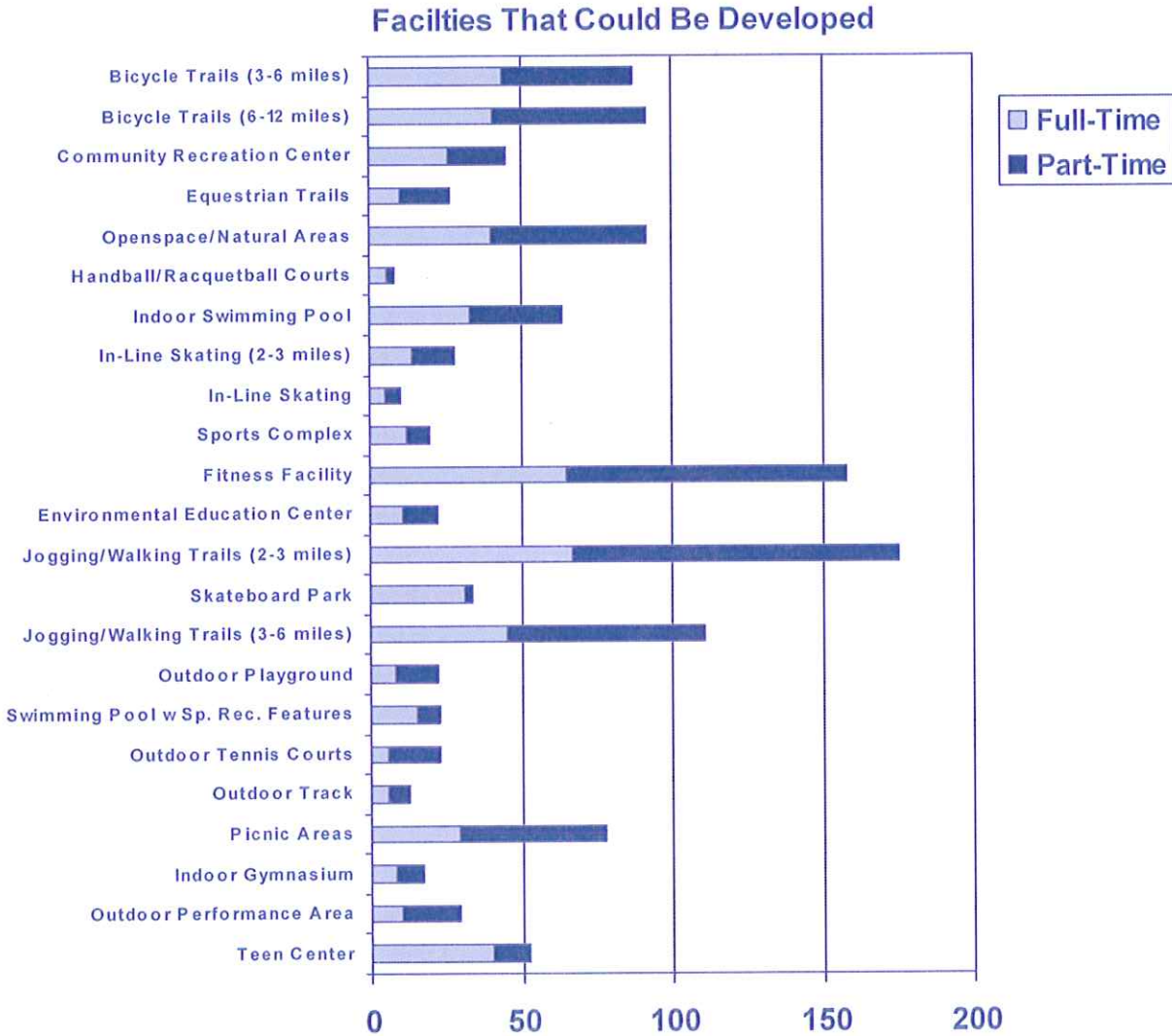


When asked about desired improvements, which could be made to existing facilities, respondents replied as shown in the following chart:

Improvements that could be made to EXISTING parks and recreation facilities



The survey gave respondents an opportunity to rank proposed facilities, which could be developed, in order of importance. Twenty nine (29) potential facility types were listed, the top five items identified on each survey are summarized in the chart below. Items with less than five votes were not included.



The Chart shows respondents expressed walking/bicycle trails, and fitness facilities were the most desired facilities that could be developed in the Town. Open space, picnic area, and indoor swimming pool were the following items of importance.

4.3 State and National Assessment

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

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

- The most rapidly growing outdoor activities (nationwide) are:
 1. Canoeing
 2. Bicycling
 3. Attending sports events
 4. Camping (all types)
 5. Sailing
 6. Hiking/Backpacking
 7. Walking for pleasure
 8. Water skiing

- The top ten most popular outdoor recreational activities (North Carolina) are:
 1. Walking for pleasure
 2. Driving for pleasure
 3. Viewing scenery
 4. Beach activities
 5. Visiting historical sites
 6. Swimming
 7. Visiting natural areas
 8. Picnicking
 9. Attending sports events
 10. Visiting zoos

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

4.4 Types of Parks and Recreation Facilities

A *comprehensive park system* is made up of a variety of park types - ranging from small neighborhood playgrounds - to larger parks with athletic fields, playgrounds, a community center and open space. They reflect the differing recreational and preferences of diverse users. Park models are used as guidelines for fulfilling the future recreational needs of communities. Not all of these types of parks are the responsibility of the municipal agency; rather, several agencies (federal, state, and/or county,) play roles in providing recreational opportunities as well. To further understand the municipality'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/may not be included in comprehensive park systems and are delineated in this section:

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

Regional Parks

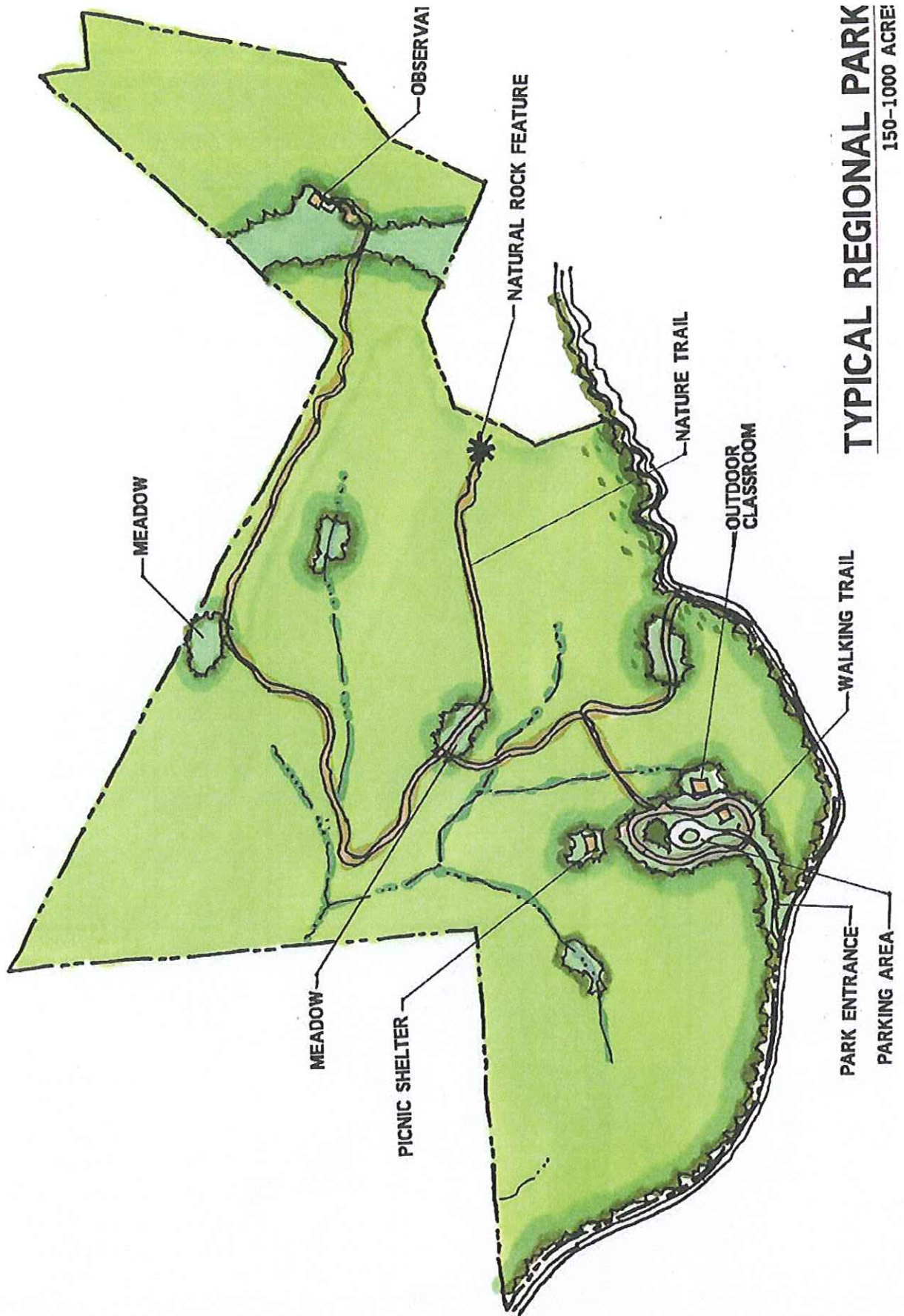
Regional parks are typically very large sites. On these sites, the unique qualities that exemplify the natural features found (such as the diverse land formation, vegetation, and wildlife) are “preserved”. Parks containing environmental centers, campsites, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic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

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

The acquisition and development of regional parks are typically undertaken by a federal or state agency. Julian Price Park and Moses Cone Park, which neighbor the Town of Blowing Rock, are examples of a regional parks.

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

<u>Service Area:</u>	Region-wide
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	10 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Minimum Size:</u>	150-1,000 acres minimum with sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed (10% of the site may be developed with facilities found in Community Parks.)
<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Environmental Center Equestrian Center Primitive Camping Group Camping Recreational Vehicle Camping Nature Trails Observation Deck Picnic Shelters with Grills Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter) Restrooms/Vending Beach Swimming Boating Fishing Piers/Boat Docks Parking Caretaker’s House



District Parks

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

Sites for District Parks should be relatively flat to alleviate excessive grading of active facilities. Where possible, there should be an equal balance of wooded and cleared areas. If a natural water feature is present, the adjoining land should be developed primarily as passive recreation. Accessibility to neighborhoods should be a consideration when choosing sites.

The development of district parks is typically the responsibility of county or municipal agencies. At this time, there are no district parks in the immediate vicinity of the Town of Blowing Rock. *Alternate facilities may be added or substituted.

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

<u>Service Area:</u>	1 to 2 ½ mile radius
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	5 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Desirable Range:</u>	75-200 acres
<u>Desirable Size:</u>	+100 acres
<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Playgrounds Full or Half Size Basketball Courts Tennis Courts (lighted) Baseball/Softball/Multi-Purpose Field Soccer Practice Field (movable goals) Volleyball Courts Soccer/Football Fields Picnic Shelter with Grill (with/without shelter) Nature Trail Benches or Bench Swings Restrooms/Concessions Parking/Service Yard 50% of Site Remains Undeveloped
<u>*Alternate Facilities:</u>	Recreation Center Tennis Center Amphitheater Observation Decks Fishing Piers/Boating/Boat Dock



TYPICAL DISTRICT PARK
75-200 ACRES

Community Parks

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

Community park sites should have varying topography and vegetation. A variety of tree species should also be present in forested areas. Community parks should contain cleared areas for the purpose of locating active recreational facilities. At least one (1) natural water feature (lake, river, and/or creek) is desirable in community parks. The land acquired for use as a community park should be contiguous in nature and strategically located in order to access all users within the community that it serves.

The development of community parks typically falls within the realm of the municipal responsibilities. There are no designated community parks in the immediate vicinity of the Town of Blowing Rock. The Town is unique in that, although the existing parks fail to meet community park standards, their close proximity to each other creates a community park. *Alternate facilities may be added or substituted.

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

<u>Service Area:</u>	1-2 mile radius
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	2-5 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Desirable Range:</u>	15-50 acres
<u>Desirable Size:</u>	25 acres
<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Picnic Tables/Shelters with/without Grills Benches or Bench Swings Restroom/Concessions/Parking Playgrounds Tennis/Volleyball Courts 50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped Full Size or Half Size Basketball Courts Nature Trails Soccer/Multi-Purpose Fields Swimming Pool
<u>*Alternate Facilities:</u>	Recreation Center Natural Water Features Disc Golf Amphitheatre Observation Decks



TYPICAL COMMUNITY PARK
15-50 Acres

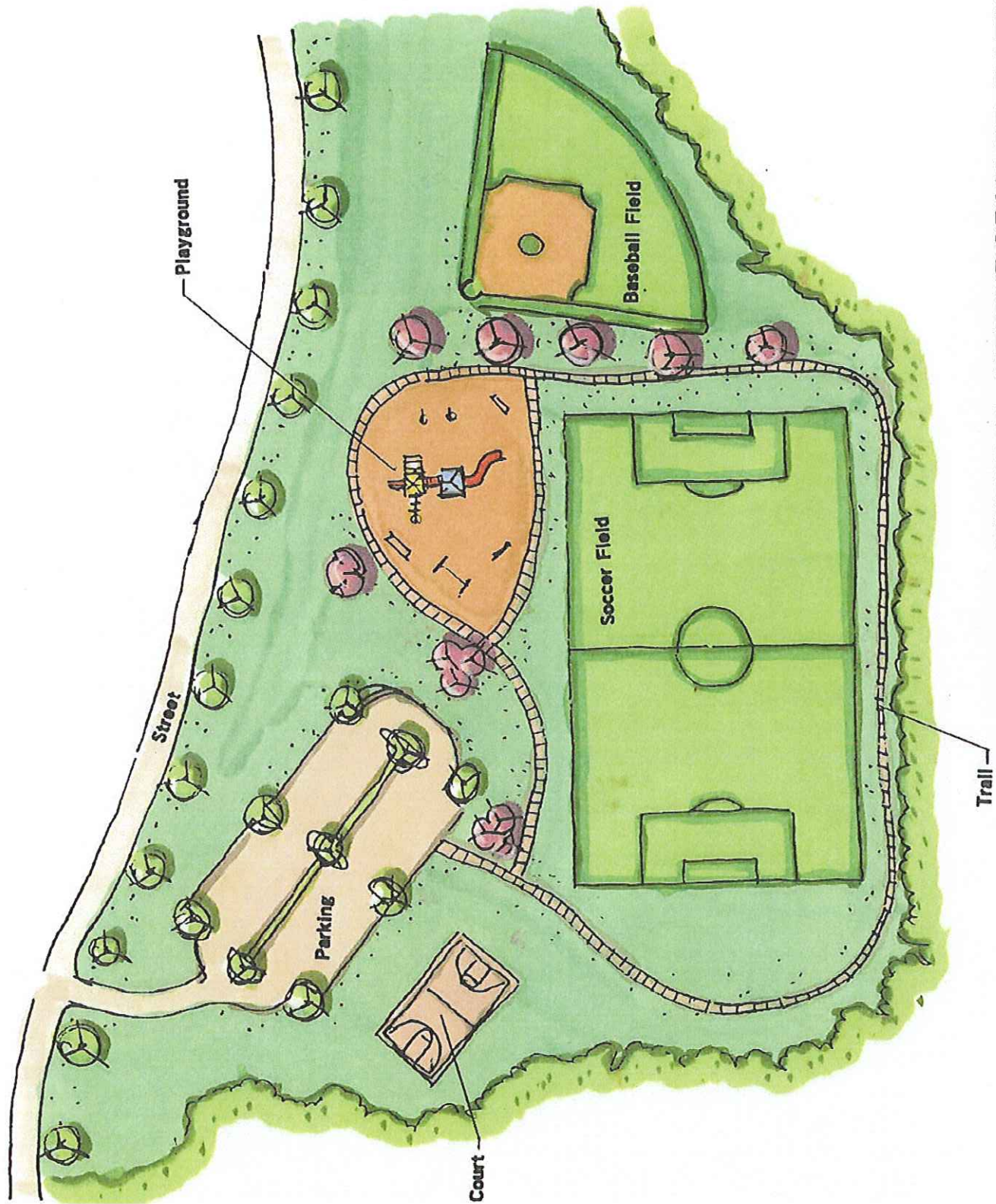
Neighborhood Parks

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

Broyhill Park, Memorial Park, and Davant Field – which all three are centrally located in the Town of Blowing Rock - are examples of a neighborhood parks. *Alternate facilities may be added or substituted as criteria for neighborhood parks.

Specific standards/criteria for neighborhood parks are as follows:

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



TYPICAL NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
7-15 Acres

Mini Parks

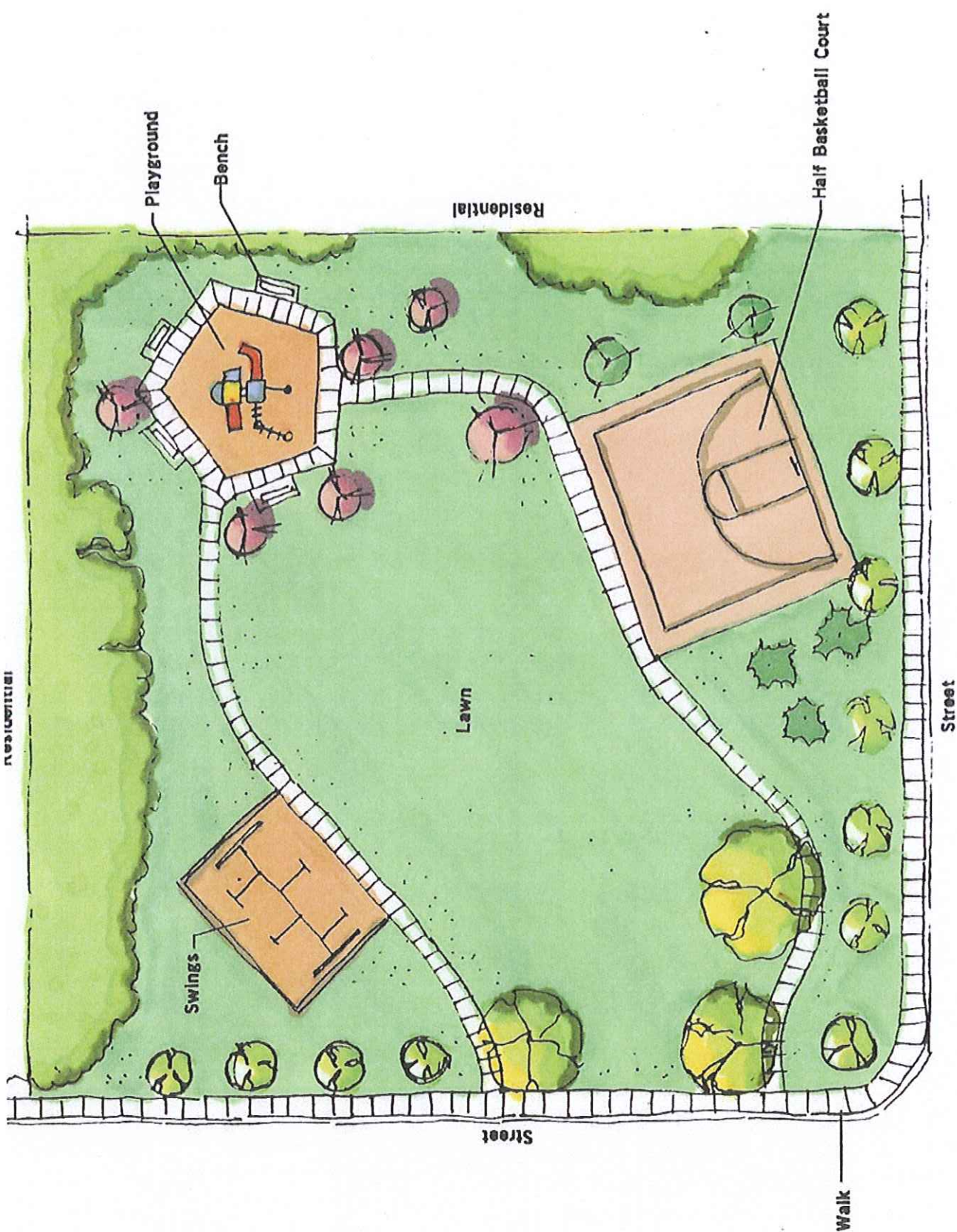
The function of a *mini park* is to provide very limited, isolated, and/or unique recreational needs. Mini parks are the smallest park classification that exists. They are often served by school and church playgrounds. These parks are located within walking distance of the area serviced, and they provide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

At this time, there are no mini parks within park system, although Gossip Park located in downtown is a popular gathering place with park benches and offers amenities that would serve as a mini park. The future widening improvements for US 321 propose land, adjacent to Lake Chetola, to be dedicated to the Town for a future mini park. In addition, Blowing Rock Elementary and local churches have facilities that are typically found in mini parks.

*Alternate facilities, which adhere to the criteria for mini parks, may be added.

Specific standards/criteria for mini parks are as follows:

<u>Service Area:</u>	¼ to ½ mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
<u>Acreage/Population Ratio:</u>	0.5 acres per 1,000 persons
<u>Desirable Size:</u>	±1 acre
<u>Typical Facilities:</u>	Playground Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter) Half Basketball Courts Benches or Bench Swings Open Play Area
<u>*Alternate Facilities:</u>	Tennis Courts Nature Trails



TYPICAL MINI PARK

Linear Parks/Greenways

A *linear park* is an area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel, such as hiking, biking, etc. Linear parks are developed for several reasons, including 1) to “connect” existing recreational facilities, 2) to facilitate public right-of-ways, and/or 3) to meet public demand. As such, the length and size of linear parks vary considerably - depending on the terrain of the park land and the distance between entities to be “connected”, such as parks, schools, homes, and businesses. In some cases, a linear park



is developed within a large land area designated for protection and management of the natural environment, with recreational opportunities being a secondary objective. The Glen Burney Walking Trail is an example of a linear park, which is located in the Town of Blowing Rock. Another example is the Middle Fork Greenway, which is currently in the planning phase. This valuable amenity will connect Blowing Rock to Boone and offer a great resource for the community.

Unique or Special Use Facilities

The *unique* or *special use facilities* are park types that exist for the sole purpose of enhancing or utilizing a special man-made or natural feature. They can include beaches, parkways, historical sites, sites of archeological significance, swimming pools, conservation easements, flood plains, etc. Minimum standards relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry for this category of park. A size that is sufficient to protect and interpret the resource, while providing optimum use, is considered desirable. The Grover C. Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool and Blue Ridge Parkway are examples of special use facilities.

Open Space

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



Public open space is defined as: any land acquired for the purpose of keeping it in a (primarily) undeveloped state. The functions of open space include the 1) preservation of drainage areas for water supplies (watersheds), 2) protection of areas which are particularly well suited for growing crops (farmland preservation), 3) protection of attractive waterways (wild and scenic rivers), 4) preservation of spaces between communities to prevent urban sprawl (greenbelts), 5) protection of wildlife habitat (sanctuaries), 6) protection of approach and take-off areas near airports (clear zones) 7) protection of undevelopable land (landfills); and 8) protection of areas aesthetically pleasing from a corridor (viewshed). While these areas are some of the more common open space functions, many others exist. Blowing Rock's open space is primarily limited to privately-owned land with watershed protection regulations. The Blue Ridge Parkway's Moses Cone Memorial Park and Julian Price Memorial Park surround the community of Blowing Rock and offer a wealth of open space and natural resources. The Town also recently acquired 192 acres know as the China Creek Property. This undisturbed property offers additional land to be preserved for open space.

4.5 Evaluation of Park Land Needs

When comparing a park system to national standards, one method is total acreage. The NRPA park land guidelines (in acres) for the total service population of the Town of Blowing Rock is provided in the table below. Population figures in this analysis – estimated at 10,000 – include the effective population, comprised of full-time residents, part-time residents, and visitors. 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. Moses Cone and Julian Price parks, owned and operated by the National Park Service (NPS), have been included due to their close proximity.

PARK ACREAGE BY CLASSIFICATION (Based on NRPA Guidelines)

TYPE OF PARK	RECOMMENDED FOR 2004 (Population: 10,000)	RECOMMENDED FOR 2024 (Population: 14,555)
Regional Park (NPS) 1,000 acres or 10 acres/1,000 persons	1,000 acres	1,455 acres
District Park 200 acres or 5 acres/1,000 persons	50 acres	73 acres
Community Park 20-30 acres or 2.5 acres/1,000 persons	25 acres	36 acres
Neighborhood Park 7-15 acres or 2 acres/1,000 persons	20 acres	29 acres
Mini Park 1-2 acres or 0.5 acres/1,000 persons	5 acres	7 acres

EXISTING PARK ACREAGE	
Moses H. Cone (NPS)	3,600
Julian Price (NPS)	4,344
Total regional:	7,944
Memorial	4
Broyhill	5.5
Davant	4.5
Total neighborhood:	14

EXISTING ACREAGE

Following a summation of park acreage, it has been determined that the Town of Blowing Rock does not meet the national and state acreage guidelines for comprehensive park systems. (See total existing acreage – to the left – as compared to total recommended acreage above.) Though public land dedicated for regional parks ranks *above* acreage guidelines; the remaining park classifications rank *below* these guidelines. In

evaluating the unique demographics of the Town of Blowing Rock, it has been determined that some of the park classifications may not be necessary. For instance, mini parks are generally established for use by young children, which are available in the existing parks.

The development of regional (and sometimes district) parks typically falls under the responsibility of federal, state, and/or county government agencies. Moses H. Cone Memorial Park and Julian Price Memorial Park provide Blowing Rock and the surrounding region with adequate *regional* facilities. The Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department, located in Boone, provides additional recreation facilities. There close proximity to Blowing Rock alleviates need for district park land.

Demographics of the area indicate that many residents of the Town of Blowing Rock are primarily between the ages of 40 and 85. This age group typically participates in passive recreation versus active recreation, which is usually accommodated through neighborhood and linear parks. Due to the limited availability of large parcels of land (with the required topography) as well as the land acquisition values, the Town of Blowing Rock should focus on the improvement/addition of its community/neighborhood parks. This focus should include consideration of property purchases that become available which are contiguous with the existing Town property.



4.6 Evaluation of Facility Needs

Local guidelines for recreational facilities (i.e. ball fields, courts, outdoor areas, etc.) have been developed for Blowing Rock in accordance with industry guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR). Identified in the following table are the minimum recommended national and state recreation facility standards. Also incorporated into the table are local guidelines established for the Town of Blowing Rock based on a combination of these standards.

STANDARDS for PUBLIC FACILITIES

FACILITY	NRPA STANDARDS	NCDENR STANDARDS	BLOWING ROCK STANDARDS (Recommended)
Fields			
Adult Baseball	1/12,000	1/5,000	1/12,000
Youth Baseball	N/A	N/A	1/8,000
Softball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Football	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Soccer	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000
Courts			
Basketball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/2,000
Volleyball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Horseshoe	1/2,000	N/A	1/2,000
Outdoor Areas			
Picnic Shelters	N/A	1/3,000	1/3,000
Playground	N/A	1/1,000	1/500
Trails			
Walking/Hiking	1/region	0.4 mile/1,000	0.4 mile/1,000
Equestrian	N/A	0.4 mile/1,000	0.4 mile/1,000
Camping	N/A	2.5 sites/1,000	2.5 sites/1,000
Specialized			
Community Center	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Swimming Pool	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000
Golf Course	1/25,000	1/25,000	1/25,000
Bicycling (Urban)	N/A	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000
Canoeing/Boating			
Streams/Lakes	N/A	0.2 mile /1,000	0.2 mile /1,000
Stream/Lake Access	N/A	1/10 miles	1/10 miles

The recommended number of public facilities, as developed from these guidelines, needed in the Town of Blowing Rock is listed in the next table. As mention earlier, the community workshops and the recreation survey will be used as primary guides in prescribing the *specific* needs for the Town of Blowing Rock rather than national and state standards.

EXISTING and RECOMMENDED PUBLIC FACILITIES

Facility	Blowing Rock Standard (Recommended)	Existing Facilities	Current Demand (10,000 estimate)	20-Year Demand (14,555 estimate)
Fields				
Adult Baseball	1/12,000	0	1	1****
Youth Baseball	1/8,000	1	1	2
Softball	1/5,000	0	2	3****
Football	1/10,000	1***	1	1
Soccer	1/10,000	1***	1	1
Courts				
Basketball	1/5,000	2	2	3
Tennis	1/2,000	2	5	7
Volleyball	1/5,000	2**	2	3
Horseshoe	1/2,000	2	5	7
Outdoor Areas				
Picnic Shelters	1/3,000	3	3	6
Playground	1/500	4	5	7
Trails				
Walking/Hiking	0.4 mile/1,000	2	4	6
Equestrian	0.4 mile/1,000	*NPS	*NPS	*NPS
Camping	2.5 miles/1,000	*NPS	*NPS	*NPS
Specialized				
Community Center	1/20,000	1	1	1
Swimming Pool	1/20,000	1	1	1
Golf Course	1/25,000	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bicycling (Urban)	1 mile/1,000	1	10	14.6
Canoeing/Boating				
Streams/Lakes	0.2 mile/1,000	*NPS	*NPS	*NPS
Stream/Lake Access	N/A	*NPS	*NPS	*NPS

*NPS – Facility is present at one or more of the National Park Services

**Volleyball available at Blowing Rock Elementary School

***Football and Soccer programs use the ball field at Davant Field for these activities.

****Facilities available through Watagua County Parks and Recreation Dept. in Boone

From this exercise, we have concluded that the Town of Blowing Rock may not meet all of the state and national standard guidelines for recreational facilities. However, due to the unique dynamics of the Town of Blowing Rock, many of the facilities listed above are not necessary for implementation. The community workshops and the recreation survey will be used as primary guides in prescribing the *specific* needs for the Town of Blowing Rock – both now and in the future.

The Town is meeting the standards in the areas of basketball, youth baseball, picnic areas, community center, and swimming pool. The prevalent insufficiencies in recreational facilities are in the categories of tennis, bicycle trails, and playgrounds.

To summarize, listed below are the results of recreational facility needs assessment – both currently and in the future - based on NRPA, NCDENR standards – not Community Input, which was the primary guide for the development of the Master Plan.

Immediate needs (2005):

- 1 Playground
- 3 Athletic Fields
- 2 miles of Walking/Hiking Trails
- 9 miles of Urban Bicycle Trails
- 1 Football Field
- 3 Tennis Courts
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 3 Horseshoe Pits

Additional Future needs (2025):

- 2 Ball Fields
- 1 Basketball Court
- 2 Tennis courts
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 2 Horseshoe Pits
- 3 Picnic Shelters
- 2 Playgrounds
- 2 miles of Walking/Hiking Trails
- 4.6 miles of Urban Bicycle Trails

--End of Section--

SECTION 5 GOALS and RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

As identified in the inventory portion of this report (Section 3), there are six (6) separate, existing recreational facilities within the Town of Blowing Rock. Each of these areas is unique and they offer many opportunities for park users. The Town has foreseen the need for a plan to guide the direction of the Parks and Recreation System for the future. This comprehensive Master Plan serves as a map for the future of recreation facilities in the Town of Blowing Rock. The plan incorporates recommendations to accomplish the objectives set forth in the Master Plan. These recommendations are divided into the following categories:

- Roles of the Town of Blowing Rock Providers
- Roles of other Recreation Providers
- Park Proposals and Recommendations
- Facility Proposals and Recommendations
- Priorities for Development

5.2 Roles of the Town of Blowing Rock

The Town of Blowing Rock offers a wide variety of active, passive, and special-facility recreation. The mission of the Town of Blowing Rock is to provide and enhance recreational and cultural opportunities for residents and visitors, as stated in the 2004 Blowing Rock Comprehensive Plan.

Meeting the recreational needs of all users will require a joint effort between various agencies and the private sector. No one group can, from a practical standpoint, provide all the proposed improvements/facilities for the future. The Town should maintain existing relationships with Watauga County and other public/private sectors, as well as create new partnerships - in order to achieve its objectives for the future. Communication with these organizations is extremely important and will improve planning activities and avoid duplication. This communication should include coordination with the Watauga County School System and the Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department. It is possible that some of these programs and/or facilities may be shared jointly by the Town and the County. In addition to “partnering” with agencies such as this, the Town of Blowing Rock should continue to search for additional organizations that have common interests in recreational programs and facilities.

The Town of Blowing Rock should also continue to develop pedestrian corridors to connect existing park facilities, public schools, and other destination points. As well as being important to the success of the Town’s parks and recreation program, these corridors foster safety and improve the quality of life for all participants.

5.3 Roles of other Recreation Providers

WATAUGA COUNTY

Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department

The Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department and the Town of Blowing Rock have an existing partnership; and they should continue to work together to provide recreational opportunities. Each agency can, and should, play a role in the all-inclusive arrangement of services that make up the park system. The key to an ongoing relationship between the Town and County is to maintain honest communication among both staff and elected officials – thus assuring that the common goals are achieved.

Watauga County School System

The Watauga County School System already serves as a component of the Blowing Rock Park System. Programming events such as day camp, volleyball, and basketball are being held at the Blowing Rock Elementary School Gymnasium. In addition a children's playground is offered. Joint use agreements are established and the Town should continue to partner with the school system, which will result in the least possible expenditure(s) of public funds for the Town of Blowing Rock.

Private Sector

The private sector provides recreational amenities and programs such as golf courses, tennis clubs, and fitness facilities. Blowing Rock has a partnership with the Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds using their gymnasium for basketball programs. The Town should continue this relationship and be active to generate more opportunities to share recreational activities.

Developers can assist the Town of Blowing Rock by the dedication or reservation of future park sites and/or open space during the overall development process. Land development can provide opportunities to add land for future parks.

State and Federal Parks

Blowing Rock is very fortunate that the Blue Ridge Parkway is located nearby. This amenity provides a wealth of recreational opportunities and helps reduce the demand on Blowing Rock's park facilities. The Town of Blowing Rock should attempt to create greenway corridors to enhance the recreational opportunities for parkway users. Coordination with the National Park Service is essential in improving connectivity between the systems.

5.4 Park Proposals and Recommendations

Park facilities have improved somewhat – with monies being recently invested in the updating of existing recreational facilities by providing additional park amenities and playground safety at some locations. However, there are existing facilities in the park system that need improvements.

As previously stated, the Town of Blowing Rock should focus on developing, and operating the existing neighborhood parks, and special use facilities, along with pedestrian corridors. Section 4 (Recreation Needs Assessment) identified the existing future parks needed in the Town. The park proposals described below have been formulated to address the existing and future park needs for the Town of Blowing Rock through the year 2025.

Regional Parks

There are two regional National Parks within a 10-mile radius of Blowing Rock. These regional parks are components of the Blue Ridge Parkway and include Moses Cone Memorial Park and Julian Price Memorial Park. The close proximity of the two regional parks to the Town of Blowing Rock provides an abundance of regional recreational amenities.

District Parks

Although state and federal guidelines recommend a district park be constructed, Blowing Rock's unique demographics negates this need. District parks function primarily as outlets for active recreation – softball, soccer, football, and other types of sports-oriented recreation. These needs are being met through Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department.

District parks also required large amounts of land, which are relatively gentle in regards to topography. Such land is very limited within the Town limits; and, its purchase would cause a heavy burden on the Town's budget. Due to this issue, the Town of Blowing Rock should continue to use the Watauga County facilities for its primary athletic recreation.

Community Parks

Both the state recreation standards and the community needs assessment point to the need for a community park to be provided for the Town of Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation System. By strict definition, the Town currently does not provide this facility; although, by combining the existing adjacent parks, the Town of Blowing Rock essentially provides all of the necessary park amenities to be classified as a community park.

By sharing the common boundaries of Davant Field, Memorial Park, Broyhill Park, Annie Cannon Memorial Park, Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool, and Glen Burney Trail, the Town of Blowing Rock provides recreation components typical of a community park – comprising more than twenty (20) acres of parkland. Again, this situation is *unique* in that all of the Town’s public parks are adjacent to each other. Davant Field, Memorial Park, and Broyhill Park are individually classified as neighborhood parks, while Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool and Annie Cannon Memorial Park would be considered special facilities. Glen Burney Trail serves as the linear park component of the community park concept.

Due to the overall combined size and combined recreation facilities provided by the existing parks in the Town of Blowing Rock, this community park “concept” will continue to adequately serve the citizens of the Town of Blowing Rock through 2025, with improvements and expansion - both individually and collectively. To achieve the concept of combined parks, pedestrian trails should be developed within the park system, linking each facility.

Neighborhood Parks

The Town of Blowing Rock currently meets the standards for neighborhood parks - as recommended by both the state recreation standards and the community needs assessment. The Town currently owns and operates three (3) neighborhood parks, which include Davant Field, Memorial Park, and Broyhill Park. Based on the effective population of the Town of Blowing Rock, state standards recommend only two (2) neighborhood parks. As a result, the Town of Blowing Rock provides sufficient acreage for neighborhood parks; however, additional amenities - such as a picnic shelters, playground equipment, and walking trails - should be considered.

Mini Parks

Currently there are no mini parks in the park system. In accordance with the recreation guidelines established by the State of North Carolina, it is recommended that the Town of Blowing Rock provide five (5) mini parks based upon the Town's effective population and facility needs within the study area. Based on a ½-mile radial park service area, two (2) mini parks would meet the recommended standards. In evaluating the existing park facilities, the Town of Blowing Rock *does* provide a sufficient amount of park area to serve a majority of residents within a ½-mile radius of Memorial Park, and all of its residents within a 2-mile radius.

Although privately owned, Gossip Park is popular to town residents and provides amenities found in a Mini Park. In addition, the future widening improvements for US 321 propose land, adjacent to Lake Chetola, to be dedicated to the Town for a future mini park. Future mini park sites could also be attained through new residential development occurring within the Town of Blowing Rock. It is recommended that 5 percent of the gross project size be dedicated to open space; or, the Town of Blowing Rock could allow the developer to donate land for future parks. These parks could contain an open multi-purpose field, playground equipment, and sitting areas.

Linear Parks

The Town of Blowing Rock currently provides the Glen Burney Trail(s) as it's only designated public trail(s). The Town should also provide a greenway trail system to connect all existing parks. This connection will help distribute park users to other recreation amenities throughout the park system. This trail should be off-street - where possible - and accommodate both bikes and pedestrians. The trail system should also provide connection to Moses Cone's Bass Lake and other potential greenway corridors.

The Middle Fork Greenway, which would connect the towns of Blowing Rock and Boone, is currently in the planning phase. This amenity will be a valuable resource for residents and visitors. The Greenway will also provide a bike trail, which is currently absent within the Town of Blowing Rock. It is recommended that the Town of Blowing Rock support the planning and coordination of this project.

Open Space

The Town of Blowing Rock and adjacent community contain a significant amount of open space. The Town is surrounded with scenic open spaces through the National Park Service and the China Creek Property. The Town should continue to acquire additional property for open space as opportunities occur.

Landscaping Specialist

The Town's Landscaping Specialist is not specifically located within any department of the Town. The Landscaping Specialist consumes the majority of workload maintaining the park system. Currently, the general public contact the Parks and Recreation Department if any landscaping concerns arise within the Park System. It is recommended that the Landscape Specialist be part of the Parks and Recreation Department. This transition will help relieve maintenance issues and also improve coordination efforts with Town staff and the Park System.

5.5 Facility Proposals and Recommendations

In Section 4.6, "Recreation Needs Assessment: Evaluation of Facility Needs", specific facility needs were identified for the Town of Blowing Rock by both the recreation guidelines set forth by the State of North Carolina and the community input process. This section summarizes the Town's needs for its existing/future facilities and makes recommendations for activities to be considered in the future development of its park system.

Adult Baseball

There are currently no adult baseball fields provided by the Town of Blowing Rock. Both the Parks & Recreation Department and the community input survey indicated that this was not a main concern for the Town's citizens. Although the standards recommend one (1) field per 12,000 residents, Blowing Rock's unique age demographics indicate no need for adult baseball. The use of Watauga County's Parks and Recreation facilities is adequate at this time.

Youth Baseball

Youth baseball is provided at Davant Field. The recreational standards recommend one (1) field per 8,000 residents. The Parks & Recreation Department, along with the community indicated that all of their current needs in the area of youth baseball are being met. At this time, the Watauga County Parks and Recreation System conduct the baseball programs. The Town should continue to partner with Watauga County in meeting this need.

Football

The Town of Blowing Rock does not have any solely dedicated football fields and public comment(s) did not indicate a need for adding this type of facility. The Watauga County

Parks and Recreation Department offers youth football programs for Watauga County. Residents of the Town of Blowing Rock do participate in these County programs; however, they *did* indicate that it is difficult to participate due to the practice schedule, which begins shortly after the school day ends. It is recommended that the Town of Blowing Rock, in conjunction with the County Parks and Recreation Department, should initiate a shuttle service - providing travel for youth desiring to participate in football activities.

Soccer

Soccer is a very popular sport and participation in soccer by youth and young adults is a growing trend locally and nationwide. Currently, the Town of Blowing Rock converts a portion of the baseball field at Davant Park to a soccer field. The Town provides soccer programs for children, ages three (3) to five (5); and, the Watauga County Parks and Recreation Department provides the same program for five (5) to ten (10) year-old children. The County's soccer programs are located in Boone and also use Davant Field for the kinder soccer program. Based on both the Parks & Recreation staff and the community, it is not anticipated that the Town of Blowing Rock will need any additional soccer fields by the year 2025. The initiation of a "shuttle" would assist in the area of soccer as previously described for football.

Basketball Courts

There are two outdoor basketball courts within the park system - both located at Memorial Park. The Town of Blowing Rock also has partnerships with Blowing Rock Elementary School and Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds (BRAG) for use of their basketball gymnasiums. It is recommended that existing programs continue at these facilities, with all partners continually striving to provide the needed space for these programs for children and young adults.

Tennis Courts

Memorial Park provides the only two (2) public tennis courts in the park system. Based on community input, more tennis courts are needed, as well as a "backboard". The senior adults are very active tennis players and often wait for long periods of time for play. It is recommended that one (1) additional tennis court be added to the Town of Blowing Rock Park System by the year 2025. A possible location for this additional tennis court is in the general vicinity of the existing swimming pool and Broyhill Park. Other options consist of either converting an existing basketball court to a tennis court or implementing a tennis court into a future mini park.

Horseshoe Pits

There are two (2) horseshoe pits located at Memorial Park. "Horseshoe" tends to be an activity associated with group gatherings such as company/church picnics or reunions. It

is recommended that additional horseshoe pits be implemented where desirable at existing Rotary pavillion and proposed picnic shelters near the Robbins Swimming Pool.

Picnic Shelters and Tables

A total of three (3) shelters exist throughout the park system. Picnicking is consistently one of the most popular outdoor recreational activities according to national/state user surveys; and, it was considered to be a high priority in the community survey conducted by the Town of Blowing Rock. The only shelter in the park system with picnic tables is at Davant Field. The other two (2) parks (Memorial Park and Broyhill Park) have gazebos, but no picnic tables. There are twenty-six (26) picnic tables in the park system – ten (10) at the Davant Field shelter and eight (8) each at Memorial Park and Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool.

The community surveys indicated a need for more picnic shelters with the existing tables – particularly due to the increased usage by visitors during the peak seasons. It is recommended that two (2) shelters be added in Memorial Park and one (1) at Robbins Swimming Pool. Signage should also be added to inform visitors of all picnic areas.

Playground Activities

A total of four (4) playground components exist throughout the Town's park system, all of which are located in Memorial Park. In addition to the Town's facilities, Blowing Rock Elementary School allows the use of their playground equipment for the public. Based upon the established standards for playgrounds for neighborhood parks, the Town of Blowing Rock should provide one (1) additional playground by the year 2015. It is recommended that an additional playground be located near the Robbins Swimming Pool. In some instances, current access to playground components does not meet ADA compliance. This issue should be addressed, as well as the need for future equipment, which integrates special ADA features. To ensure that the existing playgrounds are safe for children, a safety audit should be performed annually in accordance with the National Playground Safety Institute.

Walking /Hiking Trails

Currently, the Glen Burney Trail, which is 1.5 miles in length, is the only designated, public hiking trail in the park system. There are a total of 0.5 additional miles of walking trails within the park system. Community input obtained from the survey indicated that hiking (and bicycling) were the most desirable elements of the park system. Recreation standards recommend that by 2025, an additional 4.0 miles of trails be added to serve the community - based on the standard of 0.4 miles per 1,000 residents. Fortunately, Cone Memorial Park and Price Park provide an abundance of nearby hiking trails that by far *exceed* the hiking trail needs for the Town of Blowing Rock's park system.

However, additional walking trails *within* the Town of Blowing Rock are still needed to meet the community's needs. Hiking trails are generally difficult to traverse and also

have accessibility issues. The 0.4-mile Historic Trail along Main Street provides a pedestrian connector from downtown to the southern intersection on Main Street and Highway 321. Improvements to Highway 321 through Blowing Rock will include construction of sidewalks to accommodate more pedestrian opportunities. It is recommended that 3.0 miles of additional walking trails be added to the Blowing Rock Park System by the year 2025. In addition, a greenway should be implemented with connections to each park within the park system and other major destinations (such as Bass Lake at Cone Memorial Park). Walking trails should be 8' wide and paved - accommodating walkers and joggers - and allowing for better access, distribution, and visibility to other parks.

The Middle Fork Greenway, which would connect the towns of Blowing Rock and Boone, is currently in the planning phase. This amenity will be a valuable resource for residents and visitors. The Greenway will also provide a bike trail, which is currently absent within the Town of Blowing Rock. It is recommended that the Town of Blowing Rock support the planning and coordination of this project.

The signage for the Glen Burney trail needs to be enhanced with trail descriptions and safety information. Also, trail improvements need to be made in hazardous areas - thereby reducing future, potential accidents.

Urban Bikeways

Currently, there are no designated bicycle pathways in the Town of Blowing Rock's park system. The community surveys indicated that bicycle trails are a very important amenity for town residents and desired more off-street bicycle trails. Many residents do not feel safe while riding on existing roads. By the year 2025, the state recreation standard suggests that eighteen (18) miles will be needed for bicyclists. Should the Middle Fork Greenway connector to the Town of Boone be constructed, this need for bicycle trails could be met.

Recreation Center

The Town of Blowing Rock Recreation Center is an important multi-purpose facility serving the Town's recreational needs. Various recreation programming occurs at the Center - providing a diversification, which caters to all demographic groups within the Town. The existing Recreation Center is scheduled to be converted to administrative offices for the Police Department, as the Recreation Center moves to the existing Emergency Services Building. This relocation will give the Recreation Center more space for existing/new programs and administrative responsibilities. It is recommended that - prior to the renovation of the Recreation Center - the Town of Blowing Rock identify facilities desired, and prepare probable cost estimates for construction and/or renovation. Although no firm schedule has been established, the approximate time line for this project should occur within three to five years.

The American Legion has expressed interest in partnering with the Town to use their facility. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan prepared in 1977 addressed the American Legion building and recommended acquisition for additional program space. Although this building is not large enough to support all the amenities desired by the residents, it is in a desirable location and can provide valuable space for many programs and events. It is recommended that the Town continue discussions with the American Legion for a joint-use partnership.

There is support (within the Town of Blowing Rock community) for the construction of a new fitness facility with indoor space for youth, teens, and senior adults. This need is particularly prevalent due to outdoor temperatures/frozen precipitation during the winter months. When the Town feels that a fitness facility expansion should be implemented, preliminary research and planning should be performed to determine what amenities are needed and space requirements. Although no particular components have been determined, such a facility could include weight/fitness room, aerobics room, and multi-purpose rooms for general activities/community meetings. Administrative offices, as well as restrooms, shower/locker rooms, and storage could also be integral parts in the initial planning phase.

Such a facility, as the one just described, must meet the needs of all the population of the Town of Blowing Rock. Teens, as well as senior adults, were sited earlier as being user groups that are in the greatest need for more recreational programs and activities. It is critical that this facility be developed as a true community center and not just an athletic center.

One possible location for this facility is an expansion/addition to the existing American Legion Building. Although no planning has been performed to determine the feasibility of this expansion, there are areas that could be used for this type expansion.

Swimming Pool

The Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool is currently meeting the community's swimming pool needs. Although the pool is a popular amenity for residents of Blowing Rock and meets the population based standards, the pool and facilities are dated and often need repair. These repairs are short-term in duration - problems will continue to occur. To meet needs of all age groups, it is recommended that a new outdoor leisure pool be constructed adjacent to the existing swimming pool. Such an amenity would provide activities for all age groups in the areas of swimming, recreation, and family entertainment. This amenity was suggested through the community workshops and surveys as desired additional component of the swimming pool.

In addition, the construction of an outdoor pavilion is recommended – not only to serve as a picnic shelter – but also to accommodate a large number of people for social gatherings and other events. This structure would create an exciting destination attracting

residents and visitors. A playground structure should be implemented adjacent to this structure. (This need was expressed in the Recreation Needs Assessment.) This structure would assist in the distribution of park visitors.

It is recommended that the existing pool house be renovated to include the addition of a restroom (for year-round use). In the intermediate period, the access from parking area to the pool house should be brought up to ADA compliance and an Engineering Assessment should be performed to evaluate the existing condition of the pool facility.

Skateboard Park

There has been an expressed interest for a skateboard park from town residents and the surrounding community. It is recommended that the Town of Blowing Rock partner with other community organizations, such as civic or church groups, to explore the possibility of constructing a skateboard park. It is also recommended that the town initiate field trips to skateboard parks in the surrounding area to allow for greater opportunities for skateboard enthusiasts. Lenoir Parks and Recreation is in the planning process of implementing a Skateboard Park, which would be present a possibility of a future partnership opportunity.

Staffing and Maintenance

This Master Plan covers a planning period of 20-years. The facilities to be implemented during that time as part of the recommendations will require some level of additional staffing and additional funding for facility operation and maintenance. Consideration of these budgetary impacts should be made prior to facility implementation.

5.6 Priorities for Development

The park and facility proposals have been prioritized into one-year increments for a ten-year period (2005-2015). The prioritization was influenced by 1) the evaluation of existing facilities in the Town of Blowing Rock, 2) the assessment of the community by the use of a formal survey, and 3) the financial ability of the Town of Blowing Rock to implement the overall capital improvement plan. The following outline contain *specific* recommendations for the existing facilities and *general/specific* recommendations for construction of future facilities and/or improvements.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARK SYSTEM FACILITIES/IMPROVEMENTS

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement uniform signage for all parks
- 8' off-street, paved trail connector to all park facilities

- Connect all public parking areas to park facilities with the use of pedestrian walks
- Add entrance signage off Hwy. 221 to Broyhill Park and Robbins Swimming Pool
- Add Pedestrian connection from Main Street to Bass Lake
- Landscaping Specialist to be consolidated as part of the Parks & Recreation Department

IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES

Memorial Park

- ADA accessibility to playground areas
- Improved pedestrian walking areas
- Information kiosk
- Repair existing tennis courts
- Add two (2) picnic shelters

Broyhill Park

- Information kiosk

Annie Cannon Memorial Park

- Accessible parking space
- Information kiosk (including Glen Burney Trail)
- ADA accessibility into park
- Repair water fountain and drinking fountain

Glen Burney Trail

- Improvements to signage
- Improve trail in hazardous areas

Davant Field

- Improve parking circulation
- Pave parking area
- Improve storm drainage
- Improve pedestrian connections
- Repair drinking fountain
- Improve restroom ventilation

Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool

- Add one (1) pavilion shelter adjacent to pool facility
- Perform engineering assessment of existing Robbins facilities
- Implement leisure pool/splash play area adjacent to existing kiddy pool
- Renovate existing pool house and pool facility

- Add public restrooms adjacent to existing pool house for year-round access
- Improve accessibility to pool house
- Add playground equipment adjacent to proposed pavilion

IMPROVEMENTS FOR FUTURE FACILITIES

New Recreation Center

- Renovate existing emergency services facility for new recreation center. Center to include opportunities for youth, teens, and senior adults with open-room area, game room, and areas for programming.
- Town should continue discussions with the American Legion for a joint-use partnership.
- Future recreation expansion/addition. Expansion should allow for multi-use rooms, aerobic/exercise rooms, restrooms, shower/locker rooms, and storage. The American Legion Building could be a possible location for this future expansion.

Park Property Improvements at Hwy. 321 Bypass

- Future park property (located at northern intersection of Hwy. 321 and Hwy. 321-A) be passive in nature – including benches, pedestrian walks, and landscaping.
- Implement a focal element in the park, such as a sculpture, display gardens, and/or monumentation to accent entrance to downtown Blowing Rock.

--End of Section--

SECTION 6 **ACTION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

6.1 Introduction

The results of the Blowing Rock Comprehensive Master Plan 2005-2025 are based on the following discovery methods: 1) a review of the study area, which is the Town limits, ETJ, and tourism impact areas; 2) an analysis of the existing parks and facilities; 3) community input; and 4) recreation standards, which have been generically developed for municipalities. The Master Plan is designed to be action-oriented and serve as a tool in the improvement and enhancement of the park system for the Town or Blowing Rock.

Identification of sufficient funding is a crucial element that is required to implement the Master Plan – considering, in particular, the Town’s budget constraints. The North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is a guide by which inadequate funding for park and recreation facilities may be identified. *Insufficient funding* will be a key issue that will need to be addressed in the upcoming years if government continues to provide basic minimum services. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, North Carolina and its local governments are 33% below the national average in the funding of parks and recreation services.

To meet the existing and future needs of the Town of Blowing Rock, the goals and objectives, which are identified in the Master Plan, must be seriously considered for implementation. The Town will need to continue to establish annual budgets for the Parks and Recreation Department based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, and operations/maintenance costs. The following Capital Improvements Plan is for the first 10-year period, 2005-2015, of the recommendations of the Master Plan, and is broken into each fiscal year for implementation of specific project.

6.2 Capital Improvement Program

The Capital Improvement Program for the development of park and recreation facilities is designed to encompass the first ten (10)-year period of the Master Plan. All of the proposed costs are based on 2005 materials/labor costs, with no economic changes factored into the yearly increments. Capital improvement costs include *general* expenditures, such as site preparation, access, site utilities, and parking - along with *specific* recreation improvements. The capital improvement plan also includes estimates for planning/design fees.

This Total Capital Improvement Cost represents the proposed, cumulative figure to be spent for parks and recreation facility improvements/renovations by the year 2015 and reflects the goals and recommendations as outlined in Section 5 of the Master Plan.

TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK - PARKS AND RECREATION CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN
10 YEAR SCHEDULE 2006-2016 (amended May 2009)

CATEGORY / IMPROVEMENT	COST	YEAR 1 2006-2007	YEAR 2 2007-2008	YEAR 3 2008-2009	YEAR 4 2009-2010	YEAR 5 2010-2011	YEAR 6 2011-2012	YEAR 7 2012-2013	YEAR 8 2013-2014	YEAR 9 2014-2015	YEAR 10 2015-2016	Balance
General Park Improvements												
Implement Park Trail System	\$ 60,000							\$ 7,000	\$ 30,000			\$ 30,000
Implement Information Kiosk at Park Facilities	\$ 18,000	\$ 6,000		\$ 5,000				\$ 30,000				
Improve Hwy 221 Entrance To Broyhill Park	\$ 30,000											
Renovate New Recreation Center (EMS space)	\$ 250,000					\$ 62,500	\$ 62,500	\$ 62,500	\$ 62,500			
Pedestrian Connection To Bass Lake	\$ 100,000										\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
Renovate/Expand of Existing Recreation Center (Legion)	\$ 250,000								\$ 125,000	\$ 125,000		
Pedestrian Connection From Parking Facility To Park	\$ 35,000			\$ 35,000								
Construct/Relocate Storage/Maintenance Building	\$ 75,000			\$ 6,000		\$ 25,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 4,000				\$ 10,000
Add/Renovate Picnic Shelters And Tables	\$ 20,000											
SUBTOTAL	\$ 838,000											
Memorial Park												
Tennis Court Repair	\$ 60,000										\$ 60,000	
Resurface Basketball Courts	\$ 8,000						\$ 8,000					
Add Picnic Shelter And Tables	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000										
Hardscape Improvements, Landscaping	\$ 30,000	\$ 9,000							\$ 10,500			\$ 10,500
SUBTOTAL	\$ 108,000											
Broyhill Park												
Parking Area Renovations	\$ 60,000					\$ 30,000					\$ 30,000	
SUBTOTAL	\$ 60,000											
Davanti Field												
Parking Area Renovations	\$ 50,000					\$ 25,000					\$ 25,000	
Storm Drainage Improvements	\$ 21,000	\$ 10,500						\$ 10,500				
SUBTOTAL	\$ 71,000											
Annie Cannon Memorial Park												
Parking Area Renovations/ADA Improvements	\$ 7,000										\$ 7,000	
SUBTOTAL	\$ 7,000											
Glenn Burney Trail												
Trail Improvements	\$ 15,000	\$ 2,500		\$ 1,200				\$ 7,500				\$ 5,000
Trail Signage	\$ 2,400										\$ 1,200	
SUBTOTAL	\$ 17,400											
Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool												
Engineering Analysis of Existing Pool/Design/Admin.	\$ 152,000		\$ 152,000									
Implement New Leisure Pool/Splash Play	\$ 520,000		\$ 520,000									
Pavilion	\$ 50,000		\$ 50,000									
New Playground	\$ 30,000		\$ 30,000									
Renovation/Addition to Bathroom/Shelter/Site Work	\$ 345,000		\$ 315,000		\$ 30,000							
SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,097,000											
TOTAL ANNUAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:	\$ 2,198,400	\$ 38,000	\$ 1,067,000	\$ 47,200	\$ 30,000	\$ 117,500	\$ 145,500	\$ 121,500	\$ 228,000	\$ 125,000	\$ 173,200	\$ 105,500

6.3 Funding sources

A variety of funding opportunities are available to the The Town of Blowing Rock as the Town prepares for future improvements/development of its parks and recreation facilities. Following is a list of funding sources that have been utilized by other communities for park and greenway projects. Each of these will be addressed in this section.

- Taxation
- Bonds
- Grants
- User Fees
- Contributions
- Foundations

Taxation

Traditionally, ad valorem tax revenue has been the primary source of funding for the park and recreation enhancement of properties/facilities owned by municipalities. “Recreational opportunities” are considered a public service and often are 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.

Bonds

Many communities issue *bonds*, which are typically approved by the shareholders, to finance site development and land acquisition costs. The State of North Carolina grants municipal governments the authority to borrow funds (for parks and recreation) through the issuance of bonds, the amount of which are not to exceed the cost of acquisition or the cost for improvement of a park/recreation facilities. Total bond capacities for local government 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.

Grants

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

North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF):

PARTF was established for local and state governments in 1994 as a funding source for the development and/or improvement of parks and recreation facilities, as well as 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. A maximum of \$500,000 can be requested. The Recreational Resources Service should be contacted for additional information at (919) 515-7118.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):

A federally-funded program, *LWCF* 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/gas leases and surplus federal land sales. Acquisition and development grants may be used for a wide variety of outdoor projects such as city parks, tennis courts, bike trails, outdoor swimming pools, and support facilities (roads water supply, etc.). Facility design must be rather basic in nature - 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 Transportation Efficiency Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21):

The Transportation Efficiency Act of the 21st Century (*TEA-21*), approved by the federal government in 1998, is a primary funding source for financing bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway projects throughout the country – both at local and state levels. Providing as much as 80% for development and construction costs, this grant is earmarked for facilities such as sidewalks, rail-trails, bike-lanes and greenways. The Enhancement Program (a section of *TEA-21*) is used primarily by municipalities - since this section focuses on bicycle and pedestrian corridors, environmental mitigation, historic preservation, and scenic byways. 20% matching funds is required by the applying entity and applicants must meet several other criteria as well.

Recreation Trails Program (RTP:)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). *RTP* makes recreation funds available for state allocation to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreational trail users. RTP funds are distributed to states by a legislative formula: half of the funds are distributed equally among all states and half are distributed in proportion to the estimated amount of non-highway recreational fuel used in each state. (Non-highway recreational fuel is the type, which is typically used by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, and off-road light trucks.)

Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF)

Created in 1996 by the North Carolina General Assembly, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF), grants monies to local governments, state agencies, and non-profit conservation groups to help finance projects that specifically address water pollution issues. *CWMTF* will fund projects that (1) enhance or restore degraded waters, (2) protect unpolluted waters, and/or (3) contribute toward a network of riparian buffers and greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational benefits. There is no match required by local municipalities, however, the "suggestion" of a match is highly recommended.

Watershed Protection and Flood Protection

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

Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority

The Blowing Rock Tourism Development Authority (TDA) is part of the local government, which promotes travel, tourism, and conventions within the Town of Blowing Rock. In addition, they sponsor tourist-related events and activities in the Town, and finance tourist related capital projects in the Town. The monies used by the TDA are generated from an occupancy tax within the Town limits. This year the TDA allocated over \$62,000 towards the Parks and Recreation Department. This funding has been a very important source for park maintenance, planning, and special events.

User Fees

Communities throughout the nation employ a wide variety of *user fees* for public use of recreational programs and services within their recreation departments. The “amount” of the fee is usually determined by a portion of the recreational costs needed for improvements and/or operation. These user fees are typically levied for such special facilities as water parks and golf courses; however, they can also be charged for the use of trails and ball fields. The Town of Blowing Rock should continue to generate revenue by charging user fees for programs and use of facilities such as picnic shelters and the swimming facility in order to cover operational and administrative costs. Elected officials should determine the fees and charges; however, the fees should not be so high that persons of modest income would ultimately be denied the use of recreational facilities.

Contributions

The solicitation of *contributions* is an acceptable method of fund-raising for recreation departments. These donations, typically in the form of land, cash, labor, and/or materials, could be solicited to assist the Town of Blowing Rock 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 and/or additions. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends the use of private, nonprofit, tax-exempt foundations as a means of accepting and administering private gifts to a public park system. The Rotary Club and Blowing Rock Stage Company are excellent examples of organizations that have made improvements to the town parks. The Rotary Pavilion at Davant Field and the new stage and Annie Cannon Memorial Park are valuable amenities for the park users.

Foundations

Foundations are another source of financing by making direct contribution within communities, states, or the nation. These types of funds are usually described as special program foundations, general-purpose foundations, or corporate foundations. Foundations generally have very few restrictions and/or limitations, and are typically received from local entities. A listing of appropriate foundations can be found in the text entitled *Grant Seeking in North Carolina*, made available through the North Carolina Center of Public Policy Research, Post Office Box 430, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27602.

Partnerships

To implement the recommendations contained in the comprehensive master plan, the Town of Blowing Rock will most certainly have to expand their partnership agreements with other public agencies and private-sector organizations. There are many different types of partnerships that can be formed to achieve the goals established by the Town. In fact, many local governments throughout the nation are utilizing partnerships with public and private-sector interests to accomplish community goals.

Listed below are the various types of partnerships that the Town should consider in its efforts for the improvement/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.

The Town of Blowing Rock is currently participating with partnerships in other municipality-related endeavors/functions; and, should evaluate forming additional partnerships, which address the needs of a comprehensive park system. The existing partnerships with Watauga County have assisted in providing programs and facilities and been very beneficial for the Parks and Recreation Department. Direct requests should be made to potential partners, asking them to meet and 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 to municipalities as well. Developers can use private funds to develop facilities on municipal property and lease it to the Town over a long term. Over a period of time, the developer returns a portion of the revenue to the town and at the end of the lease, the facility is turned over to public ownership. This type of arrangement would typically be large capital investments for a special use facilities.

6.4 Land Acquisition and Development

There are many different types of land acquisition available to the Town of Blowing Rock for park system park system expansion and/or future development. Due to the inflated land costs as well as land availability, it is recommended that the Town of Blowing Rock *prioritize* the property to be acquired for a park facilities. Listed below are several methods for acquiring and developing parks:

Local Gifts

Donations of land, money, labor, and/or construction can have a significant impact(s) 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, service clubs, etc.

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.

Easement

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

Fee Simple Purchase

Fee simple purchase is the most common method used to acquire municipal property for park facilities. Although it has the advantage of simplifying 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 municipalities to acquire land by fee simple purchase; yet allows them to either sell or lease the property to prospective user(s) with restrictions that will preserve the land from future development. The *fee simple with lease-back or resale* method of development commonly results from situation(s) in which land owner(s), who have lost considerable monetary amounts in property value, determine that it is more economical to sell the land to the Town (with a lease-back option) than to keep it.

Long-Term Option

Long-term options allow municipalities to purchase property over a long period of time. This method is particularly useful because it enables the Town to consider particular piece(s) of land that may have future value, though it is not currently desired or affordable at the time. There are several advantages to this method of property acquisition: the Town can protect the future of the land without purchasing it upfront and meanwhile, the purchase price of the land will not increase, with the Town having the right to exercise its option. The disadvantage to the Town is that all privileges relinquished by the the land owner require compensation in the form of securing the option.

6.5 Proposed Funding Strategies

Over the next 10 years, the Town of Blowing Rock will not be able to support an overall capital improvement budget of \$1,707,900 solely through the general fund without a significant increase in tax revenue. A combination of innovative financing strategies will need to be applied. There are a number of these strategies that can be explored and implemented by the Town to accomplish the goals and recommendations of the master plan. Upon careful analysis of past budget documents, current practices, available resources, national trends, and standards, a funding strategy will need to be considered in evaluated grants, contributions, and other sources of funding. The Master Plan proposes viable funding strategies that emphasizes realism.

General Fund

The General Fund for the Parks and Recreation Department for the (FY) 2004/05 is \$343,060. Included in the General Fund total is money that was transferred for the Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool as well as money that was transferred for payments on the new playground equipment at Memorial Park. In addition to its general operational funding for parks and recreation, it is recommended that the Town allocate \$130,000 per year for capital improvements of parks. This funding will provide ongoing improvements to existing facilities and will allow development for new facilities. If this funding level is maintained for the next 10 years, \$1,300,000 will be generated for park improvements and new development. This annual allocation of capital improvement

funding coupled with grants will allow renovation of existing facilities and construction of new facilities.

A combination of gifts, land dedication, grants, and others revenue sources can be utilized to offset the implementation cost of the master plan. The state and the private sector should be aggressively approached in helping with this undertaking. These efforts will add to and reinforce development monies generated from the capital improvement budget.

User Charges/Registration Fees

Currently registration fees cover most of the Town's programs costs. User charges are required for use of Robbins Memorial Swimming Pool, and facility rental. Program fees are required for programs such as dog training, summer day camp and clogging. Assuming this level of funding continues through the 10-year planning period, user charges will need to be restructured as improvements and new facilities are implemented into the parks and recreation system.

--End of Section--

APPENDIX

- Community Survey
- Community Survey Results
- Town of Blowing Rock Master Plan Map
- Watauga County Area Map

TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK PARKS AND RECREATION SURVEY

The Blowing Rock Parks and Recreation Department is in the process of creating a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Town and would like your input. Please take a moment to complete the following survey. The information that you provide will help determine parks and recreation priorities in our community. If you need additional copies for your household, they can be found on our web page at www.townofblowingrock.com or by calling (828) 295-5222. We also invite you to attend our second Master Plan Community Workshop on **Tuesday, September 28th from 6:00-7:30p.m.** at the American Legion Building (located behind Memorial Park on Wallingford Street). Thank you for your time and your interest in continuing to improve the Parks and Recreation opportunities in Blowing Rock.

Gender: Male Female **Status:** B.R. Taxpayer (full time resident part time resident non-resident)
Non- Taxpayer

Your age range: 5-12 13-17 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 60-69 70+

List the number of persons in your household who are in the age brackets below:

1-5 ___ 6-8 ___ 9-12 ___ 13-15 ___ 16-18 ___ 19-21 ___ 22-29 ___ 30-39 ___ 40-49 ___ 50-59 ___ 60+ ___

Overall, how would you rate the recreational programs offered in Blowing Rock?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Don't know

Overall, how would you rate existing parks and recreation facilities in Blowing Rock?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Don't know

Specifically, how would you rate the recent playground renovation in Memorial Park?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Don't know

Overall, how would you rate the parks and recreation staff performance in Blowing Rock?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Don't know

In which of the following recreation programs and special events do you or others in your household participate in regularly?

Please check all that apply.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swim Lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Blowing Rock Trout Derby | <input type="checkbox"/> Farm House Live |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Day Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Clogging | <input type="checkbox"/> Halloween Festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Art |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kinder Soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas in the Park Festival | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Trips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kinder T-ball | <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. Tennis | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 th of July Festival | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kinder Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball | <input type="checkbox"/> Golden Easter Egg Hunt | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. NBA Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Open Gym (basketball) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Activities _____ | |

Check below how frequently you or others in your household have visited the following facilities in the past 6 months.

Memorial Park	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
•Tennis Courts	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
•Basketball Courts	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
•Volleyball Courts	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Broyhill Park	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Annie Cannon Memorial Park	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Glen Burney Trail	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Davant Field	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Grover C. Robbins Swimming Pool	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Town Sidewalk System	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Bass Lake Trails	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Trout Lake Trails	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Price Park Picnic Area	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never

Check below how frequently you or others in your household have rented the following facilities.

Broyhill Gazebo	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Rotary Pavilion	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Recreation Center	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Grover C. Robbins Swimming Pool	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never
Annie Cannon Mini-stage	<input type="radio"/> Regularly	<input type="radio"/> Occasionally	<input type="radio"/> Rarely	<input type="radio"/> Never

Check below improvements that could be made to EXISTING parks and recreation facilities in Blowing Rock.

- Add lighting to facilities
- Improve parking areas in parks
- Renovating outdoor athletic courts and fields (basketball, tennis, baseball, etc.)
- Renovating outdoor swimming pool
- Renovating picnic and sitting areas
- Increasing beautification in parks
- Improving trails
- Renovating public restrooms
- Add more public restrooms
- Expanding parks and open space
- Add signage to facilities
- Other: _____

Rank in order of importance the following facilities that could be developed in the Town of Blowing Rock. Please consider other members of your household as well.

- _____ Bicycle Trails (3-6 Miles)
- _____ Jogging/Walking Trails (2-3 Miles)
- _____ Bicycle Trails (6-12 Miles)
- _____ Skateboard Park
- _____ Ballfield Complex
- _____ Jogging/Walking Trails (3-6 Miles)
- _____ Baseball/Softball
- _____ Outdoor Basketball Courts
- _____ Community Recreation Center
- _____ Outdoor Playground
- _____ Equestrian Trails
- _____ Outdoor Swimming Pool with special recreation features
- _____ Football Field
- _____ Outdoor Tennis Courts
- _____ Open Space/Natural Areas
- _____ Outdoor Track
- _____ Handball/Racquetball Courts
- _____ Picnic Areas
- _____ Indoor Swimming Pool
- _____ Sand Volleyball Courts
- _____ In-Line Skating (2-3 Miles)
- _____ Soccer Fields
- _____ In-Line Skating (3-6 Miles)
- _____ Indoor Gymnasium
- _____ Sports Complex
- _____ Outdoor Performance Area
- _____ Fitness Facility, e.g. cardio/strength training
- _____ Teen Center
- _____ Environmental Education Center

Please list below, any recreation programs or special events that you would like to see offered in the Town of Blowing Rock:

Would you support an indoor recreation facility?

Yes No

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

Yes No

Would you support a greenway that would connect our sidewalk system to the trails at Bass Lake?

Yes No

Would you use a park or recreation facility more if it were closer to your home or work?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

Please return survey by mail to: Town of Blowing Rock, Parks and Recreation Department, PO Box 47, Blowing Rock, NC 28605, by fax at (828) 295-5223, or hand deliver to the Parks and Recreation Office, 147 Park Ave. Blowing Rock.

TOWN OF BLOWING ROCK - PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN/2004-2024
Community Survey Results

Status	B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer PT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident	Non-Taxpayer	Status- No Response
Gender					
Male	69	124	8	2	34
Female	102	121	16	1	10
Age Range					
5-12	0	0	0	0	0
13-17	1	0	1	0	0
18-24	0	0	0	0	0
25-34	2	0	1	0	1
34-44	16	15	5	0	4
45-54	35	35	3	2	11
55-64	47	72	2	0	12
65-69	41	50	6	0	12
70+	31	73	4	0	19
Number of persons in your household who are in the age brackets below:					
1-5	17	32	1	1	1
6-9	13	17	2	1	0
10-12	10	19	5	1	7
13-15	16	14	1	0	5
16-18	11	18	4	0	6
19-21	7	12	2	0	7
22-29	8	21	3	0	4
30-39	21	26	6	0	2
40-49	46	68	10	2	20
50-59	81	114	8	1	31
60+	123	239	14	0	57
Overall, how would you rate the recreational programs offered in Blowing Rock?					
Excellent	40	44	2	0	12
Good	72	100	8	1	22
Fair	18	13	4	1	15
Poor	5	2	1	0	2
Don't know	39	71	9	1	12
Overall, how would you rate existing parks and recreation facilities in Blowing Rock?					
Excellent	41	60	3	0	15
Good	102	131	12	1	28
Fair	20	17	5	1	13
Poor	6	0	0	0	1
Don't know	9	23	2	1	6

	B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer PT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident	Non- Taxpayer	Status, No Response
Specifically, how would you rate the recent playground renovation in Memorial Park?	Excellent	51	5	0	24
	Good	64	8	1	24
	Fair	13	1	0	3
	Poor	2	1	0	2
	Don't know	42	9	1	9
Overall, how would you rate the parks and recreation staff performances in Blowing Rock?	Excellent	39	11	0	11
	Good	52	11	0	25
	Fair	10	0	1	9
	Poor	0	0	1	2
	Don't know	65	11	2	18
In which of the following recreation programs and special events do you or others in your household participate in regularly?	Swim Lessons	10	0	0	0
	Summer Day Camp	10	0	0	4
	Senior Center	4	0	0	0
	Kindergarten	4	0	0	0
	Kindergarten	1	0	0	0
	Jr. NBA Basketball	3	0	0	1
	Dog Training	9	0	0	3
	Chess	1	0	0	2
	Bridge	12	11	0	7
	Sr. Tennis	6	11	0	3
	Volleyball	7	2	0	2
	Open Gym (basketball)	7	2	0	2
	Blowing Rock Trout Derby	8	4	0	1
	Halloween Festival	13	13	2	7
	Christmas in the Park Festival	38	25	1	12
	Tr. of Jr. Freshmen	57	4	4	22
	Game House	53	144	7	33
	Game House Lnp	33	9	2	6
	Adult Art	11	46	0	13
	Senior Trips	10	18	1	3
	Other Activities	2	6	2	1
		12	16	4	4

How frequently you or others in your household have visited the following facilities in the past 6 months?

	B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer PT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident	Non-Taxpayer	Status- No Response
Memorial Park	Regularly	45	4	1	20
	Occasionally	58	6	0	18
	Rarely	12	5	2	4
	Never	17	6	0	9
Tennis Courts	Regularly	6	1	1	14
	Occasionally	24	2	0	9
	Rarely	20	3	0	4
	Never	80	12	1	23
Basketball Courts	Regularly	11	4	0	28
	Occasionally	16	2	0	5
	Rarely	15	3	0	2
	Never	84	10	1	26
Volleyball Courts	Regularly	4	1	0	17
	Occasionally	12	1	0	2
	Rarely	14	2	0	6
	Never	84	13	1	26
Broyhill Park	Regularly	40	2	0	21
	Occasionally	69	8	1	19
	Rarely	32	7	0	7
	Never	18	3	1	9
Annie Cannon Memorial Park	Regularly	28	1	0	11
	Occasionally	42	8	0	0
	Rarely	43	3	1	14
	Never	33	9	1	12
Olson Burrey Trail	Regularly	11	0	0	22
	Occasionally	48	6	0	17
	Rarely	51	4	2	10
	Never	39	9	0	16
Davent Field	Regularly	18	4	1	12
	Occasionally	48	28	0	11
	Rarely	37	6	1	7
	Never	45	12	0	20
Grover C. Robbins Swimming Pool	Regularly	14	2	1	13
	Occasionally	27	2	0	13
	Rarely	17	3	0	3
	Never	85	14	1	24

	B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer PT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident	Non- Taxpayer	Status- No Response
Town Sidewalk System	Regularly	143	11	2	26
	Occasionally	46	4	17	17
	Rarely	13	4	0	5
	Never	17	4	0	6
Bass Lake Trails	Regularly	133	6	1	36
	Occasionally	60	8	0	15
	Rarely	19	4	1	4
	Never	20	4	0	4
Trout Lake Trails	Regularly	43	1	0	25
	Occasionally	46	7	0	17
	Rarely	32	3	1	5
	Never	58	8	1	9
Pine Park Picnic Area	Regularly	35	1	1	15
	Occasionally	52	7	0	23
	Rarely	33	7	1	11
	Never	25	5	0	9
Broynhill Gazebo	Regularly	5	0	0	9
	Occasionally	24	0	0	7
	Rarely	172	7	0	6
	Never	183	15	3	31
Rotary Pavilion	Regularly	1	0	0	1
	Occasionally	10	0	1	6
	Rarely	5	1	0	7
	Never	200	21	2	55
Recreation Center	Regularly	1	0	0	8
	Occasionally	4	0	0	6
	Rarely	13	0	0	6
	Never	186	22	2	33
Grever C. Robbins Swimming Pool	Regularly	0	0	1	7
	Occasionally	2	1	0	5
	Rarely	5	0	0	3
	Never	205	21	2	37

Check below how frequently you or others in your household have rented the following facilities:

Annals Common Mini-Stage

Regularly	0
Occasionally	1
Few	0
Never	143

B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident

0
3
9
137

B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident

0
0
1
20

Non-Taxpayer

0
0
0
3

Status- No Response

8
2
4
38

Check below improvements that could be made to EXISTING parks and recreation facilities in Blowing Rock.

Other	18	7	4	1	24
Improve parking areas in parks	50	72	7	1	38
Renovating outdoor athletic courts and fields (basketball, tennis, baseball, etc.)	22	13			
Renovating outdoor swimming pool	22	19	3	1	5
Renovating picnic and sitting areas	38	23	3	1	6
Increasing beautification in parks	39	44	3	0	0
Improving trails	48	58	5	0	7
Renovating public restrooms	46	59	6	0	10
Add more public restrooms	68	48	4	0	11
Expanding parks and open spaces	32	82	8	1	19
Add signage to facilities	29	51	4	1	11
Add lighting to facilities	33	12	6	0	7
		43	1	0	5

Rank in order of importance the following facilities that could be developed in the Town of Blowing Rock. Please consider members of your household as well.

	B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer PT Resident	B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident	Non-Taxpayer	Status- No Response
Bicycle Trails (3-6 miles)	44	43	8	0	17
Bicycle Trails (6-12 miles)	41	51	3	0	10
Ballfield Complex	3	1	0	0	0
Baseball/ Softball	2	0	0	1	0
Community Recreation Center	26	19	1	1	4
Equestrian Trails	10	17	0	0	2
Football Field	3	0	0	0	1
Open Space/ Natural Areas	40	52	2	0	9
Handball/ Racquetball Courts	6	2	2	1	3
Indoor Swimming Pool	33	31	3	0	9
In-Line Skating (2-3 miles)	14	14	2	0	3
In-Line Skating (3-6 miles)	5	5	3	0	1
Sports Complex	12	8	2	0	4
Fitness Facility, cardio/ strength	65	93	8	0	17
Environmental Education Center	11	11	3	0	4
Jogging/ Walking Trails (2-3 miles)	67	108	7	0	22
Skateboard Park	31	3	3	1	4
Jogging/ Walking Trails (3-6 miles)	45	65	3	0	8
Outdoor Basketball Courts	2	1	1	0	0
Outdoor Playground	8	14	0	0	1
Outdoor Swimming Pool with special recreation features	15	4	0	0	0
		8	1	0	2
Outdoor Tennis Courts	6	17	0	0	6
Outdoor Track	6	7	1	0	1
Picnic Areas	20	40	4	0	7
Sand Volleyball Courts	1	0	1	0	1
Soccer Fields	5	0	1	0	3
Indoor Gymnasium	8	9	2	0	2
Outdoor Performance Area	10	19	1	0	8
Traffic Center	40	12	2	0	8











	B.R. Taxpayer FT Resident		B.R. Taxpayer PT Resident		B.R. Taxpayer Non-Resident		Non- Taxpayer		Status- No Response	
Would you support an indoor recreation facility?	Yes	107	98	11	3	31				
	No	45	98	5	0	24				
Would you be willing to pay a normal fee to attend an event or use a special facility?	Yes	138	174	18	3	43				
	No	24	32	1	0	15				
Would you support a greenway that would connect our sidewalk system to the trails at Bass Lake?	Yes	125	167	18	3	41				
	No	34	63	3	0	14				
Would you use a park or recreation facility more if it were closer to your home or work?	Yes	63	55	8	2	18				
	No	89	124	4	1	27				

Town of Blowing Rock North Carolina

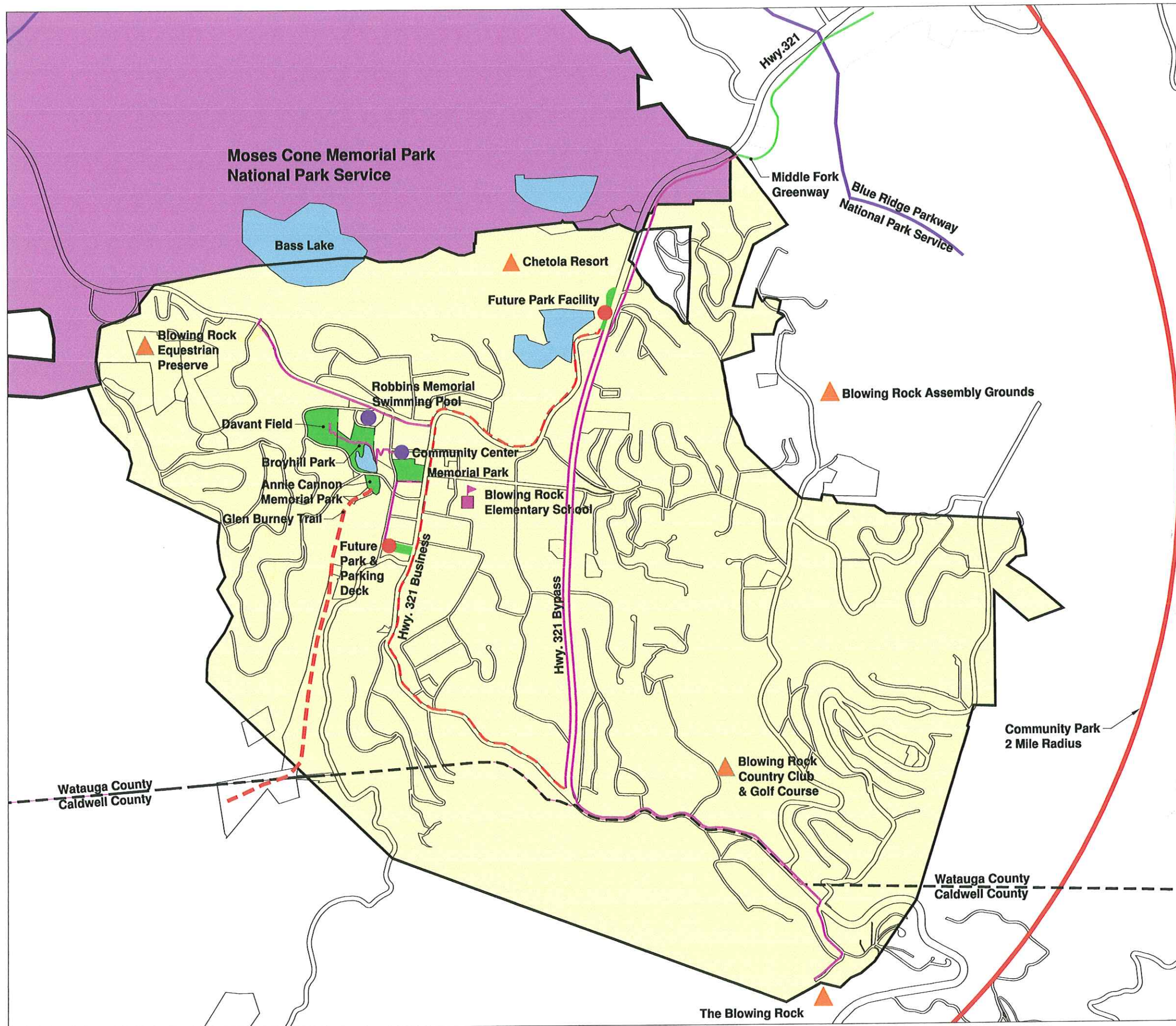
2025 COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Recreation Parks and Facilities

Legend

-  Blowing Rock Town Limits
-  Blowing Rock Town Parks
-  Moses Cone Memorial Park (National Park Service)
-  Existing Park Facility
-  Future Park Facility
-  Existing Pedestrian Walk
-  Future Pedestrian Walk
-  Middle Fork Greenway
-  Existing School Facilities
Blowing Rock Elementary School
-  Private Park Facilities
Blowing Rock Country Club
Chetola Resort
Blowing Rock Assembly Grounds
Blowing Rock Equestrian Preserve
-  Community Park (2 Mile Radius)

1/4 Mile

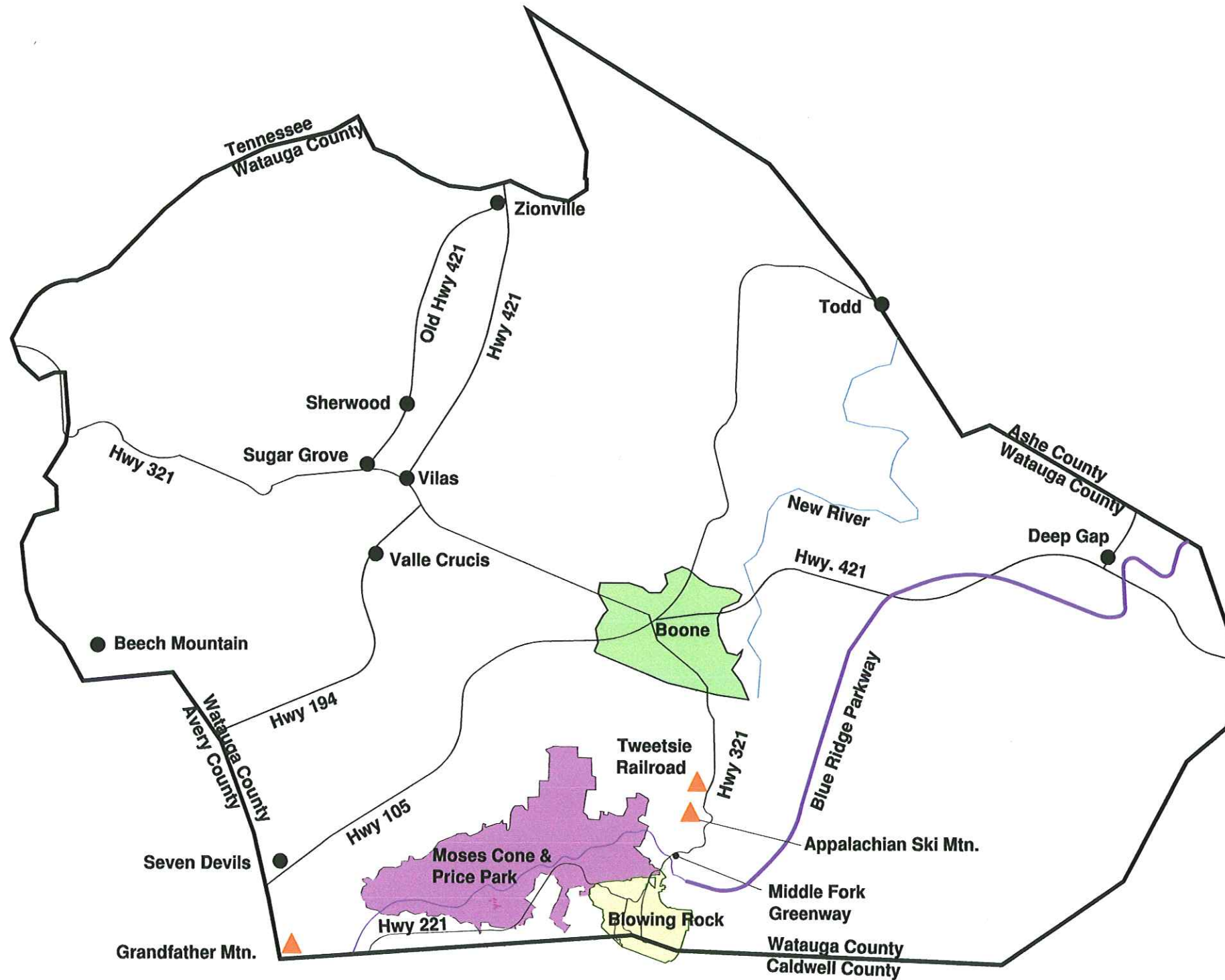
Town of Blowing Rock North Carolina

2025 COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Watauga County

Legend

-  Blowing Rock Town Limits
-  Boone Town Limits
-  Moses Cone Memorial Park
(National Park Service)
-  Blue Ridge Parkway
(National Park Service)
-  **Private Facilities**
Appalachian Ski Mountain
Tweetsie Railroad
Grandfather Mountain



3 Miles