



# CITY OF KANNAPOLIS PARKS & RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

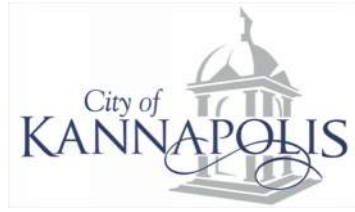
KANNAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION

Adopted  
March 25, 2024





# Acknowledgments



## **City Council Members**

Mr. M. Darrell Hinnant, Mayor  
Mr. Doug Wilson, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Mrs. Dianne Berry  
Mr. Ryan G. Dayvault  
Mrs. Jeanne Dixon  
Mr. Darrell Jackson  
Mr. Tom Kincaid

## **Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission**

Mr. Jeff Ashbaugh, Chair  
Ms. Olivia Linkel, Vice Chair  
Mr. Buddy Amerson  
Mr. Rick Money  
Mr. Eric Purvis  
Ms. Cindy Griggs  
Mr. EB Lentz  
Mr. Richard Chaney  
Mr. Mike Whitney

## **Kannapolis Staff**

Mr. Mike Legg, City Manager  
Mr. R. Eddie Smith, Deputy City Manager  
Mr. Gary Mills, Parks and Recreation Director  
Mr. Brett Mann, Parks Superintendent  
Ms. Becky Tolle, Recreation Superintendent

## **Planning Consultant**

Benesch  
2359 Perimeter Pointe Parkway, Suite 350  
Charlotte, NC 28208







# KANNAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department is to provide positive experiences through a variety of quality activities, facilities and services for the community.*

## **VISION STATEMENT**

*The Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department will strive for excellence in providing quality and diverse recreation and leisure opportunities that will enhance the health and well-being of our changing community.*

## **CORE VALUES**

**Integrity** - We value the need to be honest, truthful, fair, and trustworthy.

**Excellence** - We value the need to exceed expectations in maintaining and preserving all of our parks and facilities to the highest quality standards of safety, function and appearance.

**Professional Workforce**- We value our quality workforce by fostering a positive environment through learning, growth, and development of dedicated, highly motivated, and competent staff.

**Stewardship**- We value efficient and effective management of our assets and stewardship of our parks and open space, to sustain them for future generations.

**Health and Wellness**- We value the need to provide recreational and educational opportunities that inherently improve health and well-being.

**Inclusiveness**- We value creating, enhancing, expanding and promoting equal opportunities for participation in and enjoyment of parks and recreation services for all individuals.

**Collaboration**- We value working in cooperation with all stakeholders including residents, area communities, public and private organizations, as well as interdepartmentally.

*\*From the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan FY23-FY27. See Appendix C for the full strategic plan.*



# Table of Contents

SECTION	PAGE
Section One: Inventory.....	1-1 - 1-16
Section Two: The People of Kannapolis.....	2-1 - 2-16
Section Three: Level of Service for Parks & Recreation Facilities; Needs Assessment.....	3-1 - 3-7
Section Four: Proposals, Recommendations & Objectives.....	4-1 - 4-16
Section Five: Action Plan Implementation.....	5-1 - 5-15

## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Kannapolis Survey Findings Report
Appendix B: 2022 Parks Survey
Appendix C: Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan FY23-FY27
Appendix D: Classifications for Parks, Open Space and Greenways







*Village Park*

# Section One Inventory

## INTRODUCTION

The first step in the master planning process is to inventory and assess the parks and facilities that are currently serving the citizens of Kannapolis. In this time of economic challenge and limited budgets, it is extremely important to utilize existing facilities to their fullest potential. This section identifies the City's existing parks, categorizes parks into classifications based on size/function, and inventories the existing facilities found in each of these parks. In Section Three, this existing facility information will be used to establish an assessment for future park and recreation needs.

The City currently offers its residents park and recreation facilities at several parks, covering approximately 285 acres of land. In addition, the city also owns about 91 acres of undeveloped greenspace/park land. The City's park system offers parks of almost every park classification. These include several large facilities (Bakers Creek Park, Village Park, Walter M. Safrit Park, Pleasant Avenue Park), three important Civic Parks (Veterans Park, W. Avenue Linear Park, and Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park), and one small "Mini" Park. In addition to the City owned parks, the citizens of Kannapolis are also having their active recreational needs met at Vietnam Veterans Park and Kannapolis Middle School. Collectively, these parks and recreation facilities offer a wide variety of active and passive recreation opportunities.

## DISTRICT PARKS

### Vietnam Veterans Park - 90 acres (operated by Cabarrus County)

Vietnam Veterans Park consists of 90 acres of land and is primarily a passive recreational park. The park opened in 2002 as the result of a cooperative effort between Cabarrus County, the City of Kannapolis, and the Church of God Children's Home. The City of Kannapolis and the Church of God leased the land to Cabarrus County to build and maintain a park. Presently the City owns 45-acres of the park where the majority of recreational facilities are located. Additional park development phases include tennis courts, a mountain bike trail, a pedestrian bridge across Irish Buffalo Creek, nine additional disc golf holes, and additional trail. Currently, neither the City or County has no plans to fund these improvements.

The park is also located on the Carolina Thread Trail route between Kannapolis and Concord. Vietnam Veterans Park hosts several disc golf tournaments and various nature and wildlife classes, as well as serving as host to several community events throughout the year. During the fall local high schools use the park for cross-country meets.

#### Existing Facilities

- Basketball Courts (2)
- Volleyball Courts (2)
- Shuffleboard Courts (2)
- Horseshoe Pits (2)
- Playgrounds (2)
- Picnic Shelters (4)
- Trail 1.23 miles
- Community Garden
- Restroom Picnic Area
- Fitness Area/Exercise Stations (8)
- Disc Golf Course (9 holes)
- Small Fenced Dog Run
- War Memorial



*Vietnam Veterans Park*



## COMMUNITY PARKS

### Bakers Creek Park - 36.831 acres

Bakers Creek Park is the oldest park in the system. It was built in 1982 and is showing its age on many of the amenities. During the past five years the City has made significant improvements to update the park. It has a lighted 285' baseball/softball field, four picnic shelters, two horseshoe pits, two sand volleyball courts, two playground structures, a half-court basketball area, four lighted tennis courts, and 0.80-mile Greenway connecting Bakers Creek Park to Village Park.

While significant improvements to the park have been made recently, several facilities are in fair condition and need replacement. The park office/concession/restroom building is in desperate need of replacement. The picnic shelters need replacement as well. Funds need to be budgeted to re-pave the greenway. The baseball field needs new lights, an irrigation system, and replacement of the infield composition. The playground needs replacement as well.

There is vacant land on the park property and across Glenn Ave. for additional expansion, but no plans for additional construction have been developed at this time.

Over \$2 million in park improvements have been budgeted for the next few years for park improvements.

#### Existing Facilities

Adult Softball Field Basketball Court (1/2)

Tennis Courts (4)

Volleyball Courts (2)

Horseshoe Pits (2)

Playground

Picnic Shelter (4)

Restroom

Picnic Areas (4)



*Bakers Creek Park Softball*



*Bakers Creek Park*

# COMMUNITY PARKS

## Village Park - 16 acres

Village Park is a special use facility. This park is home to one of the largest amphitheaters in the region for summer concerts and other events. It also offers one of the largest splash pads in the area, five picnic shelters, two large playground structures, and two (2) G24 scale CP Huntington trains with approximately 3,100 linear feet of track. Village Park also has a 5,400 sq. ft. building with a 50' x 30' multi-purpose room that is rentable for events. This park building also houses some of the Parks and Recreation Department's administrative offices.

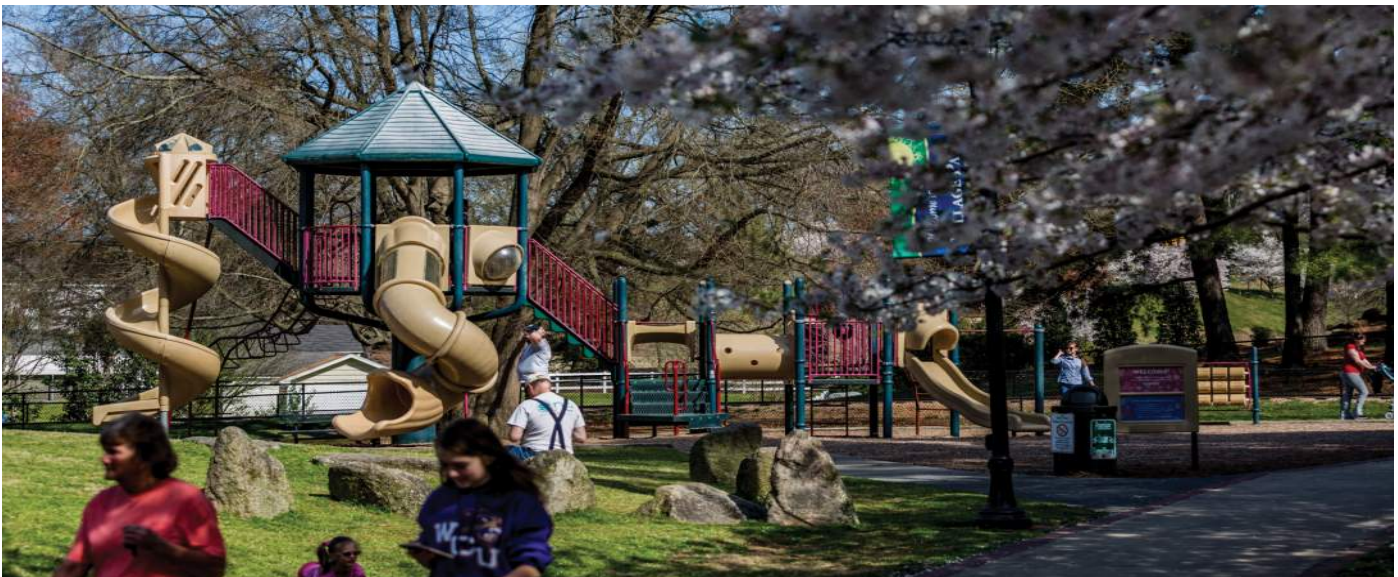
The facilities are in excellent condition and very well maintained. The City has developed a Master Plan for this park. The Carousel was added in 2017. Phase III improvements (green room) are under construction and will be completed in Spring 2024. The final phase of the park is to add a back cover over the park building patio. Additionally, the park will need budget funds for maintenance and upkeep including re-paving the parking lot.

### Existing Facilities

- Playground
- Picnic Shelters (5)
- Trail 0.30- mile
- Amphitheater
- Green Room
- Miniature Trains (2)
- Train Station
- Splash Pad
- Open Space
- Restroom/Concession Building
- Meeting/Community Rooms
- Carousel and Water Feature



*Village Park*



*Village Park*



## COMMUNITY PARKS

### Walter M. Safrit Park - 19.55 acres

Safrit Park is a park focusing on active recreation with sports facilities. This park has two lighted 300' softball fields and one full-size lighted soccer field. It has a 0.50-mile walking path around the perimeter of the park and will eventually be connected to the Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway. There is a restroom/concession facility in the middle of the park with a large shelter with tables connected to the front of the building. A large play area is in front of the building with a 5-12 year old unit and a 2-5 year old unit. There are also swings in the play area. This facility is accessed through the main entrance of the Kannapolis Operations Center.

The facilities are in good condition, but receive heavy usage in the spring and fall. Funds should be budgeted to re-pave and widen the walking trail along the creek. Additional improvements include upgrading the lights for the softball field and soccer fields to LED.

The only opportunity for expansion would be to acquire the property on the other side of the creek for additional athletic facilities. A pavement assessment project is currently under way for the parking area, including an upgrade of parking lot lighting.

#### Existing Facilities

Adult Softball Fields (2)

Soccer Field

Playground

Picnic Shelter

Trail 0.50-mile



*Walter M. Safrit Park*



## MINI PARK

Restroom/Concession Building

### Mountain Street Park - 2.56 acres

Mountain Street Park is a Mini Park that is essentially a part of Bakers Creek Park. It is slightly removed from the main body of Bakers Creek Park and connected by a short spur of sidewalk along West 8th Street. It was built by Cabarrus County in the mid-90s with the help of a PARTF grant. It has a combination restroom/shelter structure, small playground, sand volleyball courts, and parking.

The facility is in fair condition. There is no room for expansion.

#### Existing Facilities

Volleyball Courts (2)

Horseshoe Pit

Playground

Restroom/Picnic Shelter Building



*Volleyball Court at Mountain Street Park*



*Mountain Street Park*

## CIVIC PARKS

### Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park - 0.751 acres

The Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park was built in 2002 after the death of seven-time Winston Cup Champion, Dale Earnhardt (a Kannapolis native). The park received funding from David Murdock and contributions from race fans, corporations, and the City of Kannapolis. This park draws race fans every year, especially around the two races at Charlotte Motor Speedway in May and October.

The site is in good condition. There is no room for expansion of this park facility.

#### Existing Facilities

Gardens/Passive Areas



*Dale Earnhardt Tribute*

### Kannapolis Cemetery - 8.26 acres

Kannapolis Cemetery, located next to Village Park, is a registered historic landmark owned and operated by the City of Kannapolis. The 8.26-acre cemetery has 554 designated lots housing approximately 3,474 burial plots including 150 “free plots” donated to families who could not afford a proper burial.

In 2011, the City significantly enhanced the cemetery by paving the roads, installing decorative fencing, brick gateways, and landscaping at the entrances from West “C” Street. The cemetery adjoins a very popular Community Park, Village Park. The open lawns and trees of the cemetery provide additional green space for the park.

#### Existing Facilities

Gardens/Passive Areas



*Kannapolis Cemetery*



## CIVIC PARKS

### Veterans Park - 1.44 acres

Veterans Park underwent a \$2 million dollar renovation in 2013. Improvements included three water features, an eternal flame, monumentation, brick sidewalks, park benches, irrigation and a rebuilt pavilion that can be regularly used for special events and concerts. This park provides a valuable greenspace in the downtown area and offers a very good venue for special events.

The facilities are in good condition. There is no room for expansion of this park facility.

#### Existing Facilities

Gazebo

Gardens/Passive Areas

Sundial



*Veterans Park*

### Clarice Women's Triangle - 0.20 acres

This small greenspace at the intersection of Brantley and Lane Street has very limited recreational use, but provides a nice landscaped green area.

#### Existing Facilities

Gardens/Passive Area



## SCHOOL FACILITIES

### Kannapolis Middle School (6<sup>th</sup> grade) - 24.64 acres (according to GIS)

The facilities at Kannapolis Middle School were built by Cabarrus County Active Living and Parks Department in conjunction with the school construction in 2008. There is a joint use agreement between the City of Kannapolis, Cabarrus County, and Kannapolis City Schools for usage of this facility. There is a 6-lane paved walking track, girl's lighted softball field, a lighted baseball field, and a lighted multi-purpose field that is used mainly for football. The school has priority usage, with Parks and Recreation having secondary usage. Facilities are in good shape, but a higher level of maintenance is necessary to keep the fields in playable condition on a regular basis.

Over-use of the fields has created turf and erosion problems and synthetic turf needs to be installed.

#### Existing Facilities

Youth Baseball Field

Girl's Softball Field

Football/Multi-Use Field

Track



*Kannapolis Middle School Field*

# SCHOOL FACILITIES

## Kannapolis Middle School (7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade) - 31.80 acres

The facilities at Kannapolis Middle School were built by Kannapolis Schools in 2020. There is a joint use agreement between the City of Kannapolis and Kannapolis City Schools for usage of this facility. Shared facilities include a 6-lane paved walking track, a multi-use field, and 6 tennis courts.

### Existing Facilities

Multi-use Field

Track

Tennis Courts (6)



*Kannapolis Middle School Track*

## Kannapolis City Schools - Shared Use Facilities

The City of Kannapolis and Kannapolis City Schools have a joint use agreement for usage of various recreation facilities. The City has usage of the gyms, athletic fields, tracks, and playgrounds. In exchange Kannapolis City Schools get usage of other City facilities such as the Laureate Center. The following facilities are included in the agreement:

Kannapolis Middle Schools (both the 6th and 7th-8th grade facilities)

A.L. Brown Highschool (Bullock and Auxillary gyms)

Forest Park Elementary School

Carver Middle School

Fred L. Wilson Elementary School

Shadybrook Elementary School

Royal Oaks Elementary School

## GREENWAYS

### 8th Street Greenway - 45.94 acres

The 8th Street Greenway was built in 2008 and connects Bakers Creek Park to Loop Road. It is a 10' wide paved trail with a pedestrian bridge crossing over Bakers Branch and borders the north side of Lumber Yard Branch. This Greenway also runs beside the old Cannon landfill property, which was cleared and re-capped in 2019, opening up other recreational opportunities for the site.

This Greenway is in good condition. While this Greenway will not be expanded, there are plans for connectivity to the proposed Bakers Branch Greenway that will run north to West 22nd Street. This segment of greenway will provide an important connection for the Carolina Thread Trail linking Kannapolis to Landis, China Grove, Salisbury, Spencer, and other Rowan County destinations.

#### Existing Facilities

Trail 0.6 mile



*8th Street Greenway*

### Bakers Creek Greenway

The Bakers Creek Greenway was built in the late 80's and connects Bakers Creek Park to Village Park. It is a 10' wide paved trail through a shaded canopy of hardwoods and borders Bakers Creek. A side spur of this Greenway, along 8th Street, also connects it to Mountain Street Park.

This Greenway is in fair condition. While this Greenway will not be expanded, there are plans for connectivity to the proposed Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway that will connect to the southwest corner of Bakers Creek Park. This Greenway is part of the Carolina Thread Trail Regional Greenway.

#### Existing Facilities

Trail 0.8 miles



*Bakers Creek Greenway*



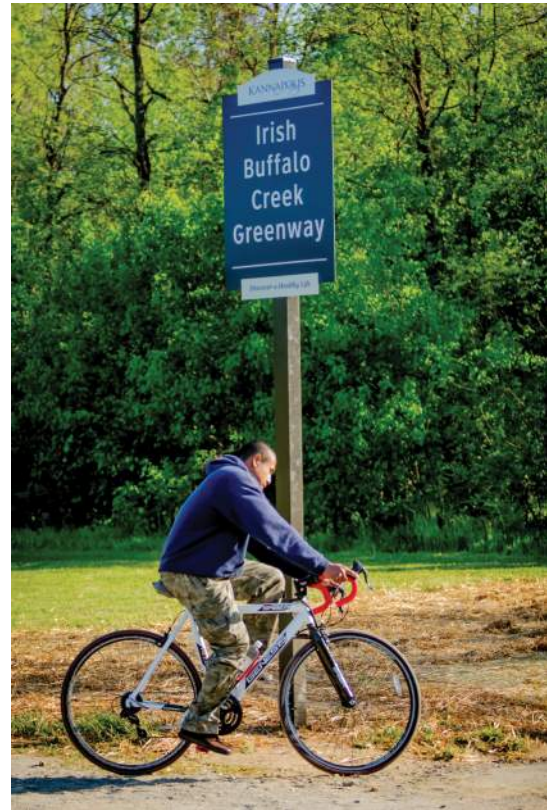
# GREENWAYS

## Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway (planned)

In 2009, the City adopted a Master Plan to develop this 6.8 mile Greenway connecting Vietnam Veterans Park on the southern end and the North Carolina Research Campus at the northern end. The Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan also recommends the development of this greenway. The first phase of the Greenway connecting Vietnam Park to the Kellswater community was constructed in 2021. The City needs to systemically fund this important greenway until completion.

Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway will provide connections to eight schools, eight neighborhoods, four parks, a public library, a YMCA, a mixed use development, and places of employment. Development of this Greenway will serve as an excellent alternative transportation route for the community. The most notable destination is the North Carolina Research Campus, a thriving biotechnology campus in heart of downtown Kannapolis.

This section of Greenway is one of two Carolina Thread Trail segments for Kannapolis. Regionally, Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway will extend south into downtown Concord.



*Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway*

### Existing Facilities

Trail 2.9 miles

### Planned Facilities

Trail 3.9 miles



*Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway*



## Rocky River Greenway

The Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan and the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Master Plan proposes this multi-use trail. It is one of two trails proposed by the Thread for Kannapolis. This planned trail follows Rocky River through the northwest area of the City. This section of Greenway starts at Highway 73 and extends 2.8 miles to the north and connects to the Summer's Walk residential community. Local destinations include several large neighborhoods, Christ the King Catholic High School, and commercial shopping areas. The first phase of the greenway, 0.5 miles, through Waterford neighborhood was built in 2016.

This Kannapolis section of this Greenway also has regional connections. The northern leg connects to the existing South Prong and West Branch sections of the Rocky River Greenway network in Mecklenburg County. Since the Waterford segment has been constructed, two new Nature Preserves, Brackett Bluff and West Branch, have been established along Rocky River. The greenway will provide an excellent opportunity to link these new preserves to Westside Park.

The southern leg connects to the Hector H. Henry II Greenway which extends south beyond Charlotte Motor Speedway area to downtown Harrisburg. The City should work diligently to acquire property or secure an easement to develop a short segment (gap) of greenway needed south of Hwy. 73 to connect the Hector Henry greenway to Westside Park.

This part of Kannapolis is seeing rapid growth and this greenway needs to be a high priority

### Existing Facilities

Trail 0.5 miles

### Planned Facilities

Trail 1.9 miles



*Rocky River Greenway*



## UNDEVELOPED PROPERTY

The City currently owns several properties that have potential for park and recreation development. One aspect of the Master Plan process will be exploring needs and opportunities offered by these undeveloped assets. Undeveloped properties with park development potential include:

### Old Cannon Landfill Site

The City has secured this property adjacent to the 8th Street Greenway that was previously used as a construction landfill. The property has been considered as a potential site for athletic fields. Further investigation is required to determine a feasible re-use of this property.

### Plant Four Park

The City owns ±1.7 acres of property on Main Street across from the former police station. This property is being used as a civic green space, but could be developed for limited or focused recreation use. This is an ideal location for a dog park.

### Pine Street Property

As part of a FEMA buyout, the City has acquired Kannapolis Village, a former long-term care center. The property is 3.43 acres and backs up to Irish Buffalo Creek. This property could provide support facilities to the future Greenways. This site would be great spot for a trailhead.

### Eastside Park Property

In June 2017 the City purchased 33+/- acres of land for development of a community park with Lake Fisher water access in the Midlake Community. The City's vision in acquiring this park to serve the citizens of eastern Kannapolis will be to develop a well-rounded park that meets the growing demand for passive recreation along with providing water access. Until the City acquired this land there was no public water access for Kannapolis citizens. In June 2019 the City developed a masterplan for this park. Funds have been budgeted in the CIP to develop this park. The City should consider applying for grants to help fund park development.



*Eastside Park Property*

### Westside Park Property

Keeping the need for active recreation in mind in January 2017, the City purchased several tracts of land, 52.16-acres in total, along the Rocky River for community park development. Serving western Kannapolis the City's vision in acquiring this park is to develop a well-rounded athletic park that meets the growing demand for competitive sports fields, expands the greenway system, provides connections to adjacent passive recreation facilities near the park, and to create shared use opportunities with the adjacent highschool and affiliated project partners. In 2019, the City started a youth athletics program for basketball, baseball, softball, flag football, and soccer. Over the past four years this program has seen rapid growth and the demand for athletic fields is very high. In June 2019 the City developed a masterplan for this park. Funds have been budgeted in the CIP to develop this park. The City should consider applying for grants to help fund park development.

## SPECIAL USE FACILITIES

### Pleasant Avenue Park 4.51 acres

Pleasant Avenue Park (also known as the Dixie Youth Field) was acquired by the City in August 2021. This park has one (1) lighted youth baseball field and one (1) lighted youth multi-sport field. Both youth soccer and football are played on the multi-sport field. This park is used for youth athletics.

There is a restroom/concession building located between the two fields. This facility is showing its age and needs to be replaced. The existing gravel parking area needs paving.

#### Existing Facilities

Youth Baseball Field (1)

Youth Multi-sport Field (1 Soccer and 1 Football)

Restroom/Concession Building

### Atrium Health Ballpark

This outstanding 4,930 seat baseball stadium facility located in downtown opened in 2021. It is home to the Kannapolis Cannon Ballers, a Single-A affiliate of the Chicago White Sox.

Besides being a beautiful stadium the ballpark features a 20,000 square foot Kids Zone which was built around a custom three-story Berliner play structure and an interactive splash pad. Looping the 360-degree concourse is the Atrium Health walking track, a third of a mile circuit complimenting the City's "Loop the Loop" walking trail.

On non-game days the community can still enjoy the ballpark as it is open daily as a public park. Kids can play on the playground and splash pad while other members of the community can walk the Atrium Health paved walking trail around the concourse.

### Gem Theatre

Since the 1936 Gem Theatre has been a fixture in downtown Kannapolis. Both residents and visitors of Kannapolis have watched movies, gone on dates, gotten engaged and even married here. This sentimental theatre is one of the favorite destinations in downtown Kannapolis.

In 2015 the City of Kannapolis acquired the theatre and began the process of refurbishing the marquee, and essential elements such as the roof, heating and air conditioning and restrooms. Presently the City is in the process of making significant renovations to the interior of the theatre. Work is scheduled for completion in May 2024. In addition to being a theatre this facility provides a valuable indoor community facility for special events and programs.

Future renovations are planned for this facility.

#### Existing Facilities

Theatre

## SPECIAL USE FACILITIES

### Swanee Theatre

Formerly used as a movie theatre, visitor center, and museum, the City recently acquired this unique recently re-modeled 1930's theatre in downtown into a premier flex-space music and event venue. This historic landmark theatre has a full slate of concerts on the weekends, shag lessons during the week, weddings, and a variety of other events. This facility provides the City with a premier indoor entertainment facility that has revenue generating potential and bringing economic activity to downtown.

### West Avenue Streetscape (Linear Park)

Over the past two or more years the City has invested over \$30 million dollars revitalizing West Avenue into a picturesque landscaped lined street which will accommodate live music, open air dining, walking, running, a putting green, and other greenspaces perfect for reading, classes for exercise or other special events. The new pedestrian friendly streetscape also has fountains, public restrooms, swings, public art, parklets, and murals. The adjoining Oak Avenue and Vance Street have also received renovations with new sidewalks, trees, landscaping, and paving.

### Horseshoe Park

Located in the center of the North Carolina Research Campus in front of City Hall this highly visible 8-acre park has quickly become a very active downtown greenspace. It is on the City's "Loop the Loop" walking trail. It has become a unique multipurpose special events space as is used for Jiggy with the Piggy, Christmas Parade, Halloween Festivals, and other things. In addition this space is used for informal play by the public. Quite often people can be seen flying a kite, walking a dog, kicking a ball around, or simply having a picnic. With all of the energy this space is generating the City needs to develop a master plan for this important downtown greenspace.



*Kannapolis Downtown*



# City of Kannapolis Parks & Recreation | Existing Features Plan

Kannapolis, NC

- Kannapolis City Schools**

  - Christ the King Private School
  - Rowan Cabarrus Community College
  - 1. A.L. Brown High School
  - 2. G.W. Carver Elementary School
  - 3. Shady Brook Elementary School
  - 4. Kannapolis Middle School
  - 5. Forest Park Elementary School
  - 6. Fred L. Wilson Elementary School
  - 7. Jackson Park Elementary School
  - 8. Woodrow Wilson Elementary School
  - 9. McKnight Child Development Center
- Cabarrus County Elementary Schools**

  - 1. Royal Oaks Elementary School
  - 2. Charles E. Boger Elementary School

**Cabarrus County Middle Schools**

  - 1. Northwest Cabarrus Middle School

**Cabarrus County High Schools**

  - 1. Northwest Cabarrus High School
  - 2. Future Northwest Cabarrus High School
  - 3. Early College High School

**Churches**

  - 1. Bethpage Presbyterian
  - 2. Charity Baptist
  - 3. First Baptist Church
  - 4. First Baptist Church Recreation Fields (Midway)
  - 5. Franklin Heights Baptist Church
- Greenways (Carolina Thread Trail Segments)**

  - Planned (5.3 mi total)
  - Built (5.6 mi total)
  - 1. Rocky River Corridor [planned] 1.9 mi
  - 2. Rocky River Corridor [built] 0.9 mi
  - 3. Irish Buffalo Creek [planned] 3.4 mi
  - 4. Irish Buffalo Creek [built] 2.9 mi
  - 5. Baker's Creek / 8th St / Village Park [built] 1.5 mi

**Kannapolis Parks**

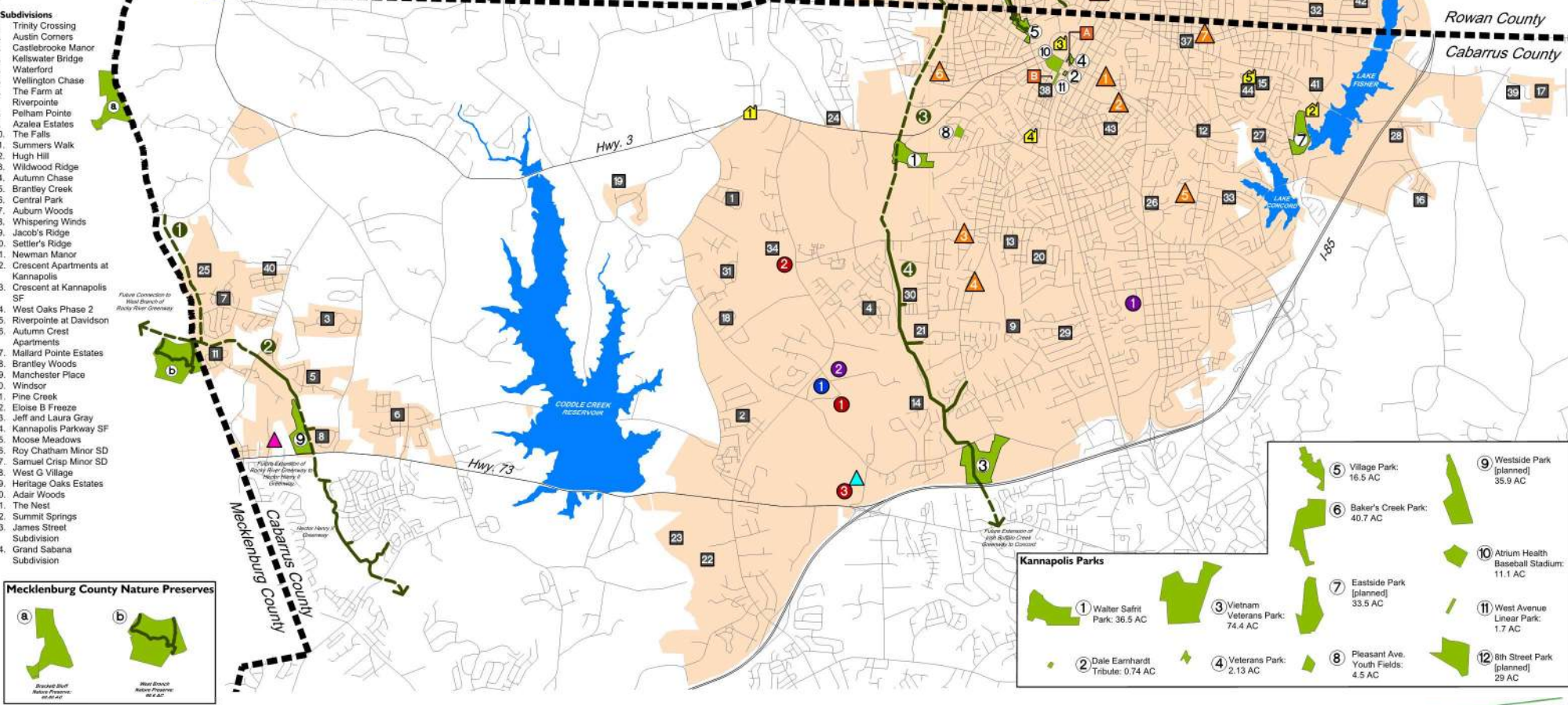
  - 1. Walter Saffit Park
  - 2. Dale Earnhardt Tribute
  - 3. Vietnam Veterans Park
  - 4. Veterans Park
  - 5. Village Park
  - 6. Baker's Creek Park
  - 7. Eastside Park
  - 8. Pleasant Ave. Youth Fields
  - 9. Westside Park
  - 10. Atrium Health Baseball Stadium
  - 11. West Avenue Linear Park
  - 12. 8th Street Park

**Mecklenburg County Nature Preserves**

  - a. Brackett Bluff Nature Preserve
  - b. West Branch Nature Preserve

**Legend**

  - Kannapolis City Limits
  - Kannapolis Lakes
  - Streets
  - County Boundary









*Village Park Train and Carousel*

## Section Two

# The People of Kannapolis

### INTRODUCTION

An important step in understanding the park and recreational needs of Kannapolis is to develop an understanding of the people that make up the community. Section Two includes a review of the City's population and demographics and looks at changes that are occurring in the community.

In addition to reviewing the City's projected growth and demographic changes, the Needs Assessment included several exercises to engage the public to gather information on public demand/expectations for future parks. These initiatives included:

- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Community Workshops

Through these efforts, considerable insight was gained regarding the public's desire for parks and recreation programs and facilities. This section discusses the information gathered in preparation of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



# POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS

## History

The City of Kannapolis is the ideal southern town. The community has been able to transform itself from a small mill village into a center for research with an international presence. The ability to transform itself through difficult changes gives the City a confidence about the future and allows it to embrace new ventures and ideas.

Events leading to the incorporation of Kannapolis actually started in 1905 when J.W. Cannon began purchasing land ( $\pm 1,000$  acres) in Cabarrus and Rowan Counties. In 1908, Cannon Manufacturing began production. As part of the mill town, Mr. Cannon developed 1,600 homes, a YMCA, civic center, movie theater, day care center and hospital. In essence, he built a town to support the mill. By 1914, Cannon Manufacturing was known as the world's largest provider of sheets and towels.

Cannon Mills was purchased in 1982 by Pacific Holding Company and David H. Murdock. The purchase of the mill was soon followed by a \$20 million renovation to the City's downtown area.

Kannapolis residents voted to incorporate the city in 1984. The years following the incorporation were a period of difficult transition in the textile industry. Cannon Mills was sold in 1985 to Fieldcrest Mills and the new company, Fieldcrest Cannon, consolidated plants. In 1997, the mill was sold to PillowTex Corporation. PillowTex Corporation filed for bankruptcy in 1999; providing further evidence that textile manufacturing was dying in this country and a new direction for the city was needed.

In 2004, David Murdock (Dole Food Company) purchased the mill at auction and announced plans for a \$1.5 billion scientific and economic renovation project called the North Carolina Research Campus. In the following decade, much progress has been made on that dream. Today, the research campus is home to eight universities and numerous corporate partners. The development of the research campus has spearheaded downtown revitalization and continues to provide a new vitality for the City.

## The People of Kannapolis

The City's 2020 population was 53,119. The US Census Bureau lists the 2022 population for Kannapolis at 55,448. This planning report utilizes a service population of 55,500 as the basis of its Needs Assessment. With an average annual growth rate of 2.2%, the projected population for 2034 is around 70,000.

Based on 2020 population figures, 50% of the City's population was female, slightly lower than the female population of North Carolina (51%). Kannapolis has a younger population than most North Carolina communities. Almost 26% of the population is under 18 years of age, while this same segment of the population makes up only 21.4% of the state's population. Persons over 65 years of age comprise 14.3% of the City's overall population, an increase of 1.3% since the 2014 plan.

With regard to race, Kannapolis's population is very similar to the rest of North Carolina. Approximately two thirds of the City's population (62.7%) is white alone but has decreased from 68.5% in the 2014 plan. A fifth of the City's population (22.4%) is black or African American alone; a 2% increase from the 2014 plan. Hispanic or Latino comprise approximately 12% of the City's population. Two or more races comprise 7.3%, while Asian makes up 2.3%.

From an economic standpoint, the residents of Kannapolis lag behind other North Carolina communities. Only 62.5% of Kannapolis residents live in owner occupied homes, while 66.2% of North Carolinians own their home. The median value of owner occupied housing units in Kannapolis is \$21,600 less than in other North Carolina communities (\$213,000 versus \$240,900). The per capita income for Kannapolis residents (\$32,448) is approximately 15% less than North Carolina's overall per capita income (\$37,641). Finally the number of persons below the poverty level in Kannapolis has decreased since the 2014 plan to 11.7% from just over 18%; now slightly lower than the State's 12.8% poverty level.

These socioeconomic factors reveal a community with a relatively young population with a need for active recreation opportunities and a focus on family activities with opportunities for children. The economic conditions in Kannapolis have limited financial resources for personal spending on recreation activities. Charging user fees for recreational activities must be carefully considered.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

The most important step in the planning process was gathering input from city residents with regard to their desires for public recreation. As part of the master plan process, the following initiatives were taken to gather public input:

### **Community Survey**

A survey was mailed out to a random sample of households in Kannapolis during the Imagine Kannapolis strategic planning process to allow the selected residents an opportunity to voice their opinions on parks and recreation needs. Participants were allowed the option of responding back through the mail or completing it online. A total of 475 residents responded to the survey.

### **Public Workshop**

One information gathering drop-in workshop was held to allow citizens the opportunity to discuss the community's park and recreation needs. Approximately 20 citizens attended the workshop and provided valuable input on recreational needs. A second workshop was held with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission.

### **Staff Meetings**

The planning consultant met with Parks and Recreation Department staff to discuss facilities, programming and operation.

### **Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission**

The City's Parks and Recreation Commission (a commission made up of citizens) was actively engaged in the planning process. Commission members provided input during a second workshop as the plan was developed and ultimately approved the final plan.

The following is a summary of findings from each of the public input initiatives:

### **Community Survey**

An important aspect of this planning process is determining the public's desire for parks and recreation facilities. As a result, it is important to determine the level of support for this type of development among city residents. To that end, a random stratified survey of the City of Kannapolis residents was conducted during the summer of 2022 as a part of the City's strategic planning process. The results of this strategic survey were

weighted and projected to represent households in the city. The key findings are addressed below.

## Methodology

This survey was conducted summer 2022 by ETC Institute. A total of 475 completed surveys were collected from Kannapolis residents, well above the established goal of 300 surveys.

The maximum sampling error for the total sample of 475 collected surveys is  $\pm 4.4$  percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY FINDINGS

### City of Kannapolis Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Areas Use

**Use of Parks/Greenways:** Respondents were asked to indicate if their household had used any of the 12 listed Kannapolis parks in the past year. The highest number of respondents (70%) visited Village Park followed by Cannonballers Stadium (64%) and Veterans Park (55%). Respondents who indicated they had visited the park/greenway were then asked to rate the overall condition. Respondents were most satisfied (rating “excellent” or “good”) with Cannonballers Stadium (99%), Village Park (98%), and Veterans Park (97%). Each of the parks/greenways received mostly excellent/good ratings.

**Satisfaction with Public Park and Recreation Areas.** Respondents were asked to indicate their level of overall satisfaction with public parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis. Most respondents (88%) chose either “somewhat satisfied” (28%) or “very satisfied” (57%). When asked how much of a need they have for additional parks and recreation areas, the highest number of respondents (66%) felt either some need (45%) or great need (21%) and 34% felt either little need (22%) or no need (12%).

**Ways Households Learn about Programs and Activities:** Respondents were asked to select all the ways they learned about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs, and activities. The highest number of respondents received communication via the city newsletter (62%), Facebook (50%), and the City of Kannapolis website (48%); in addition, these are also the three most preferred methods according to respondents.

**Interest/Importance of Amenities/Facilities:** Respondents were asked to assess their level of interest in 33 facilities/amenities. The highest amount of interest (either “great interest” or “moderate interest”) was shown for the preservation of open space or natural areas (71%), greenways for walking/biking (70%), drive-in movie theaters (67%) and access to city lakes (67%). Respondents were then asked to select the five facilities/amenities most important to their household. These are the findings:

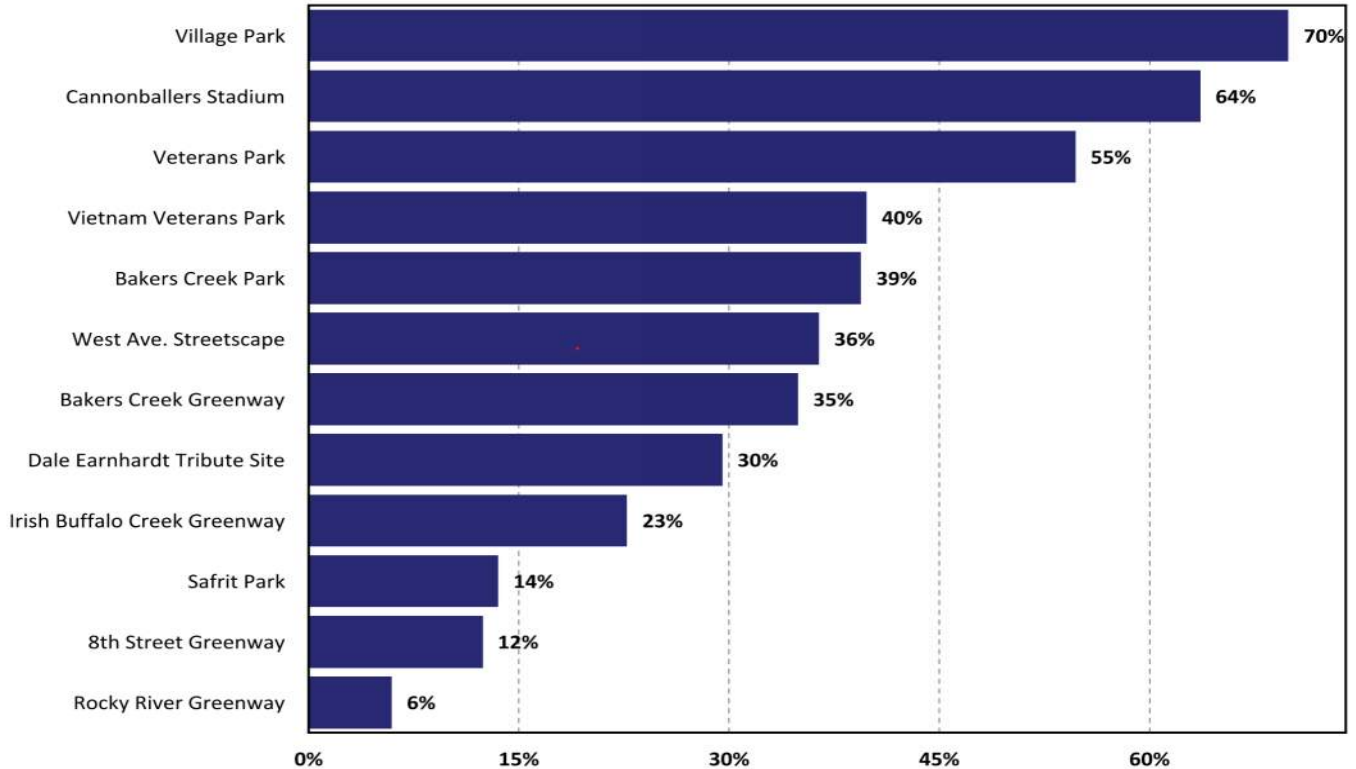
- Drive-in movie theaters (40%)
- Access to city lakes (31%)
- Greenways for walking/biking (31%)
- Waterparks (23%)

Respondents were then asked how much they would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of parks, facilities, and programming that was most important to their household. The answers were somewhat evenly divided but the highest number of respondents were not willing to pay any additional amount (25%).



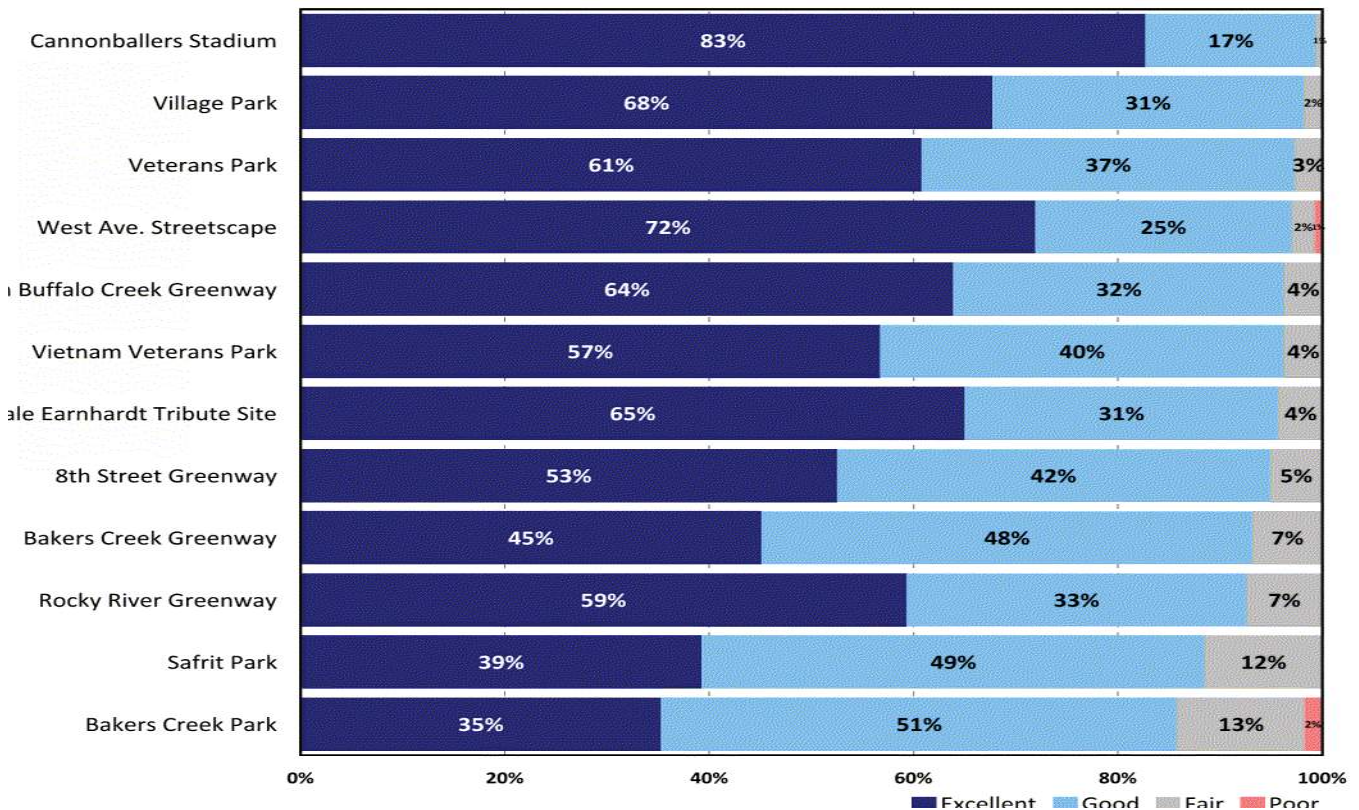
**Q1. From the following list, please check ALL the City of Kannapolis parks or greenways you or members of your household have visited over the past 12 months.**

by percentage of respondents



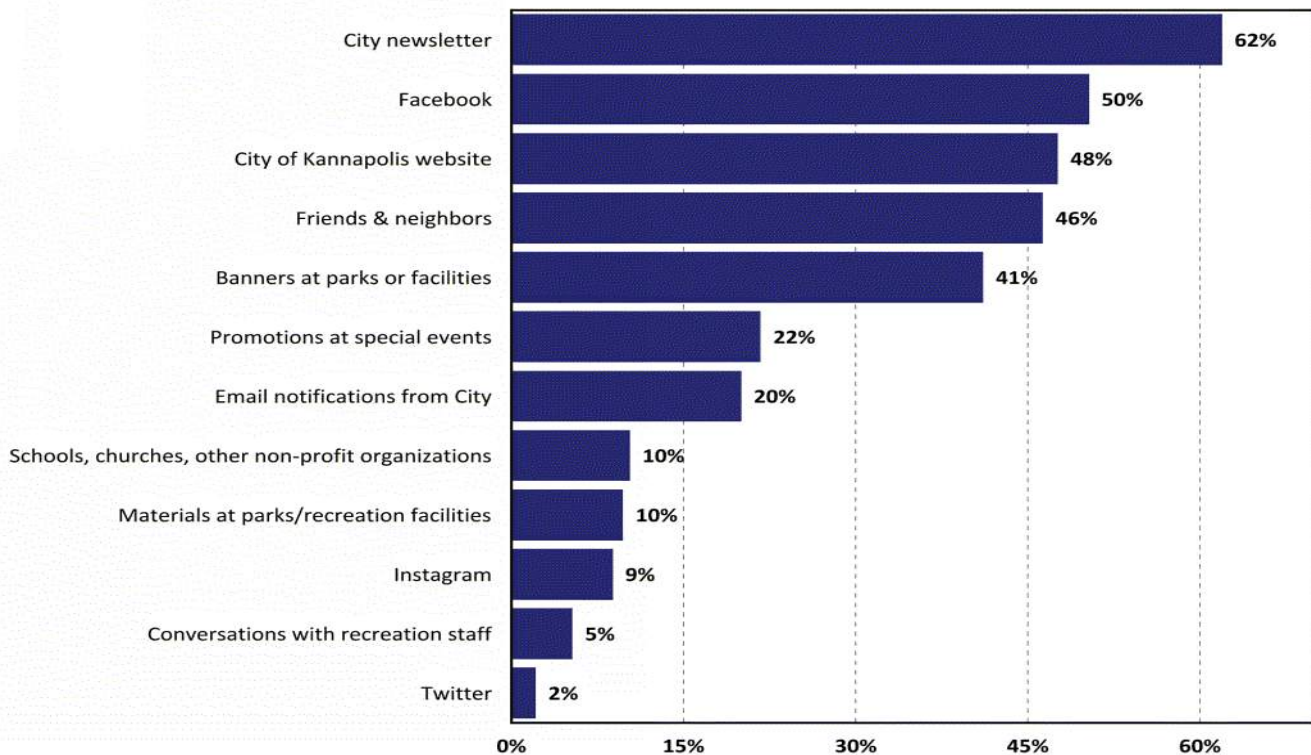
### Q1. Rating Condition of Parks/Greenways

by percentage of respondents who indicated their household had used the park/greenway (excluding "not provided")



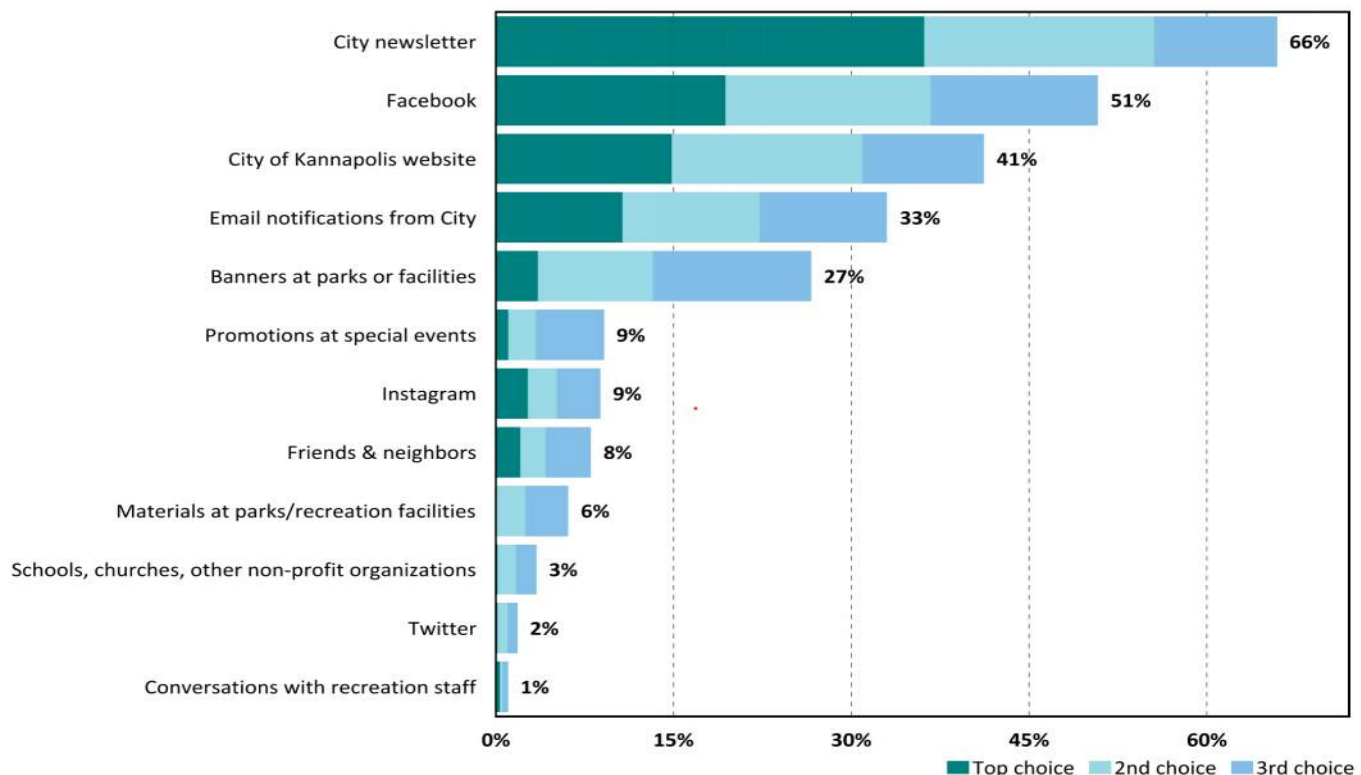
**Q2. From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs and activities.**

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



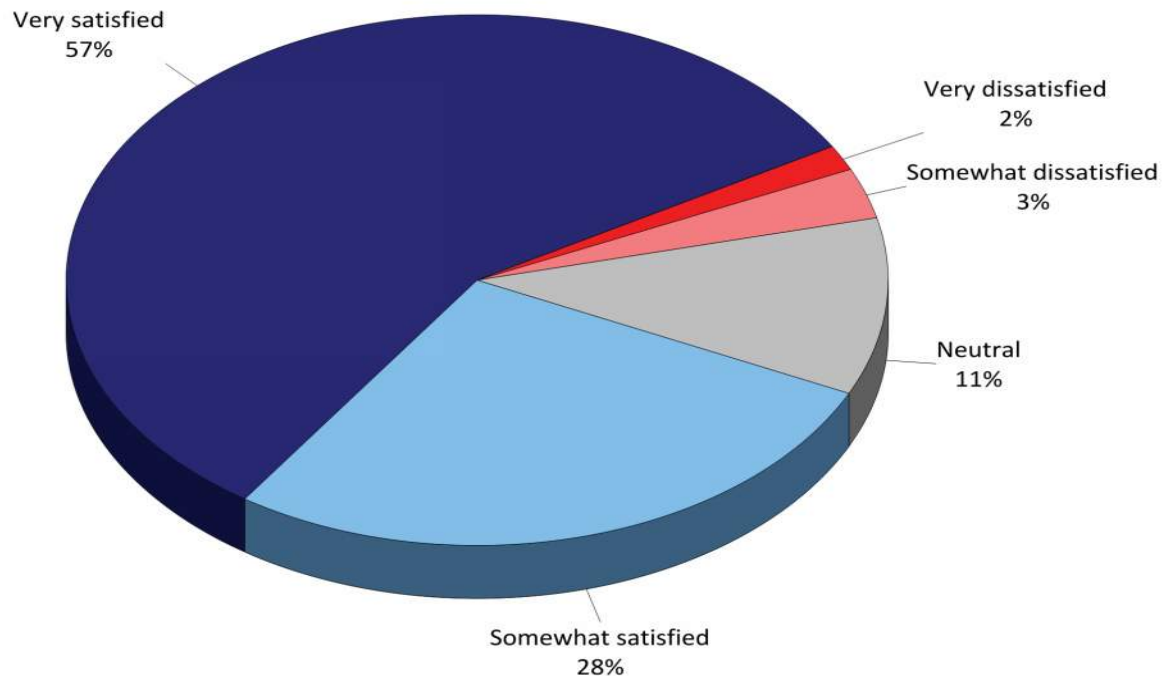
**Q3. Which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events?**

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



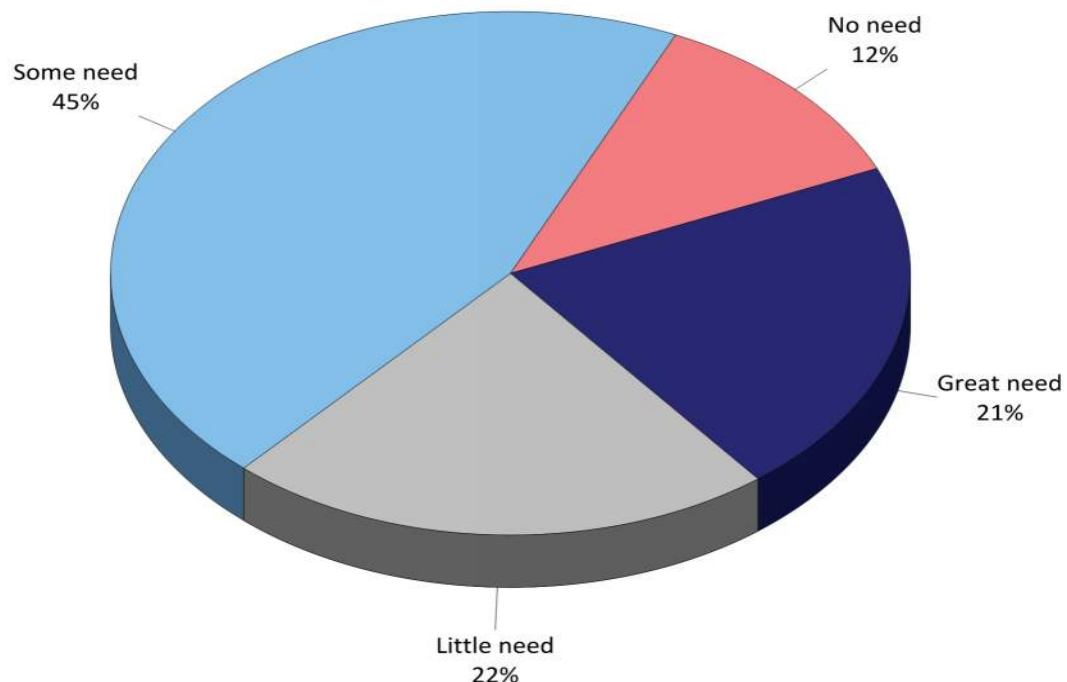
#### Q4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the public park and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know")



#### Q5. Overall, do you think there is a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?

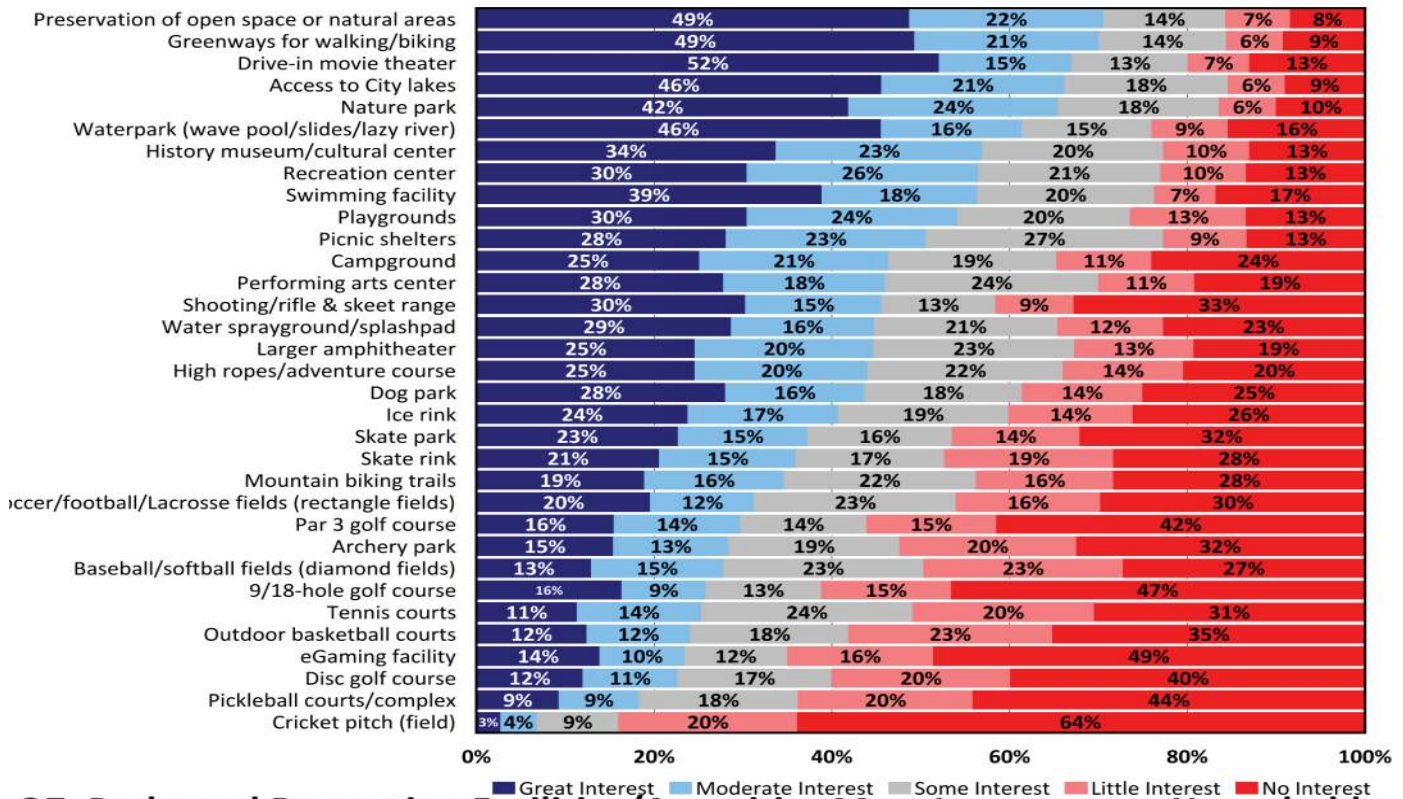
by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know")





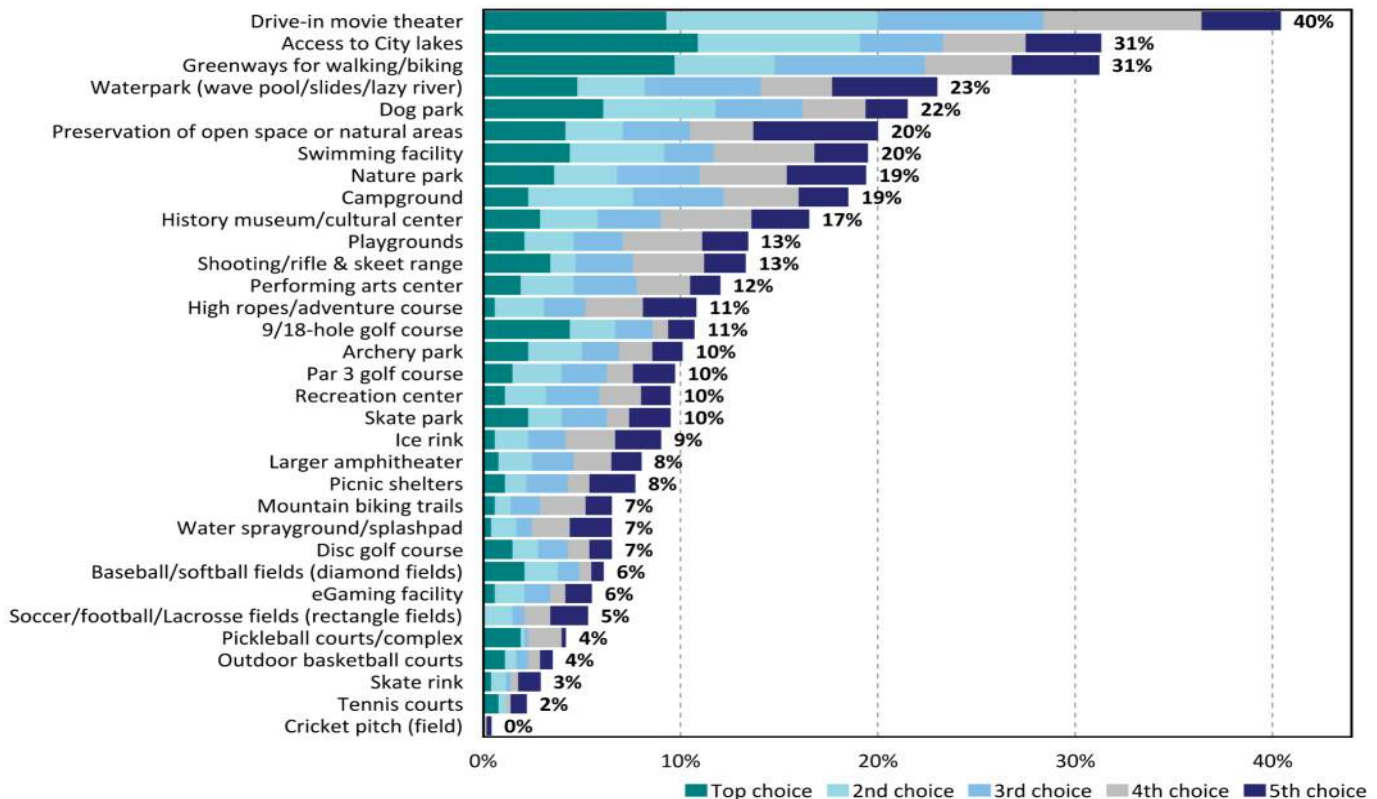
## Q6. Level of Interest for Amenities/Facilities

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



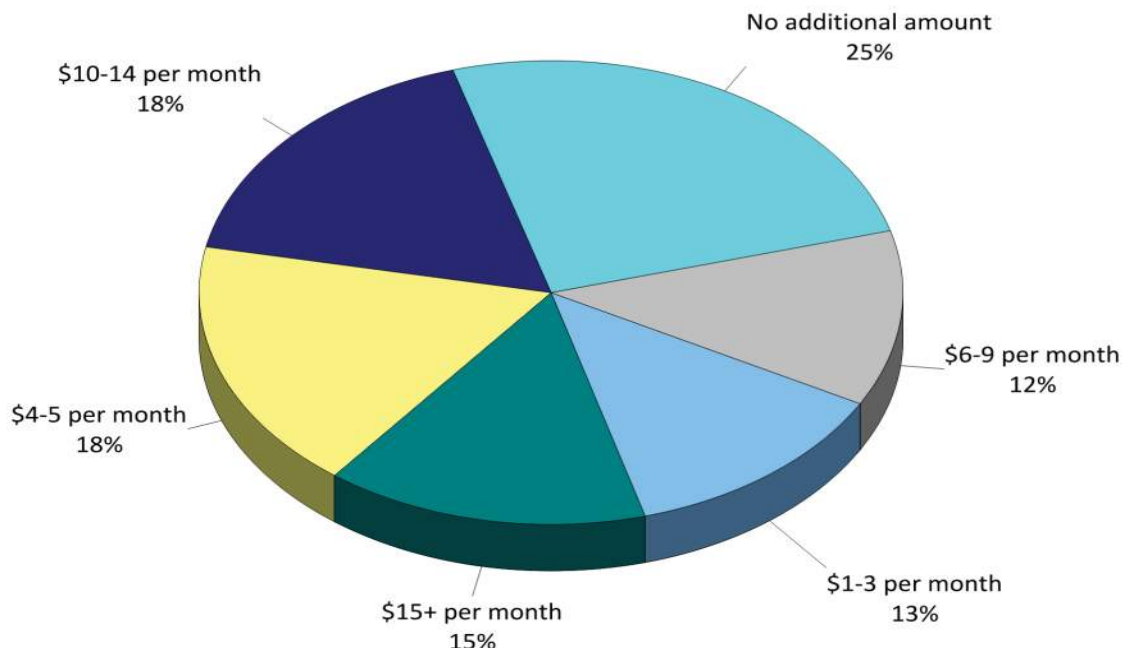
## Q7. Parks and Recreation Facilities/Amenities Most Important to Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top five choices



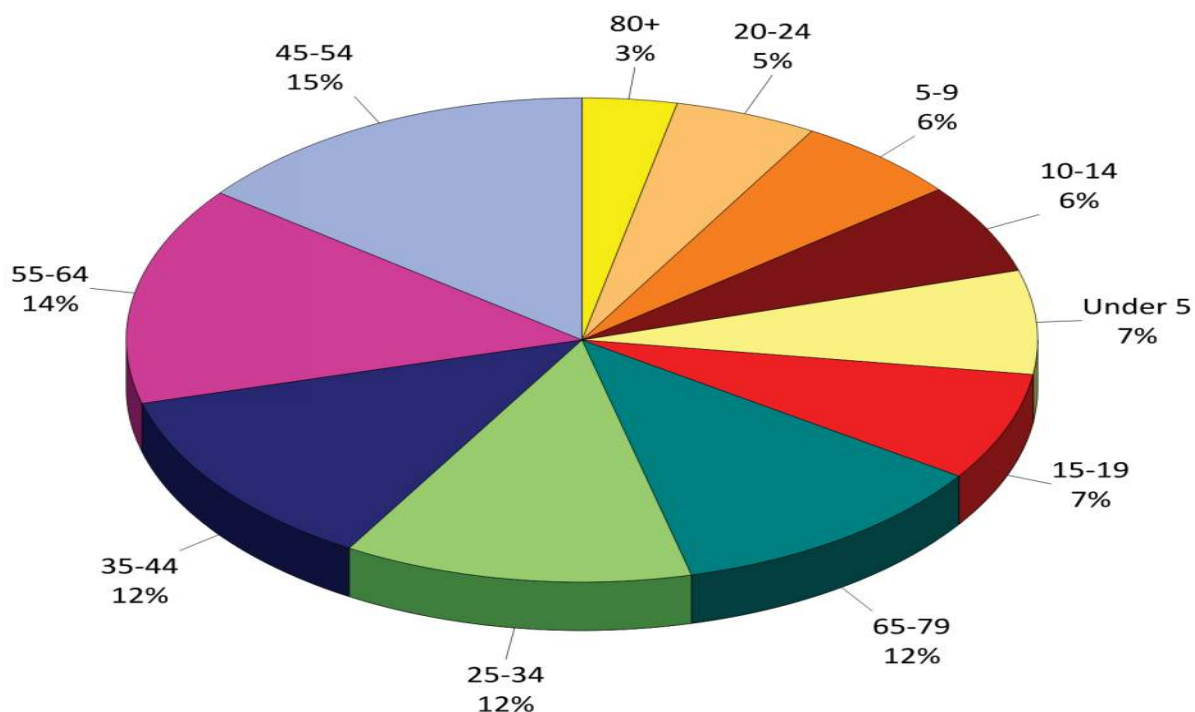
**Q8. What is the maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of the new parks, facilities, and programming that are most important to your household?**

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



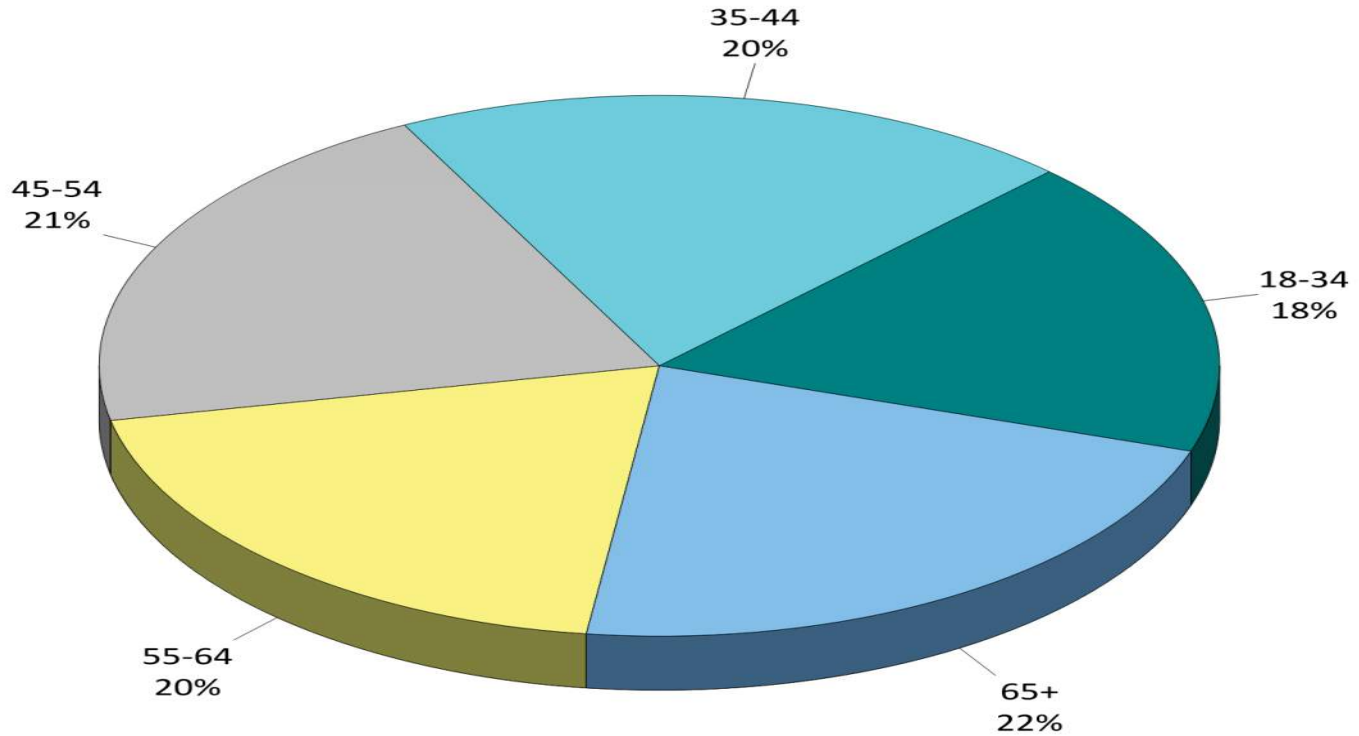
**Q9. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are in the following age groups?**

by percentage of persons in household



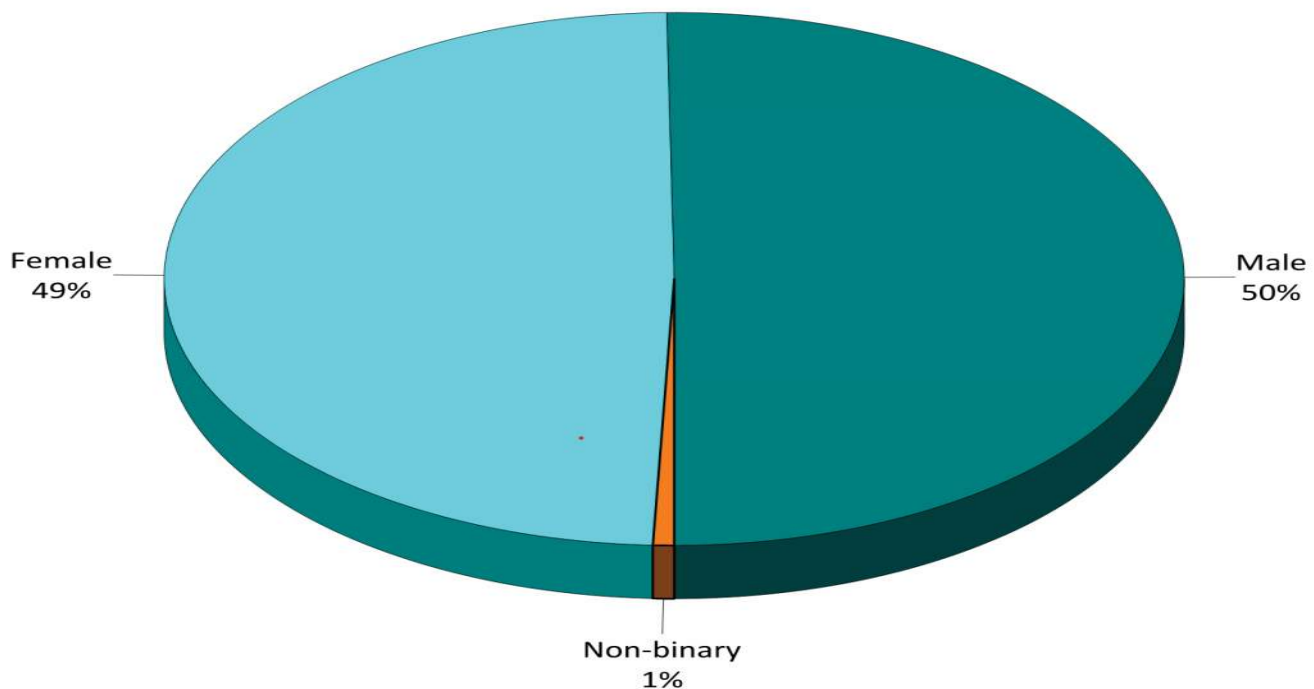
## Q10. Respondent Age

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



## Q11. Your gender:

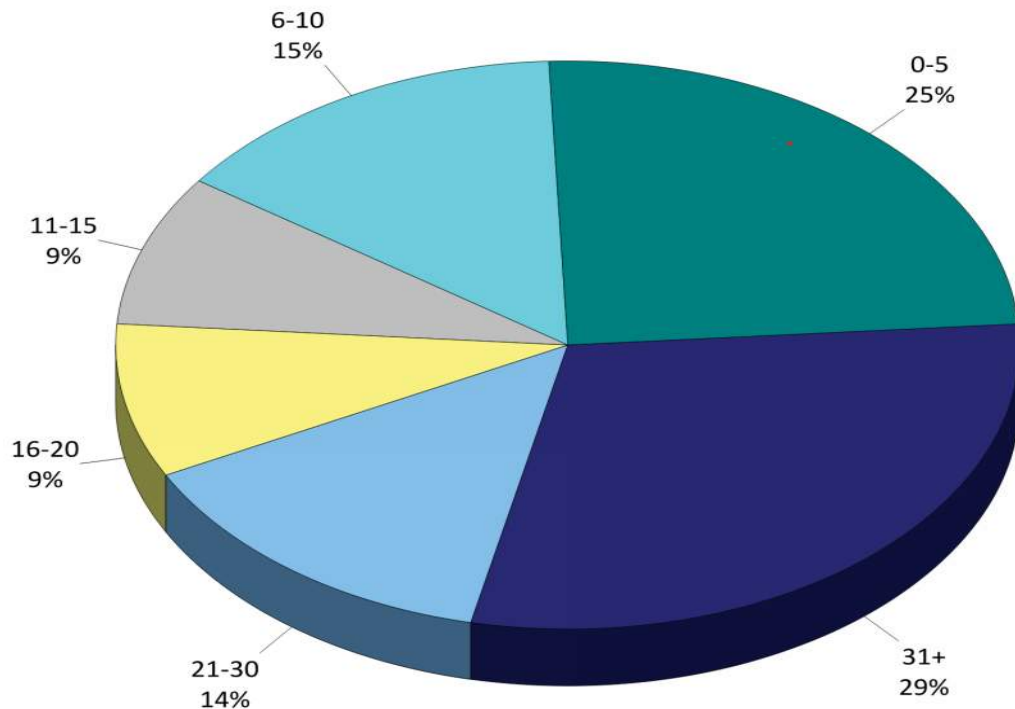
by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")





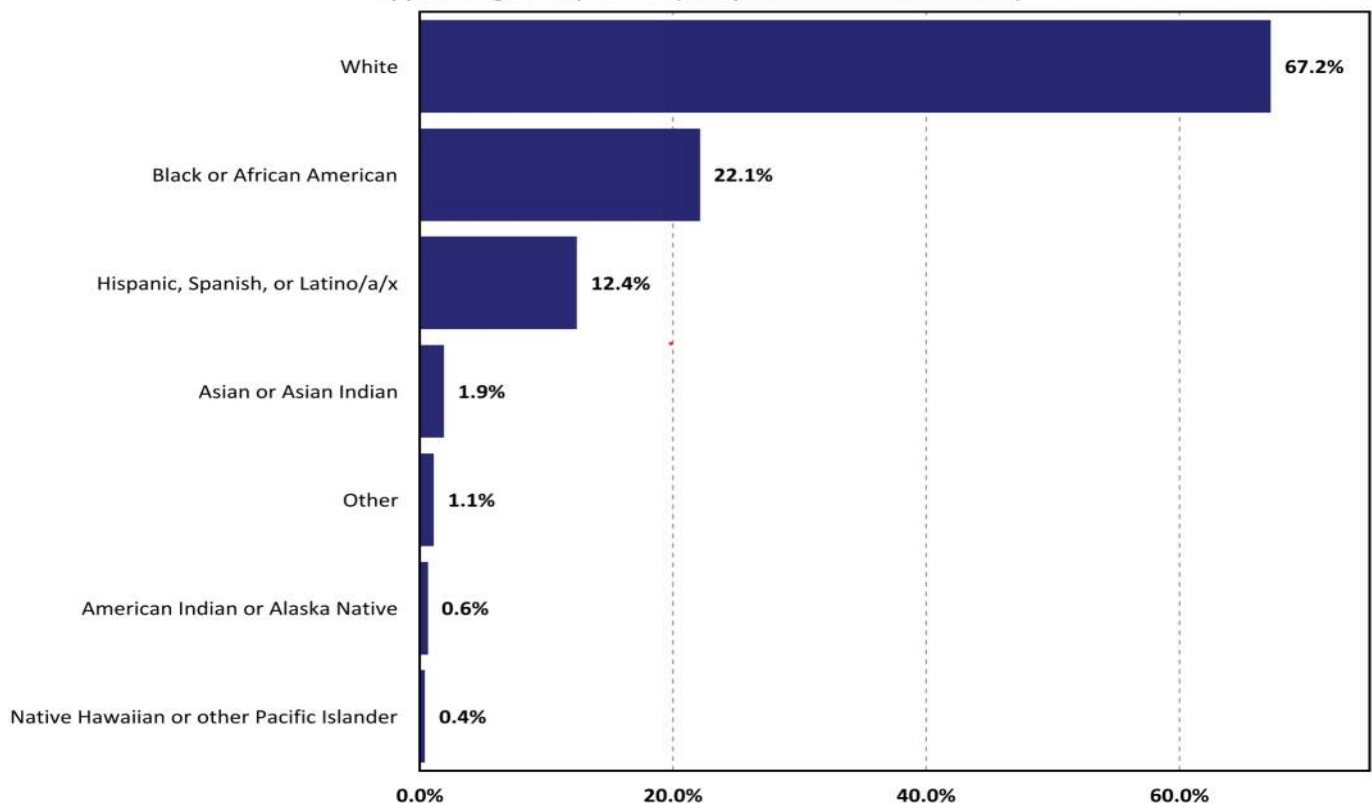
## Q12. How many years have you lived in the City of Kannapolis?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



## Q13. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity?

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



## Public Workshop - Thursday, January 25, 2024 - Kannapolis City Hall

The public workshop to discuss the City's Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan was held at the City Hall.

Approximately 20 citizens attended the workshop, engaged in good discussion, and provided valuable input.

The format of the meeting was a drop-in workshop. After signing in, attendees spent time reviewing several displays providing information on existing and proposed parks and facilities. Attendees were then invited to provide input on their perception of existing parks, the need for future parks and facilities, and ideas on how to improve the City's Park and Recreation opportunities. Input was provided on five (5) display boards where attendees were asked to record answers to specific questions, using adhesive dots to identify facility needs. A station was also set up where participants were given plastic tokens, each representing a \$10 value, that could be placed in cups representative of preferred funding desires for facilities/amenities and programs/activities. A summary of the preference voting follows:

### What Parks Do You Use?

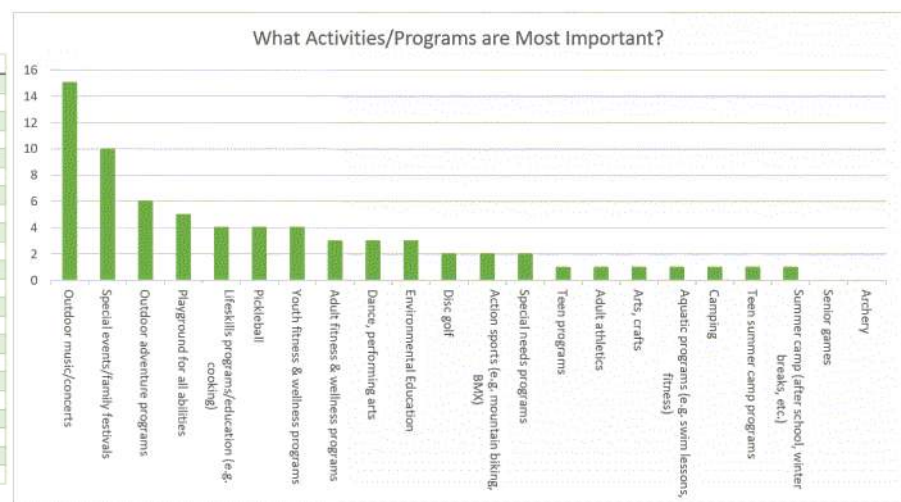
Kannapolis Parks	Number of Votes on 1/25/24
Walter Safrir Park	6
Dale Earnhardt Tribute	1
Vietnam Veterans Park	6
Veterans Park	4
Village Park	10
Baker's Creek Park	10
Pleasant Avenue Youth Fields	3
Atrium Health Baseball Stadium	11
West Avenue Linear Park	8
<b>Greenways</b>	
Rocky River Corridor	3
Irish Buffalo Creek	6
Baker's Creek/ 8th Street/Village Park	9
<b>Mecklenburg County Nature Preserves</b>	
Brackett Bluff Nature Preserve	0
West Branch Nature Preserve	0

### Why do you choose to visit City of Kannapolis Parks?

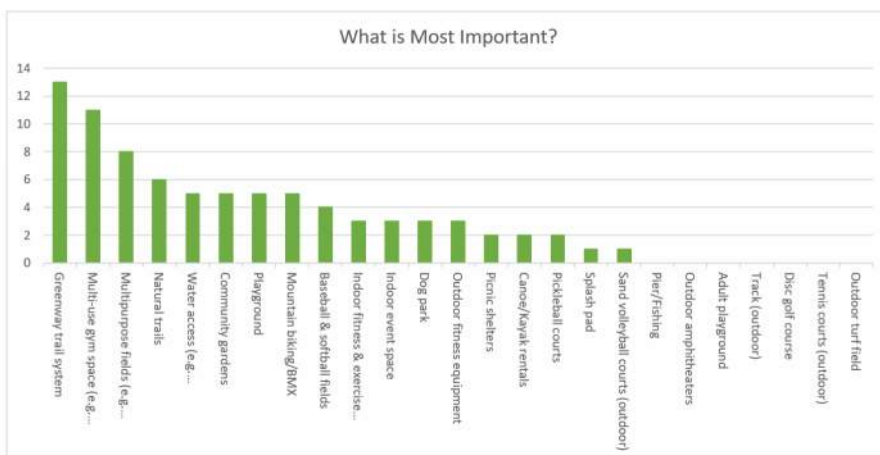
It's a great place for social engagement	6
It's a great place to enjoy nature	9
It's a great place for the whole family	15
It's a great place to attend special events	13
It's a great place to play organized sports	7
It's a great place for physical activity	5
It's a great place to hike, bike, or walk	9
It's a great place to learn	1
It's a great place for replenishment	1
It's easy to get there	3
It's a place I feel safe in when visiting	6

### Programs/ Activities

Program/Activity	What is Most Important?
Outdoor music/concerts	15
Special events/family festivals	10
Outdoor adventure programs	6
Playground for all abilities	5
Lifeskills programs/education (e.g. cooking)	4
Pickleball	4
Youth fitness & wellness programs	4
Adult fitness & wellness programs	3
Dance, performing arts	3
Environmental Education	3
Disc golf	2
Action sports (e.g. mountain biking, BMX)	2
Special needs programs	2
Teen programs	1
Adult athletics	1
Arts, crafts	1
Aquatic programs (e.g. swim lessons, fitness)	1
Camping	1
Teen summer camp programs	1
Summer camp (after school, winter breaks, etc.)	1
Senior games	0
Archery	0



Facilities	
Facility	What is Most Important?
Greenway trail system	13
Multi-use gym space (e.g. basketball, volleyball)	11
Multipurpose fields (e.g. football, soccer, lacrosse)	8
Natural trails	6
Water access (e.g. boating, kayaking, canoeing)	5
Community gardens	5
Playground	5
Mountain biking/BMX	5
Baseball & softball fields	4
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	3
Indoor event space	3
Dog park	3
Outdoor fitness equipment	3
Picnic shelters	2
Canoe/Kayak rentals	2
Pickleball courts	2
Splash pad	1
Sand volleyball courts (outdoor)	1
Pier/Fishing	0
Outdoor amphitheaters	0
Adult playground	0
Track (outdoor)	0
Disc golf course	0
Tennis courts (outdoor)	0
Outdoor turf field	0



### Programs/ Activities Funding

Program/Activity Groupings	Votes
Adult Fitness & Wellness Programs / Aquatic Programs / Youth Fitness & Wellness Programs	22
Outdoor Adventure Programs/ Camping / Environmental Education	20
Arts & Crafts / Life Skills Programs & Education / Dance & Performing Arts	19
Outdoor Music & Concerts / Special Events & Family Festivals	40
Adult Athletics / Playground for all Abilities / Senior Games / Archery / Disc Golf / Action Sports	13
Summer Camp (After School, Winter Break) / Teen Programs / Special Needs Programs / Teen Summer Camp Programs	22

### Facility/Amenity Funding

Facility/Amenity Groupings	Votes
Outdoor Basketball (write-in)	6
Playground / Outdoor Fitness & Exercise Equipment	8
Splash Pad / Pickleball Courts / Tennis Courts / Sand Volleyball Courts	15
Water Access / Pier/Fishing / Canoe & Kayak Rentals	19
Track (Outdoor) / Multipurpose Fields / Baseball & Softball Fields / Turf Fields / Disc Golf	30
Indoor Fitness & Exercise Facilities / Indoor Event Space / Multi-Use Gym Space	31
Natural Trails / Greenways / Picnic Shelters / Dog Park / Community Gardens / Outdoor Amphitheater / Mountain Biking / BMX	49

Finally participants were also invited to provide written comments/suggestions on three (3) display boards to be considered as the plan is developed. Those comments/suggestions were:

## Community Feedback

### Do you have a Favorite Recreation Destination Outside of Kannapolis?

- White Water Center
- Hiking in the Mountains
- Grandfather Mountain
- Lake Corriher Wilderness Area
- White Water Center / Greenways throughout Charlotte / Going to the Mountains
- What I like most: I think Parks & Rec have done a great job so far on greenways, concerts, & events. I enjoy going to the parks we have and look forward to the new ones being built.

### What do you see as Barriers, Obstacles, or Challenges for Recreation in Kannapolis?

- Should not build any tennis or pickleball courts without building basketball courts.



- Need more parking for the greenway at Rogers Lake Rd.
- Geographic distribution of parks
- Parks/soccer fields that are located in floodplains that flood with very little rain.
- Funding
- No water access, fishing
- There are no parks right side of Canon Blvd.
- Not offering soccer in the fall. There were 800+ kids last spring & that number is only going to grow.
  - » More soccer fields as well

### What Specific Recreational Needs do you have within the City of Kannapolis?

- Parks
  - » With playground, benches, picnic tables, within neighborhoods.
- Basketball courts
- Greenways for bicycling
- Skate park for my son to go to
- Would like to see a fitness trail
- Park on east side & west side
- Fitness facility
- Need more sidewalks or bike lanes around town for walkers & cyclists.
- Bicycle friendly – many curbs prohibit easy trail access.
- Need more sidewalks or bike lanes around town for walkers & cyclists.
- Better soccer fields or at least fields maintained regularly.

## Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission Meeting - Tuesday, February 13, 2024

### What Parks Do You Use?

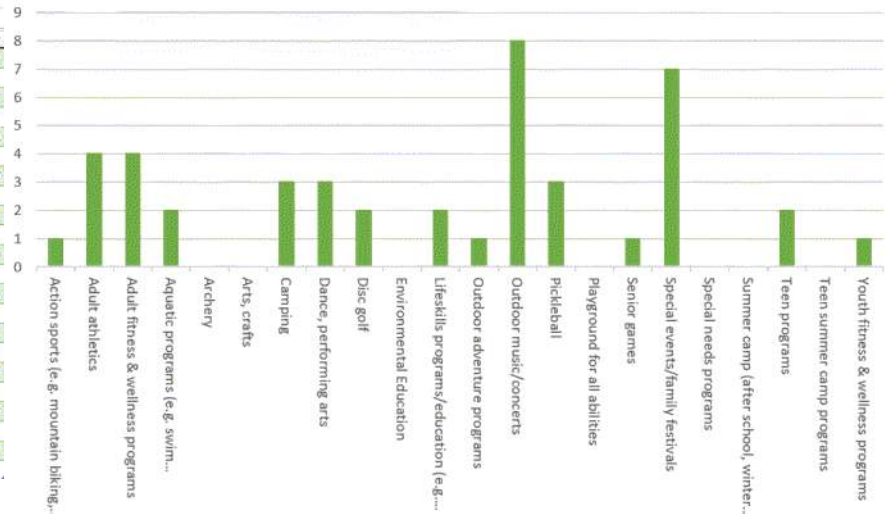
Kannapolis Parks	Number of Votes on 2/13/24
Walter Safrit Park	2
Dale Earnhardt Tribute	1
Vietnam Veterans Park	5
Veterans Park	6
Village Park	8
Baker's Creek Park	0
Pleasant Avenue Youth Fields	0
Atrium Health Baseball Stadium	5
West Avenue Linear Park	6
<b>Greenways</b>	
Rocky River Corridor	0
Irish Buffalo Creek	5
Baker's Creek/ 8th Street/Village Park	6
<b>Mecklenburg County Nature Preserves</b>	
Brackett Bluff Nature Preserve	0
West Branch Nature Preserve	0

### Why do you choose to visit City of Kannapolis Parks?

It's a great place for social engagement	14
It's a great place to enjoy nature	11
It's a great place for the whole family	7
It's a great place to attend special events	14
It's a great place to play organized sports	2
It's a great place for physical activity	9
It's a great place to hike, bike, or walk	13
It's a great place to learn	0
It's a great place for replenishment	1
It's easy to get there	8
It's a place I feel safe in when visiting	7

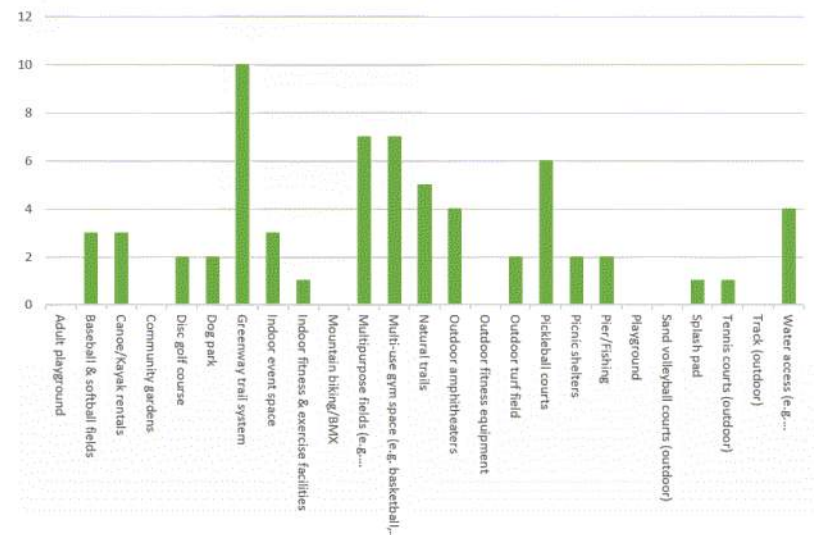
Programs/ Activities	
Program/Activity	What is Most Important?
Action sports (e.g. mountain biking, BMX)	1
Adult athletics	4
Adult fitness & wellness programs	4
Aquatic programs (e.g. swim lessons, fitness)	2
Archery	0
Arts, crafts	0
Camping	3
Dance, performing arts	3
Disc golf	2
Environmental Education	0
Lifeskills programs/education (e.g. cooking)	2
Outdoor adventure programs	1
Outdoor music/concerts	8
Pickleball	3
Playground for all abilities	0
Senior games	1
Special events/family festivals	7
Special needs programs	0
Summer camp (after school, winter breaks, etc.)	0
Teen programs	2
Teen summer camp programs	0
Youth fitness & wellness programs	1

What Activities/Programs are Most Important?



Facilities	
Facility	What is Most Important?
Adult playground	0
Baseball & softball fields	3
Canoe/Kayak rentals	3
Community gardens	0
Disc golf course	2
Dog park	2
Greenway trail system	10
Indoor event space	3
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	1
Mountain biking/BMX	0
Multipurpose fields (e.g. basketball, volleyball)	7
Multi-use gym space (e.g. basketball, volleyball)	7
Natural trails	5
Outdoor amphitheaters	4
Outdoor fitness equipment	0
Outdoor turf field	2
Pickleball courts	6
Picnic shelters	2
Pier/Fishing	2
Playground	0
Sand volleyball courts (outdoor)	0
Splash pad	1
Tennis courts (outdoor)	1
Track (outdoor)	0
Water access (e.g. swimming, fishing)	4

What is Most Important?



#### Programs/ Activities Funding

Program/Activity Groupings	Funding
Adult Fitness & Wellness Programs / Aquatic Programs / Youth Fitness & Wellness Programs	23
Outdoor Adventure Programs/ Camping / Environmental Education	16
Arts & Crafts / Life Skills Programs & Education / Dance & Performing Arts	5
Outdoor Music & Concerts / Special Events & Family Festivals	37
Adult Athletics / Playground for all Abilities / Senior Games / Archery / Disc Golf / Action Sports	16
Summer Camp (After School, Winter Break) / Teen Programs / Special Needs Programs / Teen Summer Camp Programs	3

#### Facility/Amenity Funding

Facility/Amenity Groupings	Funding
Playgrounds / Outdoor Fitness & Exercise Equipment	8
Splash Pad / Pickleball Courts / Tennis Courts / Sand Volleyball Courts/Basketball Courts	16
Water Access / Pier/Fishing / Canoe & Kayak Rentals	16
Track (Outdoor) / Multipurpose Fields / Baseball & Softball Fields / Turf Fields / Disc Golf	18
Indoor Fitness & Exercise Facilities / Indoor Event Space / Multi-Use Gym Space	17
Natural Trails / Greenways / Picnic Shelters / Dog Park / Community Gardens / Outdoor Amphitheater / Mountain Biking / BMX	25

## **Community Feedback**

### **Do you have a Favorite Recreation Destination Outside of Kannapolis?**

- Stone Mountain State Park (NC)
- All National Parks
- Myrtle Beach State Park
- Coast
- Public Golf Courses
- Lake Corriher Park
- Morrow Mountain
- Lake Lure

### **What do you see as Barriers, Obstacles, or Challenges for Recreation in Kannapolis?**

- Connection between current parks.
- Connection from downtown core to fringe population areas.

### **What Specific Recreational Needs do you have within the City of Kannapolis?**

- Walking Trails
- Walking and Hiking paths
- Trails
- Water Access
- A need for a dog park. This need has increased with the addition of downtown apartments & townhomes targeted at younger adult consumers ( have pets & no kids).





*8th Street Greenway*

## **Section Three**

# **Level of Service for Parks & Recreation Facilities; Needs Assessment**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This section contains the analysis and assessment on which the recommendations of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan are based. It begins with a brief review of previous community planning efforts relevant to the City's parks. Next, we review how other communities are working to provide park and recreation facilities to their constituents, and national and state trends in park and recreation preferences. This review of previous planning studies and similar agencies is based on a description of the park types that typically make up a park system (Appendix D). Using these park types as a backdrop, we establish a desired Level of Service (LOS) for park and recreation facilities specifically for Kannapolis. This LOS is then used as a basis for establishing a park and recreation facility Needs Assessment for the City.

It should be noted that the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has determined there are no "national standards" for park development. The NRPA recommends that each community is unique, and that standards reflecting the local "uniqueness" should be established. This section utilizes input from the public workshops, 2022 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey, as well as a review of other North Carolina communities to develop LOS specifically for the City of Kannapolis.

This study looks at two types of service levels. The first analysis looks at total acreage of park land within the

system and how this acreage is broken into park types. From this study it is possible to see how Kannapolis' existing parks compare with other communities, both in overall park acreage and park types within this overall acreage.

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

The service levels used in this study were derived from citizen input and input from the Parks and Recreation Department staff. The development of these LOS is perhaps the most important step in this planning process.

## OTHER PLANNING STUDIES

There have been community/county-wide plans developed that are directly related to developing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Kannapolis' Parks and Recreation Department. Below is a brief listing/summary of plans that were considered in the development of the recommendations found in this plan.

### Imagine Kannapolis Strategic Plan (Draft)

The City of Kannapolis has been working on a strategic plan that looks at a vision for the next 6 years (2024-2029). The strategic plan established 7 Focus Areas, each with a set of Guiding Principles. Three of the Focus Areas have relevance to Parks & Recreation in Kannapolis.

#### *Focus Area 3: Economic Vibrancy & Employment*

2024 – 2029 Projects and Initiatives

- Downtown Dog Park
- Main Street Parklet Improvements & Furnishings

#### *Focus Area 5: Arts, Tourism & Cultural Vitality*

2024 – 2029 Projects and Initiatives

- Swanee Theatre Renovations (completed)
- Gem Theatre Renovations (underway)
- Open Space and Tree Preservation
- Public Art Master Plan

#### *Focus Area 6: Natural & Built Environment*

2024 – 2029 Projects and Initiatives

- Eastside Park (debt)
- Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway – Phase 2 (debt)
- Westside Park – Phase 1 (debt)
- Upgrades to Park Facilities - Phase 1 (underway)
- Upgrades to Park Facilities - Phase 2
- Upgrade School Athletic Sites - Phase
- Upgrade School Athletic Sites - Phase 2

Unfunded Post 2029 Projects and Initiatives

- Upgrade School Athletic Sites - Phase 3

### *6-Year Financial Plan*

Debt service on 7 major projects = \$44 million capital cost. \$5.8 million annual budget impact at full buildout.

- Eastside Park (FY 25)
- Irish Buffalo Greenway Phase 2 (FY 25)
- Westside Park (FY 29)

\$42 million of one-time **cash investments** for 37 projects and initiatives ranging from \$25,000 to \$8 million.

- Upgrading School Athletic Sites (\$3.5 million in two phases FY 25 and FY 26)

The Plan includes the option of increasing revenues via a future General Obligation (G.O.) Bond vote for Parks and corresponding tax increase.

- Community Recreation Center Phase 1 (\$24M) Phase 2 (\$15M).
- One or more of 11 other park projects totalling \$48M (most range between \$2M and \$5M each).

## **Cabarrus County Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan**

Cabarrus County Active Living and Parks Department is currently in the process of updating their comprehensive parks & recreation master plan. Therefore, this plan will use the current comprehensive master plan developed in 2015 when Cabarrus County, along with community partners from throughout the county (including the City of Kannapolis), developed an updated plan for recreation and leisure services. The plan provided a ten-year vision (2015 – 2025) for the Department.

## **Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan for Cabarrus County Communities (August 2009)**

Priority corridor routes identified through Kannapolis include:

- Rocky River Corridor: Iredell County to Clark Creek – 9.7 miles in length
- Irish Buffalo Creek Corridor: Rowan County Line to Cabarrus Ave. (in Concord) – 9.9 miles in length
- 8th Street Greenway: Village Park to Bakers Creek Park to 8th St. Park – 1.4 miles in length
- Connector: 8th Street Greenway to Main St. in Downtown Kannapolis

## **Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan for Rowan County Communities (October 2014)**

Priority corridor routes identified through Kannapolis include:

- Landis Corridor: Downtown Landis to 8th Street Greenway
- 8th Street Greenway: 8th St. Park to Bakers Creek Park to Village Park
- Connector: 8th Street Greenway to Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway

## **LEVEL OF SERVICE**

The Level of Service (LOS) utilized in the development of this Master Plan was established in the 2014 master plan and remains in effect for this update.

The needs that are identified in the plan are rather conservative. Even taking this conservative approach, the recommendations in this document should lead the City to develop parks and facilities comparable to most other communities of similar size.

## **Keeping LOS Updated**

The Level of Service assessment for an agency is an ongoing process. The needs of any community change over time as the population changes, recreation trends change, etc. While this plan has established a Level of



Service for both parks and recreation facilities, it is important that the City monitors its progress in meeting citizens' LOS and identify changes in the community that warrant changes in the LOS. This review and update should be conducted every 3-5 years by City staff. These updates should be documented so they can be monitored throughout time.

## PARK NEEDS

The park sites and acreage needs assessment are reflected in Table 3.1.

### Mini Parks

A standard of 0.10 acres for every 1,000 people in the service population has been established for Mini Parks. This LOS of development is less than the standard used by many North Carolina communities but reflects a trend in park development away from Mini Parks. Based on this service level, the City will need over 5.5 acres of Mini Parks in the next ten years.



*Village Park*

Mountain St. Park is technically a Mini Park but is essentially a part of Bakers Creek Park. However, several residential communities offer private facilities similar to a Mini Park. Even with these private amenities, there are neighborhoods within the city limits that are not served by a Neighborhood or Mini Park. There may be opportunities to encourage private residential developers to provide Mini Parks in future residential community developments.

The development of Mini Parks by the City is not one of the highest priorities.

### Neighborhood Parks

Many communities develop Neighborhood Parks with a LOS of 1.5 - 2 acres of park land per 1,000 people. Based on the understanding the City would like to minimize the development of smaller parks due to maintenance concerns, the service level set for Neighborhood Parks by this Master Plan is 1 acre per 1,000 people. Utilizing this level of development there will be a need for over 70 acres of Neighborhood Parks over the next ten years. Assuming most Neighborhood Parks are in the 5-15 acre range, there is a need for five to six Neighborhood Parks.

The City of Kannapolis does not currently have any Neighborhood Parks. Since the 2014 plan two proposed neighborhood/community park sites have been identified, master planned, and property acquired for each. These two parks would provide parks on both the east and west sides of Kannapolis.

As noted in the previous section on Mini Parks, the most economical means of developing Neighborhood Parks could also be working with private residential developers in the expansion/development of Mini Parks or Neighborhood Parks as new single family and multi-family developments are planned.

### Community Parks

Based on a park land/population ratio of 3.5 acres per 1,000 population, citizens of Kannapolis have a current

demand for approximately 194.24 acres of Community Park land. Assuming an average Community Park is  $\pm 30$  acres, this indicates a current demand for five Community Parks. In 2034, when the City's population has increased to 70,000, there will be a demand for six Community Parks.

Kannapolis currently has three parks functioning as Community Parks (Walter M. Safrit Park, Village Park, Bakers Creek Park). Based on the Level of Services established for this Master Plan there is currently a need for two additional Community Parks. By 2034, the City's need for this park type will increase to three additional Community Parks.

One of the two parks mentioned above (Eastside or Westside Park) could help start to address this need. In addition to these parks, the City should look for land in the Little Texas community, Coddle Creek Reservoir/Kannapolis Parkway area as well as the developing Northeast Quadrant. With the public's desire to see the City become more engaged in programming youth athletics, there will be a need for Community Parks with a focus on active recreation.

### District Parks

Utilizing a standard of 2.5 acres per 1,000 for District Park development (a very conservative LOS based on standards utilized by most communities) there is a need for one District Park to serve the citizens of Kannapolis.

Vietnam Veterans Park, a county owned facility, serves as Kannapolis' District Park. This park is an important recreation asset to the citizens of Kannapolis. Vietnam Veterans Park meets the current and future needs for a District Park in Kannapolis. Section Four describes the importance of this park in greater detail and discusses measures the City may take to ensure this park is fully utilized (and developed) to its full potential.

### Regional Parks

Two excellent State Parks (Lake Norman and Morrow Mountain) are within easy driving distance of Kannapolis. These large Regional Parks meet the passive recreation needs of Kannapolis citizens. Development of a Regional Park should not be a priority for the City.

## FACILITY NEEDS

Level of Service for recreational facilities (i.e., ballfields, courts, picnic shelters, etc.) proposed for the Department were developed from a review of LOS the number of public facilities needed in the park system through the planning period (2024 to 2034), are identified in Table 3.2 - Facilities, "Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment Current and 10 Year Needs" (summarized on the following chart on page 3-6). A more detailed discussion of each of the facility needs is provided in Section Four: Proposals, Recommendations & Objectives.



*Carousel at Village Park*

The "Existing Facilities" column indicates the number of existing recreation facilities the City currently

provides. The “2034 Need” column identifies the total number of additional facilities needed by 2034 (ten-year need). The “Current Need” column further refines the City’s recreation facility needs by identifying the number of new facilities currently needed (this number is included in the “2034 Need” column).

As an example of how the needs assessment is presented; consider playgrounds. Currently the City has 7 existing playgrounds. Based on the LOS that has been recommended for the City (one playground for every 3,000 people in the service population), there is a current demand for 19 playgrounds ( $55,500 \div 3,000 = 18.5$ ); therefore, the City needs to construct 11 additional playgrounds (demand of 19 – 8 existing playgrounds) to meet the current demand. By 2034, with the increase in population, the demand will grow to 23 playgrounds ( $70,000 \div 3,000 = 23$ ); therefore by 2034, the City will need to build 15 new playgrounds.

Based on the LOS identified in Table 3.2 - Facilities,

**Table 3.2 - Facilities (FAC)**  
**Kannapolis**

**Recreation Facilities Needs Assessment Current and 10 Year Needs**

	2024 Standard	Existing Facilities	Current Demand (55,500)	Current Need	2034 Demand (70,000)	2034 Need (70,000)
<b>Fields</b>						
Adult Baseball	1/50,000	0	1	1	1	1
Youth Baseball	1/8,000	1	7	6	9	8
Softball	1/10,000	3	6	3	7	4
Football	1/20,000	1	3	2	4	3
Soccer	1/5,000	1	11	10	14	13
Multi-purpose						
<b>Courts</b>						
Basketball (outdoor)	1/10,000	2.5	6	3	7	5
Volleyball	1/10,000	6	6	0	7	1
Pickleball	1/8,000	0	7	7	9	9
Tennis	1/5,000	4	11	7	14	10
Court Games*	1/10,000	7	6	-1	7	0
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>						
Playgrounds	1/3,000	8	19	11	23	15
Picnic Shelters	1/2,500	15	22	7	28	13
<b>Greenways/Trails</b>						
Walking/Hiking/Cycling	0.4 miles/1,000	5.1	22	17	28	23
<b>Specialized</b>						
Recreation Center**	1/25,000	1	2	1	3	2
Swimming Pool**	1/25,000	1	2	1	3	2
Splashpad	1/20,000	1	3	2	4	3
Disc Golf	1/20,000	1	3	2	4	3
Skate Park	1/50,000	0	1	1	1	1
Dog Park	1/20,000	0	3	3	4	4
Amphitheater	1/20,000	1	3	2	4	3
Community Garden	1/20,000	1	3	2	4	3

\*Court Games = Horseshoes/Shuffleboard/Cornhole, etc.

\*\*YMCA swimming pool, gymnasium & fitness center serves some Kannapolis residents



**Table 3.1 - Park Acreage (PA)  
Kannapolis**

**Park Sites and Acreage Needs Assessment  
Current and 10 Year Needs**

<b>Park Types</b>	<b>2024 Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Standard for Development</b>	<b>Current Demand 55,500</b>	<b>Current Need 55,500</b>	<b>2034 Demand 70,000</b>	<b>2034 Need 70,000</b>
<b>Mini Parks</b>	1 Park 2.56 Acres	1-2 Acres/Park (.1 Acres/1,000)	3 Parks 5.5 Acres	Needs to be met by Developers	4 Parks 7 Acres	Needs to be met by Developers
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	No Neighborhood Parks	5-15 Acres/Park (1 Acres/1,000)	3 Parks 55 Acres	3 New Neighborhood Parks 55 Acres	4 Parks 70 Acres	1 New Neighborhood Park 15 Acres
<b>Community Parks</b>	3 Parks 72.38 Acres	25-70 Acres/Park (3.5 Acres/1,000)	5 Parks 194.25 Acres	3 New Community Parks 121.87 Acres	6 Parks 245 Acres	1 New Community Park 50 Acres
<b>District Parks</b>	1 Park 90 Acres	100-200 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/ 1,000)	1 Park 138.75 Acres	Needs Met	2 Parks 175 Acres	1 New District Park 100 Acres
<b>Regional Parks</b>	State Parks	±200 Acres/Park (10 Acres/1,000)	1 Park 555 Acres	Needs Met by State Parks	1-2 Parks 700 Acres	Needs Met by State Parks

Existing parks

Mini Parks: Mountain St. Park

Community Parks: Bakers Creek Park, Village Park, Walter M. Safrit Park

Community Parks (Planned): Eastside Park, Westside Park

District Parks: Vietnam Veterans Park (Cabarrus Co. Park)

Civic Parks: West Ave Linear Park, Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park, Kannapolis Cemetery, Veterans Park, Horseshoe Property

Specialty Parks: Atrium Health Baseball Stadium, Pleasant Ave. Youth Fields

Specialty Facilities: Gem Theatre, Swannee Theatre

Greenway: Irish Buffalo Greenway, Rocky River Greenway, Bakers Creek/8<sup>th</sup> St./Village Park Greenway



*Walter M. Safrir Park*

## **Section Four**

# **Proposals, Recommendations & Objectives**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Like all of Kannapolis' municipal services, the Parks and Recreation Department is a relatively new department. While many of North Carolina's towns and cities have been in the parks and recreation business for 50 to 100 years, the Kannapolis Department was started in 2000. The Department has made great strides in the 24 years since it was formed. Today, the City's parks are recognized as an important community asset and tens of thousands of Kannapolis residents use the City's parks regularly.

Currently, the City offers its citizens over 285 acres of park land (including Vietnam Veterans Park) and a wide variety of outdoor recreation facilities. Even with +285 acres of park land and several outstanding parks, there are areas where improvements are needed. There are some neighborhoods that do not have immediate access to parks, there are deficiencies in some recreational facilities, there is a need for a public indoor recreation facility, a swimming facility, and there are additional needs with regard to walking trails and greenway connections between parks.

Identification of these recreational needs/opportunities come at a time when Kannapolis (like most communities in North Carolina) continues to stretch capital budgets over several municipal departments. Finding the revenue to improve parks must be balanced with the reality of the current economic conditions. A successful approach will require a balanced Plan of Action (discussed in Section Five: Action Plan Implementation) built on partnerships with other community agencies.

Kannapolis is not alone in its mission to provide parks and recreational facilities to its citizens. There are a number of public and private agencies and organizations in the community that share in that role.

Kannapolis City Schools offer its students a wide range of athletic facilities. Some of those facilities are currently being used by the City for non-school recreational purposes. While there is currently some joint use of facilities, the exploration and expansion of additional joint use opportunities would benefit taxpayers.

In addition to Kannapolis City Schools, there are several schools operated by Cabarrus County Schools in the City of Kannapolis' service area. While these school facilities provide some recreational opportunities to the citizens of Kannapolis, access to these schools is limited. Therefore, facilities at these schools have not been included in the development of the City's recreational Needs Assessment.

Cabarrus and Rowan Counties offer programs and facilities through their parks departments. These facilities and programs provide some recreation opportunities for city residents. While Rowan County's parks are not a major provider of parks and recreation to Kannapolis residents, Vietnam Veterans Park (a Cabarrus County park) is an important part of Kannapolis' park resources. Joint use opportunities with both county agencies should be explored.

Two other major players with the mission of improving community health and quality of life are the Cabarrus Health Alliance and Atrium Health. The City should look for opportunities to partner with the hospital system and the Health Alliance in the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

The Carolina Thread Trail (and Catawba Lands Conservancy) also support the region in assisting with funding and resources for land acquisition for open space and greenway and trail development.

Finally, the private sector plays an important role in providing recreational opportunities in the community. A number of fitness clubs, neighborhood swim clubs, churches, and other private or quasi-private organizations provide valuable recreation opportunities to the citizens of Kannapolis. The facilities and programs these private sector organizations provide should be considered as Kannapolis plans development of future facilities.

Perhaps the most important of these private/quasi-public organizations is the Cannon Memorial YMCA. The YMCA is an important community partner in Kannapolis and serves many of the City's residents. Currently, the YMCA provides the City's only public (through membership) gymnasium and swimming facilities. Determining how this facility affects the City's need to provide indoor and aquatic recreation opportunities is an important component of this plan.



To determine specific park and recreation recommendations for Kannapolis, it is essential to clearly understand how the City will interface with these other recreational providers in the community. This cooperative effort will eliminate duplication of facilities and services. The proposals in this Master Plan are based on what each recreational provider is anticipated to offer through the ten-year planning period (2024-2034).



## State of North Carolina

Two State Parks (Lake Norman State Park and Morrow Mountain State Park) are within a relatively short drive of Kannapolis. It is anticipated that the State of North Carolina will continue to maintain and operate all State Parks within the region. The City, along with other nearby government agencies, should express their interest in seeing these parks enhanced to their utmost potential. This includes the expansion of facilities and recreational offerings. The State should continue to offer a variety of recreational facilities and programs on a regional basis. In addition, the State should be the provider of regional State Parks that include opportunities for camping, fishing, biking, and special facilities of regional and statewide interest.

## Surrounding Park and Recreation Agencies

The Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department is not the only recreation provider in the area. Cabarrus County, through its Active Living and Parks Department, provides parks and recreation services to county residents. One of the County's District Parks, Vietnam Veterans Park, is in the city limits of Kannapolis and serves many City residents. The City and County currently work together in this park. As discussed in greater detail in the section on District Parks, Kannapolis should initiate a formal discussion with Cabarrus County to explore the possibility of taking ownership of Vietnam Veterans Park.

In addition to Cabarrus County, Rowan County has a Parks and Recreation Department. Residents in the northern areas of Kannapolis are actually Rowan County residents. Unfortunately, most of Rowan County parks are in the northern area of Rowan County and not easily accessible to city residents. Sloan Park, at the Kerr Mill Historic Site is the closest Rowan County Park to Kannapolis.

Mecklenburg County, to the west, provides and manages two Nature Preserves at the County line. Brackett Bluff and West Branch Nature Preserves provide 150 acres of greenspace that can easily be connected to via the Rocky River Greenway.

Kannapolis' next-door neighbors, Landis and Concord, both have parks and recreation departments and offer their citizens a variety of parks and recreation opportunities. Both Departments have plans for future Greenway development that could link with the City's Greenways.

All park and recreation agencies operating within the region should meet annually to communicate with each other in an effort to minimize duplication and maximize cooperative planning.

## Kannapolis City Schools

The Parks and Recreation Department has a tradition of collaborating with other agencies and organizations in the delivery of quality leisure experiences and the development and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The City has partnered with Kannapolis City Schools in the development of outdoor facilities at Kannapolis City Schools. These facilities serve the needs of both the school and citizens as public park facilities.

At this time, the relationship between the City's Parks and Recreation Department and schools seem to be meeting everyone's needs. In the future, cooperative efforts could be expanded.

## Atrium Health

Citizens of Kannapolis have access to an outstanding medical facility in Atrium Health. This facility provides residents of Kannapolis and the surrounding area with excellent healthcare. Recent studies on obesity and

healthy lifestyles have made it apparent that a community's health is linked to regular physical activity. Many of these activities are offered by the City's Parks and Recreation Department.

The Hospital and the Parks and Recreation Department should explore opportunities to work together to assist citizens in achieving a more active lifestyle.

## **CITY OF KANNAPOLIS PROPOSALS, RECOMMENDATIONS & OBJECTIVES**

The Parks and Recreation Department currently affords its citizens a variety of recreation opportunities through its parks and recreation facilities. These parks provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation.

The City's park system is primarily oriented toward larger parks (Community and Civic). Currently, there are only two small parks included in its park system.

The City's existing parks provide a solid foundation of Civic Parks for community events and family recreation. While the City has several outstanding parks, some types of recreation facilities are limited. There are a number of areas where expansion and improvements are needed.

The Parks and Recreation Department must work with other agencies in the community to provide the park land and facilities that will be required. This collaborative effort should include working with the local school boards, the surrounding counties, and adjacent municipal departments to minimize duplication of facilities by developing and maintaining joint use agreements wherever possible.

## **PARK NEEDS**

Through the planning and public involvement process, LOS for park acreage and recreation facilities have been developed. These LOS were defined in Section Three: Level of Service for Parks & Recreation Facilities; Needs Assessment and identified in Table 3.1 - Park Acreage and Table 3.2- Facilities.

Utilizing the LOS for development and applying them to the city's current and projected population, a Needs Assessment for both parks and recreation facilities was developed. The summary of this Needs Assessment is found in the tables at the end of Section Three.

While the tables provide "the numbers" of the Needs Assessment, this section will define the reasoning behind the numbers and a description of how the numbers are used to provide recommendations that will ultimately guide the Department in the coming decade.

We begin with an overview of the different park types found in the City's system, and how these parks should be developed in the future.

### **Regional Parks**

Regional Parks are typically large, passive oriented parks that highlight, utilize, and protect a unique feature.

These parks, as the name implies, serve people from across a region; therefore, most people have to travel to enjoy these park types. As noted in Section Three, Regional Parks are typically offered by national, state, or county agencies. Occasionally, municipalities with populations of 100,000 or more may provide a Regional Park.

The State of North Carolina, through its State Parks Division, operates two Regional Parks in the Kannapolis area. Lake Norman State Park and Morrow Mountain State Park provide a wide variety of active and passive recreation opportunities, as well as environmental education and public open space. The existence of these excellent parks within easy driving distance of Kannapolis allows the City to focus its park development and operational efforts on other park types.

## District Parks

District Parks are another large park type often provided by county agencies or larger municipalities. These parks are typically in the 100-acre range and provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities.

The development of this type of facility often falls to county agencies. Vietnam Veterans Park serves as a District Park for the citizens of Kannapolis. Located within the city limits of Kannapolis, this park is accessible to city residents. This park was developed as a collaborative effort between the City of Kannapolis, Cabarrus County and the Church of God. The land is owned by the City and the Church and is leased to Cabarrus County. The County currently operates the park.



*Vietnam Veterans Park*

The park offers a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities. Its undeveloped areas also provide valuable green space and the potential for additional facility development. The City has indicated an interest in exploring the feasibility of transferring ownership of this park. A park transfer could open the door for additional improvements to park facilities and provide a higher level of programming. It is a recommendation of this report that the City further explore the potential benefits and liabilities of some form of ownership and operational transfer of this park with Cabarrus County. Exploring this opportunity should be a priority for the Department.

While the current need for a District Park is met by Vietnam Veterans Park, there will be a need for a new District Park by 2034.

## Community Parks

Community Parks are an important component in most municipal park systems. These parks are usually large enough (25-70 acres) to provide valuable active recreation opportunities and preservation of undeveloped open space and passive recreation areas.

The City of Kannapolis has three Community Parks. Each of the three parks offers very unique recreational experiences to the users. All of these parks are located in the north central area of the city.



Village Park is the City's "Central Park." It was one of the City's first parks and serves as a focal point for civic pride and community events. The recreational opportunities in this park are family oriented. Picnicking, playground, splash pad, train rides and concerts; all family-oriented activities that bring lots of people to the park. Since the development of the 2014 plan, improvements to Village Park have included the addition of a carousel, 2nd train and a greenroom for the amphitheater.



*A train ride is one of many activities at Village Park*

Walter M. Safrit Park, another important Community Park, is oriented to team sports and athletics. Two softball fields and a soccer field provide excellent facilities for youth and adult sports. A walking trail, picnic shelter and a playground provide recreation facilities for those not playing sports.

Bakers Creek Park, the City's largest park, provides some active recreation opportunities, but is largely under-developed and provides more passive recreation opportunities.

Community Parks are typically an important component of municipal department park systems. Based on a relatively conservative LOS (3.5 acres per 1,000 population), there is currently a need for two additional Community Parks in Kannapolis. By 2034, there will be a need for a third new Community Park.

One potential Community Park site could be located in the vicinity of the Little Texas Community to provide another facility in eastern Kannapolis.

A second Community Park site should be explored for the western area of the city. One option for this park site might be west of Kannapolis Parkway, adjacent to Don T. Howell Lake; providing a much needed water access for City residents.

A third Community Park will be needed in the northeast quadrant of the city in Rowan County to serve the anticipated growth in the area. As noted in the section on athletic facilities, this Community Park should be designed with multi-purpose athletic fields to meet the growing demand for soccer and other youth sports.

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks play an important role in providing both active and passive recreation in most municipal park systems. These parks, usually in the 5-15 acre range, are large enough to include both active and passive recreation opportunities. Typically, municipal park systems rely heavily on Neighborhood Parks.

Kannapolis does not currently have a Neighborhood Park. Neighborhood Parks would provide opportunities for people to visit parks for activities like playgrounds, walking, picnics, etc. within their neighborhoods. Some of the city's planned neighborhoods have amenity areas that serve homeowners, but many neighborhoods within the city do not have access to this park type.

Based on a very conservative Level of Service (LOS) for Neighborhood Park development (1 acre/1,000

population), there is a need for three to four new Neighborhood Parks in the next ten years. The development of these Neighborhood Parks should be considered.

## Mini Parks

Mini Parks are the smallest of the park types. These parks typically are less than an acre and provide a limited range of activities (playground, picnic shelter, benches, etc.). The City currently has one Mini Park; Mountain Street Park.

Mini Parks, like Neighborhood Parks, provide relatively limited recreation facilities, but are located in close proximity to the service population they serve.

As noted under Neighborhood Parks, the development of several smaller Mini Parks would provide “walk to” opportunities in many neighborhoods.

Utilizing a very conservative LOS for development (.1 acre/1,000 population), there is a need for two additional Mini Parks in the next ten years.

Several of Kannapolis’ planned residential communities have park and recreational facilities similar to Mini Parks and Neighborhood Parks. These facilities provide recreational opportunities to residents living within the community. These existing facilities provide valuable opportunities for recreation and should be taken into consideration when planning future parks.

The City’s UDO requires developers of major subdivisions to dedicate public open space. This dedication requirement could provide land for future Mini and Neighborhood Parks.

## Civic Parks

Civic Parks are community spaces that often provide a sense of place for a town or city. The size and form of Civic Parks may vary considerably. Likewise, the use and programming of these spaces vary. Civic Parks may include urban plazas, community green spaces and lawns, memorials, etc.

Kannapolis already has several wonderful civic places in its downtown area. Village Park has been a community treasure of Kannapolis residents for generations. Recent improvements to the park make it a continued destination for family outings and special events.

In addition to Village Park, the City recently made significant improvements through the development of West Avenue Linear Park and the Atrium Health Ballpark complex, bringing more recreation opportunities into the Downtown. The Horseshoe property in front of City Hall currently provides additional greenspace, but should be master planned.

The Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park and Veterans Park also provide important civic green spaces in the downtown area.

These five important civic spaces adequately meet the community’s need for Civic Parks.



*Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park*

## Greenways

The most popular outdoor recreation activity in the nation is walking. This popularity was reflected in the surveys that were conducted as part of this planning study and in comments made during the public meetings. Greenway trails are typically off- road trails that meander through neighborhoods and natural areas providing transportation corridors and recreational opportunities for walkers, joggers, roller bladers, and cyclists. The trail surface can either be natural or paved. Paved trails are normally eight to ten feet in width. Natural surface trail widths can vary based on conditions.



*Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway*

Greenways also offer a valuable alternative to automotive transportation. A Greenway trail often provides a linkage between communities, schools, churches, businesses, and parks.

The City currently has approximately five miles of constructed Greenway. In the past few years, plans have been developed for another six miles of trails along Irish Buffalo Creek and Rocky River. This will be an important asset to the City and should be a priority.

Rocky River Greenway and Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway are important Greenway corridors that will connect Kannapolis with Concord and Mecklenburg County and will serve residents throughout the city. The continued development of Rocky River and Irish Buffalo Creek Greenways should continue to be one of the City's priorities.

The City should also consider planning a greenway corridor along Afton Run to connect Kannapolis Parkway at I85 with NC 3. Bakers Creek/Village Park/8th St. Greenway should be extended north into Rowan County towards Landis and a future park in the northeast quadrant.

Greenways should be developed in conjunction with other park and recreation providers in the area (Cabarrus County, Concord, Landis, Carolina Thread Trail, etc.) to ensure they are coordinated with other planning efforts and that there is continuity between plans.

## Bikeways

The need for bikeable roads and the development of Greenways for biking was mentioned in the survey and in the public meeting. With the focus on healthy lifestyles, the environment, and alternative transportation, there is a great need to develop and implement a current bike plan.

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

The City should consider applying for federal SAFETEA program non-vehicular transportation funds that encourage alternative means of transportation. These funds have been used to construct bike lanes and Greenway trails in communities throughout North Carolina.



## RENOVATION & EXPANSION OF EXISTING PARKS

While the focus of the previous recommendations has been on the acquisition and development of new parks, there is also a need to improve and expand facilities at many of the City's existing parks. As part of the ongoing planning and budgeting process, the Parks and Recreation Department annually establishes a list of capital improvement projects. This list of capital improvement needs is then used by the Department and elected officials to establish yearly capital improvement budgets.

Important renovation/expansion projects which should be considered include:

- Walter M. Safrit Park
- Vietnam Veterans Park
- Bakers Creek Park
- Pleasant Avenue, Youth Fields

## MASTER PLANS FOR FUTURE PARK IMPROVEMENTS

As noted in previous sections, Master Plans should be developed for several of the City's existing parks and future parks. Parks and facilities that warrant special study include:

- Bakers Creek
- Walter M. Safrit
- Vietnam Veterans
- Future Community and Neighborhood Parks
  - » Coddle Creek/Kannapolis Parkway Area
  - » Little Texas Community
  - » Northeast Quadrant

## FACILITY PROPOSALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This report recommends the City should expand Vietnam Veterans Park, develop three Community Parks, develop smaller neighborhood parks, and make improvements to its existing parks by the year 2034. The improvements that will be made as part of these expansions and renovations will add many new facilities to the parks inventory.

In addition to these facility recommendations, an important program recommendation that came from public input was to place higher emphasis on development of greenways, nature parks, access to water (city lakes) and the provision of open space.

The City should consider the list of facility needs established in Section Three and described in greater detail as follows:

### Adult Baseball

Over the past five to ten years, the popularity of adult baseball has waned, both locally and across the nation. Based on this trend, a LOS of one field per 50,000 people for the development of adult baseball fields is still recommended. Utilizing this standard of field development, the City does not have a pressing need for an adult baseball field but may need one in the future.

## Youth Baseball

Youth baseball is still a very popular sport in North Carolina and that popularity is evident in Kannapolis. The City has only one youth baseball field. If the City becomes more engaged in youth sports programming, there will be greater demand for youth fields. Utilizing a LOS of one field for every 8,000 people (a relatively conservative LOS), there is a current need for six additional fields, plus two more fields in the next ten years.



*Atrium Health Ballpark*

## Softball

Men's and women's adult softball has traditionally been a popular sport in North Carolina. This plan recommends a LOS development of one field per 10,000 people (comparable to other North Carolina communities). Based on this standard, the City currently has a need for two or three additional softball fields. City growth could result in the need for an additional field in the future.

## Football

Football's popularity as a community-based youth sport has been reduced by the emergence of soccer and (more recently) lacrosse. The LOS for development of football fields is one field for every 20,000 people within the service community. This standard results in the need for two additional fields.

## Soccer

Soccer continues to be a fast-growing sport in America. Local demand for the sport was still voiced during the community engagement. This Master Plan reflects this demand by establishing a LOS of one field for every 5,000 people within the service population. Utilizing this standard for development, the City needs ten additional fields immediately and will need three additional fields by 2034.

The City wisely lights its athletic fields, which effectively doubles their use. Likewise, the development of synthetic turf fields could greatly increase playing time on existing fields and reduce the number of fields needed.

A final note on soccer, the demand for multi-purpose fields will be made more intense by the continued interest in lacrosse. Played on a field very similar to a soccer field (they are slightly larger than soccer fields), lacrosse continues to increase in popularity and should be considered as the City reviews its soccer field needs. This new sport should be taken into consideration since play for both sports can be programmed on similar fields. One method to accommodate the variety of field games (soccer, lacrosse, rugby, football) is to develop larger multi-use fields that can be used for a variety of field games.

## Basketball (Outdoor)

Basketball remains an extremely popular sport in the United States. Played by a variety of ages, and increasingly by females, this sport can be played either indoors or out. Currently, the City provides two

full courts and one half court outdoor basketball court but does not provide any indoor facilities. Based on national and state LOS of one outdoor basketball court per 10,000 people, the City has a need for an additional three to four basketball courts.

In addition to outdoor courts, there is a need for indoor courts as well. See the section on Community Centers and Gymnasiums for the community's need for indoor courts.

## **Tennis**

Based on input received in stakeholder interviews and the public workshops, tennis remains a relatively popular sport in Kannapolis. Currently, the city has only four public courts. These courts are in average condition and need to be improved. In addition to the public courts, there are six courts at the high school, but these courts are not always available to the public.

Utilizing a relatively conservative LOS of facility development (one court per 3,000 people) there is a current need for seven additional courts. By 2034, with the growth in population, the need will increase to ten new courts.

One option to meet the majority of this demand for these courts would be the development of a tennis complex (8-12 courts) at Vietnam Veterans Park.

It is important to note that this Needs Assessment of tennis courts is based on the assumption that the City rebuilds the existing tennis courts (4) at Bakers Creek Park.

## **Pickleball**

The sport of pickleball has gained much momentum and popularity since the 2014 plan. The City does not currently have any pickleball courts. Based on an LOS of 1 court per 8,000 people, the City needs 7 pickleball courts to meet the current need with an additional two courts needed by 2034. One possibility is to redevelop two of the tennis courts at Bakers Creek park as pickleball courts.

## **Volleyball**

The City has six outdoor volleyball courts which meet current demands. Courts could be constructed in the future if demand is expressed. Volleyball courts are relatively small and can easily be added to existing parks.

## **Court Games**

Court games cover several types of low activity recreational outlets including shuffleboard, horseshoes, cornhole, table tennis, etc. These activities provide opportunities for social interaction, particularly for older citizens.

The City currently has two shuffleboard courts and five horseshoe pits. Based on a very conservative LOS (one court per 10,000 people) there is not an immediate need for more court games.

The City may consider providing additional court games in parks if there is a demand for this activity in the future. Court games are relatively small and can easily be added to existing parks.



## Picnic Shelters

Based on a LOS of one shelter per 2,500 people, there is a need for seven additional shelters. Picnicking and the need for picnic shelters has risen over the past 2-3 years as a result of more families wanting to conduct social distancing in an outdoor environment.

## Playgrounds

The City has eight playgrounds in its parks. There is a need for eleven additional playgrounds. As new parks are developed, Kannapolis should look for locations for additional playgrounds. Larger parks may warrant more than one playground. Safety inspections and ADA accessibility audits should be conducted at all existing playgrounds.



*Playground at Village Park*

As new playgrounds are completed and existing playgrounds renovated, the Department should replace wood fiber and sand surfaces with poured in place (PIP) safety surfacing or synthetic turf. PIP and turf surfaces provide wheelchair accessibility and reduce maintenance and lifecycle costs of the playgrounds.

## Greenways/Trails

Walking is the number one outdoor recreational activity in the United States. Walking or biking trail use scored high in the public survey ( $\pm 70\%$  indicated they are interested in using trails). Greenways/Trails also scored the highest in the public meetings as the most important facility as well as the facility people would most want funded.

With this level of public demand, the development of greenways and trails should continue to be a priority for future park development. A priority should be placed on greenway and/or trail development in all existing and future parks. A paved walking trail is an important component of all park types, and should be provided within and/or connecting to all Neighborhood, Community and District Parks.

The City has already constructed the first phases of greenway along Irish Buffalo Creek and Rocky River as well as the connector between Bakers Creek/8th St. and Village Parks. Approximately 5 miles of greenway has been constructed to date. The development of additional phases of greenway should be a priority for future park development. Currently, Kannapolis should be providing 22 miles of greenway, so would need 17 additional miles now, plus another 6 miles by 2034.

In addition to developing the next phases of Rocky River Greenway and Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway, the City should develop a Greenway along Afton Run and connections in Rowan County to Landis and to the future northeast quadrant park.

## Biking Trails

The City should continue to expand opportunities for biking through the development of a Greenway trail system, including paths suitable for biking in existing and future parks, and through encouraging NCDOT

to develop roads with bike lanes or wider shoulders to accommodate bikers. The Parks and Recreation Department should work with other stakeholders to help promote and facilitate new bike- ways throughout the City.

### **Amphitheaters and Neighborhood Performing Areas**

Currently, the City has an outstanding outdoor amphitheater in Village Park. This facility is the site of numerous concerts and special events. It is the most visible facility of recreation programming in the city and is a highly valued community asset. Several stakeholders identified the desire for creating economic impact through festivals and community events. The Village Park amphitheater area provides event space that supports this recommendation.

The City should also make provisions for smaller, neighborhood gathering places for plays, small concerts, and other special events. These facilities would provide a small stage and space for gathering in a more informal manner when compared to a large amphitheater.

## **SPECIAL USE FACILITIES**

### **Community Centers and Gymnasiums**

The City of Kannapolis has several wonderful Community Parks and many very nice outdoor recreation facilities. Unfortunately, its indoor recreation facilities are extremely limited. The City's only programmable indoor recreation facility is the Park Building at Village Park. This wonderful building provides an excellent facility for community events such as weddings, receptions, family reunions, etc. and provides limited opportunities for recreation programming. Unfortunately, the building does not have space or facilities for active indoor recreation (basketball, fitness center, volleyball, etc.).

The Cannon Memorial YMCA located adjacent to Village Park, provides a wide range of indoor recreation opportunities. Unfortunately, it is a member-based facility and a relatively small percentage ( $\pm 15\%$ ) of Kannapolis residents are YMCA members.

Based on input received at the public workshops and from the city-wide survey, many Kannapolis residents would like to have access to indoor recreation facilities, that need is going unmet.

The construction and operation of a multi-use community recreation center is a significant undertaking, but it is the recommendation of this report that the City carefully explore this option. Many of the survey respondents and public meeting attendees discussed the importance of providing indoor parks and recreation facilities and programs that will enhance the quality of life of Kannapolis citizens and attract people and business to the City. The development of better indoor recreation facilities will enhance the City's park and recreation system and will move the City toward that goal.

### **Swimming Pools and Spraygrounds**

In the past, NRPA and NCDENR provided a standard for pool development of one pool for every 20,000 people. This standard was based on the concept of multi neighborhood or community pools.

Today, with the high cost of operation and construction of swimming pools, very few agencies develop neighborhood/community pools to that old standard. Instead, municipalities typically provide more

centralized facilities where one pool may serve a greater population.

The City currently does not provide any aquatic facilities or programs. The Cannon Memorial YMCA offers an indoor pool and there are several private swim clubs in the area, but no public swimming pool is available to city residents that cannot afford a membership fee\*. For a city of Kannapolis' population, this is somewhat unusual.

The demand for an aquatic facility was expressed in the survey and the public workshops. 57% of survey respondents expressed great or moderate interest in a swimming facility. Seventy-one percent said their aquatic needs are not being met. Even with the high cost of construction and operation, many communities with populations over 40,000 offer a public swimming facility. Based on the response from the public workshop and survey there appears to be community demand for a public pool.

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

The YMCA membership represents a relatively small percentage of Kannapolis' population. The 80-85% of Kannapolis residents that do not belong to the YMCA should have access to a pool.

The final decision on an aquatic facility should be worked out in future planning studies, but the City should take the initiative to carefully consider providing some form of aquatic facility.

Spraygrounds (splashpads) are growing in popularity across the country. In addition to offering a water-based play experience, the play structures, sprays, etc. afford children of all ages a total play environment and are much more economical to operate than a standard swimming pool. A properly designed, large water park sprayground can serve as a regional draw, provide revenue to the Department, and provide a beneficial economic impact to the surrounding areas.

The success of the spraygrounds at Village Park and Atrium Health Ballpark is evidence of this popularity. A third sprayground in one of the City's future parks should be considered.

*\*The Cannon Memorial YMCA offers a financial assistance program (Open Doors) for individuals and families if they meet certain financial needs.*

## TRENDS IN PARK & RECREATION FACILITIES

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

One of the downsides of the national and state guidelines is that they are not updated often and fail to incorporate newer trends and activities. In the past decade, several new activities have grown in popularity and should be considered in future park development. These activities include:



## Skateboard Parks and Extreme Sports

Skateboarding has been popular for several decades. In the past decade, many communities have recognized its popularity and have tried to provide a safe and vandal resistant setting for this creative sport. There was some interest in a skateboard park expressed in the survey and public workshops, but this activity ranked relatively low in priority. While not an immediate priority, a skateboard park may be considered as a future amenity.

## Disc Golf

Disc golf did not receive significant demand in the survey, but nationally the popularity of the sport continues to grow. The City currently has one disc golf course. Disc golf courses are inexpensive and have minimal impact on the land. The City may consider the development of a second disc golf course in the future.

## Off-leash Dog Areas

Off-leash dog areas are one of the growing trends in park development. The popularity of these facilities (also known as Dog Parks) is a response to the nation's love of pets. Communities throughout North Carolina are now constructing Dog Parks. Several people suggested a Dog Park at the public workshops.

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

There is a currently a need for 3-4 dog parks to be constructed around the City.

## Community Gardens

Community gardens provide a wide variety of community enhancements. They offer health benefits by providing local gardeners with fresh vegetables and increased exercise as they tend the gardens. They also provide environmental benefits by reducing transportation costs for food production and providing more plant cover, which reduces urbanization impacts on climate change. In addition, community gardens provide a venue for social inter- action that reduces isolation and supports community involvement.

With the many benefits provided by community gardens, many parks and recreation agencies are implementing community garden programs. Community gardens were not listed as priorities in either the survey or in the meetings but could be included in master plans for future parks should suitable lands be available and have utility connections.

# DEPARTMENTAL OBJECTIVES - FACILITIES & PROGRAMMING

In summary, these specific recommendations fall into several goals and objectives for the Department. These goals and objectives include:

- **Trail connectivity - destinations / regional greenways & trail systems**
  - » Extend Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway north to Walter Safrir Park/Bakers Creek/8th Street/Village Park
  - » Extend Rocky River Greenway south to Hector Henry II Greenway; north to Brackett Bluff Nature Preserve; west to West Branch Nature Preserve
  - » Master plan and seek key corridor(s) for Afton Run Greenway
  - » Extend greenway from Bakers Creek/8th Street/Village Park towards Landis/ Grants Creek Greenway

- **Master plan “Horseshoe Property” in front of City Hall**
- **Continue upgrades to ensure all parks & facilities are ADA compliant and accessible**
  - » All facilities within each park shall be interconnected and accessible to each other & parking
  - » All facilities should be connected to adjacent neighborhoods, greenways, sidewalk systems
  - » All facilities shall be ADA compliant and promote inclusivity; update restroom facilities
- **Explore expansion opportunities for available land within existing parks**
  - » Master plan existing parks for recreation expansion and/or redevelopment
- **Conduct a feasibility study for a future community recreation center**
  - » Seek location and land acquisition opportunity(ies)
  - » Outline preliminary programming opportunities for indoor & outdoor activities, Senior Games
  - » Consider potential funding alternatives, options
- **Design and construct Eastside and Westside Parks**
  - » Consider potential funding alternatives, options
- **Seek new park development opportunities in areas underserved by parks**
  - » Seek a location to develop a new Community or Neighborhood Park in the Coddle Creek Reservoir/Kannapolis Parkway area; acquire land and prepare a master plan
  - » Seek a location to develop a new Community or Neighborhood Park in the Little Texas community; acquire land and prepare a master plan
  - » Seek a location to develop a new Community or Neighborhood Park and greenway connector in the northeast quadrant (Rowan County) acquire land and prepare a master plan
- **Provide new park facilities/recreation activities in existing or new parks**
  - » Skate Park, Pickleball, Dog Park, Disc Golf, Nature Park



*Dale Earnhardt Tribute Park*

## Section Five

# Action Plan Implementation

### INTRODUCTION

In the previous sections, the City's needs for parks, recreational facilities, and greenways have been identified. Careful planning and strategic thinking will be required if these needs are to be met. This section will identify funding sources for implementing some of the recommendations of this plan and identify possible strategies for funding the proposed recommendations.

Instrumental to the implementation of the Master Plan is the identification of adequate funding for facility development and improvements. Finding adequate funding for parks and recreation is often difficult with the many financial demands most municipalities face. Limited budgets place even greater importance on careful planning to meet projected needs.

While much of the focus of previous sections has been on park and facility improvements, physical improvements are only part of the needs if the City is to offer its citizens parks and recreation services. As City leaders plan for the future, they should also consider several operational and management issues that will position them to meet Citywide needs. This section reviews some of those issues.

This section will look at a Capital Improvements Plan for addressing recommendations found in Section Four



and provide a strategy for raising funds to construct the proposed improvements and new facilities.

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

## REVENUE PLAN

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

### Key Funding/Revenue Sources

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

#### General Tax Revenues (operational and capital)

General tax revenues traditionally provide the principal source of funds for general operations and maintenance of municipal and City parks and recreation departments. Recreation, as a public service, is scheduled along with health, public safety, schools, etc. in annual budgets established by the governing authority. Assessed valuation of real and personal property provides the framework for this major portion of the tax base. This tax base is then used to fund a majority of City services. Currently, funding for parks and recreation/programming services is a relatively small portion of the City's overall budget. If the City wishes to enhance the quality of life and healthy lifestyle opportunities for its residents, the current level of funding for parks and recreation should be increased.

#### Park Foundation (operational and capital)

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

Partners for Parks, a Mecklenburg County based foundation, is committed to the development of Regional Parks, including parks & recreation in Cabarrus County. Partners for Parks is a good example of a foundation developed to support a facility or project. The City should explore ways to work with Partners for Parks or a similar organization should be established specifically for Kannapolis.

#### General Foundations (operational and capital)

Another source of revenue is the direct contribution of money from state and national General Foundations.

Foundation funds should be sought for both development and construction of facilities as well as providing programming. Funding sources should include general-purpose foundations that have relatively few restrictions, special program foundations for specific activities, and corporate foundations with local connections.

### Foundations with Emphasis on Conservation, Healthy Lifestyles, & Parks

Kannapolis is in a position to receive grant funding from a wide variety of public foundations and trusts. Below is a list of funding sources that are particularly applicable.

- The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust has been instrumental in funding projects in North Carolina. Their focus is to improve the quality of life and health.
- The Trust for Public Land and NC Rails to Trails have been instrumental in providing financial and technical assistance for open space conservation and development of greenways in North Carolina.
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) is the nation's largest philanthropic organization devoted specifically to the public's health. RWJF promotes change through partnerships and collaboration, with the goal of building a culture of health for all Americans. RWJF generally supports public agencies, universities, and public charities that are tax-exempt.
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation places optimal development of children at the center of all their grants. They concentrate on early childhood development within the context of families and communities. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation's areas of focus are educated kids, healthy kids, secure families, community and civic engagement, and racial equity.
- KaBOOM! is a national non-profit dedicated to providing play opportunities for America's children. They envision a place to play within walking distance of every child. KaBOOM! works with communities, volunteers, and funding partners to build playgrounds throughout the country.
- BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation has invested millions of dollars in communities across the state. They support opportunities that have an impact on the health of our state. Their areas of focus are health of vulnerable populations, healthy active communities, and community impact through non-profit excellence.
- Playworks Grants Database is a good resource for grants. Examples found within this database are:
  - » Cigna Health through its Cigna Group Foundation supports organizations that enhance health in individuals, families, and communities. They offer grants up to \$5,000.
  - » The Home Depot and Lowe's, through their foundations, offer grants towards improving community health.
  - » People For Bikes provides a community grant program that provides grants up to \$10,000 to improve infrastructure and programs that make it easier and safer for people of all ages and abilities to bike.
  - » Another source of local assistance may be large corporations with foundations established to provide grants for public projects. Companies such as Bank of America, REI, and Duke Energy often have available funding through existing grant programs, or they may be interested in creating a program or partnership for specific projects.
- The Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) offers grant funding opportunities towards land acquisition, planning & design, and construction of greenways and trails that are shown as primary corridors within the CTT Master plans for the 15 counties that comprise the CTT regional network.

The City should actively pursue grants from foundation and trust sources on a regional and national level. Information on trusts and foundations can be found through the Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003-3076 (<http://foundationcenter.org/>) and the Non-Profit Gateway to Federal Government agencies (<http://www.usa.gov/index.shtml>).

### General Obligation Bonds (capital)

General tax revenue for parks and recreation is usually devoted to current operations and maintenance of existing facilities. General obligation bonds are often used to finance capital improvements in parks. The State of North Carolina gives municipal and City governments the authority to accomplish this borrowing of funds for parks and recreation through the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). For purposes of paying the debt service on the sale of these bonds, government bodies are often required to increase property taxes. Total bonding capacities for these government agencies are limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

Kannapolis has not used this method of financing park improvements in the past. In view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, borrowing funds to acquire new land and develop facilities may be a consideration. Response from the City-wide survey indicated there may be support for additional spending to develop parks.

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

### Revenue Bonds (capital)

Revenue bonds are used for financing high use specialty facilities like recreation centers, aquatic centers, greenways, and complexes for softball and soccer. The users, and other revenue sources, pay for operations and sometimes repay the bonds. This revenue source would only be of use to the City if they choose to change their tax subsidy policy for using this type of funding. The City most likely would not seek out this option.

The legal requirements for utilizing these funding mechanisms are complicated and can require approval from the state legislature, however, use of revenue bonds might be something to consider in the near future.

### Limited Option or Special Use Tax (capital)

Limited option or special use taxes can be established in various ways. A municipality can establish the tax by determining the source, such as property valuation, real estate transfer taxes, or sales tax. This option requires legislative approval. Typically, special use taxes are structured on sales tax or transfer taxes and are earmarked for a specific project. A governing body can approve a tax that is identified or earmarked on property valuation; however, other sources may require state approval. The idea behind a special option or limited option tax is that the tax is identified or limited for a special purpose, or projects and the duration can also be limited to accomplishing the projects.

The City does not currently levy an occupancy tax on hotel rooms to help fund travel and tourism operation and promote local tourism. Many travel and tourism authorities throughout North Carolina utilize this funding source to make improvements to recreation facilities that attract tourists. This funding source could



be considered in the development of athletic fields, trails and water access, or recreation centers that might enhance tourism.

### Federal and State Assistance (capital)

Federal and state funding sources are available to assist financing capital improvement recommendations found in this plan. Many of these grant opportunities are administered through the NC Division of Parks & Recreation (DPR).

LWCF - One of the oldest park funding sources has been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Bakers Creek Park was funded with monies from this funding source when it was a Cabarrus County park. Funding through this program in North Carolina has been sporadic but has been re-energized over the past few years.

PARTF - The North Carolina General Assembly passed a bill in 1994 creating a consistent source of funds for parks and recreation in the state. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) provides money for capital improvements, repairs, renovations, and land acquisition of state and local parks. Originally, revenues from the state's portion of the real estate deed transfer tax supported the fund. Revenues vary from year to year. The structure of this funding source has recently gone through changes based on legislative action. While the funding structure for this fund has changed, it appears PARTF will continue to fund park and recreation facilities in North Carolina for the foreseeable future.

Of the funds allocated, 65% go to the state parks system, 30% provide matching grants to local governments, and the remaining 5% go to the Coastal and Estuarine Water Beach Access Program. The maximum matching grant is limited to \$500,000 for a single project. The PARTF system allows an agency to apply for a 50/50 cost-sharing grant to develop or acquire park land and facilities.

PARTF funds have been used by the City in the construction of Bakers Creek Park, Walter Safrit Park and the first two phases of Village Park with the last award occurring in 2005. In the future, the City should consider applying for funds through this program on a regular basis.

RTP - The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) provides funding for construction of new trails, maintenance and repair of existing trails, land acquisition, purchase of trail tools and planning, legal, environmental, and permitting costs.

ORLP - The Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) program was established in 2014 and is funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. ORLP is a nationally competitive, dollar-for-dollar matching grant program. It was created to aid disadvantaged, urban communities that lack access to close-by outdoor recreation. Funds can be used for the acquisition and/or development of, or substantial renovation of, public parks and other outdoor recreation spaces.

Projects may include any or all manner of outdoor recreation activities such as hiking, camping, unstructured play, picnicking, cycling, field and court sports, fishing, bird watching, swimming pools, paddling, and skating, as well as for outdoor recreation facilities and some supporting facilities and infrastructure like restrooms/bathhouses, or parking areas, when part of an overall recreation project.

New grant opportunities being administered through DPR include:

AP – Accessible Parks (AP) Grant Program provides matching grants for parks and recreation to benefit people living with disabilities in North Carolina. Local governments, including public authorities, are eligible to apply. This program is administered through the Division of Parks and Recreation and the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.

The matching grants can be used for:

- the construction of special facilities, or
- adaptation of existing facilities that meet the unique needs of persons living with disabilities or enable them to participate in recreational and sporting activities, regardless of their abilities.

Applicants can request a maximum of \$500,000 with each application and must match the grant with at least \$1 of local funds for every \$5 in grant funds.

GTS – Starting in 2024, the Great Trails State (GTS) Program, funded with \$12.5 million each year for two years, will be a competitive grant program for new trail development and extension of existing trails, including paved trails, greenways, and natural surface trails for biking, hiking, walking, equestrian use, and paddling. The fund will be administered by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR).

Eligible applicants will include municipalities or counties, regional councils of government, other public authorities, and nonprofit organizations. Eligible uses for funds will include planning, design, and related environmental assessment or permitting, land and easement acquisition, trail construction, trail structures (such as bridges), trail amenities (such as trailhead parking, signage, etc.), and maintenance, and can be used as matching funds for federal or other non-state grants.

The fund will require a minimum of a 25% flexible match, including cash, in-kind services, or donation of assets. Grants awarded will be limited to \$500,000 per project.

Additionally, the State can fund projects such as bikeways and pedestrian walks through the federally funded SAFTEA [formerly known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)]. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) administers the funds, and the local government agency can use these funds for developing portions of any proposed Greenway system. Local communities can also apply for assistance with pedestrian, bikeway, and greenway projects by applying for “NCDOT Enhancement Funds.”

Another source of state administered funding is through the North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF) (formerly known as the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF)). These funds are set aside for the acquisition of riparian properties, financing of innovative wastewater management initiatives, stormwater mitigation and stream bank restoration projects, support for greenways, and some planning programs. The acquired or purchased property can be used for recreation while protecting valuable water resources from the effects of urban encroachment. Money from this grant is particularly applicable to the preservation of open space, greenway development, and water access.

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

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

Any of these categories could have grants that could be used to develop programs and facilities for parks.

### User Fees (operational)

User fees are often charged by park and recreation departments to offset operational cost, and (occasionally) provide funding for the construction of facilities. Every department must establish its philosophy with regard to cost recovery through the use of fees. Kannapolis has historically charged fees for some facilities and programs. These fees have typically been set to offset the total operational cost of the program and have never been used to finance construction of facilities.

Currently, the City receives revenue from activities at Village Park, rentals and classes. This revenue goes into the City's General Fund and cannot be used to directly expand existing departmental programs and facilities.

Ultimately, the City may consider a change in user fees that will help offset even more of the cost of some activities. Based on elected officials' direction, the revenue generated by increased fees could then be used to reduce the general fund and possibly increase capital improvement funding to help make park improvements and expansion.

Many of the Department's facilities are outdoors (playgrounds, open space, athletic facilities, etc.) and offer only limited opportunity for cost recovery. There may be some areas where greater cost recovery could be achieved. Examples may include higher rental fees for shelters, fields, etc. or for requiring permits for Dog Parks, disc golf, etc.

This method of funding is particularly applicable in the event the Department constructs an indoor fitness facility or a swimming pool. The Department will need to study its current revenue and pricing policy as part of an overall Revenue Plan based on the values and guiding funding principles of the area. The cost of additional facilities and operation of those facilities must be increasingly borne by the user through user fees.

### Revenue Opportunities

User fees are not the only means of generating revenue. The City is currently utilizing many revenue generating opportunities but should always be looking for new ways to generate revenue. Some of these opportunities include:

- Sponsorships from local private businesses. Sponsorships typically come in the form of products, events, programs, cause-related, and in-kind. Sponsorships can also take the form of naming rights for a facility or program. Sponsorship or naming agreements should include very specific details related to sponsorship cost, duration, use of promotional materials, etc.
- Grant applications from local foundations, state and federal agencies, or individuals are typically created by staff. Most grants take time to prepare and require coordination effort with other agencies or departments from within the community to create a quality submittal. Grants also require extensive tracking of expenditures and outcomes for attaining future funding.
- Partnerships are a relatively new method of sharing funding resources to provide services. These



partnerships can be formed with a wide variety of other public or private agencies. Many times, the partners are two or more government agencies. Through these partnerships, the City receives direct benefit in either facility use, programming assistance, or volunteer man hours. All of these benefits add value and help offset costs; thus, creating earned income. This earned income requires both agencies to have common visions, values, and goals for the partnership to be successful. Examples of partnerships include:

- » Church facilities for recreation services. Several churches or religious organizations in the City provide recreation facilities and programs.
- » Youth sports associations are an important partner in organizing and programming many youth sports in the City.
- » Trail sponsors that adopt sections of trails for maintenance and cleanup.
- » Adopt-a-park and adopt-a-greenway partners that help maintain park lands and greenway corridors. These sponsors are typically in the form of neighborhood associations and businesses that are in proximity to parks and greenways.
- » School partnerships where both partners invest in the development of facilities and programs based on shared use of facilities and staff. This investment may be financial or may include other means of support. This is already in place with Kannapolis City Schools and Cabarrus County Schools.
- » Special event partners that assist with the development of community-wide events.
- » Program partners who assist in providing services to the community.
- » Advertising and licensing in programs, facilities, and events sponsored by the City. The City could leverage highly exposed advertising space to businesses willing to pay a fee for the right to advertise.
- » Volunteer development programs can reduce staff costs. Volunteers can create advocacy and bring down the cost of programs and services.

Privatizing the development of facilities or services is an opportunity that is used by some departments when they are unable to control the cost of labor and are unable to find the needed capital to develop a recreational facility or a concession operation. This gives the government agency a management tool to create an asset or improve a service without tapping into their own resources. Facilities that are typically considered for privatization include golf courses, marinas, camping and RV facilities, boat rentals, bike rentals, equipment rentals, and other forms of concessions.

Marketing strategies are an important component in developing untapped revenue opportunities. Promotional activities improve awareness of the activities provided by the City and assist in bringing more revenue to the system by filling programs and facilities.

## **METHODS FOR LAND ACQUISITION & DEDICATION**

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

### **Fee Simple Purchase**

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

## Fee Simple Purchase with Lease-Back or Resale

This technique of land acquisition enables the City to purchase land to lease or sell to a prospective user with deed restrictions that would protect the land from abuse or development. This method is used by governments who impose development restrictions severe enough that the owner considers himself to have lost the major portion of the property's value and it is more economical for him to sell with a lease-back option.

## Long-Term Option

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

## First Right of Purchase

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

## Land Trust

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

The City does not have to go through the time and expense of setting up a land trust to utilize this vehicle for land donation or conservation. The Catawba Lands Conservancy, Three Rivers Land Trust, and The Nature Conservancy are established land trusts in the area. The City has and should continue to partner with them to provide protection of valuable open space without creating a new entity.

## Donations

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

The most frequently used type of gift involves the giving of land to be used for a park. The timing of such a

donation can correspond with a PARTF (or other) grant application, thereby providing all or a significant portion of the local matching requirement associated with this fund. A similar use of gifts involves donated labor or materials, which become part of an improvement project and help to reduce project costs. The value of the services or materials can, in some cases, also be used to match non-local grant funds.

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

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

## Life Estate

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

## Easement

The most common type of less-than-fee interest in land is an easement. Property ownership may be viewed as a combination of rights. With this understanding, it is possible to purchase any one or several of these rights. An easement seeks either to compensate the landholder for the right to use their land in some manner or to compensate them for the loss of one of their privileges to use the land. One advantage of this less-than-fee interest in the land is the private citizen continues to use the land while the land remains on the tax records: continuing as a source of revenue for the City. Perhaps the greatest benefit lies in the fact that the City purchases only those rights that it specifically needs to execute its parkland objectives. By purchasing only rights that are needed, the City is making more selective and efficient use of its limited financial resources.

## Zoning/Subdivision Regulations

Many communities in North Carolina have zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations that require a developer to donate a portion of the property they are developing to the government agency to be used for public park land. Through these regulations (zoning ordinances, subdivision regulation, and mandatory dedications) developers may be required to provide new park land at no cost to the City. Regulations can require land to be dedicated and/or compensation made to the City for the development of parkland.

A detailed evaluation of all subdivision ordinances for each of the municipalities in the City, as well as the City's subdivision regulations, should be made. Wherever feasible, subdivision regulations should include some provisions for the dedication of land for open space or recreational use. Care should be taken in developing any regulation requiring such dedication. Subdivision requirements should include terminology to ensure the permitting agency has the authority to review and approve any land dedicated as public open space or for recreational use to ensure it is usable for such purposes. Likewise, dedication ordinances should



have a provision for payment in lieu to eliminate the dedication of property too small to provide community benefits or unsuitable for park development.

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

## OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

City leadership must also address some of the operational issues that will face the Department in the coming decade. These issues relate to the manpower and organizational changes that will be required as the City adds new parks/facilities. These recommendations address some of the critical operational issues the Department needs to identify as it expands the facilities and services it provides.

An important aspect of these planning recommendations is to develop a vision for the Department to improve parks, recreation, and recreation programming opportunities for City residents. Ultimately, the provision of better parks and recreational programs includes both facility improvements and establishing a method of delivery of services. Currently, the City is limited in the resources it directs to this mission. If the City is to improve the quality of parks, greenways, indoor & outdoor recreation, and senior services offered, it will be required to add staff to manage/operate facilities and provide services.

The following are the goals and recommendations for Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Operations and should be used in conjunction with the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan FY23-FY27.

- **Seek & develop partnerships with other recreation providers**
  - » Expand programming and facility partnerships with Cabarrus, Rowan & Mecklenburg Counties and their municipalities; explore opportunities & establish directives
  - » Continue partnerships with Catawba Lands Conservancy and Carolina Thread Trail
  - » Continue joint partnerships with Kannapolis City Schools and Cabarrus County Schools in developing future facilities
- **Maintain quality park management, operations & maintenance on an equitable basis for each facility**
  - » Continue to meet departmental standards needed to maintain Capra national accreditation
  - » Continue facility assessments for regular maintenance and needed replacements (Shelters, Playgrounds, Lighting, etc.)
- **Strive to provide a greenway, park, or amenity located within a 10-15 minute walk/drive for each Kannapolis resident**
  - » Require developers to provide parks, greenways & open space within new developments; potential to dedicate greenspace to Kannapolis Parks & Recreation
- **Strive to provide funding to maintain or exceed minimum level of service standards & create a sustainable economic base for Kannapolis Parks & Recreation**
- **Ensure 2024 park & recreation master plan is coordinated with strategic plans, other municipal plans, ordinances & policies**

- **Increase community outreach / parks & recreation marketing / social media**
  - » Develop a Kannapolis Parks & Recreation Facebook page
  - » Hold scheduled ‘Meet the Parks & Recreation Staff’ gatherings to gain user input; rotate around the parks

## Staff Needs

Action on the recommendations found in this Master Plan will expand the City’s parks and facilities. The development of new Community/Neighborhood Parks, the management and operation of expanded trail systems, the construction of new recreation facilities, will require additional staff to maintain, operate and program these new facilities. While the development of a true operation and maintenance program for these future facilities is beyond the scope of this Master Plan, the City should plan to add the following positions to effectively operate the future facilities:

- Park Managers
- Greenway/Trail Manager
- Community Recreation Manager & Staff
- Parks Maintenance Technicians
- Seasonal or PT park personnel

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

## Operational Costs

As noted above, the development of new recreation facilities will require additional staff. These new staff positions will add to the annual operational budget in terms of both staff and equipment costs. The expansion of recreational facilities could also add to the energy and utility cost of parks, recreation facilities, and recreation centers. The recommended facility improvements included in this Plan will increase the City’s facilities. Expansion of parks and greenways will have implications to the operational budget. The City’s management staff and elected officials must carefully consider the financial impact of each major capital improvement project as projects are considered. No capital improvement project should be undertaken without the commitment of support for adequate ongoing operational funding. Likewise, consideration should be given to the positive economic impacts that some facilities may have on the City’s economy, and if applicable, their potential for revenue generation.

## Greener Operation

As the world’s population expands and environmental concerns over global warming, conservation of resources, and preservation of our fragile natural systems become more apparent, greater environmental responsibility by public and private agencies has become critical. As a government agency, particularly one that is involved with the management of public open space and the improvement of the public’s health, the Department’s operation should make a concerted effort to minimize its environmental impact.

## Promoting Recycling is one Initiative to Reduce Waste

With this understanding, the City should evaluate its maintenance and operational procedures with an intent to minimize waste and environmental impact. Where economically feasible, the City should look to

implement operational procedures that emphasize conservation, recycling, and sustainability. Likewise, as the City looks to build new facilities, it should consider constructing facilities that minimize environmental impacts, conserve energy, and reuse building materials where possible.

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

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The Capital Improvements Plan for the acquisition, renovation, and development of parks and greenways for the planning period was prepared with input from City staff, Parks & Recreation Commission, and public involvement. All of the proposed costs are shown in current dollar values. The capital improvement costs include funds for land acquisition, site preparation, site utilities, and facility development as well as estimated planning and design fees.

The Capital Improvements Plan can be summarized into the following components:

Existing Park Renovations/Improvements	\$6,160,000
Land Acquisition	\$7,650,000
New Park Development	\$45,760,000
Greenway Development	\$15,103,000
Facility Development & Operation	\$44,110,000
<u>School/Park Development</u>	<u>\$6,600,000</u>
Total Capital Improvement Budget	\$125,383,000

Table 5-1 “Capital Improvements Plan” shows the costs associated with the capital improvements program. The table reflects the proposals and recommendations as outlined in Section Four of this Master Plan. The CIP is divided into two columns: Vision plan - \$125,383,000; Priority Projects - \$79,433,000.

## PRIORITY PROJECTS

Recognizing that this is a vision plan for a City-wide park system, City staff and elected officials must prioritize the recommendations in this document based on the public’s input and staff review.

The following park facilities and programming recommendations are considered priorities within this Parks & Recreation Master Plan for the next 5-10 years.

- **Trail connectivity - destinations / regional greenways & trail systems**
  - » Extend Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway north to Walter Safrit Park/Bakers Creek/8th Street/Village Park
  - » Extend Rocky River Greenway south to Hector Henry II Greenway; north to Brackett Bluff Nature Preserve; west to West Branch Nature Preserve
  - » Master plan and seek key corridor(s) for Afton Run Greenway
  - » Extend greenway from Bakers Creek/8th Street/Village Park towards Landis/ Grants Creek Greenway



- **Master plan “Horseshoe Property” in front of City Hall**
- **Continue upgrades to ensure all parks & facilities are ADA compliant and accessible**
  - » All facilities within each park shall be interconnected and accessible to each other & parking
  - » All facilities should be connected to adjacent neighborhoods, greenways, sidewalk systems
  - » All facilities shall be ADA compliant and promote inclusivity; update restroom facilities
- **Explore expansion opportunities for available land within existing parks**
  - » Master plan existing parks for recreation expansion and/or redevelopment
- **Conduct a feasibility study for a future community recreation center**
  - » Seek location and land acquisition opportunity(ies)
  - » Outline preliminary programming opportunities for indoor & outdoor activities, Senior Games
  - » Consider potential funding alternatives, options
- **Design and construct Eastside and Westside Parks**
  - » Consider potential funding alternatives, options
- **Seek new park development opportunities in areas underserved by parks**
  - » Seek a location to develop a new Community or Neighborhood Park in the Coddle Creek Reservoir/Kannapolis Parkway area; acquire land and prepare a master plan
  - » Seek a location to develop a new Community or Neighborhood Park in the Little Texas community; acquire land and prepare a master plan
  - » Seek a location to develop a new Community or Neighborhood Park and greenway connector in the northeast quadrant (Rowan County) acquire land and prepare a master plan
- **Provide new park facilities/recreation activities in existing or new parks**
  - » Skate Park, Pickleball, Dog Park, Disc Golf, Nature Park

## MASTER PLAN FUNDING STRATEGY

This Master Plan identifies a Vision Plan for park and recreation development and services in Kannapolis. It is understood that not all the recommendations will be acted upon over the next decade. The City and elected officials will ultimately have to prioritize the steps they will take to meet some of these park and recreation needs.

To assist with the prioritization, the following items should be considered by both City Staff, Parks & Recreation Commission, and the elected officials:

- Clearly delineate capital expenses vs. operational expenses.
- Identify any additional staff requirements as a result of proposed projects.
- Identify and evaluate areas of future development.
- Prepare potential risk assessments associated with all elements.
- Prepare proforma and cost benefit analysis demonstrating each project’s value to Kannapolis.
- Revenue sources must be identified and verified - Projected tax base growth, Land sales, User fees, Partnerships, Sponsors, Grants, General Fund, Bond Referenda, etc.

- Project timelines for each project and tasks involved.
- Identify the degree of difficulty involved for each project.
- Indicate the apparent “ripeness” of each project.
- Demonstrate the Public’s interest (as expressed in the survey) for each project / element.

<b>Table 5-1</b> <b>CITY OF KANNAPOLIS</b> <b>RECREATION AND PARKS MASTER PLAN</b> <b>CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN</b>		
	Vision Plan	Priority Projects
<b>Existing Parks Renovation/Improvements</b>		
Specific Renovations to Existing Parks		
Bakers Creek Park Improvements	\$2,350,000	\$1,250,000
Walter Safrit Park Improvements	\$1,500,000	\$750,000
Pleasant Ave. Youth Fields	\$1,200,000	\$900,000
Village Park Patio Cover	\$550,000	\$550,000
Planning & Design (10%)	\$560,000	\$345,000
<b>Renovation Total</b>	<b>\$6,160,000</b>	<b>\$3,795,000</b>
<b>Land Acquisition</b>		
Coddle Creek/Kannapolis Pkwy Park	\$2,000,000 *	\$2,000,000
Little Texas Community Park	\$1,000,000 **	\$1,000,000
NE Quadrant Park	\$2,000,000 *	\$2,000,000
Multi-use Community/Recreation Center	\$2,000,000 ***	\$2,000,000
Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway Phases 2-3	\$250,000	\$250,000
Rocky River Greenway Phases 2-3	\$150,000	\$150,000
Afton Run Greenway	\$250,000	\$250,000
<b>Land Acquisition Total</b>	<b>\$7,650,000</b>	<b>\$7,650,000</b>
<b>Park Development</b>		
East Side Neighborhood Park	\$5,200,000	\$5,200,000
West Side Community Park - Phase 1	\$15,000,000	\$8,500,000
Coddle Creek/Kannapolis Pkwy Park	\$5,800,000	
Little Texas Community Park	\$5,800,000	
NE Quadrant Park	\$6,800,000	
Research Campus Park (Horseshoe)	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Planning and Design (10%)	\$4,160,000	\$1,150,000
<b>Park Development Total</b>	<b>\$45,760,000</b>	<b>\$17,850,000</b>
<b>Greenway Development</b>		
Irish Buffalo Creek - Phase 2	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000
Irish Buffalo Creek - Phase 3	\$1,900,000	
Irish Buffalo Creek - Phase 4	\$2,200,000	
Irish Buffalo Creek - Phase 5	\$1,900,000	
Rocky River Greenway - Phase 2	\$2,200,000	\$2,200,000
Rogers Lake Rd. Trailhead Expansion	\$80,000	\$80,000
N. Bakers Branch Greenway (8th St to 22nd St)	\$1,750,000	
Afton Run Greenway	\$1,500,000	
Planning and Design (10%)	\$1,373,000	\$228,000
<b>Greenway Development Total</b>	<b>\$15,103,000</b>	<b>\$4,708,000</b>
<b>Facility Development and Operations</b>		
Multi-use Community/ Recreation Center	\$35,000,000	\$35,000,000
Vietnam Veterans Park Ops	\$2,100,000	\$300,000
Skatepark/Dog Park/Pickleball	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Planning & Design (10%)	\$4,010,000	\$3,830,000
<b>Facility Development Total</b>	<b>\$44,110,000</b>	<b>\$42,130,000</b>
<b>School/Park Development</b>		
KCS Athletic Facility Improvements	\$6,000,000	\$3,000,000
Planning & Design (10%)	\$600,000	\$300,000
<b>Facility Development Total</b>	<b>\$6,600,000</b>	<b>\$3,300,000</b>
<b>Total Capital Improvement Budget Cost</b>	<b>\$125,383,000</b>	<b>\$79,433,000</b>
* 40 AC @ \$50,000/AC ** 10 AC @ \$100,000/AC *** 10 AC @ \$200,000/AC		



# City of Kannapolis Parks & Recreation | Recommendations

Kannapolis, NC



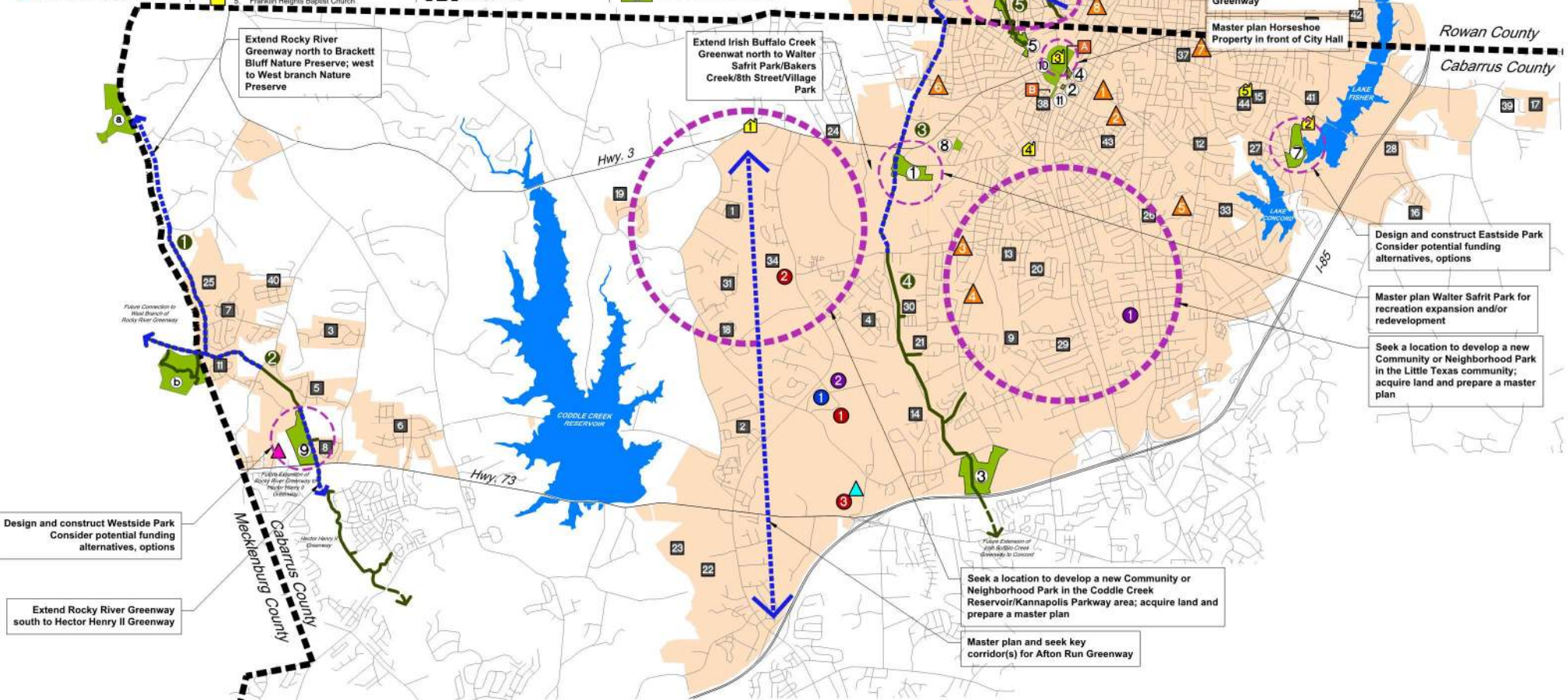
Kannapolis Parks & Recreation | 3.12.2024

- Kannapolis City Schools**
- 1. A.L. Brown High School
  - 2. G.W. Carver Elementary School
  - 3. Shady Brook Elementary School
  - 4. Kannapolis Middle School
  - 5. Forest Park Elementary School
  - 6. Fred L. Wilson Elementary School
  - 7. Jackson Park Elementary School
  - 8. Woodrow Wilson Elementary School
  - 9. McKnight Child Development Center

- Cabarrus County Elementary Schools**
- 1. Royal Oaks Elementary School
  - 2. Charles E. Boger Elementary School
- Cabarrus County Middle Schools**
- 1. Northwest Cabarrus Middle School
- Cabarrus County High Schools**
- 1. Northwest Cabarrus High School
  - 2. Future Northwest Cabarrus High School
  - 3. Early College High School
- Churches**
- 1. Bethpage Presbyterian
  - 2. Charity Baptist
  - 3. First Baptist Church
  - 4. First Baptist Church Recreation Fields (Midway)
  - 5. Franklin Heights Baptist Church

- Greenways (Carolina Thread Trail Segments)**
- 1. Rocky River Corridor [planned] 1.9 mi
  - 2. Rocky River Corridor [built] 0.9 mi
  - 3. Irish Buffalo Creek [planned] 3.4 mi
  - 4. Irish Buffalo Creek [built] 2.9 mi
  - 5. Bakers Creek / 8th St / Village Park [built] 1.9 mi
- Other Features**
- A. Gem Theatre
  - B. Swannee Theatre
  - Kannapolis City Limits
  - Kannapolis Lakes
  - Streets
  - County Boundary

- Kannapolis Parks**
- 1. Walter Saffrit Park
  - 2. Dale Earhardt Tribute
  - 3. Vietnam Veterans Park
  - 4. Veterans Park
  - 5. Village Park
  - 6. Bakers Creek Park
  - 7. Eastside Park
  - 8. Pleasant Ave. Youth Fields
  - 9. Westside Park
  - 10. Atrium Health Baseball Stadium
  - 11. West Avenue Linear Park
  - 12. 8th Street Park
- Mecklenburg County Nature Preserves**
- a. 1. Brackett Bluff Nature Preserve
  - b. 2. West Branch Nature Preserve








# APPENDICES







# **2022**

## **City of Kannapolis, North Carolina**

**Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey**

### **Findings Report**





# Contents

<b>Section 1: Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Section 2: Charts and Graphs.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Section 3: National Benchmarks.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Section 4: Tabular Data.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Section 5: Open-Ended Responses.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Section 6: Survey Instrument.....</b>	<b>49</b>



# Executive Summary



---

# 2022 City of Kannapolis

## Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey

### Executive Summary

---

#### Overview

ETC Institute administered a Needs Assessment Survey for the City of Kannapolis during the months of summer 2022. The survey will help the City of Kannapolis Parks and Recreation plan for future recreation programs and facilities that meet the community's needs and preferences.

#### Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in Kannapolis. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at *KannapolisSurvey.org*.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up by sending text messages and mailing postcards to encourage participation. The text messages and postcards contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of Kannapolis from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not included in the final database for this report.

The goal was to complete a minimum of 300 completed surveys from city residents. The goal was exceeded with 475 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 475 households have a precision of at least +/-4.4 at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey (Section 2)
- Benchmarks comparing Kannapolis Results to National Averages (Section 3)
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey (Section 4)
- Responses to open-ended questions (Section 5)
- A copy of the survey instrument (Section 6)

The major findings of the survey are summarized on the following pages.

## City of Kannapolis Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Areas Use

**Use of Parks/Greenways:** Respondents were asked to indicate if their household had used any of the 12 listed Kannapolis parks in the past year. The highest number of respondents (70%) visited Village Park followed by Cannonballers Stadium (64%) and Veterans Park (55%). Respondents who indicated they had visited the park/greenway were then asked to rate the overall condition. Respondents were most satisfied (rating “excellent” or “good”) with Cannonballers Stadium (99%), Village Park (98%), and Veterans Park (97%). Each of the parks/greenways received mostly excellent/good ratings.

**Satisfaction with Public Park and Recreation Areas.** Respondents were asked to indicate their level of overall satisfaction with public parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis. Most respondents (88%) chose either “somewhat satisfied” (28%) or “very satisfied” (57%). When asked how much of a need they have for additional parks and recreation areas, the highest number of respondents (66%) felt either some need (45%) or great need (21%) and 34% felt either little need (22%) or no need (12%).

**Ways Households Learn about Programs and Activities:** Respondents were asked to select all the ways they learned about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs, and activities. The highest number of respondents received communication via the city newsletter (62%), Facebook (50%), and the City of Kannapolis website (48%); in addition, these are also the three most preferred methods according to respondents.

**Interest/Importance of Amenities/Facilities:** Respondents were asked to assess their level of interest in 33 facilities/amenities. The highest amount of interest (either “great interest” or “moderate interest”) was shown for the preservation of open space or natural areas (71%), greenways for walking/biking (70%), drive-in movie theaters (67%) and access to city lakes (67%). Respondents were then asked to select the five facilities/amenities most important to their household. These are the findings:

- Drive-in movie theaters (40%)
- Access to city lakes (31%)
- Greenways for walking/biking (31%)
- Waterparks (23%)

Respondents were then asked how much they would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of parks, facilities, and programming that was most important to their household. The answers were somewhat evenly divided but the highest number of respondents were not willing to pay any additional amount (25%).

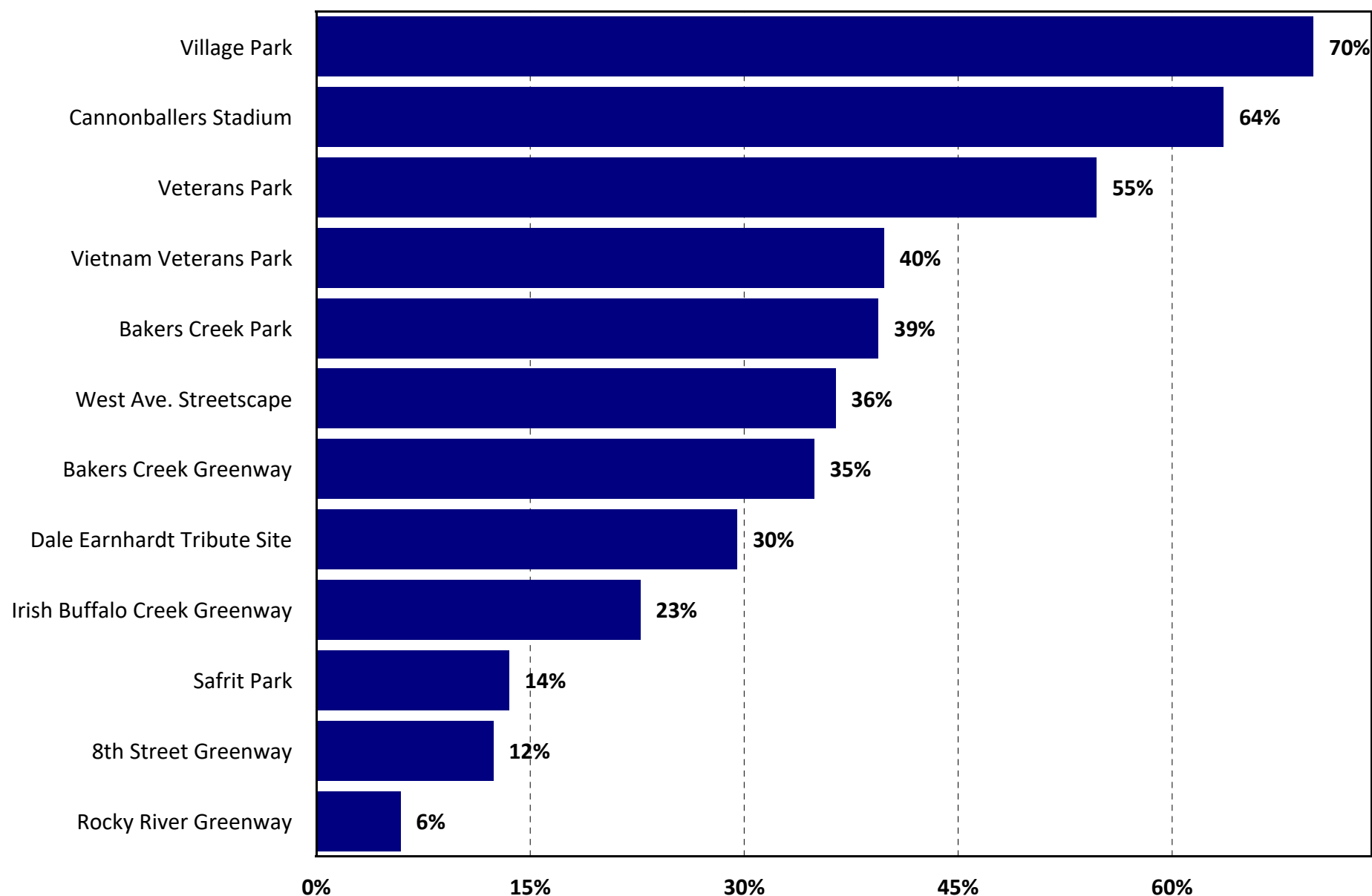


# Charts & Graphs



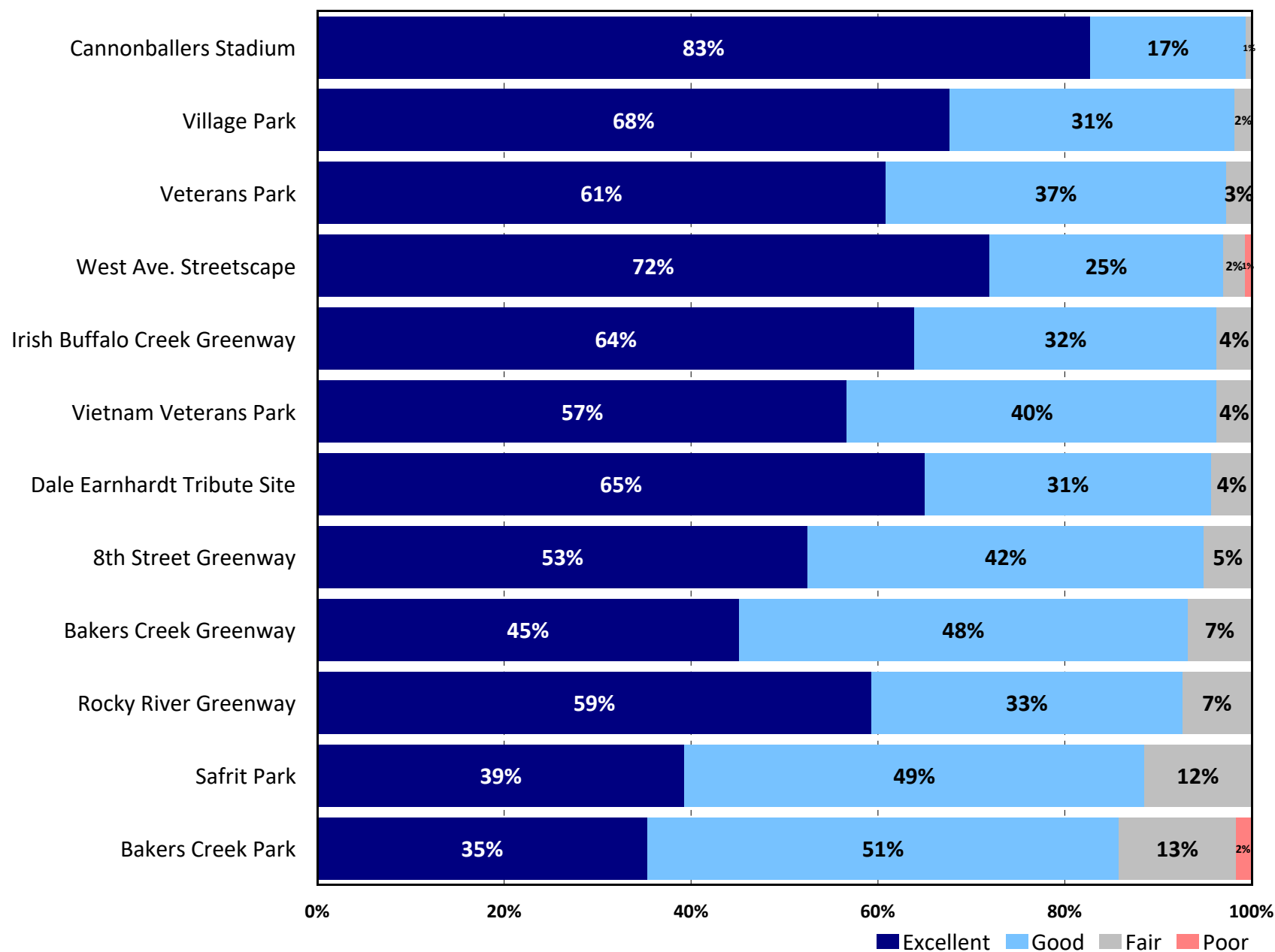
# Q1. From the following list, please check ALL the City of Kannapolis parks or greenways you or members of your household have visited over the past 12 months.

by percentage of respondents



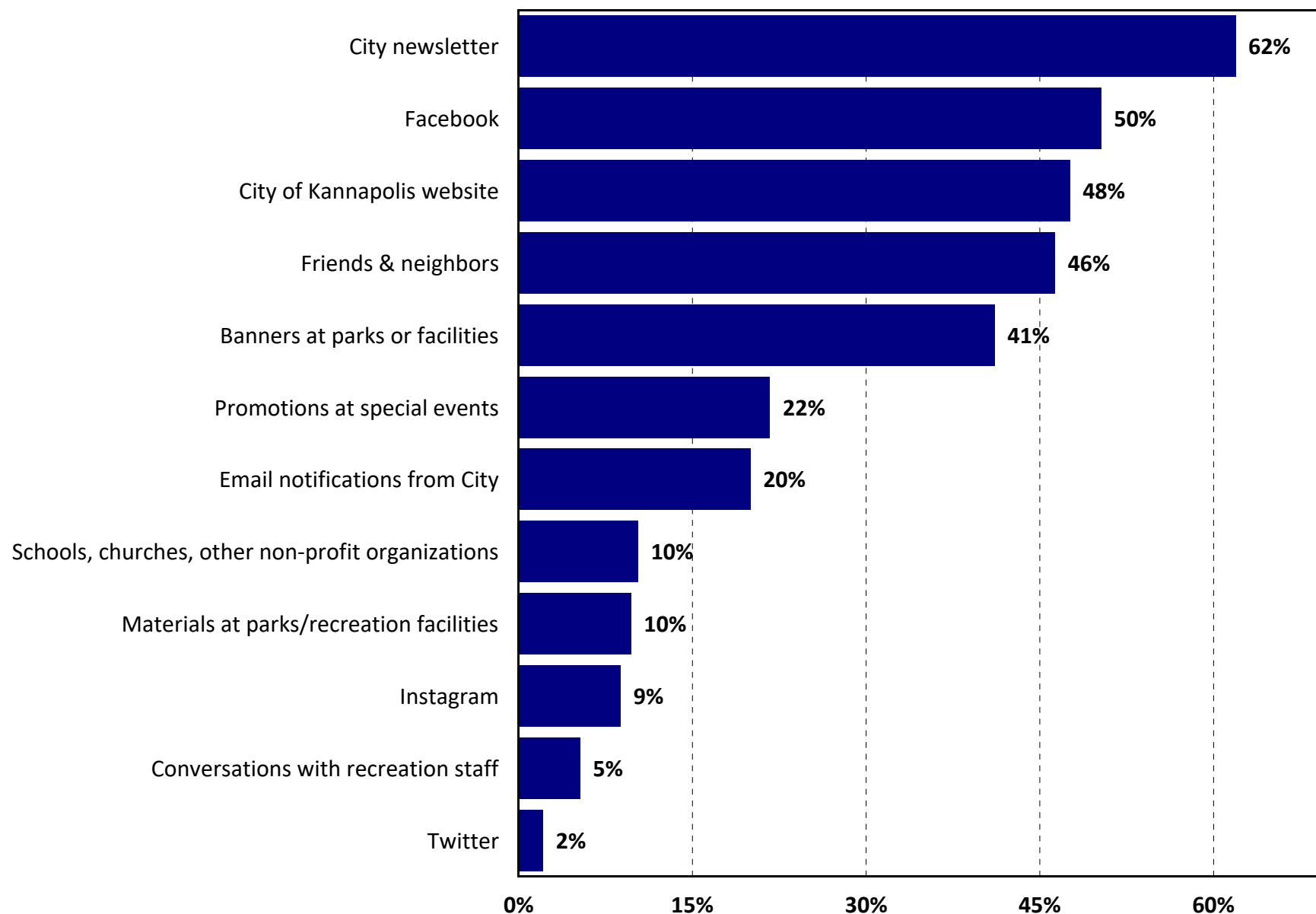
# Q1. Rating Condition of Parks/Greenways

by percentage of respondents who indicated their household had used the park/greenway (excluding "not provided")



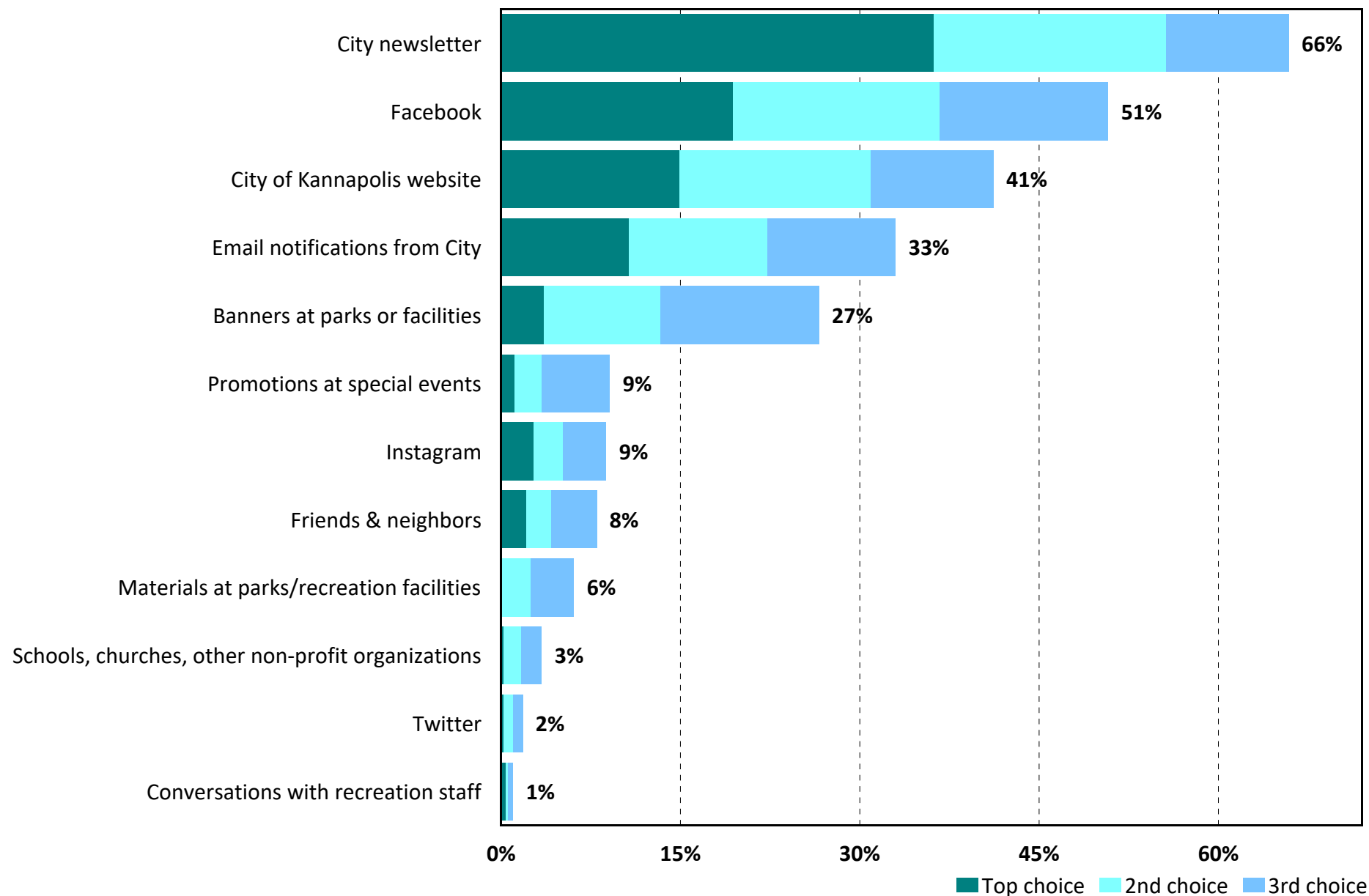
## Q2. From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs and activities.

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



### Q3. Which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events?

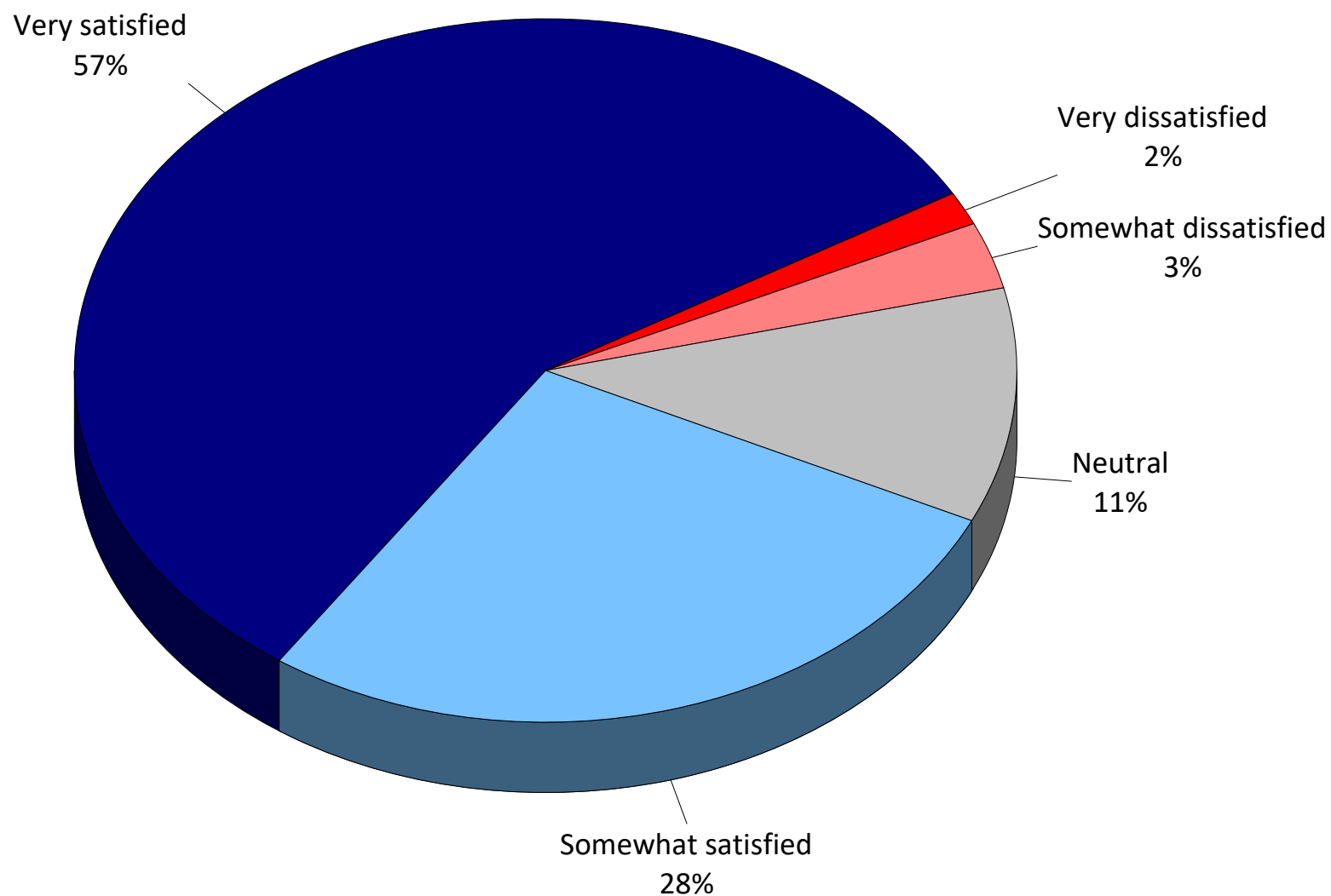
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices





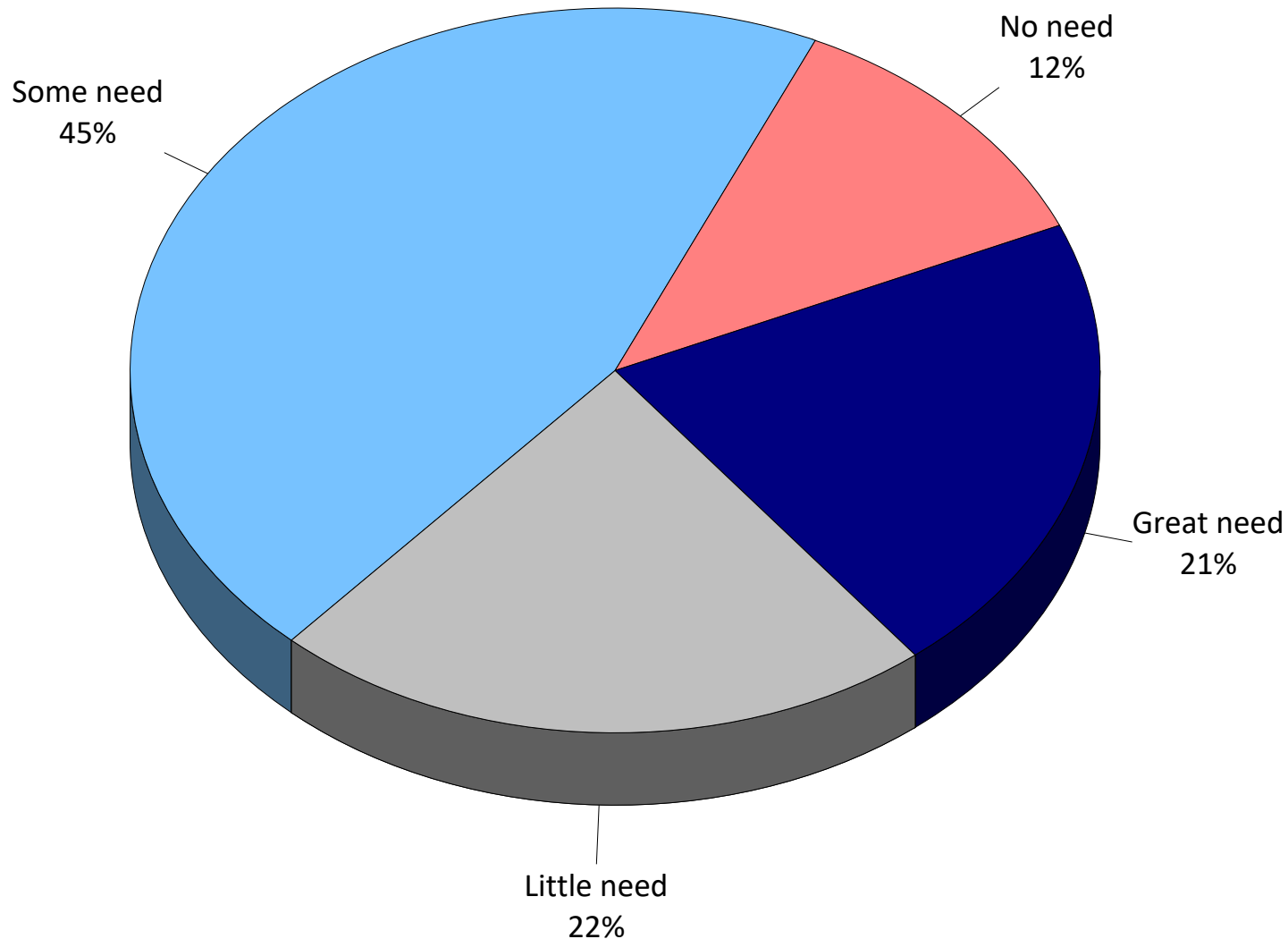
## Q4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the public park and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know")



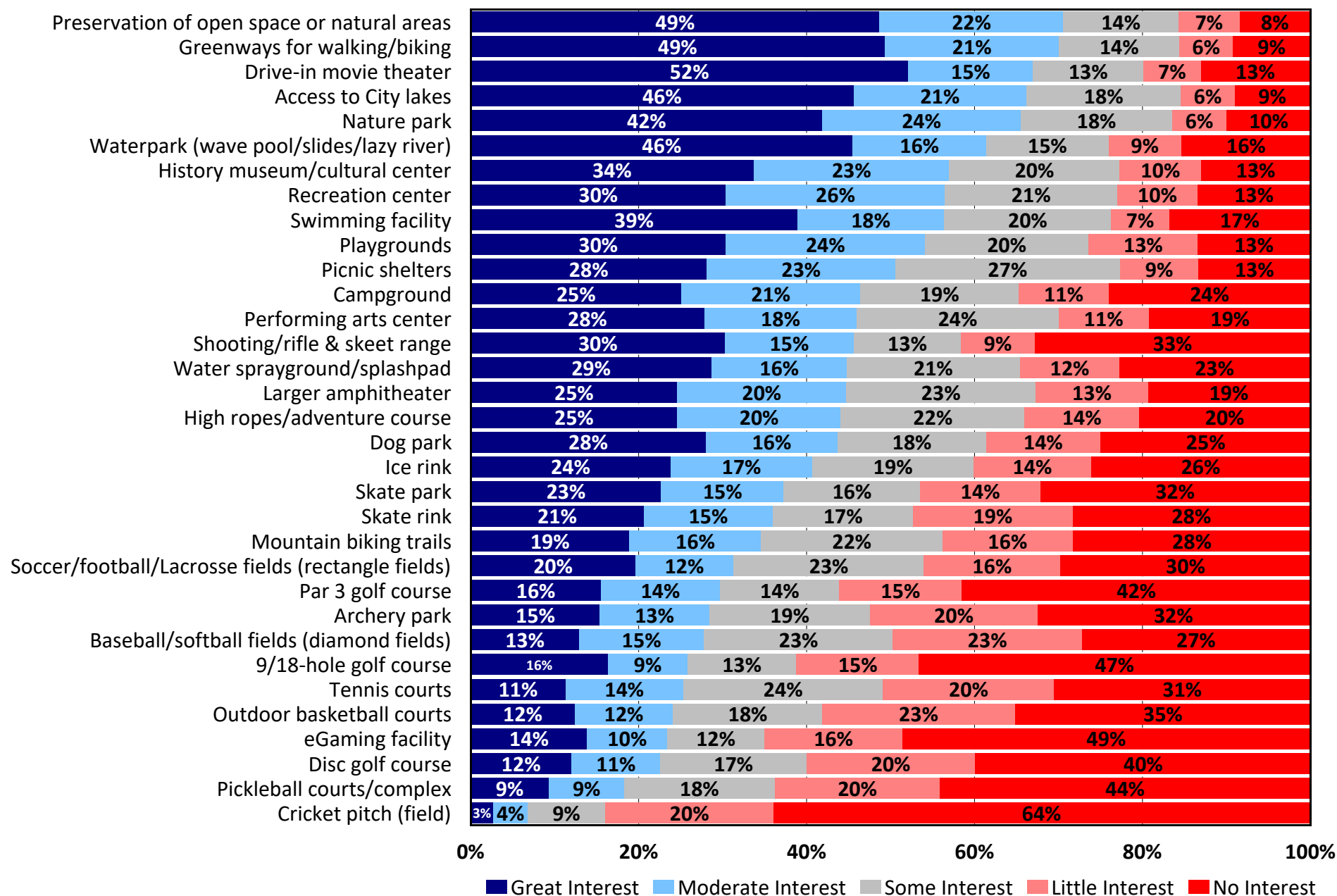
## Q5. Overall, do you think there is a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know")



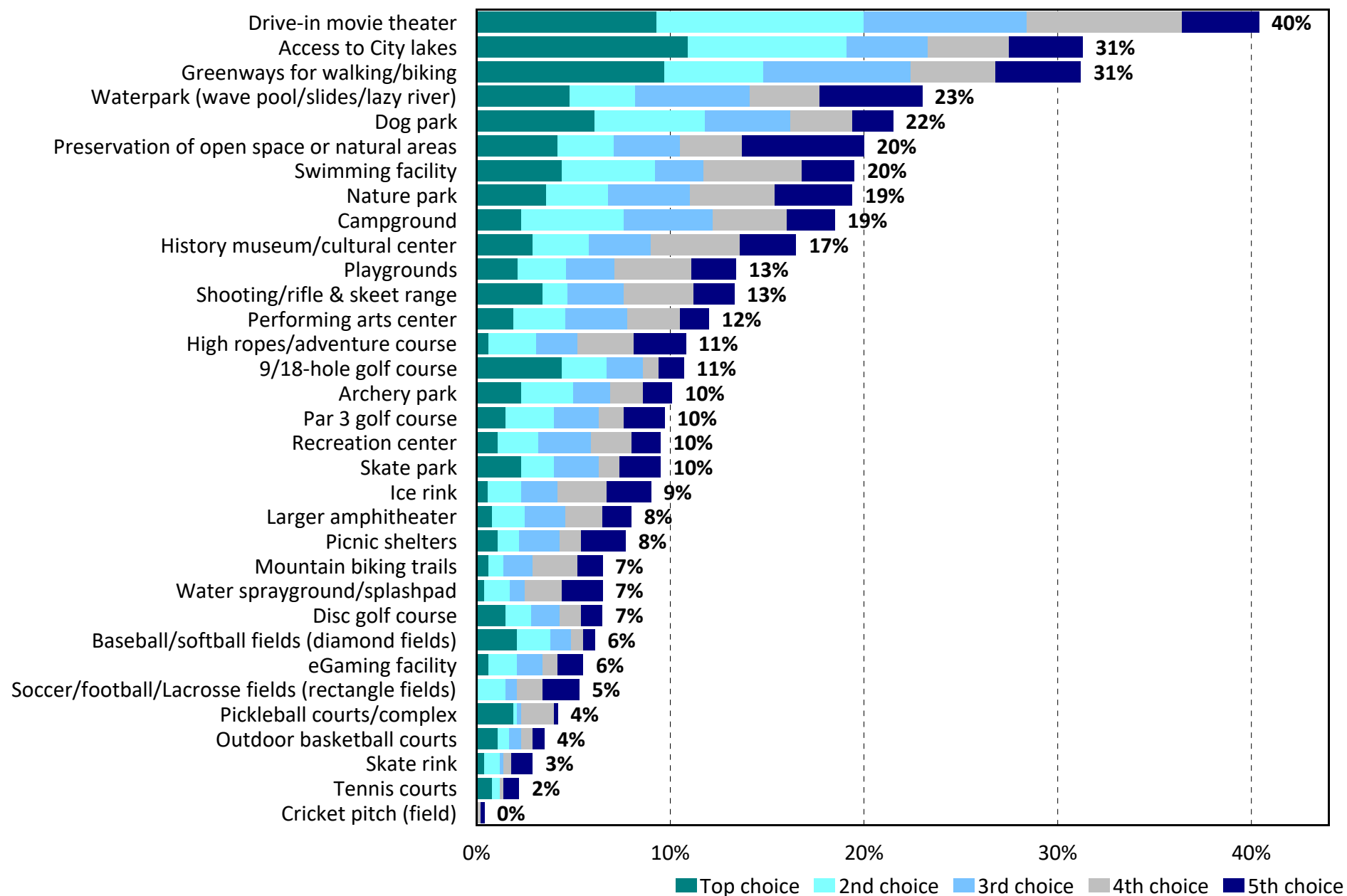
## Q6. Level of Interest for Amenities/Facilities

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



# Q7. Parks and Recreation Facilities/Amenities Most Important to Households

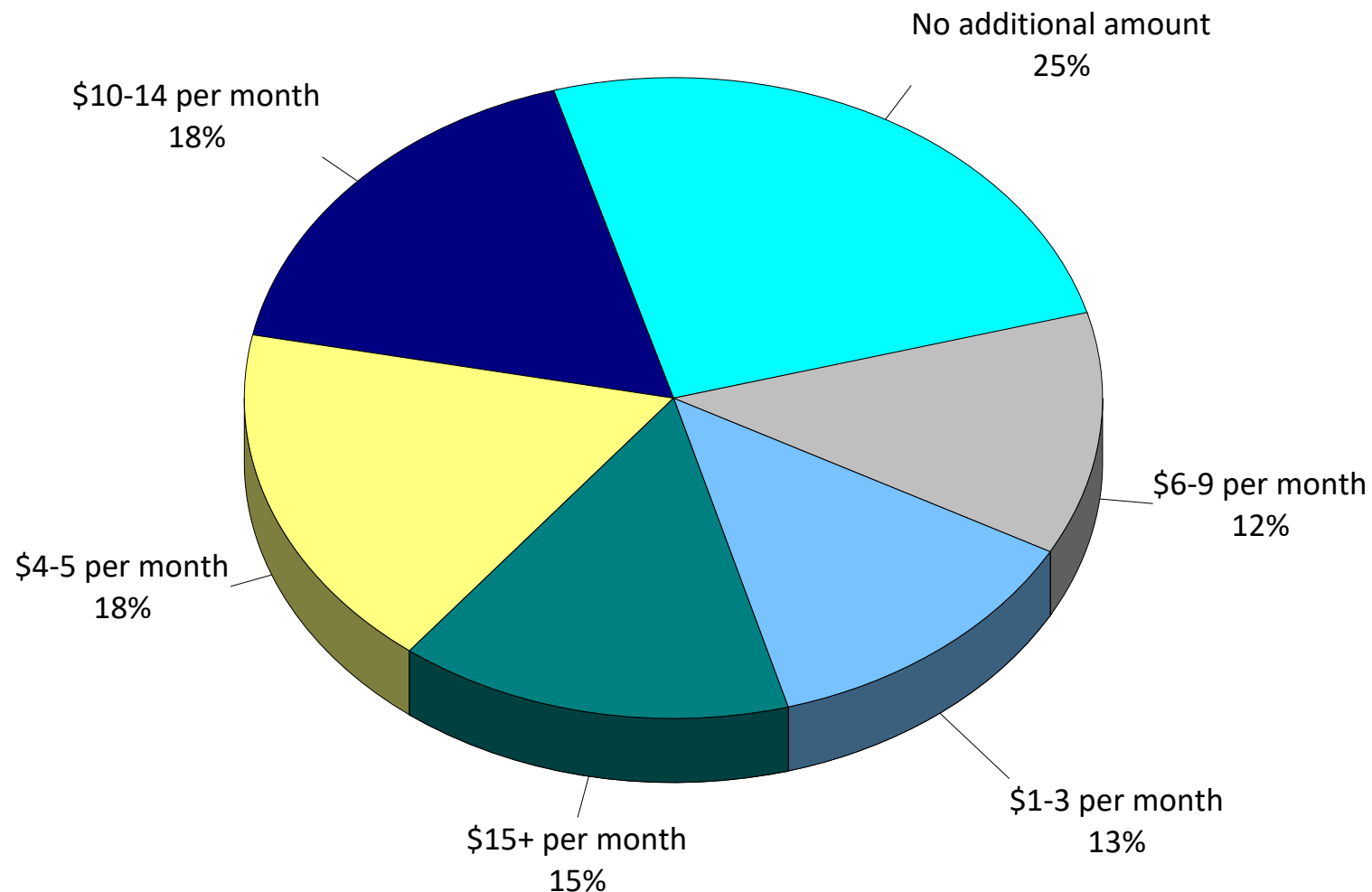
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top five choices





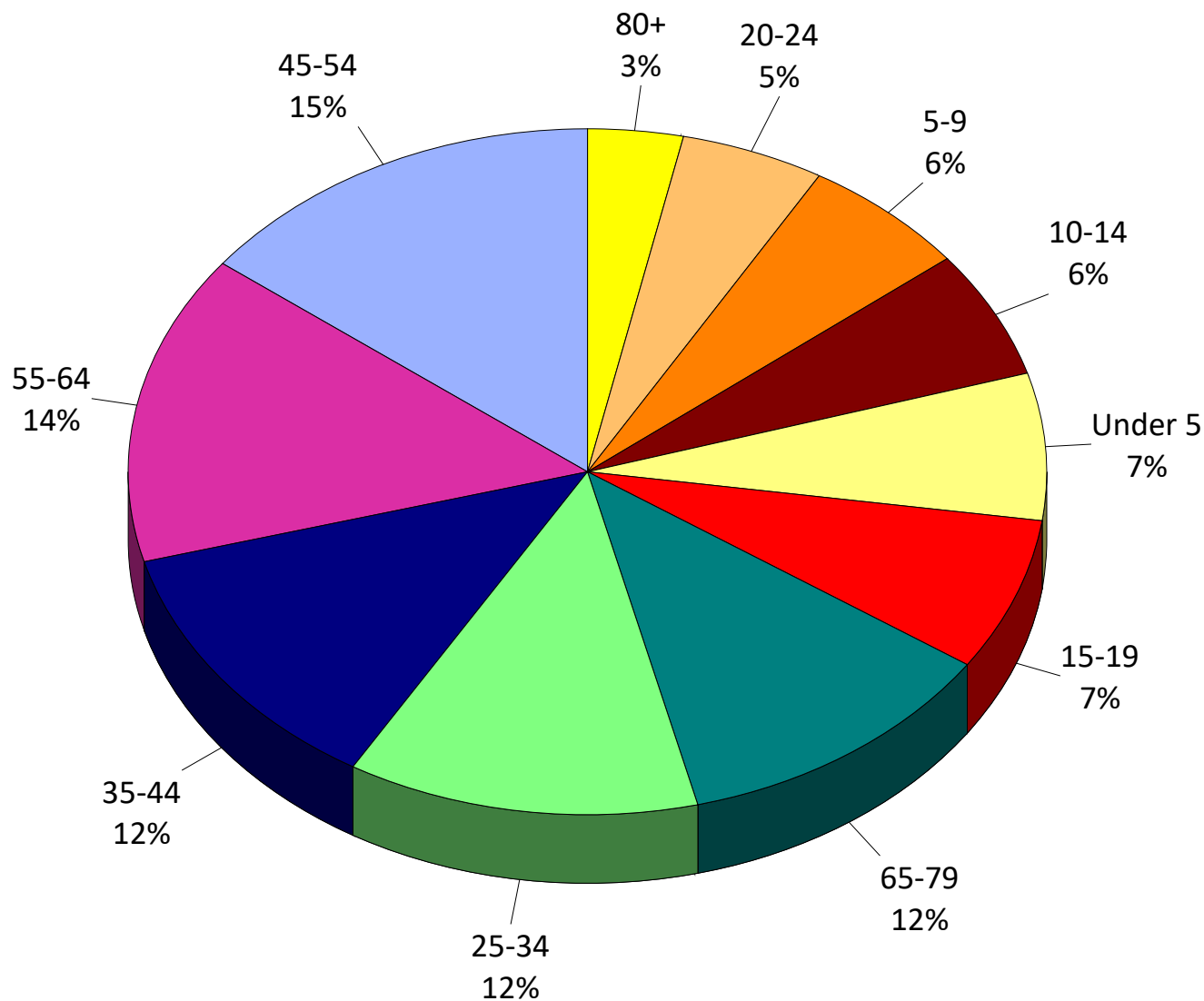
# Q8. What is the maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of the new parks, facilities, and programming that are most important to your household?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



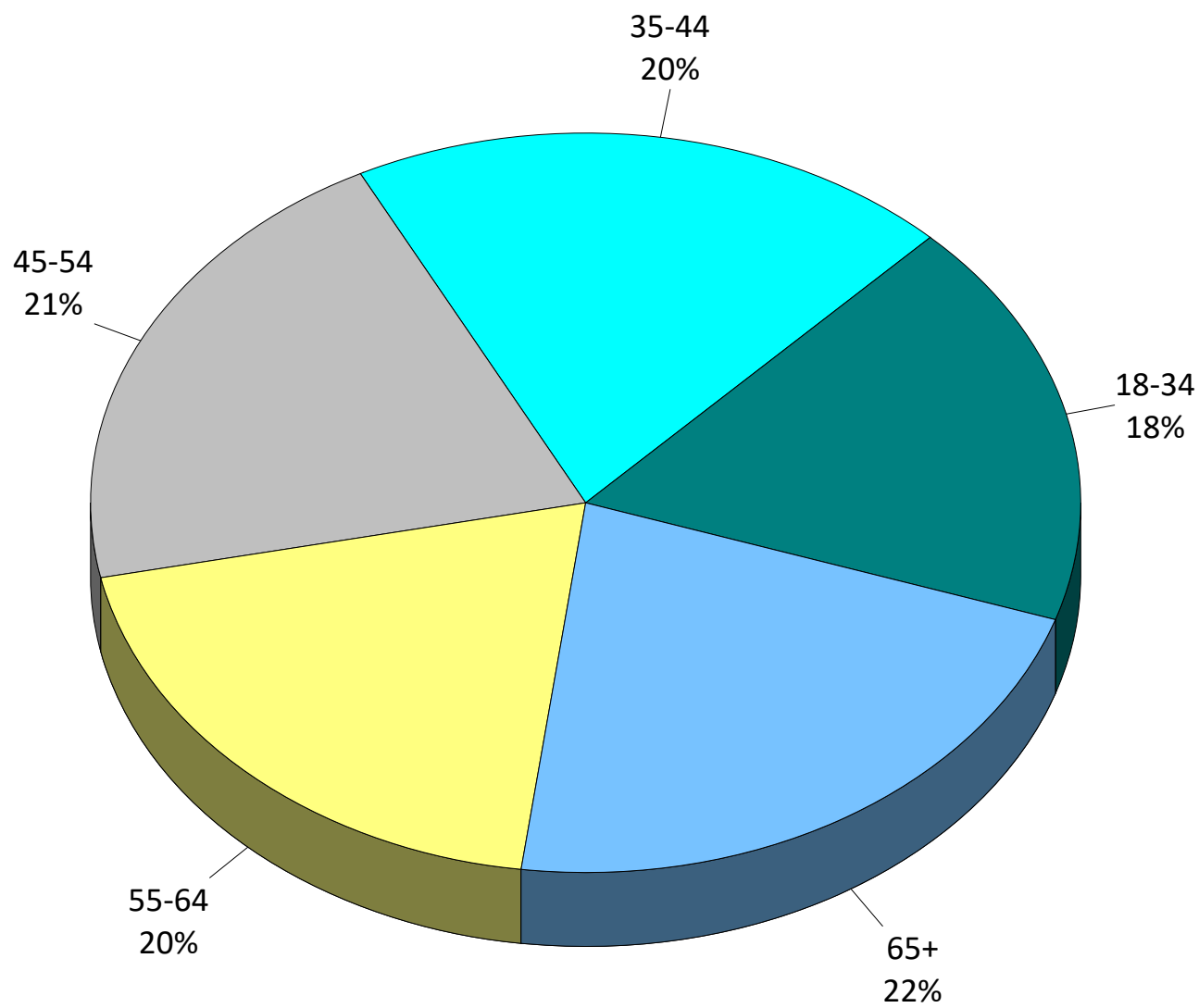
# Q9. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are in the following age groups?

by percentage of persons in household



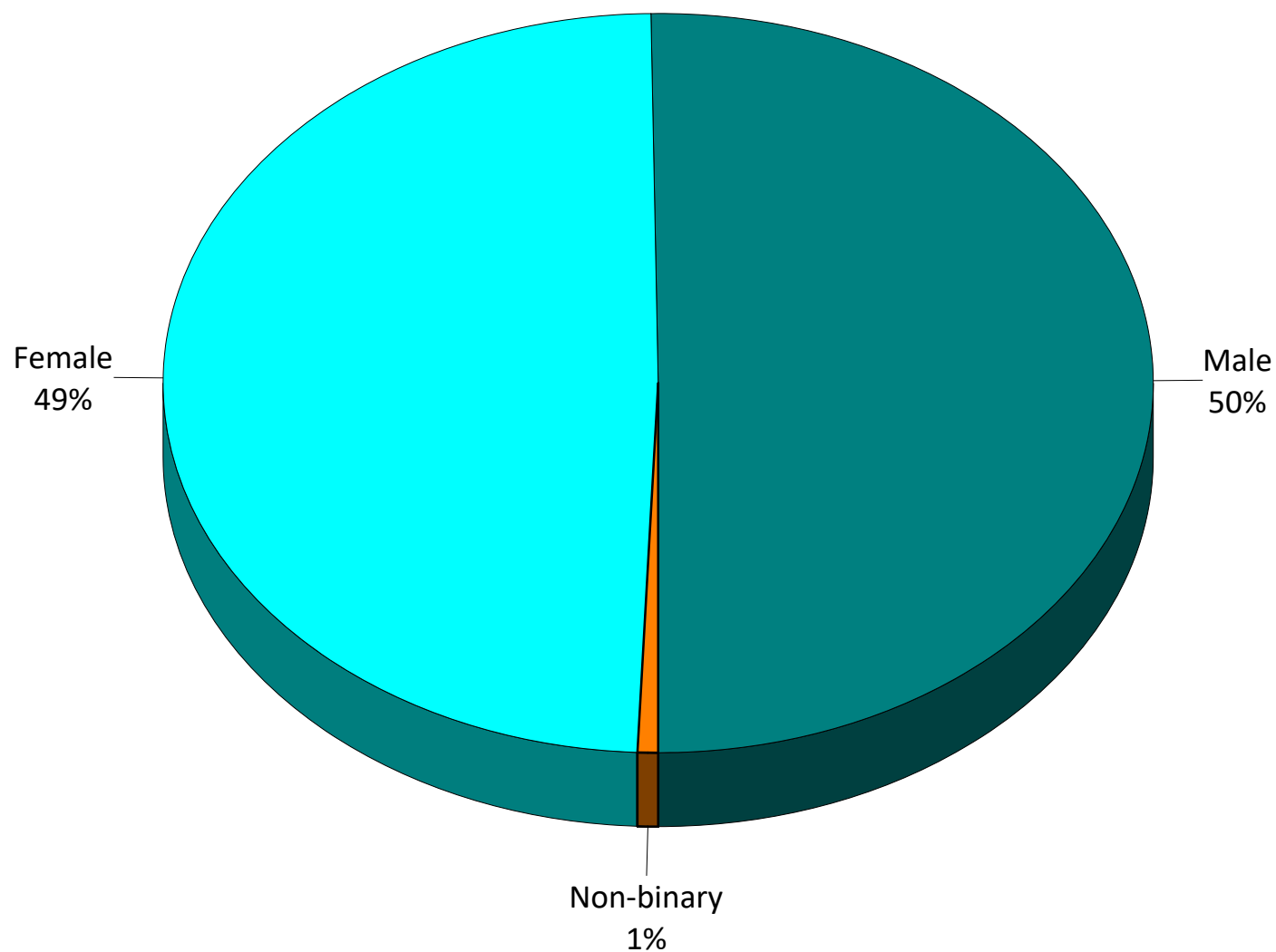
## Q10. Respondent Age

by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)



# Q11. Your gender:

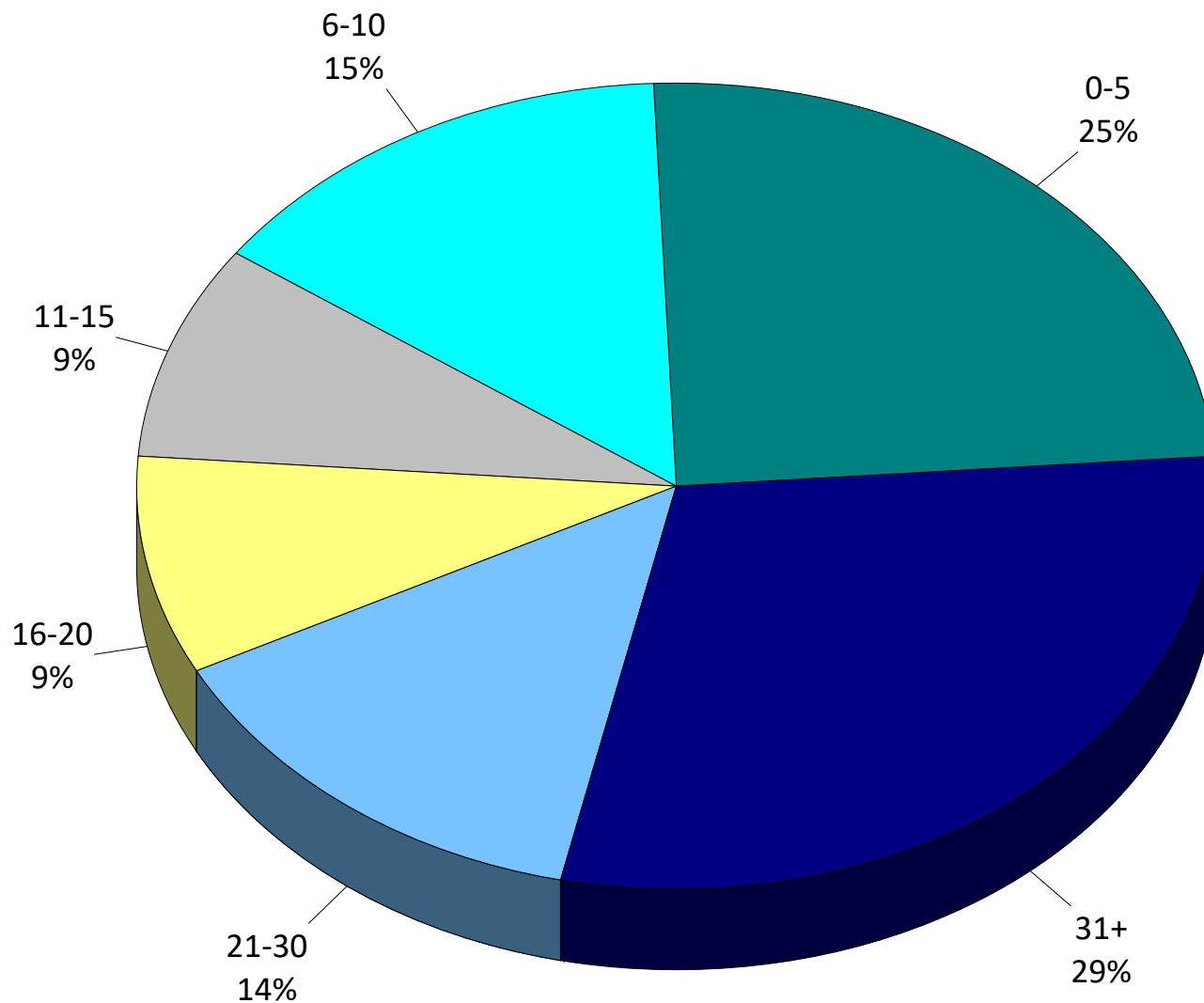
by percentage of respondents (excluding “not provided”)





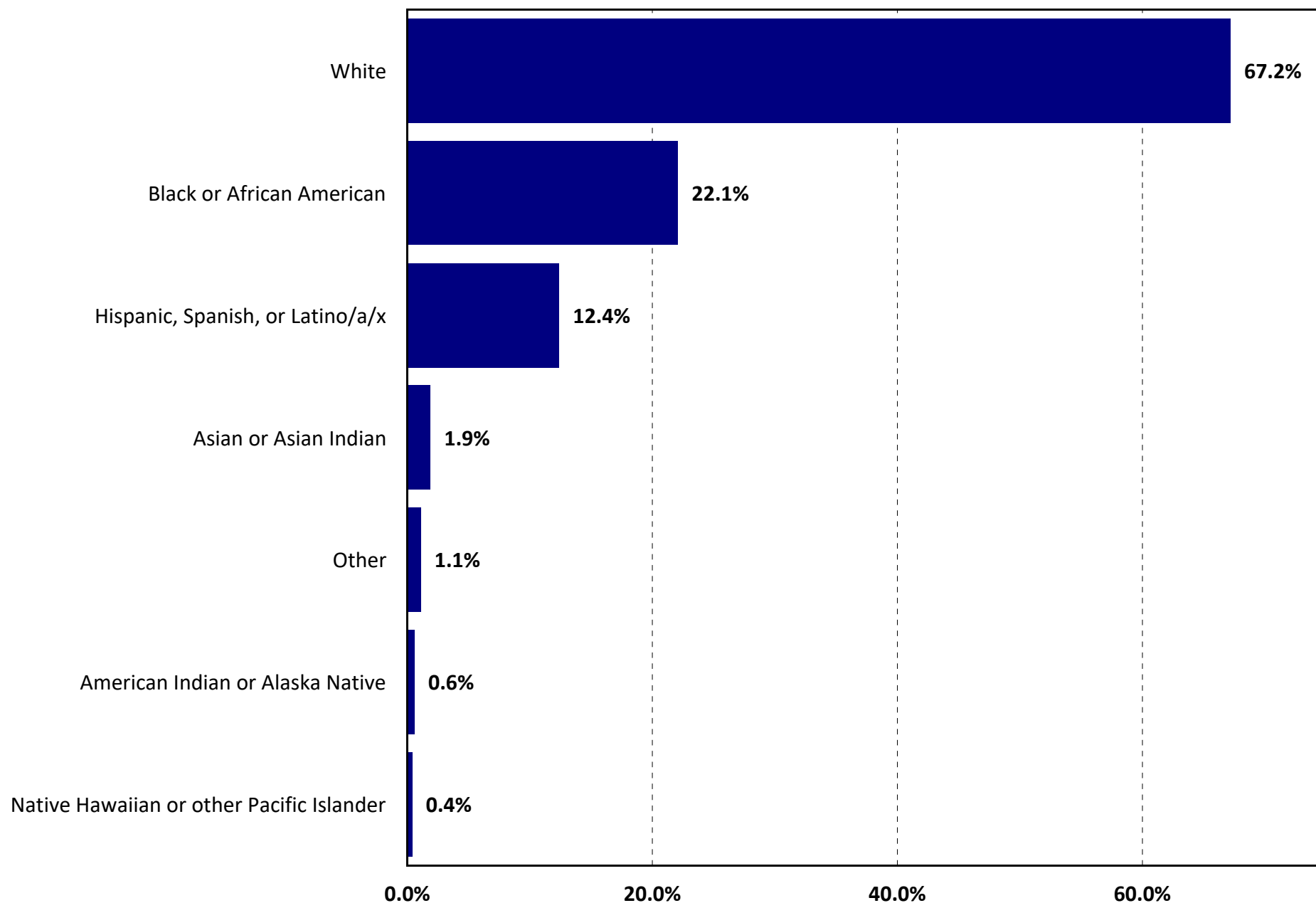
## Q12. How many years have you lived in the City of Kannapolis?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



# Q13. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity?

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)





# Benchmarks

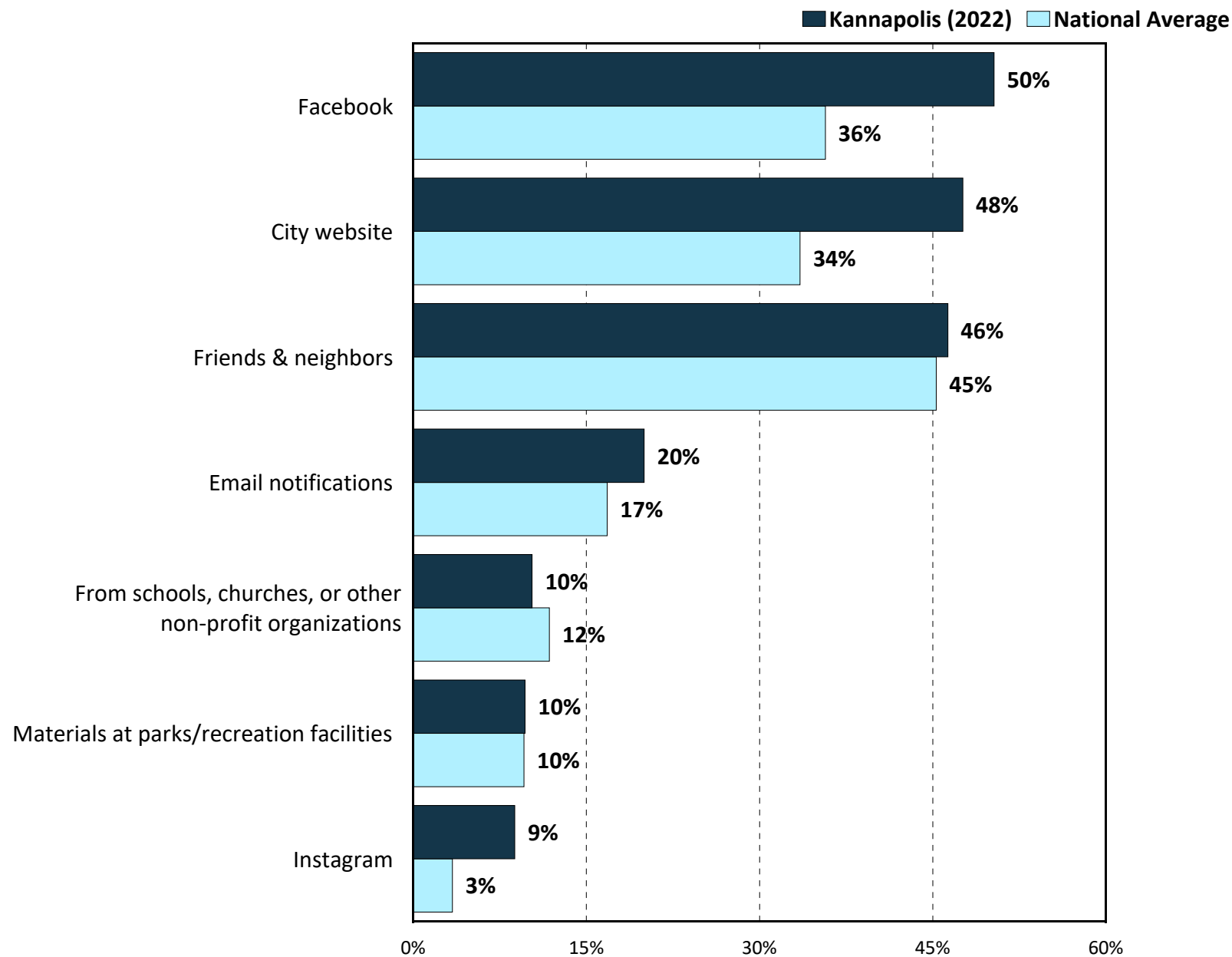
# National Benchmarks

**Note: The benchmarking data contained in this report is protected intellectual property. Any reproduction of the benchmarking information in this report by persons or organizations not directly affiliated with the City of Kannapolis is not authorized without written consent from ETC Institute.**



# Ways Households Learn About Parks and Recreation

by percentage of respondents



# 4

## Tabular Data

**Q1. Please indicate if you or any members of your household have used any of the City of Kannapolis parks or greenways listed below.**

(N=475)

	Yes	No
Q1-1. 8th Street Greenway	12.4%	87.6%
Q1-2. Bakers Creek Greenway	34.9%	65.1%
Q1-3. Bakers Creek Park	39.4%	60.6%
Q1-4. Cannonballers Stadium	63.6%	36.4%
Q1-5. Dale Earnhardt Tribute Site	29.5%	70.5%
Q1-6. Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway	22.7%	77.3%
Q1-7. Rocky River Greenway	5.9%	94.1%
Q1-8. Safrit Park	13.5%	86.5%
Q1-9. Veterans Park	54.7%	45.3%
Q1-10. Vietnam Veterans Park	39.8%	60.2%
Q1-11. Village Park	69.9%	30.1%
Q1-12. West Ave. Streetscape	36.4%	63.6%

**Q1. If "Yes," please rate the condition of the park/facility. (without "not provided")**

(N=428)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Q1-1. 8th Street Greenway	52.5%	42.4%	5.1%	0.0%
Q1-2. Bakers Creek Greenway	45.1%	48.1%	6.8%	0.0%
Q1-3. Bakers Creek Park	35.3%	50.5%	12.5%	1.6%
Q1-4. Cannonballers Stadium	82.7%	16.7%	0.7%	0.0%
Q1-5. Dale Earnhardt Tribute Site	65.0%	30.7%	4.4%	0.0%
Q1-6. Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway	63.9%	32.4%	3.7%	0.0%
Q1-7. Rocky River Greenway	59.3%	33.3%	7.4%	0.0%
Q1-8. Safrit Park	39.3%	49.2%	11.5%	0.0%
Q1-9. Veterans Park	60.8%	36.5%	2.7%	0.0%
Q1-10. Vietnam Veterans Park	56.7%	39.6%	3.7%	0.0%
Q1-11. Village Park	67.7%	30.2%	1.8%	0.3%
Q1-12. West Ave. Streetscape	71.9%	25.1%	2.3%	0.6%



**Q2. From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs and activities.**

Q2. All the ways you learn about City parks & recreation facilities, programs & activities	Number	Percent
City of Kannapolis website	226	47.6 %
City newsletter	294	61.9 %
Materials at parks/recreation facilities	46	9.7 %
Conversations with recreation staff	25	5.3 %
Friends & neighbors	220	46.3 %
Promotions at special events	103	21.7 %
Banners at parks or facilities	195	41.1 %
Email notifications from City	95	20.0 %
Facebook	239	50.3 %
Twitter	10	2.1 %
Instagram	42	8.8 %
Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations	49	10.3 %
Other	35	7.4 %
Total	1579	

**Q3. From the list in Question 2, which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events?**

Q3. Top choice	Number	Percent
City of Kannapolis website	71	14.9 %
City newsletter	172	36.2 %
Conversations with recreation staff	2	0.4 %
Friends & neighbors	10	2.1 %
Promotions at special events	5	1.1 %
Banners at parks or facilities	17	3.6 %
Email notifications from City	51	10.7 %
Facebook	92	19.4 %
Twitter	1	0.2 %
Instagram	13	2.7 %
Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations	1	0.2 %
None chosen	40	8.4 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**Q3. From the list in Question 2, which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events?**

Q3. 2nd choice	Number	Percent
City of Kannapolis website	76	16.0 %
City newsletter	92	19.4 %
Materials at parks/recreation facilities	12	2.5 %
Conversations with recreation staff	1	0.2 %
Friends & neighbors	10	2.1 %
Promotions at special events	11	2.3 %
Banners at parks or facilities	46	9.7 %
Email notifications from City	55	11.6 %
Facebook	82	17.3 %
Twitter	4	0.8 %
Instagram	12	2.5 %
Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations	7	1.5 %
Other	7	1.5 %
None chosen	60	12.6 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**Q3. From the list in Question 2, which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events?**

Q3. 3rd choice	Number	Percent
City of Kannapolis website	49	10.3 %
City newsletter	49	10.3 %
Materials at parks/recreation facilities	17	3.6 %
Conversations with recreation staff	2	0.4 %
Friends & neighbors	18	3.8 %
Promotions at special events	27	5.7 %
Banners at parks or facilities	63	13.3 %
Email notifications from City	51	10.7 %
Facebook	67	14.1 %
Twitter	4	0.8 %
Instagram	17	3.6 %
Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations	8	1.7 %
Other	4	0.8 %
None chosen	99	20.8 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**SUM OF TOP 3 CHOICES**

**Q3. From the list in Question 2, which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events? (top 3)**

<u>Q3. Sum of Top 3 Choices</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
City of Kannapolis website	196	41.3 %
City newsletter	313	65.9 %
Materials at parks/recreation facilities	29	6.1 %
Conversations with recreation staff	5	1.1 %
Friends & neighbors	38	8.0 %
Promotions at special events	43	9.1 %
Banners at parks or facilities	126	26.5 %
Email notifications from City	157	33.1 %
Facebook	241	50.7 %
Twitter	9	1.9 %
Instagram	42	8.8 %
Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations	16	3.4 %
Other	11	2.3 %
None chosen	40	8.4 %
Total	1266	

**Q4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the public park and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?**

Q4. How satisfied are you with overall public park & recreation areas	Number	Percent
Very satisfied	259	54.5 %
Somewhat satisfied	125	26.3 %
Neutral	48	10.1 %
Somewhat dissatisfied	14	2.9 %
Very dissatisfied	7	1.5 %
Don't know	22	4.6 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**WITHOUT DON'T KNOW****Q4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the public park and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?  
(without "don't know")**

Q4. How satisfied are you with overall public park & recreation areas	Number	Percent
Very satisfied	259	57.2 %
Somewhat satisfied	125	27.6 %
Neutral	48	10.6 %
Somewhat dissatisfied	14	3.1 %
Very dissatisfied	7	1.5 %
Total	453	100.0 %



**Q5. Overall, do you think there is a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?**

Q5. Is there a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks & recreation areas	Number	Percent
Great need	93	19.6 %
Some need	201	42.3 %
Little need	99	20.8 %
No need	53	11.2 %
Don't know	29	6.1 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**WITHOUT DON'T KNOW**

**Q5. Overall, do you think there is a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis? (without "don't know")**

Q5. Is there a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks & recreation areas	Number	Percent
Great need	93	20.9 %
Some need	201	45.1 %
Little need	99	22.2 %
No need	53	11.9 %
Total	446	100.0 %

**Q6. Please indicate the level of interest that you or members of your household have for each of the amenities/facilities listed below, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means your household has a "Great Interest" and 1 means "No Interest." (without "not provided")**

(N=475)

	Great interest	Moderate interest	Some interest	Little interest	No interest
Q6-1. 9/18-hole golf course	16.4%	9.4%	13.0%	14.6%	46.6%
Q6-2. Access to City lakes	45.6%	20.6%	18.4%	6.4%	9.0%
Q6-3. Archery park	15.4%	13.0%	19.2%	19.9%	32.4%
Q6-4. Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	12.9%	14.9%	22.5%	22.5%	27.2%
Q6-5. Campground	25.1%	21.3%	18.9%	10.7%	24.0%
Q6-6. Cricket pitch (field)	2.7%	4.1%	9.2%	20.1%	63.8%
Q6-7. Disc golf course	12.0%	10.6%	17.4%	20.1%	40.0%
Q6-8. Dog park	28.0%	15.7%	17.7%	13.6%	25.1%
Q6-9. Drive-in movie theater	52.1%	14.9%	13.1%	6.9%	12.9%
Q6-10. eGaming facility	13.9%	9.5%	11.6%	16.4%	48.6%
Q6-11. Greenways for walking/biking	49.3%	20.8%	14.3%	6.4%	9.2%
Q6-12. High ropes/adventure course	24.6%	19.5%	21.9%	13.6%	20.4%
Q6-13. History museum/cultural center	33.7%	23.3%	20.3%	9.7%	13.0%
Q6-14. Ice rink	23.8%	16.9%	19.2%	14.0%	26.1%
Q6-15. Larger amphitheater	24.6%	20.1%	22.6%	13.4%	19.2%
Q6-16. Mountain biking trails	18.9%	15.7%	21.6%	15.5%	28.4%
Q6-17. Nature park	41.9%	23.6%	18.1%	6.4%	10.1%
Q6-18. Outdoor basketball courts	12.4%	11.7%	17.8%	22.9%	35.3%
Q6-19. Par 3 golf course	15.5%	14.2%	14.2%	14.6%	41.6%
Q6-20. Performing arts center	27.8%	18.2%	24.0%	10.8%	19.3%

**Q6. Please indicate the level of interest that you or members of your household have for each of the amenities/facilities listed below, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means your household has a "Great Interest" and 1 means "No Interest." (without "not provided")**

	Great interest	Moderate interest	Some interest	Little interest	No interest
Q6-21. Pickleball courts/complex	9.3%	9.0%	17.9%	19.7%	44.1%
Q6-22. Picnic shelters	28.1%	22.5%	26.7%	9.4%	13.3%
Q6-23. Playgrounds	30.4%	23.7%	19.5%	13.0%	13.4%
Q6-24. Preservation of open space or natural areas	48.7%	21.9%	13.7%	7.3%	8.4%
Q6-25. Recreation center	30.4%	26.1%	20.5%	9.6%	13.4%
Q6-26. Shooting/rifle & skeet range	30.3%	15.3%	12.8%	8.8%	32.8%
Q6-27. Skate park	22.7%	14.6%	16.2%	14.4%	32.0%
Q6-28. Skate rink	20.6%	15.4%	16.7%	19.0%	28.3%
Q6-29. Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	19.6%	11.7%	22.7%	16.2%	29.9%
Q6-30. Swimming facility	38.9%	17.5%	19.9%	6.9%	16.8%
Q6-31. Tennis courts	11.3%	14.0%	23.8%	20.4%	30.5%
Q6-32. Water sprayground/splashpad	28.7%	16.1%	20.6%	11.9%	22.6%
Q6-33. Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	45.5%	15.9%	14.6%	8.6%	15.5%
Q6-34. Other	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**Q7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?**

<u>Q7. Top choice</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
9/18-hole golf course	21	4.4 %
Access to City lakes	52	10.9 %
Archery park	11	2.3 %
Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	10	2.1 %
Campground	11	2.3 %
Disc golf course	7	1.5 %
Dog park	29	6.1 %
Drive-in movie theater	44	9.3 %
eGaming facility	3	0.6 %
Greenways for walking/biking	46	9.7 %
High ropes/adventure course	3	0.6 %
History museum/cultural center	14	2.9 %
Ice rink	3	0.6 %
Larger amphitheater	4	0.8 %
Mountain biking trails	3	0.6 %
Nature park	17	3.6 %
Outdoor basketball courts	5	1.1 %
Par 3 golf course	7	1.5 %
Performing arts center	9	1.9 %
Pickleball courts/complex	9	1.9 %
Picnic shelters	5	1.1 %
Playgrounds	10	2.1 %
Preservation of open space or natural areas	20	4.2 %
Recreation center	5	1.1 %
Shooting/rifle & skeet range	16	3.4 %
Skate park	11	2.3 %
Skate rink	2	0.4 %
Swimming facility	21	4.4 %
Tennis courts	4	0.8 %
Water sprayground/splashpad	2	0.4 %
Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	23	4.8 %
<u>None chosen</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>10.1 %</u>
Total	475	100.0 %



**Q7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?**

<u>Q7. 2nd choice</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
9/18-hole golf course	11	2.3 %
Access to City lakes	39	8.2 %
Archery park	13	2.7 %
Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	8	1.7 %
Campground	25	5.3 %
Disc golf course	6	1.3 %
Dog park	27	5.7 %
Drive-in movie theater	51	10.7 %
eGaming facility	7	1.5 %
Greenways for walking/biking	24	5.1 %
High ropes/adventure course	12	2.5 %
History museum/cultural center	14	2.9 %
Ice rink	8	1.7 %
Larger amphitheater	8	1.7 %
Mountain biking trails	4	0.8 %
Nature park	15	3.2 %
Outdoor basketball courts	3	0.6 %
Par 3 golf course	12	2.5 %
Performing arts center	13	2.7 %
Pickleball courts/complex	1	0.2 %
Picnic shelters	5	1.1 %
Playgrounds	12	2.5 %
Preservation of open space or natural areas	14	2.9 %
Recreation center	10	2.1 %
Shooting/rifle & skeet range	6	1.3 %
Skate park	8	1.7 %
Skate rink	4	0.8 %
Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	7	1.5 %
Swimming facility	23	4.8 %
Tennis courts	2	0.4 %
Water sprayground/splashpad	6	1.3 %
Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	16	3.4 %
None chosen	61	12.8 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**Q7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?**

<u>Q7. 3rd choice</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
9/18-hole golf course	9	1.9 %
Access to City lakes	20	4.2 %
Archery park	9	1.9 %
Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	5	1.1 %
Campground	22	4.6 %
Disc golf course	7	1.5 %
Dog park	21	4.4 %
Drive-in movie theater	40	8.4 %
eGaming facility	6	1.3 %
Greenways for walking/biking	36	7.6 %
High ropes/adventure course	10	2.1 %
History museum/cultural center	15	3.2 %
Ice rink	9	1.9 %
Larger amphitheater	10	2.1 %
Mountain biking trails	7	1.5 %
Nature park	20	4.2 %
Outdoor basketball courts	3	0.6 %
Par 3 golf course	11	2.3 %
Performing arts center	15	3.2 %
Pickleball courts/complex	1	0.2 %
Picnic shelters	10	2.1 %
Playgrounds	12	2.5 %
Preservation of open space or natural areas	16	3.4 %
Recreation center	13	2.7 %
Shooting/rifle & skeet range	14	2.9 %
Skate park	11	2.3 %
Skate rink	1	0.2 %
Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	3	0.6 %
Swimming facility	12	2.5 %
Water sprayground/splashpad	4	0.8 %
Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	28	5.9 %
<u>None chosen</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>15.8 %</u>
Total	475	100.0 %

**Q7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?**

Q7. 4th choice	Number	Percent
9/18-hole golf course	4	0.8 %
Access to City lakes	20	4.2 %
Archery park	8	1.7 %
Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	3	0.6 %
Campground	18	3.8 %
Cricket pitch (field)	1	0.2 %
Disc golf course	5	1.1 %
Dog park	15	3.2 %
Drive-in movie theater	38	8.0 %
eGaming facility	4	0.8 %
Greenways for walking/biking	21	4.4 %
High ropes/adventure course	14	2.9 %
History museum/cultural center	22	4.6 %
Ice rink	12	2.5 %
Larger amphitheater	9	1.9 %
Mountain biking trails	11	2.3 %
Nature park	21	4.4 %
Outdoor basketball courts	3	0.6 %
Par 3 golf course	6	1.3 %
Performing arts center	13	2.7 %
Pickleball courts/complex	8	1.7 %
Picnic shelters	5	1.1 %
Playgrounds	19	4.0 %
Preservation of open space or natural areas	15	3.2 %
Recreation center	10	2.1 %
Shooting/rifle & skeet range	17	3.6 %
Skate park	5	1.1 %
Skate rink	2	0.4 %
Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	6	1.3 %
Swimming facility	24	5.1 %
Tennis courts	1	0.2 %
Water sprayground/splashpad	9	1.9 %
Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	17	3.6 %
None chosen	89	18.7 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**Q7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?**

Q7. 5th choice	Number	Percent
9/18-hole golf course	6	1.3 %
Access to City lakes	18	3.8 %
Archery park	7	1.5 %
Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	3	0.6 %
Campground	12	2.5 %
Cricket pitch (field)	1	0.2 %
Disc golf course	5	1.1 %
Dog park	10	2.1 %
Drive-in movie theater	19	4.0 %
eGaming facility	6	1.3 %
Greenways for walking/biking	21	4.4 %
High ropes/adventure course	13	2.7 %
History museum/cultural center	14	2.9 %
Ice rink	11	2.3 %
Larger amphitheater	7	1.5 %
Mountain biking trails	6	1.3 %
Nature park	19	4.0 %
Outdoor basketball courts	3	0.6 %
Par 3 golf course	10	2.1 %
Performing arts center	7	1.5 %
Pickleball courts/complex	1	0.2 %
Picnic shelters	11	2.3 %
Playgrounds	11	2.3 %
Preservation of open space or natural areas	30	6.3 %
Recreation center	7	1.5 %
Shooting/rifle & skeet range	10	2.1 %
Skate park	10	2.1 %
Skate rink	5	1.1 %
Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	9	1.9 %
Swimming facility	13	2.7 %
Tennis courts	4	0.8 %
Water sprayground/splashpad	10	2.1 %
Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	25	5.3 %
None chosen	131	27.6 %
Total	475	100.0 %



**SUM OF TOP 5 CHOICES****Q7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household? (top 5)**

<u>Q7. Sum of Top 5 Choices</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
9/18-hole golf course	51	10.7 %
Access to City lakes	149	31.4 %
Archery park	48	10.1 %
Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	29	6.1 %
Campground	88	18.5 %
Cricket pitch (field)	2	0.4 %
Disc golf course	30	6.3 %
Dog park	102	21.5 %
Drive-in movie theater	192	40.4 %
eGaming facility	26	5.5 %
Greenways for walking/biking	148	31.2 %
High ropes/adventure course	52	10.9 %
History museum/cultural center	79	16.6 %
Ice rink	43	9.1 %
Larger amphitheater	38	8.0 %
Mountain biking trails	31	6.5 %
Nature park	92	19.4 %
Outdoor basketball courts	17	3.6 %
Par 3 golf course	46	9.7 %
Performing arts center	57	12.0 %
Pickleball courts/complex	20	4.2 %
Picnic shelters	36	7.6 %
Playgrounds	64	13.5 %
Preservation of open space or natural areas	95	20.0 %
Recreation center	45	9.5 %
Shooting/rifle & skeet range	63	13.3 %
Skate park	45	9.5 %
Skate rink	14	2.9 %
Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	25	5.3 %
Swimming facility	93	19.6 %
Tennis courts	11	2.3 %
Water sprayground/splashpad	31	6.5 %
Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	109	22.9 %
None chosen	48	10.1 %
Total	2019	

**Q8. What is the maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of the new parks, facilities, and programming that are most important to your household?**

Q8. Maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund development of new parks, facilities, & programming

	Number	Percent
\$15+ per month	67	14.1 %
\$10-14 per month	80	16.8 %
\$6-9 per month	55	11.6 %
\$4-5 per month	80	16.8 %
\$1-3 per month	59	12.4 %
No additional amount	115	24.2 %
Not provided	19	4.0 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**WITHOUT NOT PROVIDED**

**Q8. What is the maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of the new parks, facilities, and programming that are most important to your household? (without "not provided")**

Q8. Maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund development of new parks, facilities, & programming

	Number	Percent
\$15+ per month	67	14.7 %
\$10-14 per month	80	17.5 %
\$6-9 per month	55	12.1 %
\$4-5 per month	80	17.5 %
\$1-3 per month	59	12.9 %
No additional amount	115	25.2 %
Total	456	100.0 %

**Q9. Including yourself, how many people in your household are...**

	Mean	Sum
number	2.78	1295
Under age 5	0.19	87
Ages 5-9	0.17	78
Ages 10-14	0.17	79
Ages 15-19	0.20	94
Ages 20-24	0.14	66
Ages 25-34	0.34	158
Ages 35-44	0.35	161
Ages 45-54	0.41	190
Ages 55-64	0.40	187
Ages 65-79	0.33	153
Ages 80+	0.09	42

**Q10. What is your age:**

Q10. Your age	Number	Percent
18-34	84	17.7 %
35-44	93	19.6 %
45-54	98	20.6 %
55-64	94	19.8 %
65+	104	21.9 %
Not provided	2	0.4 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**WITHOUT NOT PROVIDED****Q10. What is your age: (without "not provided")**

Q10. Your age	Number	Percent
18-34	84	17.8 %
35-44	93	19.7 %
45-54	98	20.7 %
55-64	94	19.9 %
65+	104	22.0 %
Total	473	100.0 %

**Q11. What is your gender?**

Q11. Your gender	Number	Percent
Male	236	49.7 %
Female	231	48.6 %
Non-binary	3	0.6 %
Not provided	5	1.1 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**WITHOUT NOT PROVIDED****Q11. What is your gender? (without "not provided")**

Q11. Your gender	Number	Percent
Male	236	50.2 %
Female	231	49.1 %
Non-binary	3	0.6 %
Total	470	100.0 %

**Q12. How many years have you lived in the City of Kannapolis?**

Q12. How many years have you lived in City of Kannapolis	Number	Percent
0-5	114	24.0 %
6-10	68	14.3 %
11-15	40	8.4 %
16-20	40	8.4 %
21-30	66	13.9 %
31+	137	28.8 %
Not provided	10	2.1 %
Total	475	100.0 %

**WITHOUT NOT PROVIDED****Q12. How many years have you lived in the City of Kannapolis? (without "not provided")**

Q12. How many years have you lived in City of Kannapolis	Number	Percent
0-5	114	24.5 %
6-10	68	14.6 %
11-15	40	8.6 %
16-20	40	8.6 %
21-30	66	14.2 %
31+	137	29.5 %
Total	465	100.0 %

**Q13. Which of the following best describes your race?**

<u>Q13. Your race</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Asian or Asian Indian	9	1.9 %
Black or African American	105	22.1 %
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	0.6 %
White	319	67.2 %
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	2	0.4 %
Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x	59	12.4 %
Other	5	1.1 %
Total	502	

**Q13-7. Self-describe your race:**

<u>Q13-7. Self-describe your race</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Mixed	2	40.0 %
Mixed Black and White	1	20.0 %
Hispanic Jewish	1	20.0 %
Scandinavian & Native American	1	20.0 %
Total	5	100.0 %



**5**

# **Open-Ended Responses**

### Open-Ended Question Responses

**Q2—“Other”: From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs and activities**

- all trails app
- Announcement
- Banners on Kannapolis Parkway.
- Big signs
- birthday parties, church events
- By attending.
- Cabarrus County CVB
- Clients
- Drive by and see it.
- Driving around
- Driving around
- Driving around
- Exploration of area
- Flyer in the water bill.
- Google maps
- Google maps
- Google maps
- I live here
- I live in Kannapolis that's how I know.
- I live just off the loop.
- I usually search on Apple/google maps and the All Trails app for areas I haven't visited.
- I was married at the village park,, family knew about using the pavilion
- I work part time for parks and rec!
- Independent Tribune Newspaper
- Independent Tribune, Salisbury Post.
- Just saw it riding by
- Kannapolis matters, Thru the water bills
- Knew about them
- Library
- Local news / press releases
- Newspaper
- Riding around the city
- Saw them myself
- Searching on Google.
- signs
- Signs at Roger Lake rd and Kannapolis Park way.
- Vida Kannapolis
- Walking through the greenways
- Water bill has information.
- Water bill mailer
- WCNC
- Whatever info gets sent with the utility bills
- Work

- **Q6—"Other": Interest in Amenity/Facility.**
- 1. Walking/nature trails, picnic facilities, fishing piers along Fisher Lake. Need to make better use of the Lake as recreation asset!!! 2. Need rest station or port a john at buffalo baker creek trail head at Rodgers Lake road for older people and kids please!! West street rest room building lacks sufficient toilets!!! A real problem when area is crowded with events!!! 3. West street has insufficient landscaping shade! Street is blistering hot in summer!!!"
- a park on the eastside
- Access for fishermen in the many reservoirs located in the area.
- Access to lake areas so fishing and boating.
- Adult water park ! But a great town pool in Kannapolis would be AWESOME!! Concerts at the ball field ! Fall concerts !!
- Affordable daycare/camps for our youth, Holiday events/spread the love events, Homeless shelters/life counseling for troubled individuals who want to turn their lives around
- AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM
- Art and music incorporation throughout city
- bike lanes
- BMX track.
- Build the skate park that you promised.
- covered playground
- Creative arts spaces where residents can create works of art and choreograph dance pieces.
- Day trips via buses
- Farm type petting zoo
- Fishing and boating
- fishing place
- fishing pond
- Free dance studios.
- Gun safety classes.
- Hiking Trails (not paved greenway)
- Horse back riding
- Horseback riding facility with nature trails.
- HORSESHOES AND GRILLS
- ice rink
- I'm especially interested in seeing the area near city hall and the NC research campus used more, the giant open field needs to be turned into a park or something productive
- Indoor football/diamond fields.
- Kid's indoor activities
- Maintenance of all facilities that are already built is of great interest!!!
- Mini golf.
- More access to basketball goals outdoors and in are much needed.
- More bars that serve liquor
- More like soccer/Football fields!! With open goals

- More restaurants to eat at and not Mexican food, need steak house. Seafood and Olive Garden, also a Chick-fil-A. That is what this town needs, places to eat at, and not have to travel to CO n cord. Charlotte. Or Salisbury.
- Need more Parking desperately and much better security especially around Kids places and better crowd control, the Concerts have become ridiculous and not fun
- Paddle boating
- Pattle boats, lake rides of some kind
- Restaurants, food trucks, mini fair, more events/festivals
- rock climbing
- Senior citizen greenway or park
- Skate board park for teens.
- Space for small live entertainment events that can offer lower ticket costs. Look at indoor basketball courts, with a walking track overhead looking down on the courts. Have all these facilities in one complex so parking, concessions and restrooms can be shared instead of scattered among a bunch of different places.
- special needs playground
- The city of Kannapolis needs to build sidewalks for residents to walk to the parks and greenways. Please, build a sidewalk on Fishers st..
- the kids and teenagers of Kannapolis don't have much to do but hang out downtown and that leads to trouble cause there is not much to do for them there either if they are kept busy no trouble and the parents are much more happy
- Water parks

# **6** **Survey Instrument**





September 2022

Dear Kannapolis Resident,

**Your response to the enclosed survey is extremely important.**

The City of Kannapolis is conducting a comprehensive review of its need to provide Parks and Recreation services to its residents, and your input is a critical component of this effort. To that end, we are conducting a Community Survey to establish priorities for the future needs of residents for parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services. **Your household was one of a limited number selected randomly to receive this survey; therefore, it is very important that you participate.**

**We appreciate your time.**

We realize the survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete, but each question is important. The time you invest providing us with your input on Parks and Recreation needs will also help the Kannapolis City Council as they develop the Imagine Kannapolis Strategic Plan. For more information on Imagine Kannapolis please visit [www.kannapolisnc.gov](http://www.kannapolisnc.gov).

**Please complete and return your survey within the next two weeks.**

ETC Institute, an independent consulting company, is administering the survey and compiling the results for the City.

**Your responses will remain confidential.** Please return your completed survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope addressed to **ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061**. If you prefer to take the survey by web, the address is [kannapolissurvey.org](http://kannapolissurvey.org).

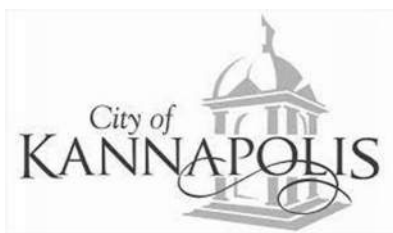
If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Gary Mills at 704-920-4343 or [gmills@kannapolisnc.gov](mailto:gmills@kannapolisnc.gov).

***Take this opportunity to let your voice be heard!***

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gary Mills', is written over a light gray circular background.

**Gary Mills, Director**  
**City of Kannapolis Parks and Recreation**



## Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey

The City of Kannapolis would like your input to help determine park and recreation priorities for our community. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. When you are finished, return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid, return-reply envelope. If you prefer, you can complete the survey online at [kannapolissurvey.org](http://kannapolissurvey.org). We greatly appreciate your time!

1. Please indicate if you or any member of your household have used any of the City of Kannapolis parks or greenways listed below during the past 12 months by circling either "Yes" or "No." If "Yes," please rate the condition of the park/greenway using a scale of 1 to 4, where 4 means "Excellent" and 1 means "Poor."

Name of Park/Greenway	Have you used this park/greenway in the past 12 months?		If "Yes," how would you rate the condition of the park/greenway?			
	Yes	No	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
01. 8th Street Greenway	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
02. Bakers Creek Greenway	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
03. Bakers Creek Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
04. Cannonballers Stadium	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
05. Dale Earnhardt Tribute Site	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
06. Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
07. Rocky River Greenway	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
08. Safrut Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
09. Veterans Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
10. Vietnam Veterans Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
11. Village Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
12. West Ave. Streetscape	Yes	No	4	3	2	1

2. From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Kannapolis parks and recreation facilities, programs and activities.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (01) City of Kannapolis website               | <input type="checkbox"/> (08) E-mail notifications from the City                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (02) City newsletter                          | <input type="checkbox"/> (09) Facebook  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (03) Materials at parks/recreation facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Twitter   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (04) Conversations with recreation staff      | <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Instagram   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (05) Friends and neighbors                    | <input type="checkbox"/> (12) Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Promotions at special events             | <input type="checkbox"/> (13) Other: _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Banners at parks or facilities           |   |

3. From the list in Question 2, which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the City use to communicate with you about City, parks, facilities, programs and special events? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 2, or circle "NONE."]

1st: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd: \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd: \_\_\_\_\_ NONE

4. Overall, how satisfied are you with the public park and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Very satisfied     | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Neutral               | <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Very dissatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Somewhat dissatisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> (9) Don't know        |

5. Overall, do you think there is a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional parks and recreation areas in the City of Kannapolis?

- ☐ (1) Great need ☐ (2) Some need ☐ (3) Little need ☐ (4) No need ☐ (9) Don't know

6. Please indicate the level of interest that you or members of your household have for each of the amenities/facilities listed below, using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means your household has a "Great Interest" and 1 means "No Interest."

Type of Facility/Amenity	Great Interest	Moderate Interest	Some Interest	Little Interest	No Interest
01. 9/18-hole golf course	5	4	3	2	1
02. Access to City lakes	5	4	3	2	1
03. Archery park	5	4	3	2	1
04. Baseball/softball fields (diamond fields)	5	4	3	2	1
05. Campground	5	4	3	2	1
06. Cricket pitch (field)	5	4	3	2	1
07. Disc golf course	5	4	3	2	1
08. Dog park	5	4	3	2	1
09. Drive-in movie theater	5	4	3	2	1
10. E-gaming facility	5	4	3	2	1
11. Greenways for walking/biking	5	4	3	2	1
12. High ropes/adventure course	5	4	3	2	1
13. History museum/cultural center	5	4	3	2	1
14. Ice rink	5	4	3	2	1
15. Larger amphitheater	5	4	3	2	1
16. Mountain biking trails	5	4	3	2	1
17. Nature park	5	4	3	2	1
18. Outdoor basketball courts	5	4	3	2	1
19. Par 3 golf course	5	4	3	2	1
20. Performing arts center	5	4	3	2	1
21. Pickleball courts/complex	5	4	3	2	1
22. Picnic shelters	5	4	3	2	1
23. Playgrounds	5	4	3	2	1
24. Preservation of open space or natural areas	5	4	3	2	1
25. Recreation center	5	4	3	2	1
26. Shooting/rifle & skeet range	5	4	3	2	1
27. Skate park	5	4	3	2	1
28. Skate rink	5	4	3	2	1
29. Soccer/football/Lacrosse fields (rectangle fields)	5	4	3	2	1
30. Swimming facility	5	4	3	2	1
31. Tennis courts	5	4	3	2	1
32. Water sprayground/splashpad	5	4	3	2	1
33. Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)	5	4	3	2	1
34. Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1

7. Which FIVE types of facilities/amenities from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 6, or circle "NONE."]

1st: \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd: \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd: \_\_\_\_\_ 4th: \_\_\_\_\_ 5th: \_\_\_\_\_ NONE

8. What is the maximum additional amount you would be willing to pay per month to fund the development of the new parks, facilities, and programming that are most important to your household?

\_\_\_\_\_ (1) \$15 or more per month      \_\_\_\_\_ (3) \$6-9 per month      \_\_\_\_\_ (5) \$1-3 per month  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \$10-14 per month      \_\_\_\_\_ (4) \$4-5 per month      \_\_\_\_\_ (6) No additional amount

**9. Including yourself, how many people in your household are...**

Under age 5: ____	Ages 15-19: ____	Ages 35-44: ____	Ages 65-79: ____
Ages 5-9: ____	Ages 20-24: ____	Ages 45-54: ____	Ages 80+: ____
Ages 10-14: ____	Ages 25-34: ____	Ages 55-64: ____	

**10. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years****11. What is your gender? \_\_\_\_\_(1) Male \_\_\_\_\_(2) Female \_\_\_\_\_(3) Non-binary****12. How many years have you lived in the City of Kannapolis? \_\_\_\_\_ years****13. Which of the following best describes your race? [Check all that apply.]**

____(01) Asian or Asian Indian	____(05) Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
____(02) Black or African American	____(06) Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x
____(03) American Indian or Alaska Native	____(99) Other: _____
____(04) White	

**This concludes the survey. Thank you for your time!**

Return your completed survey in the enclosed return-reply envelope addressed to:  
ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061

# KANNAPOLIS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

RECREATION AND FACILITIES FOCUS GROUP

&

YOUTH COUNCIL

FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS SURVEY RESULTS



# RECREATION AND FACILITIES

## FOCUS GROUP SURVEY RESULTS: FACILITIES (9)

### MEDIAN TOP 15

1. Recreation Center
2. Baseball/Softball Fields (Diamonds)
3. Greenways
4. Soccer/Football fields (rectangle fields)
5. Swimming Facility
6. Dog Park
7. Access to City Lakes
8. Pickleball Courts/Complex
9. Picnic Shelters
10. Skateboard Park
11. Shooting/Rifle & Skeet Range
12. Tennis Courts
13. High Ropes/Adventure Course
14. Preservation of Open Space
15. Nature Park

### MEAN TOP 15

1. Baseball/Softball Fields (Diamonds)
2. Greenways
3. Dog Park
4. Soccer/Football Fields (rectangle fields)
5. Recreation Center
6. Swimming Facility
7. Access to City Lakes
8. Playgrounds
9. Par 3 Golf Course
10. Picnic Shelters
11. Pickleball Courts/Complex
12. Shooting/Rifle & Skeet Range
13. Nature Park
14. Skateboard Park
15. Tennis Courts

# RECREATION AND FACILITIES

## FOCUS GROUP SURVEY RESULTS: **FACILITIES** (9)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 3

1. Greenways (4)
2. Baseball/Softball Fields (4)
3. Recreation Center (4)
4. Soccer/Football Fields (3)
5. Dog Park (2)
6. Par 3 Golf Course (3)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 5

1. Recreation Center (5)
2. Greenways (4)
3. Baseball/Softball Fields (4)
4. Soccer/Football Fields (3)
5. Dog Park (2)
6. Par 3 Golf Course (2)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 10

1. Recreation Center (7)
2. Dog park (7)
3. Baseball/Softball Fields (6)
4. Soccer/Football Fields (6)
5. Greenways (5)
6. Swimming Facility (5)
7. Pickleball Courts/Complex (5)
8. Access to City Lakes (5)
9. Playgrounds (5)

# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## COMMUNITY BASED: FACILITIES (16)

### MEDIAN TOP 15

1. Greenways
2. Soccer/Football Fields (rectangle fields)
3. Drive-in Theatre
4. Preservation of Open Space
5. Nature Park
6. Dog Park
7. Museum
8. Access to City Lakes
9. Water Sprayground/Splashpad
10. Recreation Center
11. Picnic Shelters
12. Outdoor Basketball
13. Performing Arts Center
14. Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)
15. Playgrounds

### MEAN TOP 15

1. Drive-in Theatre
2. Greenways
3. Soccer/Football Fields (rectangle fields)
4. Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)
5. Outdoor Basketball
6. Picnic Shelters
7. Access to City Lakes
8. Dog Park
9. Recreation Center
10. Tennis Courts
11. Preservation of Open Space
12. Performing Arts Center
13. Nature Park
14. Museum
15. Playgrounds

# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## COMMUNITY BASED: FACILITIES (16)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 3

1. Drive-in Theatre (4)
2. Recreation center (3)
3. Waterpark (3)
4. Preservation of Open Space (3)
5. Roller Skating Rink (3)
6. Skatepark (3)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 5

1. Greenways (8)
2. Drive-in Theatre (6)
3. Waterpark (5)
4. Recreation Center (4)
5. Soccer/Football Fields (4)
6. Roller Skating Rink (4)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 10

1. Greenways (9)
2. Soccer/Football Fields (9)
3. Dog Park (8)
4. Drive-in theatre (8)
5. Museum (8)
6. Recreation center (7)
7. Access to City Lakes (7)
8. Campground (7)

# RECREATION AND FACILITIES FOCUS GROUP & YOUTH COUNCIL: COMMUNITY BASED FACILITIES COMPARISON

## AGREEMENT IN MEDIAN TOP 15

- Greenways
- Soccer/Football Fields
- Dog Park
- Access to City Lakes
- Recreation Center

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 3

- Recreation Center

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 5

- Recreation Center
- Greenways
- Soccer/Football Fields

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 10

- Recreation Center
- Greenways
- Soccer/Football Fields
- Dog Park
- Access to City Lakes



# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## YOUTH BASED: FACILITIES (33)

### MEDIAN TOP 15

1. Drive-in Theatre
2. Swimming Facility
3. Recreation Center
4. Soccer/Football Fields
5. Outdoor Basketball Courts
6. Greenways
7. Preservation of Open Space
8. Dog Park
9. Roller Skating Rink
10. Nature Park
11. Access to City Lakes
12. Water Park (wave pool/slides/lazy river)
13. Water sprayground/splashpad
14. Baseball/Softball fields
15. Picnic Shelters

### MEAN TOP 15

1. Drive-in Theatre
2. Recreation Center
3. Swimming Facility
4. Greenways
5. Preservation of Open Space
6. Soccer/Football Fields
7. Outdoor Basketball
8. Waterpark (wave pool/slides/lazy river)
9. Nature Park
10. Roller Skating Rink
11. Dog Park
12. Access to City Lakes
13. Water sprayground/splashpad
14. Playgrounds
15. Skatepark

# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## YOUTH BASED: FACILITIES (33)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 3

1. Drive-in Theatre (12)
2. Waterpark (11)
3. Nature Park (6)
4. Recreation Center (5)
5. Greenways (5)
6. Outdoor basketball (5)
7. Water sprayground/splashpad (5)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 5

1. Waterpark (13) w/six 1<sup>st</sup> place votes
2. Drive-in Theatre (13)
3. Nature Park (12)
4. Swimming Facility (10)
5. Water sprayground/splashpad (10)
6. Outdoor basketball (9)
7. Soccer/Football Fields (8)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 10

1. Drive-in Theatre (23)
2. Swimming Facility (19)
3. Recreation Center (18)
4. Soccer/Football Fields (18)
5. Outdoor Basketball (17)
6. Greenways (16)
7. Waterpark (15)
8. Water sprayground/splashpad (15)

# RECREATION AND FACILITIES FOCUS GROUP & YOUTH COUNCIL: YOUTH BASED FACILITIES COMPARISON

## AGREEMENT IN MEDIAN TOP 15

- Recreation Center
- Greenways
- Soccer/Football Fields
- Swimming Facility
- Baseball/Softball Fields
- Preservation of Open Space
- Dog Park
- Nature Park
- Access to City Lakes
- Picnic Shelters

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 3

- Recreation Center
- Greenways

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 5

- Soccer/Football Fields

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 10

- Recreation Center
- Soccer/Football Fields
- Greenways

# RECREATION AND FACILITIES FOCUS GROUP

## SURVEY RESULTS: PROGRAMS (9)

### MEDIAN TOP 15

1. Music Festival
2. Food Truck Events
3. Additional long-distance running/road races
4. Programs for Individuals with disabilities/special needs
5. Swimming Lessons
6. Expanded Sr. Trips
7. Fitness Programs (Zumba, Yoga, etc.)
8. Youth Summer Camps
9. Tennis League/Ladders
10. Pickleball League/Ladders
11. Theatre/ Drama Programs
12. Canoeing/Kayaking
13. Environmental/Outdoor Education Programs
14. Ticketed Entertainment Events
15. Youth Golf Lessons

### MEAN TOP 15

1. Programs for Individuals with disabilities/special needs
2. Music Festival
3. Fitness Programs (Zumba, Yoga, etc.)
4. Swimming Lessons
5. Expanded Sr. Trips
6. Additional long-distance running/road races
7. Youth Summer Camps
8. Canoeing/Kayaking
9. Tennis League/Ladders
10. Youth Golf lessons/leagues
11. Theatre/Drama programs
12. Sr. Athletics/Programming
13. Food Truck Events
14. Pickleball Leagues/Ladders
15. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Event Series

# RECREATION AND FACILITIES FOCUS GROUP

## SURVEY RESULTS: PROGRAMS (9)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 3

1. Music Festival (4)
2. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Event series (2)
3. Swimming Lessons (2)
4. Expanded Sr. Trips (2)
5. Adult Golf Lessons (2)
6. Ticketed Entertainment Events (2)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 5

1. Music Festival (5)
2. Food Truck Events (4)
3. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Event Series (3)
4. Swimming Lessons (3)
5. Canoeing/Kayaking (3)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 10

1. Music Festival (6)
2. Swimming Lessons (5)
3. Food Truck Events (5)
4. Programming for individuals with disabilities/special needs (5)
5. Additional long-distance running/road races (5)
6. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Event Series (4)
7. Expanded Sr. Trips (4)
8. Tennis Leagues/Ladders (4)
9. Pickleball Leagues/Ladders (4)
10. Fitness Programs (Zumba, Yoga, etc.) (4)



# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## COMMUNITY BASED: PROGRAMS (16)

### MEDIAN TOP 15

1. Food Truck Events
2. Youth Summer Camps
3. Neighborhood Outreach (smaller neighborhood events/family fun days)
4. After-school Programs
5. Environmental/Outdoor Recreation Programs
6. Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs
7. Theatre/Drama Programs
8. Music Festival
9. Expanded/Enhanced Summer Event Series
10. Additional long-distance running/road races
11. Dance Lessons/programming
12. Visual Arts Programming
13. Preschool Programming
14. Youth Volleyball leagues
15. Bi/triathlon races

### MEAN TOP 15

1. Youth Summer Camps
2. Food Truck Events
3. After-school Programs
4. Neighborhood Outreach Programs
5. Environmental/Outdoor Recreation Programs
6. Pre-school Programming
7. Additional long-distance running/road races
8. Music Festival
9. Sr. Athletics/Programming
10. Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs
11. Theatre/Drama Programs
12. Visual Arts Programs
13. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Event Series
14. Youth Tackle Football
15. Fitness Programs

# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## COMMUNITY BASED: PROGRAMS (16)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 3

1. Food Truck Events (5)
2. Neighborhood Outreach Programs (4)
3. Environmental/Outdoor Recreation Programs (4)
4. Youth Summer Camps (4)
5. Ticket Entertainment Events (4)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 5

1. Youth Summer Camps (8)
2. Food Truck Events (7)
3. Neighborhood Outreach Programs (6)
4. Environmental/Outdoor Recreation Programs (5)
5. Ticketed Entertainment Events (5)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 10

1. Food Truck Events (11)
2. Youth Summer Camps (10)
3. Neighborhood Outreach (8)
4. Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs (7)
5. Ticketed Entertainment Events (7)
6. Fitness Programs (7)

# RECREATION AND FACILITIES FOCUS GROUP & YOUTH COUNCIL: COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS COMPARISON

## AGREEMENT IN MEDIAN TOP 15

- Food Truck Events
- Music Festival
- Environmental/Outdoor Recreation Programs
- Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs
- Theatre/Drama Programs
- Additional long-distance running/races
- Youth Summer Camps

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 3

- Ticketed Entertainment Events

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 5

- Food Truck Events

## AGREEMENT IN TOP 10

- Food Truck Events
- Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs

# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## YOUTH BASED: PROGRAMS (33)

### MEDIAN TOP 15

1. Swimming Lessons
2. Youth Summer Camps
3. Neighborhood Outreach Programs
4. Food Truck Events
5. Theatre/Drama Programs
6. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Entertainments Series
7. Music Lessons
8. Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs
9. Music Festival
10. Fitness Programs
11. Additional long-distance running/races
12. Teen Adventure Programs
13. Visual Arts Programs
14. After School Programs
15. Sr. Athletic Programs

### MEAN TOP 15

1. Neighborhood Outreach Programs
2. Youth Summer Camps
3. Swimming Lessons
4. Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs
5. Food Truck Events
6. Additional long-distance running/races
7. Music Festival
8. Theatre/Drama Programs
9. Enhanced/Expanded Summer Entertainment Series
10. Fitness Programs
11. Teen Adventure Camps
12. Music Lessons
13. Pre-school Programs
14. Track & Field Programs
15. Youth Volleyball Leagues

# YOUTH COUNCIL SURVEY RESULTS

## YOUTH BASED: PROGRAMS (33)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 3

- Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs (8)
- Music Festival (6)
- Neighborhood Outreach Programs (5)
- Swim Lessons (5)
- Theatre/Drama Programs
- Teen Adventure Camps (5)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 5

- Swim Lessons (11)
- Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs (9)
- Neighborhood Outreach Programs (9)
- Youth Summer Camps (9)
- Music Festival (8)
- Food Truck Events (8)

### MOST VOTES IN TOP 10

- Swim Lessons (15)
- Youth Summer Camps (15)
- Food Truck Events (15)
- Neighborhood Outreach Programs (13)
- Fitness Programs (13)
- Programs for individuals with disabilities/special needs (12)
- Environmental/Outdoor Recreation Programs (12)



# KANNAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION

## STRATEGIC PLAN FY23 – FY27



Updated  
**April 14, 2016**  
**February 6, 2017**  
**March 29, 2018**  
**April 11, 2019**  
**August 19, 2020**  
**August 27, 2021**  
**November 8, 2022**  
**August 18, 2023**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This ***Strategic Plan*** for the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department is a vibrant, living document. It is intended to ensure the Department's resources and energies are focused in the most productive and cost-effective manner towards meeting the recommendations of the adopted ***2014-2024 Parks and Recreation Master Plan***'s goals, objectives, and recommendations. This plan with its actions, timelines, and targeted results will be reviewed and analyzed annually. With much effort, community support, creativity, and strategy, our strategic objectives and initiatives will help the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department grow, change, and evolve to better serve the changing needs of the community.

# **KANNAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of the Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department is to provide positive experiences through a variety of quality activities, facilities and services for the community.*

## **VISION STATEMENT**

*The Kannapolis Parks and Recreation Department will strive for excellence in providing quality and diverse recreation and leisure opportunities that will enhance the health and well-being of our changing community.*

## **CORE VALUES**

**Integrity** - We value the need to be honest, truthful, fair, and trustworthy.

**Excellence** - We value the need to exceed expectations in maintaining and preserving all of our parks and facilities to the highest quality standards of safety, function and appearance.

**Professional Workforce**- We value our quality workforce by fostering a positive environment through learning, growth, and development of dedicated, highly motivated, and competent staff.

**Conservation**- We value efficient and effective management of our assets and stewardship of our parks and open space, to sustain them for future generations.

**Health and Wellness**- We value the need to provide recreational and educational opportunities that inherently improve health and well-being.

**Social Equity**- We value creating, enhancing, expanding, and promoting equal opportunities for participation in and enjoyment of parks and recreation services for all individuals.

**Collaboration**- We value working in cooperation with all stakeholders including residents, area communities, public and private organizations, as well as interdepartmentally.

## **KANNAPOLIS PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Goal 1: Connect and promote our greenway system within the City and neighboring communities.**

- Objective 1 –** Create connection on Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway to the City of Concord under I-85 and make connection from Rogers Lake Road to Highway 3. (FY27)
- Objective 2 –** Create connection to the City of Concord and Mecklenburg County greenways on the Rocky River corridor. (FY27)
- Objective 3 –** Implement Loop the Loop program app to assist in tracking mileage. (FY25)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate a county wide greenway passport program. (FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Create a video of the greenways and post them online. (FY24)
- Objective 6 –** Add another Run Kannapolis 5K on a Greenway (FY24)

### **Goal 2: Enhance program offerings and opportunities within the community.**

- Objective 1 –** Implement at least four collaboration programs with outside organizations/providers to develop additional programs. (FY24/FY25)
- Objective 2 –** Update program inventory with numerical data offered from outside organizations to evaluate and recognize deficiencies for available program opportunities; and offer programs to meet the deficiencies not currently provided by outside organizations. (FY24)
- Objective 3 –** Implement the use of a cloud-based program waiver system (FY24)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate and/or implement e-gaming programming. (FY24/FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Add additional summer matinee programming at the Gem Theatre (FY24)
- Objective 6 –** Investigate working with school districts to offer lower cost licensing for field trips to the Gem Theatre. (FY24)

### **Goal 3: Enhance programs, special events and facilities that will stimulate the local economy and provide a positive economic impact.**

- Objective 1 –** Investigate the feasibility and collaborate with outside facility management groups to offer ticketed events at community facilities. (ongoing)
- Objective 2 –** Continue investigation for implementation of community skatepark facility as a regional tourist destination. (FY27)
- Objective 3 –** Utilize “horseshoe” property to create additional economic development opportunities and special events. (FY24/FY25)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate the possibility of hosting and develop a weekend music festival in our downtown. (FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Investigate opportunities to utilize newly acquired Gem Theatre for additional programming opportunities. (FY24/FY25)

**Goal 4: Continue to improve communication with the public, alternative service providers and interdepartmentally.**

- Objective 1 –** Implement monthly division management meeting. (FY24)
- Objective 2 –** Consistently utilize available distribution points for marketing materials. (FY24)
- Objective 3 –** Develop a bilingual version of the Village Park brochure. (FY24)
- Objective 4 –** Develop Parks and Recreation social media pages separate from the City's pages. (FY25)
- Objective 5 -** Continue collaboration meetings with the West Ave District. (FY24)
- Objective 6 -** Investigate and implement interdepartmental promotions at the Gem Theatre. (FY24)

**Goal 5: Enhance departmental workforce through training/educational opportunities.**

- Objective 1 –** Provide staff training on departmental operational procedures on an annual and/or as needed basis and all full-time staff must attend three trainings annually. (FY24)
- Objective 2 -** NIMS training for full-time staff assigned to the EOC completed by the end of the year. (FY23)
- Objective 3 –** Continue to provide and document safety and risk management training on a monthly basis. (FY23) ongoing
- Objective 4 –** All eligible full-time management staff will obtain CPRP status, based on NRPA requirements, by the end of 2024.
- Objective 5 -** Provide educational materials and opportunities for all full-time positions to achieve and maintain a professional certification or license based on their job responsibilities. (FY24)
- Objective 6 -** Continue to request an increase to travel/training budget by at least 10% annually to provide for additional educational opportunities to enhance our professional workforce. (FY25)
- Objective 7 -** Provide and document safety and risk management through NeoGov trainings on a quarterly basis. (FY24)



**Goal 6: Increased utilization of technology to become a more efficient and effective department.**

- Objective 1 –** All designated park facilities will have access to the City network (Bakers Creek Park, Safrit Park, Pleasant Ave & Gem Theatre). (FY 25)
- Objective 2 –** Publicly accessible wi-fi at Village Park, Pleasant Ave and Downtown. (FY24)
- Objective 3 -** Implement improving cell signal at Village Park (FY24)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate cemetery database software by the end of (FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Implement Park maintenance software or City Works to enable staff to track work orders, vehicle maintenance, inventory and inspections. (FY24)
- Objective 6 –** Locate and mark unmarked graves with use of ground penetrating radar at Kannapolis Cemetery. (FY24)
- Objective 7 -** Fully implement mobile access to downtown irrigation systems and Veterans Park. (FY24)
- Objective 8 -** Implement access to management team to security camera network within the park system. (FY24)

**Goal 7: Provide a quality, diversified park and open space system that supports opportunities for active and passive recreation.**

- Objective 1 –** Update long range P&R Master Plan. (FY24)
- Objective 2 –** Incorporate unique environments and interesting amenities and facilities into parks to provide a balanced P&R experience and diverse opportunities. (ongoing)
- Objective 3 -** Continue to implement changes to Pleasant Ave Park to create a safer and more aesthetic recreation facility. (FY24)
- Objective 4 -** Implement capital recommendations from City Council's Strategic Planning Initiative (FY24)

## ***Moving Forward: Our Strategic Priorities***

---

### **CONNECT AND PROMOTE OUR GREENWAY SYSTEM WITHIN THE CITY AND NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES**

Create a trail system throughout the City providing connectivity to neighboring communities that will provide opportunities for recreation as well as alternative modes of transportation.

---

### **ENHANCE PROGRAM OFFERINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY**

Provide quality recreation services at well managed facilities that meet the needs of our patrons and provide excellent customer service.

---

### **ENHANCE PROGRAMS, SPECIAL EVENTS AND FACILITIES THAT WILL STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND PROVIDE POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Develop opportunities within the community through the parks and recreation department that will offer desired programs and facilities that will create additional revenue opportunities.

---

### **CONTINUE TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC, ALTERNATIVE SERVICE PROVIDERS AND INTERDEPARTMENTALLY**

Create an environment that produces a high performing, qualified workforce dedicated to delivering excellent customer service and communicating with Kannapolis' citizens and other departments in a clear and timely manner.

---

### **ENHANCE DEPARTMENTAL WORKFORCE THROUGH TRAINING/EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Assure that financial resources are in place to provide additional educational opportunities, maintain professional certifications, and to provide staff training to full and part-time employees on departmental operational procedures on a regular basis.

---

### **INCREASED UTILIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY TO BECOME A MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE DEPARTMENT**

Plan for technological growth to ensure that adequate financial resources are in place to meet the growing demand for enhanced parks and recreation services.

---

### **PROVIDE A QUALITY, DIVERSIFIED PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM THAT SUPPORTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION**

Provide park and facility planning, acquisition, and development to meet the needs and expectations of Kannapolis residents.

---

**Strategic priority:**

**#1 CONNECT AND PROMOTE OUR GREENWAY SYSTEM WITHIN THE CITY  
AND NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES**

Create a trail system throughout the City providing connectivity to neighboring communities that will provide opportunities for recreation as well as alternative modes of transportation.

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Objective 1 –** Create connection on Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway to the City of Concord under I-85 and make connection from Rogers Lake Road to Highway 3. (FY27)
- Objective 2 –** Create connection to the City of Concord and Mecklenburg County greenways on the Rocky River corridor. (FY27)
- Objective 3 –** Implement Loop the Loop program app to assist in tracking mileage. (FY25)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate a county wide greenway passport program. (FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Create a video of the greenways and post them online. (FY24)
- Objective 6–** Add another Run Kannapolis 5K on a Greenway (FY24)

**Objectives met thus far:**

- ***Promotion of Loop the Loop program to increase healthy living (FY 19 & FY20)***
- ***Created a link on the departmental webpage to access Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) website for regional trail information (FY19)***
- ***Began construction of the Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway (FY20)***
- ***Completed construction of the Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway (FY21)***
- ***Provide a marketing piece of mapping system in both electronic and hard copies of our greenways and trails within the City. (FY21)***
- ***Increased directional signage in parks (MET FY21)***
- ***Complete construction of Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway phase 1 (FY 21)***
- ***Completed CTT signage/mapping program (FY 22)***
- ***Provide distance markers on all greenways to enhance the user experience. (FY23)***
- ***Implement a story walk program on the greenways. (FY23)***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Implement capital recommendations from City Council's Strategic Planning Initiative (FY24)

Develop informational materials for current and future greenways  
FY 20 & FY 21

Develop, market, and promote community outreach and education programs regarding the benefits of parks and trails.  
FY21

Work with Carolina Thread trail staff to jointly promote greenway opportunities in Kannapolis by creating links on each other's webpage  
FY21

Develop uniform sign package for all City greenways FY21 & FY22

Secure remaining property for greenway construction on Rocky River and begin development  
FY21 & FY22

Acquire and preserve channels and floodplain areas as public open space or natural areas that could be developed as future trail corridors.  
FY22/Ongoing

Work with company to finalize tracking app for Loop the Loop program FY21

Utilize P&R Master Plan to guide development of local connectors as they become available  
Ongoing

**Strategic priority:**

**#2 ENHANCE PROGRAM OFFERINGS AND OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY**

Provide quality recreation services at well managed facilities that meet the needs of our patrons and provide excellent customer service.

**Strategic Objectives:**

**Goal 2: Enhance program offerings and opportunities within the community.**

- Objective 1 –** Implement at least four collaboration programs with outside organizations/providers to develop additional programs. (FY24/FY25)
- Objective 2 –** Update program inventory with numerical data offered from outside organizations to evaluate and recognize deficiencies for available program opportunities; and offer programs to meet the deficiencies not currently provided by outside organizations. (FY24)
- Objective 3 –** Implement the use of a cloud-based program waiver system (FY24)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate and/or implement e-gaming programming. (FY24/FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Add additional summer matinee programming at the Gem Theatre (FY24)
- Objective 6 –** Investigate working with school districts to offer lower cost licensing for field trips to the Gem Theatre. (FY24)

***Objectives met thus far:***

- ***Enhanced summer programming opportunities to youth throughout the community with mobile rec and other activities (FY19)***
- ***Updated program inventory offered from outside organizations to evaluate and recognize deficiencies for available program opportunities (FY19)***
- ***Added additional full-time and part-time programming and athletic staff to enhance program offerings within the community and to work with outside organizations (FY19 & FY20)***
- ***Development of city-wide youth athletics program (FY20)***
- ***Conducted community-wide programming survey to best determine needs of our citizens (FY20)***
- ***Implement at least 4 collaboration programs with outside organizations/providers to develop additional health and wellness programs. (FY 21) MET 14 internal 1 external***
- ***Investigate the use of a cloud-based program waiver system. (FY21) MET***
- ***Presented Busking program on West Avenue to City Council and was deferred. (FY22)***
- ***Add an additional six trips to the adult day trip program by the end of (FY24).***
- ***Continue to seek input on programs through a community wide survey to develop additional programming. (FY23)***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Implement capital recommendations from City Council's Strategic Planning Initiative (FY24)

Implement programs identified through a community wide survey to develop additional programming. (FY25)

Work with Cabarrus Health Alliance and other community wellness programs to develop healthy programs for the community FY21

Initiate and document an ongoing research and analysis program (program stats, feedback forms, surveys) to keep in touch with community needs.

FY 21 ongoing

Identify program emphasis for fitness/wellness; define market niche and target populations.

FY21/ongoing

Complete an annual review of programs and services to ensure a diverse range of offerings including program type as well as competitive vs. recreational offerings.

FY 22

Develop spreadsheet/database to track community programs and determine unmet needs FY22

Determine and develop adult day trip needs to enhance an already successful program FY21



**Strategic Priority:**

**#3 ENHANCE PROGRAMS, SPECIAL EVENTS AND FACILITIES THAT WILL STIMULATE THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND PROVIDE POSITIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Develop opportunities within the community through the parks and recreation department that will offer desired programs and facilities that will create additional revenue opportunities.

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Objective 1 –** Investigate the feasibility and collaborate with outside facility management groups to offer ticketed events at community facilities. (ongoing)
- Objective 2 –** Continue investigation for implementation of community skatepark facility as a regional tourist destination. (FY27)
- Objective 3 –** Utilize “horseshoe” property to create additional economic development opportunities and special events. (FY24/FY25)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate the possibility of hosting and develop a weekend music festival in our downtown. (FY25)
- Objective 5 -** Investigate opportunities to utilize newly acquired Gem Theatre for additional programming opportunities. (FY24/FY25)

***Objectives met thus far:***

- ***Promoted downtown connectivity from park facilities thru downtown connectivity plan (FY18)***
- ***Utilized “horseshoe” property to develop additional economic development opportunities thru special events (FY18 & FY19)***
- ***Created masterplan for Eastside Park and access to lake Fisher (FY19)***
- ***Created Masterplan for Westside Park with focus on athletic facilities (FY19)***
- ***Developed series of programs and events within downtown corridor (FY20)***
- ***Investigate the possibility of hosting and develop a weekend music festival in our downtown. (FY21) MET***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Investigate opportunities to utilize newly acquired Gem Theatre for additional programming opportunities. (FY24/FY25)

Analyze opportunities to co-develop additional community events for revenue production FY22

Continue to evaluate established fee schedule and general cost recovery goals that will encourage repetitive facility visits/uses; determine appropriateness of current fee policy  
FY21/ongoing

Encourage development of revenue generating facilities to help off-set costs of development and operation  
FY 22/ongoing

Work with Finance and Administration to identify/develop innovative future funding sources for capital projects  
FY21/ongoing

Create a written policy and parameters to better define and make decisions on the department's role for events (lead, provider, facilitator, sponsor, participant or co-sponsor).  
FY21

Create a report of events the department currently produces or supports, identify and classify what strategic role they fill for the department and what role the P&R Department plays (provider, partner, etc.) FY 21

Evaluate recommended facilities and prioritize needs to be utilized in development of the Capital Improvement Plan  
FY 21/ongoing

**Strategic Priority:**

**#4 CONTINUE TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC, ALTERNATIVE SERVICE PROVIDERS AND INTERDEPARTMENTALLY**

Create an environment that produces a high performing, qualified workforce dedicated to delivering excellent customer service and communicating with Kannapolis' citizens and other service providers in a clear and timely manner.

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Objective 1 –** Implement monthly division management meeting. (FY24)
- Objective 2 –** Consistently utilize available distribution points for marketing materials. (FY24)
- Objective 3 –** Develop a bilingual version of the Village Park brochure. (FY24)
- Objective 4 –** Develop Parks and Recreation social media pages separate from the City's pages. (FY25)
- Objective 5 -** Continue collaboration meetings with the West Ave District. (FY24)
- Objective 6 -** Investigate and implement interdepartmental promotions at the Gem Theatre. (FY24)

***Objectives met thus far:***

- ***Updated internal communication policy (FY18)***
- ***Hold monthly management team meetings (FY18)***
- ***Developed stronger volunteer recognition program (FY18)***
- ***Developed select marketing materials to make them bilingual (FY19)***
- ***Developed 3 new distribution points for marketing materials (FY 19)***
- ***Hosted focus group meetings with external service providers to enhance communications (FY 20)***
- ***Developed new marketing materials for Village Park (FY 20)***
- ***Updated park rules signs to make them bilingual (FY21)***
- ***Implement quarterly full-time staff meetings within the department. (FY 21) MET***
- ***Developed select marketing materials to make them bilingual (FY22)***
- ***Fully implement and distribute the internal communication policy and standard operating procedures for the department by end of (FY23).***
- ***Continue quarterly full-time staff meeting within the department (FY23)***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Create and maintain an updated yearly inventory/database of all collaborative partnerships.  
FY21/ongoing

Create an internal customer feedback/complaint logging system to improve responsiveness and internal communication, and developing public information materials and a departmental report card.  
FY22

Review current customer service results and practices and plan training opportunities for each division's staff to create high level customer experiences.  
FY21

Actively engage customers, parents, and community groups and incorporate ideas and recommended feedback into programming and services.

FY 21/ongoing

Develop and continually update Departmental Marketing and Communications Plan to further enhance communications, include more comprehensive external communications.

FY21/ongoing

Develop print, web and other materials that educate the community about programs and facilities as well as volunteer opportunities within the Parks and Recreation department.

FY21/ongoing

Continue to work with Communications Department to see the value in P&R social media opportunities

FY21

Work with sign shop and communications department to continue to develop and enhance park signage package to make them bilinguals FY22

**Strategic Priority:**

**#5 ENHANCE DEPARTMENTAL WORKFORCE THROUGH TRAINING/EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Assure that financial resources are in place to provide additional educational opportunities, maintain professional certifications, and to provide staff training to full and part-time employees on departmental operational procedures on a regular basis.

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Objective 1 –** Provide staff training on departmental operational procedures on an annual and/or as needed basis and all full-time staff must attend three trainings annually. (FY24)
- Objective 2 -** NIMS training for full-time staff assigned to the EOC completed by the end of the year. (FY23)
- Objective 3 –** Continue to provide and document safety and risk management training on a monthly basis. (FY23) ongoing
- Objective 4 –** All eligible full-time management staff will obtain CPRP status, based on NRPA requirements, by the end of 2024.
- Objective 5 -** Provide educational materials and opportunities for all full-time positions to achieve and maintain a professional certification or license based on their job responsibilities. (FY24)
- Objective 6 -** Continue to request an increase to travel/training budget by at least 10% annually to provide for additional educational opportunities to enhance our professional workforce. (FY25)
- Objective 7 -** Provide and document safety and risk management through NeoGov trainings on a quarterly basis. (FY24)

***Objectives met thus far:***

- ***Increased travel and training budget to provide additional educational opportunities to enhance our professional workforce (FY 18, FY 19, FY 20, FY 21)***
- ***Continue to increase part-time budget to cover required trainings (FY 19, FY20, FY21)***
- ***Continue to provide staff training on departmental operating procedures (FY19, FY20, FY21)***
- ***Developed new safety and risk management procedures, training, and documentation for the department (FY 18)***
- ***Continued to implement desire for eligible full-time staff to obtain CPRP (FY19, FY20, FY21)***
- ***Provided educational materials and opportunities for staff to maintain professional certifications to include CPRP, AFO, CPSI, Pesticide credits, CDL's. (FY 18, FY19, FY20, FY21)***
- ***Continue to request an increase to travel/training budget by at least 10% annually to provide for additional educational opportunities to enhance our professional workforce. (FY23)***
- ***Continue to provide educational materials and opportunities for all full-time positions to achieve and maintain a professional certification or license based on their job responsibilities. (FY23)***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Implement capital recommendations from City Council's Strategic Planning Initiative (FY24)

Ensure adequate funds are budgeted for professional development for each full-time employee.  
FY21/Ongoing

Create yearly training and professional development plans for each employee as part of the annual budgeting process. FY22

Provide staff opportunities for professional development and networking to identify trends, new opportunities and resources to enhance programs and services.  
FY21/ongoing

Evaluate organizational structure and roles and responsibilities of staff due to increased workload and turnover. FY22

Create and maintain an inventory of staff leadership roles and involvement in professional organizations, non-profit boards, task forces, etc. FY21

Work with Risk Manager to increase internal staff trainings on safety and risk management issues FY 21



**Strategic Priority:**

**#6 INCREASED UTILIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY TO BECOME A MORE EFFICIENT  
AND EFFECTIVE DEPARTMENT**

Plan for technological growth to ensure that adequate financial resources are in place to meet the growing demand for enhanced parks and recreation services.

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Objective 1 –** All designated park facilities will have access to the City network (Bakers Creek Park, Safrit Park, Pleasant Ave & Gem Theatre). (FY 25)
- Objective 2 –** Publicly accessible wi-fi at Village Park, Pleasant Ave and Downtown. (FY24)
- Objective 3 -** Implement improving cell signal at Village Park (FY24)
- Objective 4 –** Investigate cemetery database software by the end of (FY25)
- Objective 5 –** Implement Park maintenance software or City Works to enable staff to track work orders, vehicle maintenance, inventory and inspections. (FY24)
- Objective 6 –** Locate and mark unmarked graves with use of ground penetrating radar at Kannapolis Cemetery. (FY24)
- Objective 7 -** Fully implement mobile access to downtown irrigation systems and Veterans Park. (FY24)
- Objective 8 -** Implement access to management team to security camera network within the park system. (FY24)

***Objectives met thus far:***

- ***Provide adequate training for utilization of software/technology (FY18, FY 19, FY20)***
- ***Access to City network for Village Park (FY19)***
- ***Developed and implemented on-line registrations for programs (FY 18 & FY 19)***
- ***Developed and implemented on-line registrations for picnic shelters (FY20)***
- ***Implemented new POS system (Clover) at all park facilities (FY 20)***
- ***Developed and implemented on-line reservation system for splashpad during Covid (FY21)***
- ***Utilize existing available technology to enhance park experiences and interactions with patrons, i.e. tablets for exit surveys; QR codes on signage; live streamed youth basketball games. (FY21)***  
***MET***
- ***Investigate park maintenance software to enable staff to track work orders, vehicle maintenance, inventory and inspections. (FY21) MET***
- ***Installed and updated security cameras at multiple park locations to enhance safety of visitors and staff. (FY22)***
- ***Investigate and implement updating Splash Pad chemical and feature control system (FY24)***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Work with IT Department to continue investigating ways to bring park facilities onto the City network for smoother departmental operations FY22

Continue to develop and implement additional on-line program participant opportunities through existing software package for the P&R Department. FY21

Investigate and implement cemetery database program for Kannapolis Cemetery.  
FY22

Increase departmental exposure with mobile apps, utilization of QR codes, twitter and other forms of social media.  
FY21/Ongoing

Develop a 3-5 year Capital Improvement Plan for technology upgrades and equipment. FY21

Offer annual technology training opportunities to full-time staff to enhance working knowledge of departmental software systems  
FY21/Ongoing

**Strategic Priority:**

**#7 PROVIDE A QUALITY, DIVERSIFIED PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM THAT SUPPORTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION**

Provide park and facility planning, acquisition, and development to meet the needs and expectations of Kannapolis residents.

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Objective 1 –** Update long range P&R Master Plan. (FY24)
- Objective 2 –** Incorporate unique environments and interesting amenities and facilities into parks to provide a balanced P&R experience and diverse opportunities. (ongoing)
- Objective 3 -** Continue to implement changes to Pleasant Ave Park to create a safer and more aesthetic recreation facility. (FY24)
- Objective 4 -** Implement capital recommendations from City Council’s Strategic Planning Initiative (FY24)

***Objectives met thus far:***

- ***Purchased and installed double-decker carousel for Village Park (FY18 & FY19)***
- ***Purchased 33 acres for Eastside Park providing lake access and other passive opportunities (FY19)***
- ***Began installing new drought tolerant plants and other plant materials to enhance the park visitor experience (FY 18, FY 19, FY20, FY21)***
- ***Purchased additional land for Westside Athletic Park (FY 18 & FY21)***
- ***Investigate the development of a community skateboard park. (FY21) MET***
- ***Created a proposed design for a community skatepark facility as a regional tourist destination. (FY22)***
- ***Redesigned and implemented changes to Pleasant Ave Park to create more diverse recreational opportunities. (FY22)***
- ***Conducted community-wide, statistically valid park and recreation facility and marketing survey. (FY23)***
- ***Assess and evaluate plant materials on City property for feasibility and alternative options. (FY23)***

**Strategic Initiative and Timeline:**

Implement capital recommendations from City Council’s Strategic Planning Initiative (FY24)

Update long range P&R Master Plan. (FY24)

Continue to set established times for review of Master Plan and track implementation progress. FY 21

Continue evaluation of priority plan to enable accurate development of CIP projects and implementation. FY21/Ongoing

Seek partnerships and funding from outside organizations to develop additional athletic facilities, environmental education opportunities, and greenway development for Westside Park. FY22

Continue to utilize data collection that will assist in determining the need for additional programs and recreational facilities. FY21/ongoing

Identify opportunities to enhance outdoor recreation programs that focus on the interpretation and stewardship of parks, trails and natural areas. FY21/Ongoing

Develop plant material lists for multiple situations in park facilities for optimum growth and ease of maintenance FY22



*View from 8th Street Greenway*

## **CLASSIFICATIONS FOR PARKS, OPEN SPACE & GREENWAYS**

A well balanced park system is made up of several park types that range from very large Regional Parks (often encompassing hundreds of acres) to very small Mini Parks (sometimes less than one acre). The descriptions on the following pages define the parks that typically comprise a community's park system. Numerous agencies (federal, state, county, and municipal) play a role in providing this system. Looking at the entire system helps identify the roles of the various agencies.

The following park descriptions are based on park classifications outlined in the 1995 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) publication "Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines". They are not intended to serve as park standards, but instead are used as a framework for describing the components found in a park system. Communities should structure their park types based on individual community needs. Table 3.1-Park Acreage and Table 3.2-Park Acreage reflect the standards for development that are recommended for the City of Kannapolis. The recommended standards vary slightly from NRPA guidelines listed on the following pages.

## Regional Parks

Regional Parks are typically very large sites, encompassing unique qualities that exemplify the natural features, diverse land formations, and the variety of vegetation and wildlife found in the region. Examples of the types of facilities provided in a Regional Park include environmental centers, camping, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. Open fields for non-structured activities, such as frisbee throwing or kite flying, are also generally found in these parks.

Land chosen for future preserves or the expansion of existing sites should contain the previously mentioned characteristics accompanied with natural water features such as beach areas, rivers, and creeks. The majority of the site should be reserved for passive recreation, with the remaining acreage used for active recreation.

NRPA's guidelines for developing Regional Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire county
Acreage/Population Ratio:	10 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	Sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed. Typically a minimum of 200 acres; up to 1,000 acres.
Typical Facilities:	
Environmental Center	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Equestrian Center	Restrooms/Vending
Primitive Camping	Beach
Group Camping	Swimming
Recreational Vehicles Camping	Boating
Nature Trails	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks
Observation Deck	Parking
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Caretaker's House

Development of **Regional Parks** typically falls within the responsibility of federal, state and/or county agencies.





200 + Acres

Typical Regional Park

**District Parks**

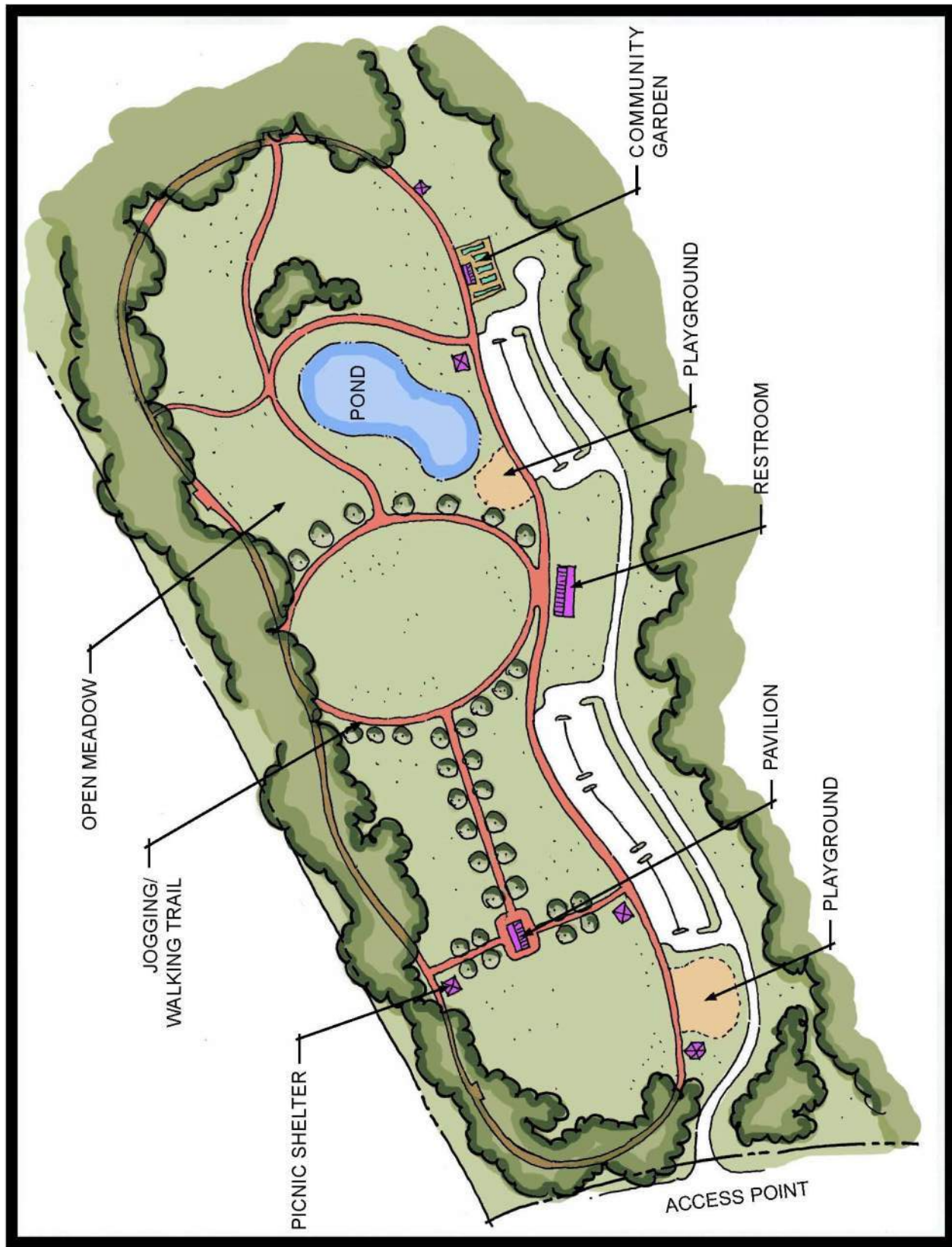
A District Park provides more diverse recreational opportunities than the Regional Park. The District Park emphasizes passive recreational opportunities that are similar to the Regional Park in addition to including limited active recreational facilities. It is easily accessible by the population (typically 40,000) it serves and maintains a 2.5-5 mile service radius. The park contains a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000 population and should be a minimum of 100 acres in size.

An indoor recreation building/community center may be included in a District Park. These facilities typically reflect the character of the park with a historic, natural, or urban theme. Active recreational facilities located in a District Park include play areas, limited ball fields, hard surface courts, multi-purpose play fields, picnicking locations, and various types of trails.

Listed below are NRPA’s guidelines for developing District Parks:

Service Area:	Typically serve the entire community
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5.0 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	40 acres minimum, 80-150 acres optimal
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Shelter with Grills
Basketball Courts	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Tennis Courts (lighted)	Nature Trail
Tournament Level Tennis Facilities	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball Courts	Restroom/Concessions
Multi-purpose Fields	Parking
Tournament Level Soccer Fields	Service Yard
Tournament Level Baseball/Softball Fields	
Alternate Facilities:	
Recreation Center	Amphitheater
Tennis Center	Observation Decks
Running Track	

Development of **District Parks** typically falls within the responsibility of county or municipal agencies.



Typical District Park 80-150 Acres

## Community Parks

Community Parks provide for the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community. A range of facilities is typically provided and may support tournament competition for athletic and league sports or passive recreation. These parks also present opportunities for nontraditional types of recreation. Fifty percent of Community Park sites should be developed for passive recreation. These relatively undisturbed areas may serve as buffers around the park and/or act as buffers between active facilities.

Community Park sites should have varying topography and vegetation. Forested areas should have a variety of tree species. Cleared areas should be present for siting active recreational facilities. One or more natural water feature(s), such as a lake, river, or creek, are desirable. Park land should be contiguous and strategically located in order to be accessible to all users within the neighborhoods it serves.

Listed below are NRPA's guidelines for developing Community Parks:

Service Area:	.5 - 3 mile radius
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5.0 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	30-50 acres

### Typical Facilities:

Recreation Center	Picnic Tables with Grills
Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Tennis Court (lighted)	Nature Trails
Baseball/Softball Fields (lighted)	Restroom/Concessions
Multipurpose Fields	Parking
Soccer Fields (lighted)	Playgrounds
Swimming Pool	Volleyball Courts
Amphitheater	Disc Golf
Observations Decks	Lakes
Picnic Shelters	Paddle Boat/Canoe Harbor
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks

Specialty facilities may be added to or substituted for other facilities depending on community need or special site characteristics.

Development of **Community Parks** may fall within the responsibility of municipality or county agencies.





Typical Community Park      30 - 50 Acres

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks provide the basic unit of most park systems. These parks are usually located within walking distance of the area serviced and provide a variety of activities of interest to all age groups. While their small size requires intense development, fifty percent of each site should remain undisturbed, if possible, to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent land users.

The NRPA guidelines for Neighborhood Park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 to .75 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	5-10 acres
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Shelters with Grills
Court Games	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Informal Play Field	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball	50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped
Trails/Walkways	Parking (7-10 spaces)

**Neighborhood Parks** are typically developed by municipalities.





Typical Neighborhood Park      5 - 10 Acres

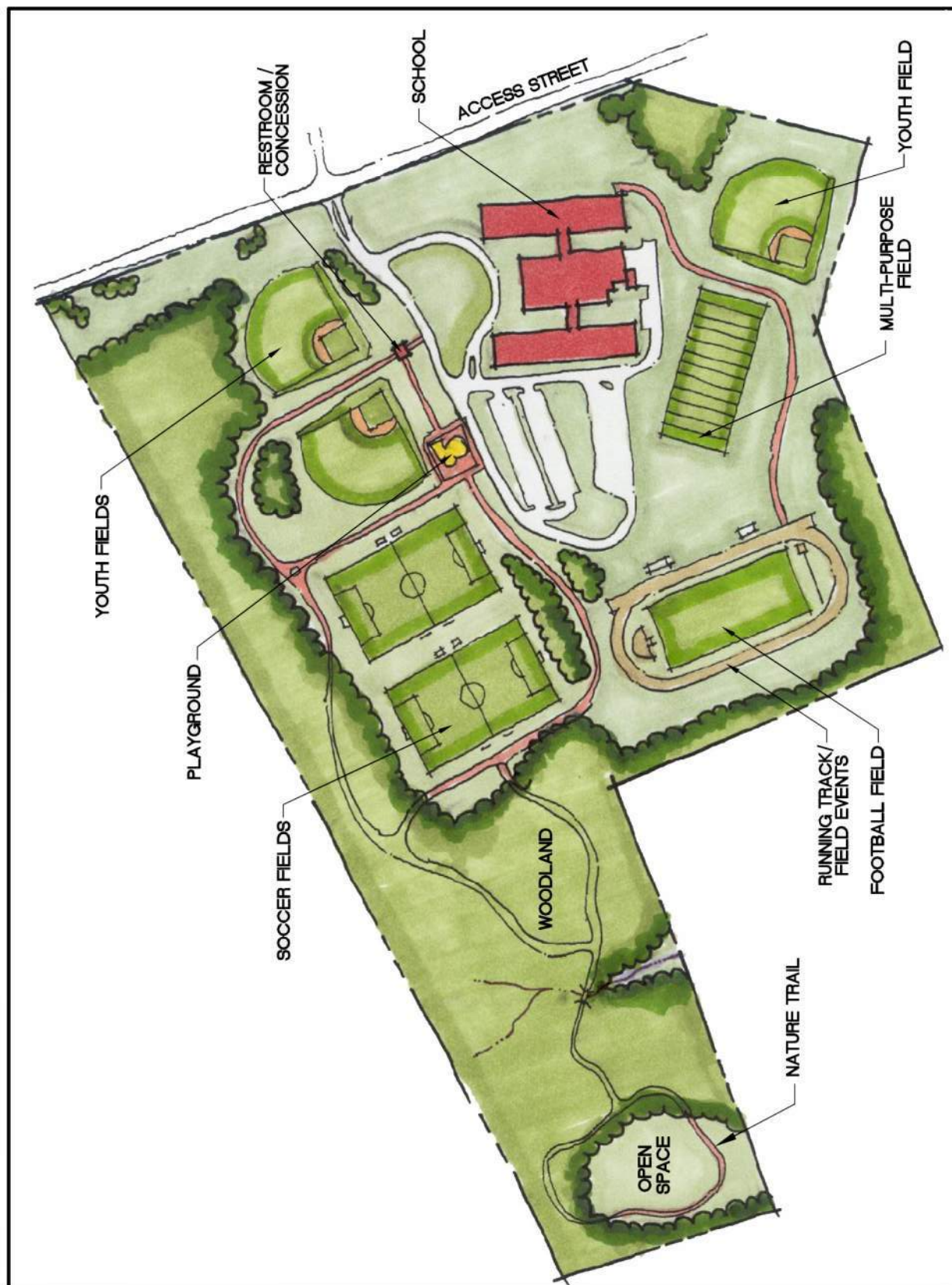
## School Parks

Joint use is a mechanism that public agencies use to maximize resources. Through joint use, both the school system and the parks and recreation department benefit from shared use of facilities and valuable land resources. School Park facilities typically go beyond the simple joint use of school facilities. The parks and recreation agency will become a partner in the development of a school site and fund recreational facilities beyond those typically built with a stand-alone school. These facilities may be indoor spaces (gymnasiums, classrooms, meeting rooms, etc.) or outdoor recreation facilities (ballfields, playgrounds, picnic shelters, etc.). The cost of developing and operating these additional facilities is minimized when constructing them in partnership with school development. Savings are also found in shared infrastructure (parking, restrooms, etc.) and shared maintenance and operational cost.

The School Park concept maximizes the joint use objective and provides a planned facility that maximizes public funds. The School Park concept typically varies depending on the school. Elementary and middle schools provide the ideal setting for a Neighborhood Park, while middle and high schools follow the function of a Community Park or Sports Complex. Access to school sports facilities at high schools and middle schools can be difficult based on team sports needs. This concept only works if there is a mutually agreed upon joint use agreement to define roles, responsibilities, and use of facilities.

Service Area:	Varies depending on school type and park type
Desirable Size:	Varies depending on school type and park type
Typical Facilities:	Varies depending on school type and park type

Development of **School Parks** usually fall within the responsibility of municipalities, county agencies, or school districts.



Typical School Park

± 50 Acres

**Mini Parks**

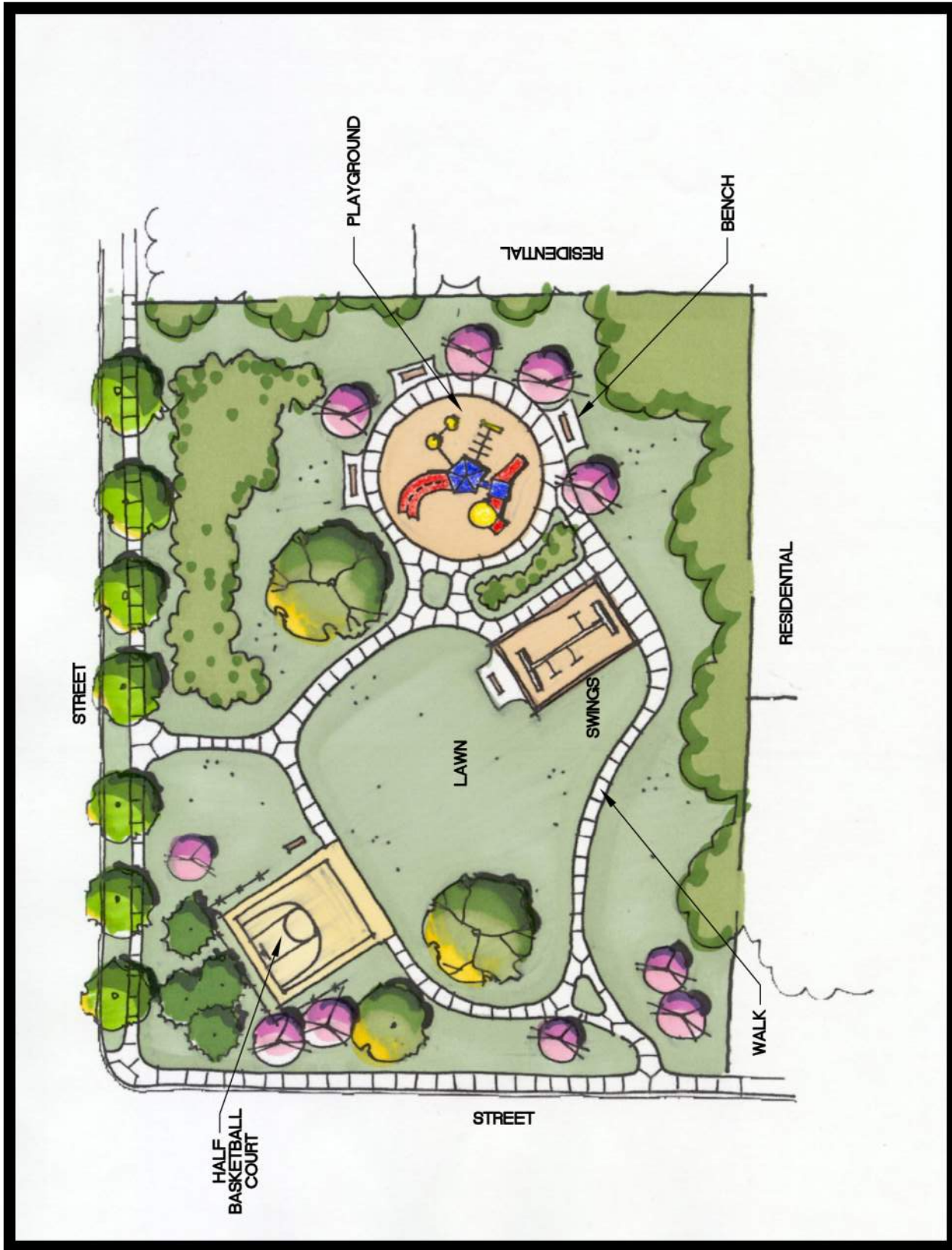
Mini Parks are the smallest park classification. These parks are located within walking distance of the area serviced, and they provide limited recreational needs. The small amount of land associated with Mini Parks usually results in intense development with little to no buffer between the park and adjacent properties.

NRPA’s guidelines for Mini Park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	.25 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	.25 - 1 acres
Typical Facilities:	
Playground	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
½ Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Open Play Area	Landscaped Public Use Area

**Mini Parks** are typically developed by municipalities.





Typical Mini Park

.25 - 1 Acres

## Greenway Trails

Greenways provide an important component of the overall park system. They:

- Serve as alternative non-motorized transportation facilities.
- Provide links between parks, schools, neighborhoods, and commercial areas.
- Emphasize harmony with the natural environment.
- Provide safe pedestrian movement.
- Provide resource based outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Enhance adjacent property values.
- Provide linear parks and open spaces.

Greenways are very similar to natural resource sites; the primary difference is the emphasis on pedestrian trails found in the Greenway system.

Desirable Size:           Greenways form corridors that vary considerably in length and width.  
A 50' width is generally considered a minimum.



*8th Street Greenway*