

**BLACK MOUNTAIN RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
2025 MASTER PLAN**

Presented to:

THE TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN, NORTH CAROLINA

By:

**Casey Conner, Director
Black Mountain Recreation and Parks**

Representing

Recreation Department Staff
Recreation Commission

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Master Plan	7
Section 1: Master Purpose Statement with Goals and Objectives	7
Section 2: Current and Projected Community Factors	9
Section 3: Inventory of Current Recreation and Park Facilities and Programs	12
Section 4: Recreation Standards and Community Needs Assessment	16
Section 5: Master Plan Proposals and Recommendations	20
Section 6: Action Plans and Implementation	25
Maps	34
Map of Parks & Facilities	
Map of Greenways	
Half-Mile Buffer Maps	
Tables	37
Table 1	Standards for Park Classifications & Land Area Requirements
Table 2	Public Facility Needs Analysis for Black Mountain
Table 3	Standards for Public Facilities
Appendices	39
Appendix A	Recreation & Parks Department Mission & Vision Statement
Appendix B	Original Resolution from May 1998
Appendix C	Recreation & Parks Needs Assessment, 2014
Appendix D	Capital Improvement Plan, 2017
Appendix E	Recreation & Parks Strategic Plan
References	97

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Master Plan Purpose

Black Mountain prepared a recreation study in 1992; however, it was not a “comprehensive recreation and park master plan”. In order to assist the department in meeting their mission statement, the current Recreation Commission recognized the need to develop an updated master plan to assess current and future recreational needs of the community and develop a strategy for the provision of recreational services (see Mission Statement, Appendix A). The Board of Aldermen of the Town of Black Mountain supported this need for a plan through a resolution approved in May, 1998 (see Resolution, Appendix B). The first Master plan was adopted in March of 2004.

The objective of the planning process is to provide the Town of Black Mountain with an accurate, usable plan to guide its actions and decisions concerning the improvements and development of its parks and recreation system for the next 10 years. This plan, which will take us through the year 2025, will be reviewed and updated annually.

Goals and Objectives

Identifying goals and objectives assists in developing a basic framework for formulating and implementing the Master Plan. We have developed a strategic plan which identifies both short and long term goals and objectives in addition to the goals and objectives for the Master Plan. Goals and objectives also represent the Master Plan’s understanding of the community’s desires, and it serves as a basis for developing recreation policies and planning decisions.

Goal: To provide the citizens, elected officials, and staff of Black Mountain with a 10-year plan for parks, recreation, and open space that adequately addresses the recreational needs of all citizens within the community, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, or income.

Objectives:

- To involve the public throughout the planning and implementation process by soliciting input regarding their recreational wants and needs.
- To develop a Master Plan that is responsive to the town’s projected population characteristics and is flexible to meet changing needs of the public. An annual review will be conducted by the Recreation Commission who will report findings to the Aldermen. The Master Plan will be updated and revised as needed.
- To sufficiently assess and analyze the town’s existing, proposed, and potential recreation and park facilities.
- To develop a Master Plan that provides a structure for orderly and consistent policy development and decision making as related to park, recreation, and open space issues.
- To develop a Master Plan that can be utilized as a management tool for administering resources for programs and facilities.
- To identify mechanisms for the funding of existing and proposed recreational facilities and programs.
- To develop alternative methods for joint use of public land including right-of-ways, reservoirs, buildings, etc.
- To ensure the Master Plan recommendations are developed to protect and enhance the quality of life for present and future citizens of Black Mountain and surrounding areas.

Evaluation of Facility Needs

The numbers of public facilities needed in Black Mountain through the planning period (2015-2025) are identified in Table 6 of the Needs Assessment. Based upon the standards, needs for additional facilities include:

- More Sidewalks and Walking Trails
- Picnic Pavilions
- Year Round Restroom Facilities
- Greenways
- More Community Garden Space
- Bike Trails and Bike Lanes
- Another Dog Park
- Fishing Facilities
- Greenhouse
- Outdoor Basketball Courts
- Outdoor Kitchen
- Campground
- Tennis Courts
- Indoor Basketball Courts
- Baseball Fields

Park Proposals and Recommendations

Sections 3 and 4 of this plan summarize the existing and future needs of Black Mountain. The following proposals and recommendations are aimed at meeting those park needs.

1. A regional park should not be provided by the Town of Black Mountain.
2. The Town needs to provide a district park for residents. A district park is 75 or more acres in size and should provide picnic area with group shelters, campground with at least 30 individual sites and 1 group campsite, nature trails, outdoor amphitheater, and possibly an outdoor environmental education center.

A feasibility study should be made to determine if the Town's watershed property can be developed into a park without affecting the wells located on the property. This property should only be considered as a developed park if it is revenue producing.

At a minimum, this property should be opened up as a low-impact nature park with nature trails and hiking trails. This type of park could also be revenue producing by issuing season passes for the right to use the property.

If this property cannot be developed, the Town should look for another large tract of land that can be developed.

3. The Town currently owns two community parks (Lake Tomahawk and Veterans Park) and needs a third. A community park is approximately 25 acres and should include, at a minimum, 2 softball/baseball fields, 1 soccer field, and a group picnic shelter.
4. A total of four neighborhood parks are needed. The Town currently has two, Carver and Cragmont. Two additional neighborhood parks are needed.

The Carver property includes several acres that are not developed. A feasibility study should be conducted of the building and property to determine the best plan for its use as a recreation and park facility. This site could be the site for additional indoor and/or outdoor basketball courts. This site also has a need to be better connected to the surrounding neighborhood by greenways, walking trails or sidewalks.

The Cragmont property includes an outdoor basketball court and tennis court. The park needs a restroom. In keeping with the recreational activities found in a neighborhood park, this park should be considered for re-design and could include additional tennis courts, lighted for night-time use, a fitness trail, and a large playground to turn it into more of a destination park.

Since the above parks are relatively close together, one of the new parks should be north of downtown and one should be located east of NC 9/Montreat Road. A current map of parks and a 0.5 mile buffer is included in the maps section.

5. The Town needs five mini-parks. A Mini-park includes playgrounds, tot lots, and personal play or reflection spaces. These parks should be located within a ¼ mile radius of the population they serve. They usually do not include parking spaces, although one or two spaces may be appropriate. Generally, they should be accessible by sidewalk or a greenway system. BMRP currently maintains one mini-park, RiverWalk Park. The Town has recently acquired a mini-park sized property along Flat Creek. This property should be considered as a potential park for seniors or others for reflective/quiet space and possibly for a fishing station for use by physically challenged citizens.
6. A playground should be located in each park, both currently owned and those to be developed.
7. A greenway system should be developed that connects all parks and that connects Black Mountain and Montreat. With the development of the In-the-Oaks property by Montreat College, the Town should partner with the college to develop a greenway/walking path between the Veterans Park and Cragmont and Lake Tomahawk Parks.

The adopted Greenway Master Plan formulated by the Greenways Commission provides detailed information on the need for linear parks and the paths proposed are recommended in this plan.

8. A new recreation center is needed. This center would be for all citizens, but especially for our youth and senior populations. This center should include a gymnasium with one or two basketball courts, an indoor tennis court, two or three classrooms, a meeting room with adjacent kitchen, and an auditorium/performance theater.

Priorities for development

The needs as listed in the previous section will not be met within the framework of this ten year plan. However, even if a need cannot be met, preliminary studies or planning can begin. Based on the input received through public meetings and through discussion with recreation and parks professionals, and through discussion with town staff, the following needs are listed in priority order:

1. Land acquisition to begin positioning for future needs within the Town of Black Mountain. Land acquisition should include areas both large and small to fill voids in service as suggested in the prior section. Land acquisition should be considered for expanding existing parks as well as development of new ones.
2. Continue to develop the greenway system to tie all of the town's parks together through a series of walking and biking paths. This will enable our youth to access all facilities without having to travel along vehicular pathways.
3. Develop mini-parks and put playgrounds at each existing park. Five mini-parks are needed. A mini-park should be located within ¼ mile of each town resident. Playgrounds are currently needed at Veterans Park and Cragmont Park.

These top priority items need to be completed as soon as possible and certainly within the next five years. Planning for the following items should begin within the next five years and be accomplished within fifteen years.

Develop existing town owned properties into neighborhood parks. These undeveloped park properties include the Black Mountain Veterans Park and the under-developed Cragmont Park property. These parks should include open play spaces, picnic shelters, playground, reflective spaces, and walking paths.

Action Plan Implementation

This Master Plan is based upon an inventory of background information, an analysis of the existing system, the identification of user needs, and national and state recreation standards. Instrumental to implementation of the recommendations of this plan is the identification of adequate funding. Funding estimates are listed below. Estimates for items in the current capital improvement plan (Appendix C) are based upon today's dollar value. Estimates for items in the proposed recommendations are based on a Class C engineering estimate or a planning stage estimate.

The Capital Improvement Program can be summarized into the following components:

For Existing & Proposed Programs/Parks (2016-2025):

Planning & Design	\$ 240,000
Equipment Needs	\$ 535,000
Land	\$ 100,000
New Construction	<u>\$1,630,500</u>
Total	\$2,505,500

In addition to the above, there is a current need for additional staff, a supervisor of community programs/cultural resources, a park and recreation maintenance division, and one evening park rangers with law enforcement authority. However, this cannot adequately be determined until it is known exactly what facilities and programs will be developed. Some aspects of the plan can be accomplished without additional staffing.

Summary – Economic Impact of Recreation and Parks

Research concerning the economic importance of public recreation has not been well documented. These services can be difficult to measure on a monetary basis and seldom receive much attention in terms of their impact on a community. Public recreation is not bought and sold in the same manner as the services provided by private resorts and clubs. As such, there are no formal indices for measuring the volume of trade generated at public parks.

In a Fortune magazine study, nearly 50 % of the largest 1000 US corporations look at recreational opportunities in an area before deciding on relocation.

Recent surveys have concluded that parks provide a positive economic impact within a community. The US Forest Service has conducted a study in North Carolina that indicates parks do contribute considerably to the economic conditions of a region. In addition, outdoor recreation, including open space areas, is an especially attractive economic development alternative. In addition to creating new jobs and income, the impacts of park and recreation enriches the quality of life by providing leisure opportunities.

1. MASTER PLAN PURPOSE STATEMENT WITH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Introduction

Black Mountain Recreation and Parks Department has had a prepared recreation facilities and programs master plan since March of 2004. Many changes have occurred over that time in terms of expanded development and increased population. The area has had little population growth during the past decade. Statistics show that the area has grown 40% since 1980. New development has created more demand for public services such as new sewer, water, schools, roads, and recreation opportunities. Demand for recreational opportunities has also increased throughout the State of North Carolina, dramatically changing the role of county and municipal governments as providers of recreational services.

Planning for recreational services and open space is as significant for a community as planning for transportation systems, utilities, and education. The continued development of Black Mountain, Black Mountain Township, and surrounding townships will make it increasingly difficult to acquire new “community” properties and open space for recreational purposes. The major benefits of planning ahead include:

- Promotion of civic pride and sense of community unity.
- Enhancement of the community’s ability to attract new business and industry. In turn, the expanding tax base will assist in supporting recreation.
- Identification of quality recreational facilities and programs that will enhance the well-being for all citizens in an era marked with increased stress at home and at work.
- Identification of and protection for open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Promotion of social interaction among diverse individuals and groups through like interests in recreation.
- Competitiveness in acquiring grant funding. The push for lower taxes and decreased funding for municipalities has made the competition for grants and state funding extremely competitive. Approved master plans are now required for funding consideration by outside providers.

Master Plan Purpose

Black Mountain prepared a recreation study in 1992; however, it was not a “comprehensive recreation and park master plan”. In order to assist the department in meeting their mission statement, the current Recreation Commission recognized the need to develop an updated master plan to assess current and future recreational needs of the community and develop a strategy for the provision of recreational services (see Mission Statement, Appendix A). The Board of Aldermen of the Town of Black Mountain supported this need for a plan through a resolution approved in May, 1998 (see Resolution, Appendix B). The Original version of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was finalized and approved in March of 2004.

The objective of the planning process is to provide the Town of Black Mountain with an accurate, usable plan to guide its actions and decisions concerning the improvements and development of its parks and recreation system for the next 10 years. This plan, which will take us through the year 2025, will be reviewed and updated annually.

Location

The Town of Black Mountain is located within the Township of Black Mountain and comprises approximately 64% of the township’s population of 12,599 residents. The Town of Montreat also lies within the township and comprises an additional 723 residents. Black Mountain is the eastern most incorporated town in Buncombe County and is surrounded by Montreat to the North and Swannanoa to the West, with a population of 10,381. The county seat of Asheville is located 15 miles to the west. The county provides an outdoor swimming pool within the Owen School District and two small community parks in Swannanoa. With only intermittent monetary support from the county through grants, the Town of Black Mountain is the main provider of recreational services for eastern Buncombe County and its 23,260 recorded residents.

Goals and Objectives

Identifying goals and objectives assists in developing a basic framework for formulating and implementing the Master Plan. We have developed a strategic plan (Appendix E) which identifies both short and long term goals and objectives in addition to the goals and objectives for the Master Plan. Goals and objectives also represent the Master Plan's understanding of the community's desires, and it serves as a basis for developing recreation policies and planning decisions.

Goal: To provide the citizens, elected officials, and staff of Black Mountain with a 10-year plan for parks, recreation, and open space that adequately addresses the recreational needs of all citizens within the community, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, or income.

Objectives:

- To involve the public throughout the planning and implementation process by soliciting input regarding their recreational wants and needs.
- To develop a Master Plan that is responsive to the town's projected population characteristics and is flexible to meet changing needs of the public. An annual review will be conducted by the Recreation Commission who will report findings to the Aldermen. The Master Plan will be updated and revised as needed.
- To sufficiently assess and analyze the town's existing, proposed, and potential recreation and park facilities.
- To develop a Master Plan that provides a structure for orderly and consistent policy development and decision making as related to park, recreation, and open space issues.
- To develop a Master Plan that can be utilized as a management tool for administering resources for programs and facilities.
- To identify mechanisms for the funding of existing and proposed recreational facilities and programs.
- To develop alternative methods for joint use of public land including right-of-ways, reservoirs, buildings, etc.
- To ensure the Master Plan recommendations are developed to protect and enhance the quality of life for present and future citizens of Black Mountain and surrounding areas.

2. CURRENT AND PROJECTED COMMUNITY FACTORS

Introduction

The current and projected community factors pertinent to Black Mountain are divided into two categories: natural factors and cultural factors. Natural factors take into consideration physiographic features, water resources, and unique natural areas. Cultural factors include existing land use, future land use, transportation, economy, and population trends and projections.

Natural Factors

Physiographic Features

Black Mountain is located in the upper Swannanoa River Valley and is surrounded to the east, south, and north by mountain ranges. The topographic character of the area is composed of wide and often abrupt variations due to ravines created by drainage courses that lead from the higher elevations to the river and its major tributaries. The mountainous nature of the area makes the flatter lands most desirable for all types of development including residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational development.

The soils found along major streams and rivers can accommodate recreational facilities if design allows for flood control. These soils cannot accommodate residential or commercial development. Soils in the rolling interior basin (between the floodplain and the mountain slopes) can accommodate recreational development as well as residential and commercial development. The slopes can accommodate recreational development that is low impact in nature such as hiking trails. The slopes can accommodate residential development up to the point where slopes exceed 25%. [Source: APRD Master Plan]

Water Resources

Water resources fall into two categories: that which is used for drinking water and that which can be used for recreational purposes. In many areas, these are often one and the same.

In North Carolina, watershed regulations for the protection of drinking water are state-mandated. Watersheds are classified based upon the amount of development allowed. The essence of these regulations is to maintain or increase the quality of potable water supplies by limiting development of impervious areas within a particular area of the watershed. The amount of built upon area allowed varies with the watershed classification and the distance the development is from the reservoir site. Although Black Mountain still has a reservoir, the water is not used as a source of potable water. Potable water is obtained from fifteen wells that are scattered throughout the town.

The watershed lands surrounding the reservoir contain ten of the town's wells. Regional and state water authorities have indicated that these lands might also be used for recreational purposes ranging from low impact fishing, picnicking, and hiking to more moderate impact of rental cabins and camp sites.

Other watersheds within the township include the Montreat watershed and the Asheville watershed. The Montreat watershed is available in certain areas for low impact recreation such as hiking. The Asheville watershed is not available for recreational purposes.

The major stream running through town is Flat Creek. Flat Creek arises in the Montreat area of the township and flows southward into Black Mountain proper where it makes a westerly turn. It joins the North Fork of the Swannanoa just west of the town limits to form the Swannanoa River. Flat Creek is available for recreational purposes in many areas. It is accessible for fishing. A path in Veterans Park runs along the stream allowing access for fishing, picnicking, quiet reflection/meditation, and play within the waters.

A major recreational water source within Black Mountain is Lake Tomahawk, the central feature of Lake Tomahawk Park. This 4.5 acre lake is surrounded by a walking path which includes fishing docks, benches, and other recreational amenities. The lake is available on a limited basis for non-motorized boating.

Another recreational water source within Black Mountain Township is located within the Town of Montreat and is known as Lake Susan. Lake Susan also has a walking path around it with benches and is available for limited, non-motorized boating. Lake Susan impounds one-half acre.

Environment Open Spaces

Concern for protecting the environment is increasingly important to the general public as information on preservation, conservation, and protection is more readily available and understood. More people are concerned with the physical and aesthetic issues that demand attention in order to provide the commodities we need to survive comfortably: clean air and water, adequate food and shelter, and space to recreate and release from everyday life. The amount of open land for protection of plant and animal habitats has become more important to our society and our personal well-being as we have urbanized. The public has awakened to these needs and their demand for more open space for passive recreation and aesthetic enjoyment will continue to grow. The demand has initiated a trend by local governments to acquire open space for watershed protection, regional parks, and greenways. The public demands have also propelled local governments to require developers to incorporate open space areas as part of a project's plan. The start of open space initiatives is an attempt to link parks, environmental features, and other "people spaces" to form a diverse network of green space that will benefit the entire region. [Source: APRD Master Plan]

Black Mountain has continued an initiative to make the community a walk able community. Recent additions of sidewalks along Montreat Road and the current and planned sections of the greenway are evidence of this initiative. The town's two major parks and its recreation center are now or will soon be connected by a walk able path. These paths not only provide for the recreational needs of walkers but also provide a safer transportation route for children and youth to access these facilities.

Unique Natural Areas

The Land of Sky Regional Council has prepared an Analysis of Sensitive Natural Areas for a four county area including Buncombe County. Three of these areas are located within our study area. They are Montreat Watershed, Craggy Pinnacle, and Asheville Watershed. All of these are protected by other governmental entities. Low impact recreation is allowed on the Montreat Watershed and Craggy Pinnacle area but not on the Asheville Watershed. Craggy Pinnacle is not accessible from the study area by vehicle.

Cultural Factors

Population Trends and Projections

Current population estimates for Black Mountain, Montreat, and Swannanoa Townships total approximately 23,260 according to American Fact Finder through the US Census Bureau. Of this, the US Census Bureau estimated that 8,080 lived within the Town of Black Mountain in 2013. The population of the townships is projected to increase by fifteen percent within the next ten years. This trend will also be reflected within the town.

Eighteen percent of the population is younger than 18. Twenty-three percent is age 65 or older. Another 8.5percent is found in the 18-24 age group.

Of adults, age 25 or older, 87% have completed high school and 30% have completed a bachelor's degree or higher.

Average household income is \$40,185. Eighteen percent of households live below the poverty level, according to the US Census Bureau.

Existing Land Use

The geographic formation of the area is a raised basin surrounded by mountains that has historically provided for growth in the gentle terrain of the valley bottom. Historic paths utilizing the river bottoms became the obvious locations for roads and were, and continue to be, the easiest place to build. Commercial development continues to follow the trend for locating along the major transportation corridors.

Residences have historically been located in the valleys or on gently sloping terrain. Single family residences account for the majority of home in the area. Typically, these have been built by private landowners or by developers in small sub-divisions. The lack of amenities, such as water and sewer service, has kept development off of the steeper mountain slopes. Multi-family residences exist within the area but not in large concentration. Most multi-family units consist of ten or fewer units. Several group living facilities, serving our senior population exist in the area. The largest group living facility is Highland Farms.

Black Mountain and the immediate area are home to a unique transient population. This population is served primarily by religiously oriented camp and conference centers. These centers expand the population of the area by 5000 per week during the summer months and up to 1000 per week during the remaining months. This population also needs access to appropriate recreational opportunities that are not always provided by the respective conference centers.

Future Land Use

Land use practices are changing. Competition for prime building sites, those located in the valleys and on the gentle slopes, has increased. New construction practices are allowing for development on mountains in excess of twenty percent slope. The decline in agriculture is freeing up large plots of land that is being developed into large sub-divisions. Open spaces within the valley are diminishing. Population statistical projections indicate the trend is toward growth and is expected to increase by fifteen percent within the next decade.

Transportation

Two major transportation corridors run through Black Mountain and the upper Swannanoa Valley. These are US 70 and Interstate 40, which parallel one another, running east to west. A secondary transportation corridor is NC 9, which runs north to south, beginning in Montreat and running through the Broad River Township. Asheville, the county seat, is located fifteen miles west of Black Mountain.

3. INVENTORY OF CURRENT RECREATION AND PARK FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

All of Black Mountain Township's recreation and park facilities and programs were inventoried. Facilities are classified based on their provider and fall into one of three categories. Categories are public, quasi-public, and private. Public facilities are owned by governmental agencies. Private facilities are owned privately and are for use by private members or their invitees. Quasi-public facilities are owned privately but can be used by the public under certain conditions. Quasi-public facilities are associated with churches, religious conference centers, camps, or other non-profit organizations. Use by the public is usually restricted to having a member or employee accompanying the recreator(s) while the facility is being used.

Programs may be offered by any of the providers mentioned above and may be offered either on a fee basis or are free of charge. Programs include classes in arts and crafts, exercise classes, personal defense classes, drama and dance classes, and creative learning classes. Programs also include events such as holiday celebrations, drama presentations, concerts, festivals, foot races, event walks, sports tournaments, and youth and adult league sports.

Facilities

This is only a listing of known facilities owned or managed by other organizations. The condition of facilities may vary.

Private sector facilities located in Black Mountain Township include:

Camp Rockmont. Privately owned camp. Facilities are available by invitation only. Rental fees are charged to most users. Facilities include a lake with swimming, beach, canoes, paddleboats, and fishing. Tennis courts, soccer field, play field, and gymnasium are also available.

Camp Merrimac and Camp Timberlake. Privately owned camp.

Ascending Fitness – Privately owned fitness center.

Cheshire Fitness Center – Privately owned fitness center.

Black Mountain Pilates – Offers healthy and nurturing environment to learn and practice Pilates with an emphasis on core strength and long lean muscles.

Black Mountain Yoga – Committed to bringing flexibility, strength and balance to the whole person, mind, body and spirit. Offer classes for everyone – beginner through advanced levels.

Black Mountain Neuro Medical Center – Therapeutic activities include a greenhouse, pet therapy and an aquatics program for residents. Also has an easy to walk to campus for the community.

Asheville Christian Academy – Campus offers running trial and athletic summer camps to community.

Quasi-public sector facilities include:

Black Mountain Center for the Arts. This center provides a forum for artists to display their works. This includes a variety of media including watercolor, oils, photography, dance, and a clay studio.

Black Mountain Elementary School. Facilities include one multi-use field for T-ball or soccer, a playground, outdoor fitness stations, a garden, and a gymnasium. Outdoor facilities are available to the public after school and on weekends.

Black Mountain Primary School. Facilities include one regulation softball field, two T-ball softball fields, a playground, and a small gymnasium. Outdoor facilities are available to the public after school and on weekends.

Black Mountain Home. Home for displaced children. Facilities include 2 playgrounds, a gymnasium, a weight room, a soccer/lacrosse pitch, softball field, large pavilion with grills, amphitheater, gardens, nature trails, and farm. Facilities are not generally open to the public, but specific permission may be granted.

Black Mountain Presbyterian Church – Playground facility open to public afternoon and weekends.

Blue Ridge Assembly. Conference center operated by YMCA. Facilities are generally unavailable to the public. Facilities include outdoor pool, outdoor covered basketball courts, ropes course, playground, and trails.

Camp Dorothy Walls. Conference center of the AME Zion Church. Facilities are not generally available to the public and include a gymnasium, outdoor pool, tennis courts, and outdoor basketball courts.

Christmount Christian Assembly. Conference center operated by the Disciples of Christ Church. Facilities can be used by the public on a limited basis. Facilities include two outdoor pools, a play field, tennis courts, outdoor basketball court, horseshoe pits, playground, and trails.

Cragmont Assembly. Conference center affiliated with the Free Will Baptist Church. Facility use is only available to the public on a case-by-case basis. Swings and playground equipment are available on a limited basis.

Highland Farms Retirement Community – Offers level walking trails through retirement community for public use.

Meadowbrook Free Will Baptist Church. Facilities include an indoor gymnasium available on a limited basis.

Montreat College. This college shares facilities with the Montreat Conference Center. In addition, the college owns the property known as In the Oaks. Facility use is limited and includes a historic home used for meetings and classes, cross country trails, a softball field, soccer/lacrosse pitch, a track, and open space.

Montreat Conference Center. Conference center owned by the Mountain Retreat Association and affiliated with the Presbyterian Church USA. Facilities are open to the public but limited in the summer and fall months by the large number of conference attendees. Facilities include outdoor swimming pool, gymnasium, tennis courts, a small lake with paddle boat rentals, play field, playground, nature hut and trails, multipurpose building for basketball and volleyball, and a campground. The campground has 29 sites and includes bathhouses and a small playground. In addition 2760 acres has been set aside as wilderness under a conservation trust, which includes hiking trails of varying degrees of difficulty.

Owen Middle School. Located in Western township, 4 miles from downtown Black Mountain. Facilities available to the public after school and on weekends, and include tennis courts, football/soccer field, softball/baseball field, and gymnasium.

Owen High School. Also located in Western township, facilities include two gymnasiums, baseball field, softball field, track, soccer field, and disc golf course.

Ridgecrest Conference Center. Conference center and youth camps operated by the Southern Baptist Convention. Facilities can be used by the public on a limited case-by-case basis. This use is generally limited to the winter and spring months. Facilities include gymnasium, tennis courts, two ball fields, playground, two lakes with canoeing and fishing, disc golf, and trails.

Swannanoa Valley History Museum. This museum displays historical information and artifacts of Black Mountain and the Swannanoa Valley.

Warren Wilson College - walking/hiking trails throughout campus, accessible to public. Scenic environment. Pool under repairs, available to public.

Public facilities include:

Buncombe County. County-owned pool next to Owen Middle School. Charles D. Owen Park is located eight miles from downtown Black Mountain and includes three ball fields, walking path, two medium size picnic shelters, a playground, a small lake, and an outdoor basketball court.

US Forest Service. The Forest Service provides a trailhead on the eastern edge of the township. The Kitsuma Trail runs from Ridgecrest to Old Fort. The trail is popular with both hikers and mountain bikers. Many hikers only hike the short distance from the trailhead to Kitsuma Peak, which offers spectacular views of Ridgecrest, Black Mountain, and the Swannanoa Valley.

Town of Black Mountain. Black Mountain provides a variety of facilities, which are listed below.

Black Mountain Veterans Park. The Park includes four lighted ball fields. Two fields are regulation size for both adult baseball and softball. Two fields are regulation size for youth league play, age 12 and under. One of these fields has an expanded outfield that can be used as a football or soccer practice field. The ball fields are clustered around a two-story concession stand, scoring/press box, and restroom facility. The park includes two picnic areas; one is a picnic area with small shelter and table for 8; the other consists of several clusters of picnic tables and will hold a total of 24 picnickers. Grills are available for each table or cluster. A .6 mile walking path surrounds the park. About one-half of the walking paths follow the Swannanoa River which forms the eastern and northern boundaries of the park. Benches are available along the path, as are one viewing or fishing platforms. The western terminus of the original section of greenway is located in the park. This greenway, known as Oaks Trail is a one-half mile connector between the park and Vance Avenue. This connector gives walking access from Lake Tomahawk Park through downtown Black Mountain to Veterans Park. Black Mountain Veterans Park also extends just south of Interstate 40. It is connected by a greenway underneath I-40 and through one of the river overflow passages. On the south side of Veterans Park we have the Dr. John Wilson Community Garden, .55 miles of paved greenway, nine holes of our disc golf course, and home to Grey Eagle Arena. Grey Eagle Arena is a 14,000 sq. ft. indoor soccer facility that houses our youth indoor soccer programs, dodgeball, and bounces house party rentals as well as many other programs and uses. Needed improvements include:

- Additional Parking
- Trail Improvements
- Year Round Restrooms
- Streambank Stabilization
- Outdoor Kitchen
- Picnic Pavilion
- Playground
- Improved Drainage

Carver Community Center. This 15,200 square foot facility has classroom space, auditorium, kitchen, and conference room. It houses the Recreation and Parks Department offices, the Swannanoa Valley Montessori School and the Art in the Afternoon after school program. Outdoor facilities include a beach volleyball court, skatepark and a playground. Improvements needed are:

- Completion of HVAC
- Painting
- Electrical
- Alarm System
- Office rehabilitation

Cragmont Park. This four acre park has an open playfield, most often used for youth league practice, an outdoor basketball court, and two tennis courts. Improvements needed are:

- Expansion of Tennis Courts
- Walking Path
- Pickle Ball Court
- Restrooms
- Playground

Croquet Court. Even fewer municipally owned croquet courts are available in the country. The croquet court is built to tournament standards and is also available by membership or open for public play. Although under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Parks Department, the facility is managed by the Black Mountain Croquet Association. Needed improvements are not discussed here.

Golf Course. This is one of the few municipally owned golf courses in the area. The course is 18 holes and is open to membership as well as the public. The golf course is not currently under the jurisdiction of the Recreation and Parks Department. Needed improvements are not discussed here.

Lake Tomahawk Park. This nineteen acre park has a 1700 square foot shelter used for group picnics, parties, and other events. The park includes a 4.5 acre lake, which is surrounded by a .55 mile walking path. A playground is available as well as benches and 4 individual picnic tables and grills. Fishing is allowed and a fishing dock for use by individuals with disabilities is provided. There are two lighted tennis courts, two horseshoe courts, a gazebo, stage, and an outdoor swimming pool. Parking is available for 73 cars. An open area serves as the amphitheater for the summer outdoor music concerts. A year-round restroom building opened in 2001. Improvements needed are:

- Rehabilitation of amenities such as picnic tables, benches, picnic sites, etc.

Lakeview Center. This center is located within Lake Tomahawk Park and is a 6500 square foot two story building that is used as the senior citizens activity center. The facility includes a kitchen, meeting area, and restrooms. The facility is used for community meetings and is frequently rented for private meetings and parties. Improvements needed include:

- Painting, replacement windows, & Flooring in downstairs

4. RECREATION STANDARDS AND COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The quantity and distribution of recreation land and facilities within a community or for a specific user group is determined by standards established by the recreation and park industry. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), in their publication Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, edited by R.A. Lancaster, defines recreation and park standards in this manner:

“Community recreation and park standards are the means by which an agency can express recreation and park goals and objectives in quantitative terms, which in turn, can be translated into spatial requirements for land and water resources. Through the budget, municipal ordinances, cooperative or joint public-private efforts, these standards are translated into a system for acquisition, development and management of recreation and park resources.”

The publication further describes the role standards have in establishing a baseline or minimum for the amount of land required for various types of park and recreation facilities. Additionally, standards correlate recreational needs into spatial requirements and provide justification for recreational expectations and needs.

The recreation needs of Black Mountain have been ascertained through public comment, an inventory of existing land and facilities, and a formal needs assessment survey of randomly selected recipients conducted by an outside consultant, as well as a review of typical and generally accepted park, recreation, and open space standards. While national standards can serve as a guide in determining minimum requirements, Black Mountain must establish standards of its own in consideration of expressed needs and the town’s economic, administrative, operational, and maintenance capabilities.

In preparing the master plan, standards developed by organizations including the NRPA, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Health and Natural Resources, and master plans from other public entities have been reviewed. Other master plans reviewed include those of Asheville, Transylvania County and Union County, NC. One of the most important aspects in preparing a comprehensive master plan is the solicitation of public comment on the perceived recreation and park needs of the community. The input gathered from the community involvement process and surveys can then be cross-checked with the recreation standards.

State and National Trends in Recreation

For many years the percentage of the population that utilizes active recreational facilities has been declining, while the percentage that utilizes the passive recreation has been increasing. Preferences toward activities that are more flexible to busy schedules and reach a wider swath of age cohorts have changed the way parks and recreation departments provide for their citizens.

Passive recreation trends include an ongoing decrease in participation in team sports (see 2015 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report), while participation in “outdoor activities” continues to increase. These outdoor activities include running and jogging, walking, hiking, and bicycling, all of which tie into another important trend, trails.

Greenways and Trails

A passive trend that holds a lot of promise is the desire for trails and the heavy use of those trails that do exist. Greenways top the list of requests from the 2013 Recreation Needs Assessment for Black Mountain. As more trails become available throughout the U.S. and people see the economic, social, and physical benefits of having these facilities, demand increases.

Small-Scale, Active Recreation

Another trend is toward small-scale, active recreation opportunities that require less space, less time, and fewer people to enjoy. For example, pickleball and outdoor fitness stations are often requested in Black Mountain, but also match national trends. Games and facilities that are geared toward neighborhoods and community facilities can help increase access to this type of recreation.

Partnerships

As funding and space fluctuate, while demand for opportunities increases, partnerships continue to be an important banner of parks and recreation. According to the 2014 State of the Managed Recreation Industry by Emily Tipping, 86.4% of all recreation agencies currently have partnerships with other agencies. Of those partnerships, the most common is a connection with local schools. The expectation that new programs or ideas seek grant funding has become standard, and with that, the need to always seek partnerships.

The Aging Population

Black Mountain has a strong hold on a trend that is just spreading around the nation, the increase in retired adults. The boomer population has come to expect service and are eager to enjoy recreation in their older years. This trend also interacts with other trends. For example, the aging population is looking (and asking) for access to more passive and small-scale recreation opportunities like greenway trails and pickleball courts.

Use of Technology

Over the past several years recreation and parks departments across the country have been embracing the use of technology in parks. Interactive trail maps are used for navigation, education, and awareness and are one more way for end-users to embrace recreation in a passive way.

Park Classification and Land Requirements

The following recommended standards for park classifications and land area requirements are described below and summarized in Table 1. The park types described conform to one of three general categories: places for active recreation, resource-oriented areas, and specialized facilities. Space requirements, typical facilities and programs, and unique environmental features define the park types.

Regional Park

A regional park is a park within a fifty-mile service radius, which serves several communities or a multi-county region. Approximately 10 acres per 1,000 population served and generally 1,000 acres are required for developing a regional park. The regional park is an area of natural ornamental quality that provides diverse and unique natural resources for nature-oriented outdoor recreation including nature viewing and study, wildlife habitat conservation, hiking, camping, canoeing, and fishing. Generally 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management, with less than 20% developed for recreation. The recreation areas consist of play areas and open fields or meadows for informal use.

District Park

A district park provides more diverse recreational opportunities than a regional park and on a much smaller scale. The district park emphasizes passive recreational opportunities similar to a regional park, yet also includes limited active recreational facilities. A district park is easily accessible by the population it serves and is within a 5-10 mile service radius. The park contains a minimum of 5 acres per 1,000 population. A district park should be a minimum of 200 acres in size. A district park will generally include an indoor recreation building or an interpretive center that reflects the character of the park. Active recreational facilities may include active play areas, ball fields, hard surface courts, multi-purpose play fields, picnicking, and various types of trails.

Community Park

The community park is easily accessible to a single, or several, neighborhoods depending on local needs and population distribution at the time the park is developed. This type of park provides recreational opportunities for the entire family and contains areas suited for intense recreational purposes such as a recreation center building, athletic fields, swimming, tennis, and walking or jogging trails. The park may also possess areas of natural quality for outdoor recreation such as viewing, sitting, and picnicking. Community parks should be within two miles of their service area and require 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served. They should be at least 25 acres in size.

Neighborhood Park

The neighborhood park is designed to serve a population of up to 5,000, but in many instances may serve more. The park requires 2.5 acres per 1,000 population served and should be a 5 to 15 acres. This type park is typically characterized by recreational activities for each member of the family, such as court games, crafts, playground, picnicking, and space for quiet/passive activities. Where feasible, the activity areas are equally divided between quiet/passive play areas and active play areas. The service radius is one-half to one mile and is easily accessible to the neighborhood population through safe walking and biking access. Parking may or may not be provided.

Mini Park

Mini parks are characterized by their relatively small size, usually 1 to 4 acres. This type of park is specialized to serve a specific segment of the population such as a tot lot or quiet space for senior citizens. The service area is less than one-fourth mile. Parking is usually not provided.

Linear Park

A linear park is an area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel such as walking, hiking, biking, horseback riding, and canoeing. Usually, linear parks are developed to provide a safe route to connect recreational facilities, schools, and residential neighborhoods.

The acreage and service area of a linear park is variable and subject to existing natural and man-made features, the existence of public right-of-way, and the public demand for this type of park. In some cases, a linear park is developed within a large land area designated for protection and management of a natural feature, such as a stream or river, and the recreational use is a secondary objective.

Special or Unique Areas or Facilities

Special or unique areas are park types that exist to enhance or utilize a special man-made or natural feature. They can include beaches, aquatic facilities, museums, golf facilities, parkways, historical sites, conservation easements, flood plains, river access, etc. Minimum standards relating to acreage or population have not been established by the park and recreation industry. A size that is sufficient to protect and interpret the resource while providing optimum use is considered desirable for special sites that are natural in character. Other specialized facilities, such as an amphitheater or outdoor classroom, require space sufficient to accommodate the program planned for the site.

Evaluation of Park Land Needs

Total Acreage Per Park Classification

The minimum park land requirements or acreage needed based on the population of Black Mountain Township is found in Table 2. Township population figures are used because the Town of Black Mountain's Recreation and Parks Department serves a community broader than just the citizens of the Town itself. This situation will be discussed in the recommendation section of this master plan. The acreage requirement is based upon the population ratio method which indicates "acres of park land per 1,000 population" as established for each park classification.

Because of Black Mountain's unique location in an area with abundant federal recreational lands, acreage standards have been relaxed to better meet the situation. Park and recreation lands must meet the needs of the local population, especially the needs of individuals or families who have economic or time-restraints that prevent them from traveling to these federal recreational areas. A regional park, although needed, is not a park requirement that needs to be met by Black Mountain.

The types of parks needed by the end of the planning period, year 2015, based upon acreage standards are also shown in Table 2. This table indicates a minimum need of 99 acres of park land plus an adequate acreage of linear parks to connect facilities and neighborhoods. The minimum number of parks needed is 10. These parks should include 5 mini-parks, 2 neighborhood parks, 1 community park, and 1 district park. In addition, one special or unique park is needed.

Open Space

While it is feasible and appropriate to adopt population-based standards for park land and facilities, it is not quite as clear to calculate open space standards. Perhaps the most appropriate standard is a determination by the community that certain open space areas are necessary to protect perceived significant natural areas or the aesthetics that make living in the area valuable to the residents.

Public open space is defined as any land acquired for the purpose of keeping it in a permanent undeveloped state. The functions of such land include: a) protection of drainage areas for water supplies (watersheds); b) protection of areas that are particularly well suited for growing crops (farmland preservation); c) protection of attractive waterways (wild and scenic rivers); d) preservation of spaces between communities to prevent urban sprawl (greenbelts); e) protection of wildlife habitat (sanctuaries); f) protection of approach and take-off areas near airports (clear zones); and, g) protection of undevelopable land (landfills). While these are some of the more common open space functions, many others exist.

Facility Standards

Minimum standards for recreational facilities (i.e., ball fields, courts, outdoor areas, etc.) have been developed for Black Mountain in accordance with industry guidelines established by the NRPA and the NCDEHNR. Table 3 identifies the minimum recreation facility standards that may be used to compare Black Mountain with other public entities in North Carolina and the United States.

Evaluation of Facility Needs

The number of public facilities needed in Black Mountain through the planning period (2015-2025) are identified in Table 6 of the Needs Assessment (Appendix C). Based upon the standards, needs for additional facilities include:

- More Sidewalks and Walking Trails
- Picnic Pavilions
- Year Round Restroom Facilities
- Greenways
- More Community Garden Space
- Bike Trails and Bike Lanes
- Another Dog Park
- Fishing Facilities
- Greenhouse
- Outdoor Basketball Courts
- Outdoor Kitchen
- Campground
- Tennis Courts
- Indoor Basketball Courts
- Baseball Fields

Community Input Needs Assessment

A comprehensive community Needs Assessment was conducted during the summer of 2014. The complete report can be found as Appendix C.

5. MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

As previously discussed, some recreational facilities in the Black Mountain area are owned and operated by the local conference centers. These centers do not, as a rule, allow for these facilities to be used by the local public. Numerous recreational opportunities are available on federal lands but most of these are located more than twenty miles from Black Mountain. Buncombe County provides only an outdoor swimming pool and small ballpark in the area and both of these are located in Swannanoa and are 5-10 miles from Black Mountain. Black Mountain offers three developed properties with a variety of activities in place.

Even with all of these recreation facilities in place, Black Mountain remains deficient in available recreation and park land. The school sites are available after school hours and in off months and school security issues are making it increasingly difficult to use these facilities. Conference center facilities are only available during the winter months and only on a limited basis then. Use of church facilities is also restricted. The analysis of the national and state standards as presented in the previous chapter shows the town to be deficient in the amount of facilities provided for recreation and parks. This is especially true in the category of mini-parks and neighborhood parks. Existing community and district parks are smaller in size than recommended. Linear parks are needed to provide safe transportation routes for walkers, joggers, and bicyclists. Quiet spaces are needed. A large public gathering space is needed.

Need for public land will increase as the population increases. The increased population base will demand additional recreational facilities. Funds available for acquisition and development of park land will also continue to become more difficult to obtain due to competing needs in the community.

In preparing this plan, there was extensive discussion regarding the future roles of all the recreational providers in the county. Opinions were obtained from staff, the Recreation Commission, and the general public. It was determined that in order to meet the challenges of the future, there will need to be a sharing of responsibilities among all the recreational providers in Black Mountain, surrounding towns and townships, and the county. Therefore, the proposals and recommendations of this Master Plan begin with identifying the specific roles of each provider, from the public, quasi-public, and private sectors.

Roles of Recreation Providers

Meeting all the recreational needs of the community will require a joint effort between the various government agencies and the private sector. No one group can be held solely responsible for providing all the programs and facilities for the community. The following recommendations describe the roles that each recreational provider should take over the planning period.

Federal Government

The United States provides national park and forest facilities within twenty miles of Black Mountain. The facilities include hiking trails, a few picnic sites, a major arts and crafts museum/store, and one campground with 98 sites. Little is done within the twenty mile radius in terms of nature trails, fitness trails, bicycling trails, picnic shelters and sites, or campsites. No group campsite is located within this area. Although open lands are available, national trends show that the general public will only access open lands if "invited" through developed facilities.

State of North Carolina

The State of North Carolina should take the lead in offering a variety of recreational facilities found in a regional park. The nearest state park is Mt. Mitchell State Park which offers hiking, some nature study, viewing of wildlife, scenic viewing, and a few picnic and camp sites. However, participation in these activities in this park is limited to those who are hardier and can endure the strenuous trails found here. It is not truly a regional park as defined in the previous chapter. This park is forty miles away by automobile and is accessed by curvy, mountainous roads that are often closed during winter.

North Carolina also provides several special or unique facilities within twenty-five miles of Black Mountain. These include Vance Birthplace Historic Site, Thomas Wolfe House Historic Site, University of

North Carolina Botanical Gardens, and North Carolina Arboretum. These unique sites, although several miles distant, should meet the needs of Black Mountain residents for these types of facilities and should not be duplicated here.

The state should financially assist Black Mountain with acquiring lands for parks and recreational facilities, in developing new facilities, and renovating existing facilities through the NC PARTF grant programs, NC DOT Bikeways Program, and Community Development Block Grants.

Buncombe County

Currently, Buncombe County Parks and Recreation (BCPR) provides parkland at locations throughout the county. The agency currently manages and operates 27 separate facilities. BCPR provides facilities such as athletic fields, pools, recreation centers, and river access points. Although, BCPR maintains and programs their facilities for use by all county residents, including citizens of Black Mountain, only two of these 27 facilities are located within the Swannanoa Valley. Owen Park, which loosely fits the definition of a neighborhood park and is, located ten miles from Black Mountain. The park is mainly used by the residents of Swannanoa Township for their youth athletic programs. The park includes a walking path around a small lake, two picnic shelters, an outdoor basketball court, one adult regulation softball/baseball field, and two other ball fields. Public restrooms are available only if a ballgame is in progress. And, an outdoor swimming pool located three miles from downtown Black Mountain opened in 2000.

The county and the Town of Black Mountain should work together to accommodate the needs of all county residents. However, the county should first recognize the need for providing for 30,000 residents in eastern Buncombe County that live outside the city limits of Black Mountain. If BCPR can provide for the recreation needs of these residents, then the Town should work with them and avoid providing a duplication of services. If BCPR continues to be unable to meet the needs of Swannanoa Valley residents, then Black Mountain should seek funding from the county to help in providing recreational opportunities for residents from outside the town limits.

Buncombe County schools have cooperated in the past in making school property available for recreational use where possible. Currently, most of the recreational programs taking place at school sites are associated with programs offered through Black Mountain Recreation and Parks or local non-profit youth sports programs. BMRP needs to work with the local schools to attain an overall formal joint use agreement. The schools and BMRP should work closely together in identifying additional programs that may take place on school or park properties.

Key issues that need to be considered in developing an agreement are outlined under “Partnership Opportunities” within this section of the report.

City of Asheville

The City of Asheville’s park and recreation program has as its primary focus the recreational needs of its own citizens. Therefore, its facilities are not discussed here. We have worked with the City of Asheville Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources on multiple occasions to provide programming, transportation, and fulfill other needs of both organizations.

Town of Montreat

The Town of Montreat is a small incorporated municipality located approximately two miles from Black Mountain and within Black Mountain Township. It is unique in character and its residents are unique. Black Mountain recognizes that Montreat’s citizens participate in and use Black Mountain’s recreational programs and facilities. The two municipalities should partner in providing recreational services to residents.

Town of Black Mountain

As its primary focus, the Town of Black Mountain needs to offer recreation programs and facilities for its own citizens. Historically, the Town has been serving Black Mountain residents, as well as, county residents of Black Mountain, Broad River, and Swannanoa Townships and residents of the Town of Montreat. Through the planning period, it will be increasingly more difficult to follow this trend. It is

anticipated that the Town will not be in a financial position to offer recreation programs and facilities to other than Town residents. The needs of non-residents might continue to be met if the County and Montreat provide additional funding or if a non-resident fee is charged.

In the future, BMRP's role should continue to offer a variety of recreational activities that meet the diverse needs of the community. The Town should also continue being the provider of community, neighborhood, mini, special use, and linear parks and also of open spaces. The extent of programming and offering recreation facilities will ultimately be determined by what Black Mountain can afford. Revenue producing recreation should be examined. The Town should search for teaming opportunities with other governmental agencies, such as the county and the private sector in sharing of programs and facility development.

Quasi-Public Sector

BMRP should meet with local churches and conference centers and develop partnerships which allow for use of facilities during the off-season or at specified times for special programs, such as youth basketball. Discussions should also be held on whether these partnerships could include a joint use of an indoor recreational facility.

Private Sector

The private sector should be encouraged to take on a much greater role over the next twenty years if the recreational needs of the town are to be fully met. Commercial recreation providers should provide facilities and programs that the public and quasi-public sectors cannot offer due to economic, legal, or ethical reasons. The private sector could provide for specialty recreation such as equestrian centers, shooting ranges, archery areas, x-sports parks, etc. The town should be supportive and encourage the private sector to develop these special use facilities.

Land developers should be responsible for the dedication of open space when associated with development of new residential, commercial, or industrial properties. Dedication, or compensation in lieu, should be administered through the town Planning Department and coordinated with Recreation and Parks. Requirements should be placed in the future updates of the town's subdivision regulations and/or zoning ordinances.

Partnership Opportunities

All types of partnerships can be formed with local public, private, or quasi-public entities. To get started a direct request should be made of an organization to meet and evaluate the mutual benefits possible through a partnership. Eventually a concrete description of responsibilities will be needed, but the important step is to make an initial contact and promote interest that can solidify an agreement to provide recreational services for the community.

Partnerships with the private sector can be beneficial to all participants. Typically, a private developer can use private funds to develop a facility on town property with the town leasing it to the developer on a long-term basis. During the period of the lease the developer returns a portion of the revenues to the county and at the end of the lease the facility reverts to town ownership. This type of arrangement would be appropriate for any revenue producing facility that requires a large capital investment.

Park Proposals and Recommendations

Sections 3 and 4 of this plan summarize the existing and future needs of Black Mountain. The following proposals and recommendations are aimed at meeting those park needs.

1. A regional park should not be provided by the Town of Black Mountain.
2. The Town needs to provide a district park for residents. A district park is 75 or more acres in size and should provide picnic area with group shelters, campground with at least 30 individual sites and 1 group campsite, nature trails, outdoor amphitheater, and possibly an outdoor environmental education center.

A feasibility study should be made to determine if the Town's watershed property can be developed into a park without affecting the wells located on the property. This property should only be considered as a developed park if it is revenue producing.

At a minimum, this property should be opened up as a low-impact nature park with nature trails and hiking trails. This type of park could also be revenue producing by issuing season passes for the right to use the property.

If this property cannot be developed, the Town should look for another large tract of land that can be developed.

3. The Town currently owns two community parks (Lake Tomahawk and Veterans Park) and needs a third. A community park is approximately 25 acres and should include, at a minimum, 2 softball/baseball fields, 1 soccer field, and a group picnic shelter.
4. A total of four neighborhood parks are needed. The Town currently has two, Carver and Cragmont. Two additional neighborhood parks are needed.

The Carver property includes several acres that are not developed. A feasibility study should be conducted of the building and property to determine the best plan for its use as a recreation and park facility. This site could be the site for additional indoor and/or outdoor basketball courts. This site also has a need to be better connected to the surrounding neighborhood by greenways, walking trails or sidewalks.

The Cragmont property includes an outdoor basketball court and tennis court. The park needs a restroom. In keeping with the recreational activities found in a neighborhood park, this park should be considered for re-design and could include additional tennis courts, lighted for night-time use, a fitness trail, and a large playground to turn it into more of a destination park.

Because of the relatively close proximity of these two parks a new park should be north of downtown and one should be located east of NC 9/Montreat Road.

5. The Town needs five mini-parks. Mini-parks includes playgrounds, tot lots, and personal play or reflection spaces. These parks should be located within a ¼ mile radius of the population they serve. They usually do not include parking spaces, although one or two spaces may be appropriate. Generally, they should be accessible by sidewalk or a greenway system. BMRP currently maintains one mini-park, RiverWalk Park. The Town has recently acquired a mini-park sized property along Flat Creek. This property should be considered as a potential park for seniors or others for reflective/quiet space and possibly for a fishing station for use by physically challenged citizens.
6. A playground should be located in each park, both currently owned and those to be developed.
7. A greenway system should be developed that connects all parks and that connects Black Mountain and Montreat. With the development of the In-the-Oaks property by Montreat College, the Town should partner with the college to develop a greenway/walking path between the Recreation Park and Cragmont and Lake Tomahawk Parks.

The adopted Greenway Master Plan formulated by the Greenways Commission provides detailed information on the need for linear parks and the paths proposed are recommended in this plan.

A new recreation center is needed. This center would be for all citizens, but especially for our youth and senior populations. This center should include a gymnasium with one or two basketball courts, an indoor tennis court, two or three classrooms, a meeting room with adjacent kitchen, and an auditorium/performance theater.

Priorities for development

The needs as listed in the previous section will not be met within the framework of this ten year plan. However, even if a need cannot be met, preliminary studies or planning can begin. Based on the input received through public meetings and through discussion with recreation and parks professionals, and through discussion with town staff, the following needs are listed in priority order:

1. Land acquisition to begin positioning for future needs within the Town of Black Mountain. Land acquisition should include areas both large and small to fill voids in service as suggested in the prior section. Land acquisition should be considered for expanding existing parks as well as development of new ones.
2. Continue to develop the greenway system to tie all of the town's parks together through a series of walking and biking paths. This will enable our youth to access all facilities without having to travel along vehicular pathways.
3. Develop mini-parks and put playgrounds at each existing park. Five mini-parks are needed. A mini-park should be located within ¼ mile of each town resident. Playgrounds are currently needed at Veterans Park and Cragmont Park.

These top priority items need to be completed as soon as possible and certainly within the next five years. Planning for the following items should begin within the next five years and be accomplished within fifteen years.

Develop existing town owned properties into neighborhood parks. These undeveloped park properties include the Black Mountain Recreation Park and the under-developed Cragmont Park property. These parks should include open play spaces, picnic shelters, playground, reflective spaces, and walking paths.

6. ACTION PLANS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The Black Mountain Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan is based upon a review of the entire community, an analysis of the existing park system, the identification of user needs, the development of recreation standards, and an adherence to stated proposals and recommendations. The plan is intended to be “action-oriented”, designed to provide a framework from which the Town can enhance its recreation and parks system.

Instrumental to implementation of the Master Plan is the identification of adequate funding at a time when balancing municipal budgets throughout the state has become increasingly difficult. The North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identified inadequate funding for park facilities and recreation programs as a key issue needing to be addressed in the next five years if government is to maintain basic minimum services. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, per capita funding for parks and recreation services throughout the State of North Carolina, including local government is 33% below the national average. Even though funding is currently low statewide, it does not appear to reflect the high value Black Mountain citizens place on recreation and parks.

Implementing the Master Plan will result in meeting the future needs for recreation and park services, as well as preserving some transitional open space in Black Mountain. The Town will need to continue to establish annual budgets for the Recreation and Parks Department based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, and operations and maintenance costs. The action plan is formatted into two funding periods covering a period of time from 2015 to 2025 and is designed to give Black Mountain a realistic approach to finance the proposals and recommendations of the Master Plan.

Capital Improvement Program

The capital improvement program for the acquisition development, and renovation of parks for the next five years was prepared with input from Recreation staff and the planning committee team.

Instrumental to implementation of the recommendations of this plan is the identification of adequate funding. Funding estimates are listed below. Estimates for items in the current capital improvement plan (Appendix D) are based upon today’s dollar value. Estimates for items in the proposed recommendations are based on a Class C engineering estimate or a planning stage estimate.

The Capital Improvement Program can be summarized into the following components:

For Existing & Proposed Programs/Parks (2016-2025):

Planning & Design	\$ 240,000
Equipment Needs	\$ 535,000
Land	\$ 100,000
New Construction	<u>\$1,630,500</u>
Total	\$2,505,500

Operations and Maintenance Needs

Operations and maintenance needs are determined based on the total park acreage that the Recreation and Parks Department will be maintaining through the year 2025. It will be necessary for Black Mountain to evaluate operational and maintenance needs of individual facilities as they are being planned. An initial evaluation of operational needs for a project must be made prior to going forward with construction drawings. Maintenance and operational expenses can be identified early in the planning process during the development of site specific schematic plans. At this stage of the planning process a project’s size, shape and character is determined at an exact scale. Thus, enabling decisions to be made concerning maintenance and operations procedures which may affect the final design. During the development of final design and construction drawings, more detailed operational and maintenance needs are identified so that a maintenance program can be prepared for the facility.

The best approach to operations and maintenance control is to continue to use the preventive maintenance program that schedules activities that provide for the minimum amount of care necessary to maintain a facility. An appropriately staffed maintenance crew supports a preventive maintenance program. This plan reduces drains on budgets and staff time spent responding to emergencies that always seem to deviate from routine maintenance tasks at hand. Certain maintenance intensive facilities, such as playgrounds, restrooms, and pools, require repair/or replacement of critical parts annually. Costs can be contained by anticipating their occurrence, rather than responding to them as an emergency.

In planning for new development, operational and maintenance costs must be carefully considered prior to approving a project for construction. Often operational demands require reducing the quantity of items of facilities to be built for a project. It is better to reduce quantities than to lessen quality of construction. Reducing construction quality may in time place a tremendous burden on maintenance/repair budgets and eventually render the facility unusable. In addition, designs for new parks and facilities should attempt to be vandal resistant and able to withstand appreciable wear and tear. Many times it is easier to obtain money to develop parks than to maintain them, yet the public is more likely to respond to a park's condition, than to the initial cost.

Staffing Needs

Black Mountain Recreation and Parks Department's structure and number of personnel is consistent with similar sized town recreation departments in the State. Black Mountain Recreation and Parks currently manage facilities and programs.

All existing positions within the Department are warranted but responsibilities are recommended to become more focused as the department grows over the next ten years. In addition to the above, there is a current need for additional staff, a supervisor of community programs/cultural resources, a park and recreation maintenance division, and one evening park rangers with law enforcement authority.

The following lists existing and needed staff positions and their general duties:

- Recreation and Parks Director (1-existing). Reports to Town Manger and acts as liaison with Recreation and Parks Recreation Commission and Board of Aldermen. Responsible for overall administration of department and long term planning.
- Administrative Assistant (1-existing). Accountable to the Director and provides general administrative functions for the department
- Clerk/Secretary (1-needed) by the year 2020. To report to Administrative Assistant and be responsible for general clerical/receptionist functions. This position would be needed if the Carver Community Center was to become a full functioning Recreation Center with evening and weekend hours.
- Recreation Supervisor (1-existing). To report to Director and be responsible for planning, coordinating and administration of all community events and programs for Town of Black Mountain; coordinates all Recreation Department publicity and coordinates with local organizations. Professional with 3-5 years of experience.
- Recreation Coordinator (1-existing, 1 needed). Reports to Director and responsible for planning, organizing and managing a combination of recreation programs and facilities to include community center programs, summer recreation programs, athletics, aquatics and senior programs.
- Health Program Services Administrator (1-existing). This position is responsible for coordination of Greenways projects, Health Initiative programs, also responsible for coordinating, developing and implementing the Town's employee wellness program.

- Park Operations Superintendent (1 – existing PW). Combines the park maintenance and operation responsibilities with park planning and safety. Responsible for planning and development of maintenance programs.
- Maintenance Staff (3 – existing PW). Provides maintenance assistance to Park Superintendent on an individual park basis. Reports to the Park Operations Superintendent.
- Park Rangers (1 needed/part time). Provides security functions on an individual park basis. Reports to Director of Recreation and Parks. Professional with 0-7 years of experience. Currently use off duty police officers – seems to work well.
- Recreation Center – Aide (1 existing, 2 needed). Performs a variety of duties in operation of community recreation center. Works with youth and adults; does related work as requested.

Staffing needed based on new facilities is not discussed here. That discussion is incumbent upon the approval of this plan and the actions taken. The development of a recreation center and indoor pool would require additional staffing as would the development of any fee-use park or facility.

Pricing Recommendations

The pricing policy should reflect three levels of pricing for services. Recreation by its nature is a consumptive service. It is within this mindset that services are broken down into a public service, merit service, and a private benefit service.

A public service is a service that has high public benefit (equal benefit to everyone) and should be free and supported by taxes. An example of this is a playground in a park.

A merit service provides some public service and some private benefit not afforded to other users of the Town. An example of this type of service is reserving a pavilion in a park for a person's exclusive use or a program that provides a product that a user gets to keep. (i.e. like a tee shirt).

A private service is where the person receiving the service benefits totally and the general taxpayer benefits are not existent. Therefore, the user should pay the total cost of providing the service. An example of this is private lessons for a program service.

Black Mountain provides mainly public and merit type services. Across the United States, communities have different levels of tax subsidy based on the value and importance they place on recreational services. In Black Mountain, the current pricing practice is to support non-athletic, youth programs 100% of direct and indirect cost. This same practice is applied to services for seniors as well. For fee based programs, including youth athletic programs, there is no price differentiation for residents and non-residents.

The recommendations for pricing for Black Mountain Recreation and Parks' services follow:

- In the future, establish a costing program that evaluates direct and indirect cost for each aspect of program and park services. Once these costs have been identified, evaluate the merit or private benefit, if any that is being provided and determine at what level of public subsidy support the Town wants to contribute for each activity reviewed. The Town then can determine if they would like to find a sponsor or grant to support the program cost or to bring down the cost to a minimum level. If so, establish a strategy to seek out those opportunities through a formal request process.
- Depending on whether the Town seeks to find outside private or public sources to fund a portion of the program, they will need to communicate to the users what percentage of monies the Town is contributing to the experience and what level the outside sources are contributing. From this strategy the Department, over time, can make appropriate adjustments according to willingness to pay and market elasticity in the Black Mountain area.

- All new program services provided in the future should be priced at appropriate levels of public subsidy that is in tune with the Town's value system for the program provided. This would include consideration of whether to charge an additional fee for non-residents.

Pricing Elasticity

Pricing elasticity is established by seeking out the highest related price in the area for a service and the lowest price of the same service. An example of this would be golfing/green fees whereby the highest fee in the area might be \$30 dollars and the lowest fee would be \$15. The elasticity is then \$15 dollars, which allows the Department to establish a niche in the market place through effective marking and positioning the value of the service to the community.

Determining pricing elasticity for recreation services begins with identifying what a typical recreation hour is worth in the United States today. A recreation hour is typically worth \$3.00 to \$3.50 per hour for recreation services. People are generally willing to pay for recreation pursuits, which demonstrates an elasticity level. As an example, a movie for an adult typically costs \$6.00 to \$7.00 per movie for prime time and most movies are typically 2 hours in length which amounts to \$3.00 to \$3.50 per hour. Another example is a lane/game of bowling costs \$3.00 to \$3.50 per lane and a game of bowling usually lasts one hour if you are bowling with four people. If a person goes to a theme park it typically costs about \$30.00 to \$35.00 for a 10-hour experience or \$3.00 to \$3.50 per hour. A recreation user's willingness to pay demonstrates the value a user sees in a particular activity. In Black Mountain there are examples of willingness to pay in similar cases if you compare to the YMCA or other recreation suppliers. Sometimes a user's willingness to pay is publicly subsidized because of the value the activity brings to the community as a whole.

Nationally, the recreational cost for like kinds of service that Black Mountain offers demonstrates the elasticity value people are willing to pay. In most situations the Town of Black Mountain subsidizes recreation programs to some level depending on the value the town sees in supporting that specific program. The following is a typical list of program fees and subsidy levels to demonstrate price elasticity in the recreation market place. This does not mean Black Mountain should follow this example, but only demonstrates the value and willingness to pay for recreation programs across the country.

- ♦ Youth sports programs (basketball \$55.00 for 8 game schedules) are typically 50% publicly subsidized.
- ♦ Aquatic programs (4 lessons @ \$40.00) are not publicly supported

Typical subsidy levels for recreation program activities are as follows:

- ♦ Senior Programs – Up to 40%
- ♦ Fitness Programs – 0%
- ♦ Youth Programs – Up to 50%
- ♦ Adult Programs – 0%

Earned Income Opportunities

The Town of Black Mountain has a good history of developing earned income opportunities to supplement the Town's budget for special events. In developing earned income opportunities the Town should consider these earned income opportunities.

Resident/non-resident fees are an earned income area where non-Town residents pay a higher rate than Town residents. The rate is typically 15 to 20% more than the Town resident rate. The price should be established as a base market rate with Black Mountain residents receiving the program for this price.

Sponsorship opportunities within the Department will need to be coordinated to not confuse sponsors by sending two or three requests to the same businesses. Sponsorships typically come in the form of product sponsors, event sponsors, program sponsors, cause-related sponsors, and in-kind sponsors.

Grants 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 Town to create a quality submittal. Grants also require extensive tracking of expenditures and outcomes for attaining future funding.

Partnerships are the new area of earned income that many cities are seeking to share cost in providing services to the community. Many times the partners are two or more government agencies. This earned income requires both agencies to have common vision, values, and goals for the partnership to be successful. Typically, partnerships follow some of these general trends:

- Church partnership in providing neighborhood park or recreation services.
- Youth sports associations where volunteers help the Town in providing the service to the community for the sports that they represent.
- Trail sponsors that adopt sections of trails for maintenance and cleanup.
- Adopt-a-park partners that help maintain parklands. These sponsors are typically in the form of neighborhood associations and businesses that are next to parks.
- School partnerships whereby both partners invest in the development of facilities and programs based on shared use of facilities and staff.
- Special Event partners that assist with the development of community wide events.
- Program partners that assist each other in providing services to the community.

Park foundation development is another earned income opportunity that towns have embraced to achieve added dollars to the budget. Park foundations help the town seek out individuals who would like to invest in the town by providing donations of land, cash, or in-kind related services. These donations can add value to Black Mountain.

Advertising and licensing in programs, facilities, and events the Town provides. This earned income allows the town to leverage highly exposed advertising space where businesses will pay a premium for the right to advertise.

Volunteer development programs are highly valued earned income opportunities the Town can create through effective recruitment. Volunteers can create advocacy and bring down the cost of programs and services.

Privatization of the development of facilities or services is an earned income opportunity that is used in most towns when they are unable to control the cost of labor and are unable to find the needed capital to develop a recreation facility or a concession operation. This gives the town a management tool to create an asset or improve a service without tapping the town's resources.

Funding/Revenue Sources

The Black Mountain Recreation and Parks Department has a long history of good public support for funding of parks, programs and services. However, existing funding sources have not been able to keep up with the needs of the community and the management of park assets. The proposed additional facilities and expanded operations will only add to the need for additional dollars from a variety of sources. The Town needs to create a combination of new revenue sources to meet the future needs of Black Mountain residents.

Upon adoption of the Master Plan, the Town of Black Mountain needs to continue with establishing a revenue plan. A revenue plan incorporates all available funding resources in a community and prioritizes them. The following listing of funding sources is provided to help the Town evaluate all options:

- ◆ General Tax Revenues - General tax revenues traditionally provide the principle sources of funds for general operations and maintenance of a municipal recreation and parks system. Recreation as a public service is scheduled along with roadways, health, public safety, schools, etc. in regular budgets established by the municipality. Assessed valuation of real and personal property provides the framework for this major portion of the tax base for the Town. The Town of Black Mountain currently (FY15-16) has a property tax valuation of .375/\$100 valuation. General tax revenues typically cover park services a whole. Recreation facilities such as game fields, recreation centers, and cemeteries are covered by a combination of general tax revenues and user fees. All towns have different values in place for how they fund various portions of a recreation experience. Tax subsidies vary by activity.

The Town will need to update its current revenues and pricing policy as part of the revenue plan based on the values and guiding funding principals of the Town. Refer to this section of the report for potential subsidy goals and pricing strategies.

- ◆ General Obligation Bonds – General tax revenue for parks and recreation is usually devoted to current operation and maintenance of existing facilities. In view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, borrowing of funds to acquire new lands and develop facilities will be necessary. The State of North Carolina gives municipal 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 the purpose of paying the debt on these bonds the Town is empowered to levy a special tax. Total bonding capacities for local government is limited for parks and recreation to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

The real value of a municipality's bonding authority and capacity is not necessarily the funds made available for capital improvement program alone (in terms of local monies). Bonding enables the Town to utilize local 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. At this time the feedback received from the 2014 Needs Assessment does not support a bond referendum.

- ◆ Revenue Bonds – Revenue bonds have become a popular funding method for financing high use specialty facilities like aquatic centers, ice rinks, tennis centers, golf courses, and complexes for softball and soccer. The user and other on-site revenue sources pay revenue bonds. This revenue source would only be of use to the Town of Black Mountain if they choose to change their tax subsidy policy for using this type of funding. Based on the Town's current pricing practices it most likely would not seek out this option. If the Town decided to move in this direction, this type of funding could be used to finance projects such as an indoor aquatic center or large recreation center.
- ◆ Federal and State Assistance – Federal funding sources necessary to help finance the Master Plan have historically been available from the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Potential funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is also available given certain conditions. Other potential sources for recreational funding are available through the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

During the 1980s, the Black Mountain Recreation and Parks Department used LWCF and state administered Community Development funds to develop parks within the system. These include Lake Tomahawk Park, the Croquet Court and Black Mountain Recreation Park.

The North Carolina General Assembly passed a bill in 1995 creating a consistent source of funds for parks and recreation in the state. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) will provide money for capital improvements, repairs, renovations, and land acquisition in state and local parks. Revenues from the State's portion of the real estate deed transfer tax support the Fund and are estimated to be \$18 million annually. The percentage dedicated to PARTF varies from year to year. The maximum matching grant is limited to \$500,000 for a single project.

- ◆ Limited Option or Special Use Tax – Limited option or special use taxes can be established in various ways. A town or county can establish the tax source from property valuation, transfer taxes, or sales tax. The proposal will require legislative approval if it is structured on sales tax or transfers. A local governing body can approve a tax that is identified or earmarked on existing property valuation. 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 the accomplishment of the purpose or projects.
- ◆ Black Mountain Parks and Greenways Foundation – The Foundation uses individual and corporate philanthropic donations to develop and maintain parks, grounds, programs, and facilities throughout town.
- ◆ General Foundations – Another source of revenue is the direct contribution of money from General Foundations within the state or nation. A listing of appropriate foundations can be found in the text entitled Grant Seeking in North Carolina, made available through the North Carolina Center of Public Policy Research, P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602.

Foundation funds should be sought for both development and construction of facilities as well as providing programs. They should include general-purpose foundations that have relatively few restrictions, special program foundations for specific activities and corporate foundations found with few limitations and typically from local sources.

- ◆ Partnership Structures – All types of partnerships can be formed with local public, private, or quasi-public entities. To get started a direct request should be made of an organization to meet and evaluate the mutual benefits possible through a partnership. Eventually a concrete description of responsibilities will be needed, but the important step is to make an initial contact and promote interest that can solidify an agreement to provide recreational services for the community.

Partnerships with the private sector can be beneficial to all participants. Typically, a private developer can use private funds to develop a facility on town property with the town leasing it to the developer on a long-term basis. During the period of the lease the developer returns a portion of the revenues to the town and at the end of the lease the facility reverts to town ownership. This type of arrangement would be appropriate for an improvement such as a pool, golf course or other facility requiring a large capital investment.

Other Methods for Acquisition and Development

Other methods available to the Town of Black Mountain for acquiring and developing parks as recommended in the Master Plan include the following.

- ◆ Fee Simple Purchase - The outright purchase is perhaps the most widely used method of obtaining parkland. However, this method is the most difficult to reconcile with limited public resources. Fee simple purchase has the advantage of being relatively simple to administer and to explain to the general public in terms of justifying a particular public expenditure.
- ◆ Fee Simple with Lease-Back or Resale – This technique of land acquisition enables the Town to purchase land to either 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 that 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 sale with a lease-back option.
- ◆ Long-Term Option – A long-term option is frequently used when a particular piece of land is seen as having potential future value though it is not desired or affordable to the Town at the time. Under the terms of a long-term option, the Town agrees with the landowner on a selling price for the property and a time period over which the Town has the right to exercise its option. The first benefit of this protective method is that the land use of the property is stabilized because its future is in doubt and an expenditure of money for the property would be lost in the previously agreed upon selling price.

Secondly, the Town does not have to expend large sums of money until the land is purchased. Thirdly, the purchase price of the land is settled upon. The disadvantage of this method lies in 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 parkland eliminates the need for fixing the selling price of a parcel of land yet alerts the Town of any impending purchase which might disrupt the parkland acquisition goals. The Town 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 parkland 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 Black Mountain with interests in recreation, historic, conservation, preservation, land development, and environment. Their goals and responsibilities are to work with landowners to acquire parkland for current and future generations. The individuals appointed to the Land Trust must have a good knowledge of land acquisition methods and tools to entice land owners to sell, donate, provide easements, life estates, irrevocable trusts, or a combination of all. This includes seeking out a good 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 the comprehensive Master Plan.
- ◆ Local Gifts – a significant and yet often untapped source of providing funds for acquisition and development of local park projects is through a well-organized local gifts program. The pursuit of land, money, construction funds, or donated labor can have a meaningful impact on the development of a well-rounded system.

The most frequently used type of gift involves the giving of land (through a full gift of agreed upon below market value sale) to be used for a park. The timing of such a donation can correspond with a PARTF grant application, thereby providing all or a significant portion of the local matching requirement associated with this fund. A familiar 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 also be used to match non-local grant funds. When not tied into a grant, such donations of land, labor, or materials can play an important role in reducing the demand for local capital expenditures.

Some cities have developed a gift catalog as a tool for emphasizing an organized 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 local program needs. The gifts catalog should be prepared in a format that can be distributed effectively and inexpensively and should employ 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 Recreation and Parks Department as part of their tax and estate planning.

- ◆ Life Estate – A life estate is a deferred gift. Under this plan, a donor retains use of his land during his lifetime and relinquishes title to such land upon his death. In return for this gift, the owner is usually relieved of the property tax burden on the donated land.
- ◆ Easement – The most common type of less-than-fee interest in land is an easement. Since property ownership may be envisioned as a bundle of rights, it is possible for the Town to purchase any one or

several of these rights. An easement seeks either to compensate the landholder for the right to use his land in some manner or to compensate him for the loss of one of his privileges to use the land. On 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 Town. Perhaps the greatest benefit lies in the fact that the community purchases only those rights that it specifically needs to execute its parkland objectives. By purchasing only rights that are necessary to the system and on the land itself, the Town is making more selective and efficient use of its limited financial resources.

- ♦ Zoning/Subdivision Regulations/Mandatory Dedication – Zoning ordinances, subdivision regulation, and mandatory dedications may be utilized to create new parkland at no cost to the community. This must be approved through special state legislation in Raleigh.

Subdivision regulations can be revised to contain written provisions making allowance for both “cluster and planned unit development.” Design standards relating to tree cover, drainage ways, and other natural features can be instrumental in the preservation of the natural setting. Regulations can require that land is dedicated and/or compensation made to the Town for the development of parkland.

Black Mountain should reserve the right to review all preliminary development plans to verify acceptance of required dedicated parkland. All too often, developers attempt to dedicate unusable land to local governments. Scattered and unplanned pockets of open space are of no use to the overall recreation and park system. Payment in lieu of dedicated land for facility development at other park sites is recommended as an alternative.

A variation of the mandatory land dedication is payment of a fee in lieu of land dedication. The fee payment for dwelling unit construction goes directly into a special fund earmarked for park acquisition and development. The benefits of this method for park development in newly evolving neighborhoods are many.

- * The Town of Black Mountain is financially able to purchase parks in accordance with a predetermined set of plans.
- * The money is available when needed.
- * The residents involved directly feel the benefit of the park fee.

Summary – Economic Impact of Recreation and Parks

Research concerning the economic importance of public recreation has not been well documented. These services can be difficult to measure on a monetary basis and seldom receive much attention in terms of their impact on a community. Public recreation is not bought and sold in the same manner as the services provided by private resorts and clubs. As such, there are no formal indices for measuring the volume of trade generated at public parks.

In a Fortune magazine study, nearly 50 % of the largest 1000 US corporations look at recreational opportunities in an area before deciding on relocation.

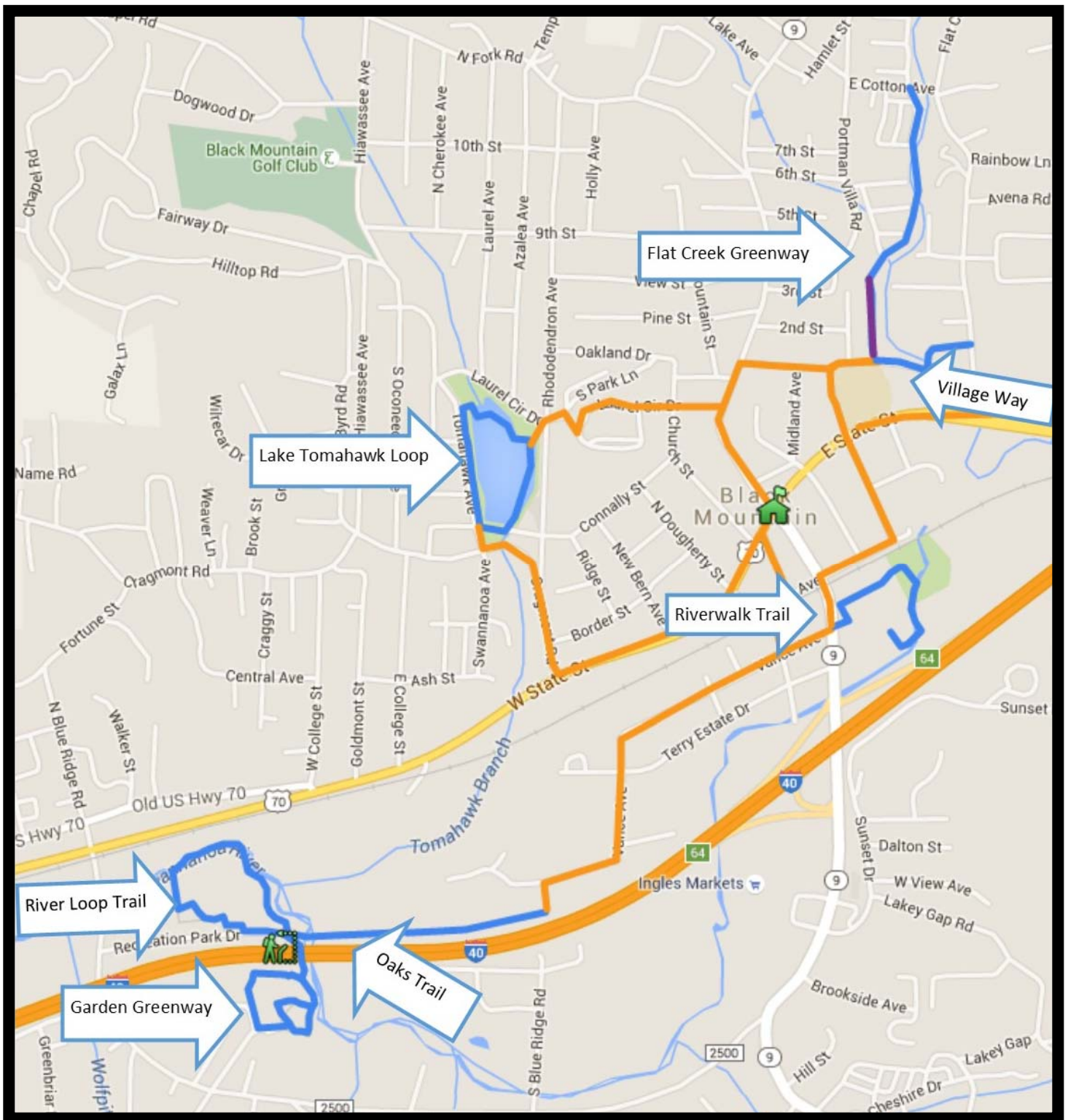
Recent surveys have concluded that parks provide a positive economic impact within a community. The US Forest Service has conducted a study in North Carolina that indicates parks do contribute considerably to the economic conditions of a region. In addition, outdoor recreation, including open space areas, is an especially attractive economic development alternative. In addition to creating new jobs and income, the impacts of park and recreation enriches the quality of life by providing leisure opportunities.

Black Mountain Recreation & Parks

Facilities & Parks



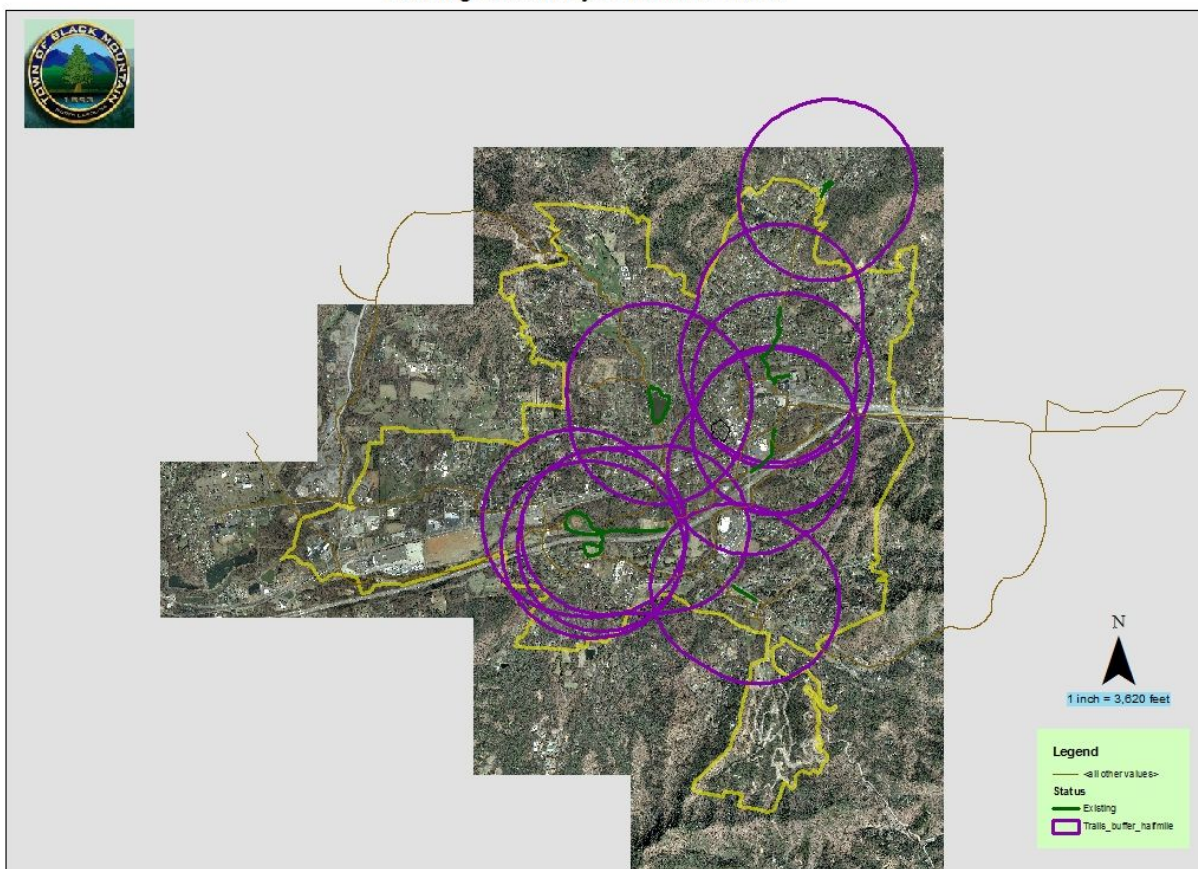
Black Mountain Recreation & Parks Greenways



Greenways are in Blue, Connecting streets in Orange.

Maps of Parks & Greenways with 1/2 mile buffer.

Existing Greenways Half-Mile Buffer



1/2 Mile Parks Buffer

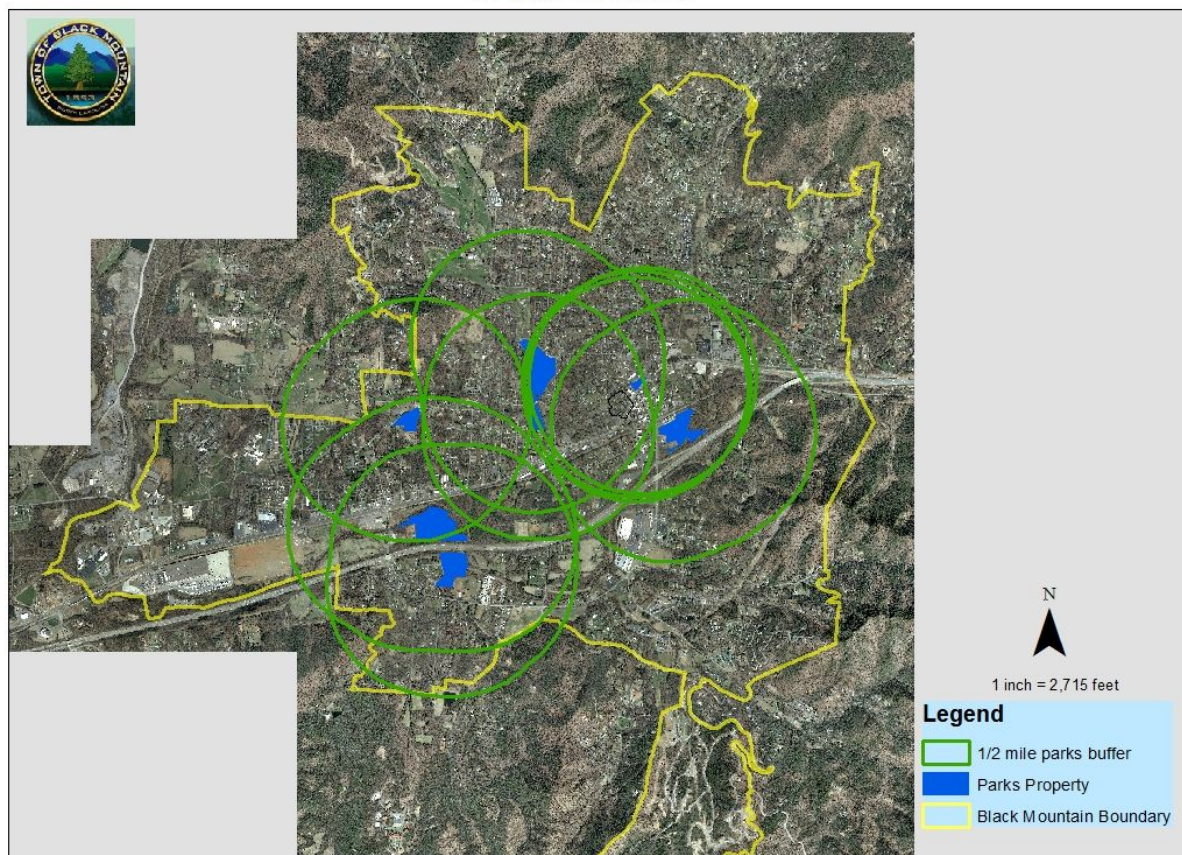


Table 1: Standards for Park Classifications and Land Area Requirements

Park Type	Acres/1000 Population	Minimum Size in Acreage	Service Area
Regional Park	10	1000	50 mile radius
District Park	5	200	5 mile radius
Community Park	2.5	25	2 mile radius
Neighborhood Park	2.5	5	1 mile radius
Mini Park	.5	1	.25 mile radius
Linear Park (State Standard)	30	Varies	Varies
Special or Unique	Varies	Varies	Varies

*This chart is based on the National Park, Recreation, & Open Space Standards projections. The Recreation Commission agrees this is an appropriate standard for Black Mountain.

Table 2: Public Facilities Needs Analysis for Black Mountain

Park Type	Number Needed in Year 2025	Recommended Minimum Size in Acreage
Regional Park	0	0
District Park	1	70
Community Park	1	15
Neighborhood Park	2	3
Mini Park	5	1
Linear Park (State Standard)	Adequate to connect all parks	Adequate to connect all parks
Special or Unique	1	3

Table 3: Standards for Public Facilities

Facility	National Standard for Population 10,000 and Under	National Standard for Population 10,000 to 20,000	Currently Have
District Park *1	50 acres	75 acres	0 acres
Community Park *2	2 or 3 @ 25 acres each	3 or 4 @ 25 acres each	19 acres (Lake) 17 acres (Rec Park)
Neighborhood Park *3	3 @ 12.5 acres each	4 @ 12.5 acres each	7 acres (Carver) 4 acres (Cragmont)
Recreational Center *4	1	1	0
Neighborhood Center (no gym)	1	1 to 2	1
Softball/Baseball Fields *5	3 to 6	6 to 11	6
Swimming Pool 25 yard Or 50 Meter Pool	1 0	1 or 2 1	1 or 2 1
Tennis Courts	5	7	4 @ Black Mtn 8 @ Owen Middle 6 @ Montreat
Basketball, Outdoor	2	3	6
Volleyball, Outdoor	2	3	1
Shuffleboard	2	3	0
Football/Soccer	1	2	2
Picnic Shelter	3	5	1
Picnic Sites	20 to 40	40 to 60	8
Camping Sites	25	38	0
Bicycling Trail	10 to 20 miles	15 to 30 miles	½ mile
Jogging/Fitness Trail	1	1	0
Nature Trail	2	3	0
Playgrounds	10	15	3
Outdoor Amphitheater	1	1	0
Handball/Racquet Ball	1 to 2	1 to 2	0

*1 A district park consists of an indoor recreational facility, ballfields, hard surface courts, multi-purpose play fields, picnicking, and various types of trails.

*2 A community park consists of a community center, athletic fields, swimming, tennis, walking/jogging trails, wildlife viewing area, quiet sitting area, and picnicking.

*3 A neighborhood park contains passive recreational areas for sitting, picnicking, walking, and, adjacent, yet removed, active play areas with one or two tennis courts, playground, and a multi-purpose play field.

*4 A multi-purpose recreational center includes an indoor pool, indoor courts (tennis and racquetball), classrooms/activity rooms, and meeting space such as a small auditorium/theatre.

*5 Rec park includes 4 fields, 3 of which are suitable for baseball and 4 of which are suitable for softball. Two softball only fields are located at the Primary School and are not controlled by the Town. Currently, adult leagues and youth leagues cannot be scheduled at the same time due to lack of fields.

***The Recreation Commission approves the use of these standards when applied to Black Mountain.*

Source: National Park, Recreation and Open Space Standards. National Recreation & Park Association.

Appendices

Appendix A	Recreation & Parks Department Mission & Vision Statement	40
Appendix B	Original Resolution from May 1998	41
Appendix C	Recreation & Parks Needs Assessment, 2014	42
Appendix D	Capital Improvement Plan, 2017	86
Appendix E	Recreation & Parks Strategic Plan	95



Vision Statement

Building a strong and healthy community through programs and places.

Mission Statement

The Black Mountain Recreation and Parks Department, in partnership with our citizens and with respect to our environment, will provide community-based recreation programs, wellness opportunities, facilities, and services to enrich the quality of life in Black Mountain.

Resolution # R-98-13

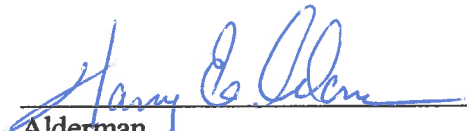
**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A
COMMUNITY RECREATION PLAN EFFORT**

WHEREAS, the Town of Black Mountain recognizes a need for parks and recreation for the residents of the Town, and

WHEREAS, the community realized the importance of sound planning in order to meet the needs of its citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Alderman of the Town of Black Mountain, by unanimous declaration, does support the effort to prepare a Recreation and Parks Master Plan to use as its official plan for the next ten years, for the growth and development of parks and recreation opportunities for the Black Mountain Community.

I move the adoption of the foregoing resolution:

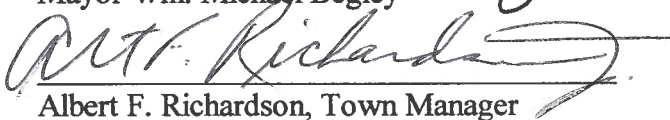

Alderman

Seconded by:


Alderman

Read, approved and adopted this 11th day of May, 1998.


Mayor Wm. Michael Begley


Albert F. Richardson, Town Manager

ATTEST:


Town Clerk

Black Mountain, NC Needs Assessment Report

Prepared by

Management Learning Laboratories

Winston-Salem, NC

www.m-l-l.org

2015

CONTENTS

READING/INTERPRETING THE REPORT	2
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	3
METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY	4
DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE	4
QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENTS	4
PROCEDURES FOR ANALYZING THE DATA.....	6
RESULTS OF THE STUDY: DEMOGRAPHICS	7
DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION	7
Gender	7
Age	7
Income	8
Household composition	8
RESULTS OF THE SURVEY: GENERAL FINDINGS.....	9
RECREATION INTERESTS.....	9
PERSONAL OPINIONS.....	11
Opinions about recreation facilities	12
Opinions about health-related issues	13
Opinions about programs and administration	14
Opinions about funding recreation	15
AREAS OF IMPORTANCE	16
INFORMATION ABOUT PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES	20
TIME AND ATTENDANCE	22
TIME.....	22
ATTENDANCE	23
REASONS FOR NON-USE	25

READING/INTERPRETING THE REPORT

This report is the final outcome of the Needs Assessment Study (henceforth referred to as “study”) that was commissioned by the Town of Black Mountain Parks and Recreation (henceforth referred to as “BMRP”) in 2014. In reading/interpreting this report, it is important to note that the results are presented in several ways. First, there is a narrative description of the findings, which then are supported by tables of data. **Key findings and summaries are underlined in the body of the report.** Recommendations are made across the entire body of the report and are always supported by data. *All recommendations are presented in italics in the body of the report.*

The tables and numbers in the report should be considered carefully. Since there were several questions that addressed similar issues, these items were distributed in different parts of the questionnaire. When combined, these pieces of information together make up the entire report and results. *In many cases, the importance attached to a particular piece of numeric data must be interpreted along with other similar questions in the instrument.* Moreover, before drawing specific conclusions, it is important to recognize that a universal yardstick cannot be used to interpret the results. For example, the results from one section of the questionnaire may suggest that a particular facility, considered by 40% of the respondents to be needed in Black Mountain, is in fact a significant necessity because most of the other facilities listed in that section received far less endorsement. On the other hand, a particular activity that is considered necessary by 40% of the respondents may be very insignificant in a particular section if there were other activities that received far more support. It is the ranking, as presented in the tables that is most important. Consequently, it is impossible to try to find one percentage as the cut-off point for all the questions. Each question needs to be considered separately and as a part of the section to which it belongs.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The study was designed to elicit interest, behavior, demographic, and attitude information from the citizens served by the BMRP concerning recreation and leisure. It is important to note that the study was intended to obtain information from the entire community and not any specific user group. The objective of the study was to obtain the relevant information that will help the BMRP do its job more effectively by enabling it to be more responsive to the recreation needs of the residents of Black Mountain. Additionally, the information can also be used to better organize the internal workings of the BMRP to stay in tune with the current and future needs of the community. This also implies that the BMRP will benefit by learning about the residents' awareness of the recreation activities within Black Mountain. In summary, this study was not a user's survey, but a more comprehensive assessment of the recreation needs, attitudes and opinions of the residents of the entire community. Thus, it should be noted that the primary goal of the study was to obtain information about BMRP. Finally, the percentages reported in this document can be considered to be accurate at +/-5% level.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

Development of the Questionnaire

Numerous people were invited to meet with the research staff resulting in several focus group meetings and some personal interviews that helped to identify issues relating to parks and recreation in Black Mountain. The meetings were moderated by MLL staff. Overall, the meetings were well attended.

All of the background information gathered in these meetings was used to produce the first draft of the instrument, which contained questions and items specific to the community. These early drafts were then reviewed by the consulting team, as well as by the members of the BMPR. After a thorough review, a final draft of the questionnaire was approved by the BMPR.

Questionnaire Contents

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to elicit respondent interest in various recreation categories such as “arts and crafts,” “performing arts,” “sports and athletics,” etc. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of interest in each of the categories. Examples of activities within each category were listed so respondents would know what each category meant. Respondents were also asked to indicate if they had participated in any of the recreation activities within the past 12 months.

The next section listed items that were indicated as areas of emphasis in various meetings. These included both programmatic and facility items. The respondents were asked to indicate whether the items were needed, and if they would use them if the opportunities were provided.

The next section, labeled, “Time Attendance,” dealt with the level of use of parks, and attendance at the recreation programs by the respondents. Different types of recreation uses were listed and the respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they had engaged in each use in the past twelve months. The respondents also indicated the best time for recreation activities.

Next, there was a section designed to elicit reasons for not using or attending recreation facilities and programs. A list of possible barriers was provided and respondents were asked to indicate if each applied to them and the members of their family. The choices included items such as “lack of information,” “lack of parking,” etc.

Respondents then were asked about the best ways of keeping informed about public recreation opportunities. They were provided with a list that included items such as cable television, seasonal brochures and word of mouth, and respondents were asked to evaluate them as either “effective” or “ineffective” or “not sure.”

Respondents were then provided a section that solicited opinions about funding recreation in Black Mountain. Several funding options like “user fees”, “bonds” and “property taxes” were offered and the respondents were asked to indicate their support for each method on a four-point scale that ranged from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” with a fifth “don’t know” option.

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with personal opinions of the respondents. There was a series of statements for which they could indicate their level of agreement on a four-point scale that ranged from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” with a fifth “don’t know” option. There were several general areas of personal opinion.

The items dealt with issues such as:

- Respondents’ personal knowledge and feelings about the BMPR and its offerings,
- Specific improvements that the BMPR could make in its services,
- General recreation issues related to the BMPR,
- Opinions about the effectiveness of marketing and publicity efforts of the BMPR, and
- General questions about the quality of life in Buncombe County.

The last section of the questionnaire included general demographic questions concerning gender, age, marital status, household composition, length of residence in Buncombe County, and where generally the respondent lives in the community.

It should be noted that the questionnaire was designed to mimic the questionnaire from the previous study conducted by MLL to allow for future comparability between the data.

Procedures for Analyzing the Data

At the end of the data collection process, which was conducted by US Mail, the response rate was just over 10% elicited from the mailing of 3,000 questionnaires to a random sample of addresses in Black Mountain. The data was analyzed using standard statistical software to develop the recommendations presented here. Furthermore, it should be noted that the data presented in this report are based only on the responses obtained in the community-wide study and the descriptive and narrative information collected in the focus group meetings. There are no presumptions about the actual performance of the BMPR; only the perceptions of the community are reported. It is quite possible that many of the perceptions do not match the actual activities of the BMPR. However, the purpose of this report is to present the perception, accurate or inaccurate, to demonstrate how the community feels about the BMPR.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY: DEMOGRAPHICS

Description of the Population

A set of questions was designed to elicit demographic information such as age, marital status, gender, etc. These questions can provide information about a community's makeup and therefore its possible recreation needs. It is useful to note that the percentages reported and tabulated sometimes add up to 101% or 99% due to the effects of rounding off decimals.

Gender

The sample was made up of 32% male and 68% female respondents. While this is different from the Census information, at this point, the data will be accepted with a certain amount of bias towards female respondents.

Age

The questionnaire provided different age categories and the age category percentages of the respondents are reported below. This places the median age in the 55-64 age groups which is higher than the Census median age reported as 48 years.

Age Category	Percent
18-24	0%
25-34	3%
35-44	11%
45-54	16%
55-64	30%
65-69	11%
70-74	12%
Over 75	14%

Income

The household income distribution varied from under \$50,000 to over \$150,000 per year, with the median income being in the \$50,000 to \$75,000 range which is higher than the median income of \$37,000 described in the 2012 Census. The specific income categories reported by the respondents were as follows:

Income Category	Percent
Under \$50,000	40%
\$50-75,000	17%
\$75-100,000	13%
\$100-125,000	5%
\$125-150,000	3%
Over \$150,000	8%

Household composition

The respondents indicated that 57% were married. Nearly 97% of the respondents claimed to be white, with the rest being African-Americans and Hispanics. Nearly 90% of the respondents claimed to have a high-school diploma or a higher educational degree. The people who responded to the questionnaire approximate the population of Black Mountain with some over- and under-representations. Additionally, the majority of the respondents claimed to pay property taxes in Black Mountain and the average length of residence in Black Mountain was 21 years. These limitations can be corrected by applying appropriate statistical weights to the data, however, this report is based on the analysis of the un-weighted data.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY: GENERAL FINDINGS

The following sections of this report describe the findings about the various recreational needs of Black Mountain residents. The questionnaire was used to explore recreation and leisure interests as well as what residents believe should be areas of emphasis for additional facilities and programs in Black Mountain. Moreover, information was gathered concerning opinions about various recreation-related issues, including factors that limit the use of facilities and how recreation programs should be funded. Personal opinions about recreation and health-related issues were also collected. Unless otherwise specified, numbers in parentheses refer to the percentage responding positively to a question. Furthermore, it should be noted that the percentages are estimates and can vary between plus or minus three to five percentage points.

Recreation Interests

The first section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate the level of interest they have for each of eight different categories of recreational activities. Examples of specific activities pertaining to each general category were provided. The scale included the options, “No Interest,” “Some Interest” and “Great Interest.” The results presented in Table 1 are arranged in descending order to highlight the most widely shared leisure interests at the top of the table.

Special Events and activities related to Performing Arts appeared at the top of the ranking. More than 63% of the residents reported that they have great interest in 4th of July events, health fairs and summer concerts while around 25% of them have shown some interest. The emphasis on special events is also supported by the fact that 85% of the respondents chose it as an important need for the community. Less than 12% people have reported not being interested in these events. Nearly four-fifth of the respondents indicated an interest in theater, concerts, ballet and music with 44% of them expressing great interest in these activities. Given such a strong interest level, *the BMRP should ensure that it provides opportunities and spaces for their residents to participate in special events and enjoy performance arts.*

More than 80% of the residents showed an interest in outdoor recreational activities. While 52% of them find great interest in walking, hiking and mountain biking, more than one-fourth of the residents have some interest in them. This is particularly significant as around 87-90% of the respondents indicated a need for trails and walking areas while similar number of people thought Black Mountain could be made into a more “walkable” town in another section of the questionnaire. As such, *the BMRP should consider offering more facilities for outdoor recreational activities.*

Activities related to art and crafts appeared next in ranking. Nearly half of the respondents cited some interest in carving classes and quilting while more than one-fourth of them expressed great interest in these activities. Although around 23% of the residents were not enthusiastic about art and crafts, higher percentage of people were more interested in these pastimes. So, *the BMRP should consider offering art and craft activities and centers for its residents.*

Water sports and fitness-related activities were largely popular. Around 32% of the residents were highly interested in swimming, aerobics and weights while more than two-fifth of them were moderately interested in them. This is supported by the fact that 87% of the residents believed they needed to exercise more to live a healthier life while 65% of them indicated a need for water exercise classes in other parts of the study. Given the strong interest and willingness to participate in such activities, *the BMRP should provide fitness related facilities for their resident.*

Social activities appeared next in ranking. More than three-fifth of the citizens cited interest in dancing, teen and senior clubs, bridge and meal site for seniors. However, less than 25% of the people indicated high interest and around half of the residents claim to never have visited senior centers. *As such, the BMRP should promote these activities for its interested residents but they should remain lower in priority.*

The remaining recreation activities are of interest to less than half of the respondents and should remain lower in priority. This does not mean that these kinds of activities, such as basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer and other sports activities should be ignored. They should only be supported once the more popular interests have been accommodated and/or if there is sufficient interest among a small, dedicated group of residents to support such activities. *The BMRP should first focus on those activities in which most residents are interested. Subsequently,*

those interests that are supported by a smaller subgroup of residents should be accommodated.

The results from these items are presented in the following table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who selected each response option for each activity type.

Table 1: Recreation Interests

RECREATION CATEGORY	Great Interest	Some Interest	No Interest
Special events e.g., 4th of July events, health fairs, summer concerts, etc.	63.1	25.2	11.7
Performing Arts e.g., Theater, concerts, ballet, music, etc.	44.0	37.0	19.0
Outdoor recreation e.g., Mountain biking, hiking, walking, etc.	52.5	27.7	19.8
Arts & Crafts e.g., Carving class, quilting etc.	25.5	51.0	23.5
Aquatics e.g., Lap swim, swim lessons, open swim, family swim, etc	32.0	43.0	25.0
Fitness e.g., Aerobics, weights, etc.	32.0	37.0	31.0
Social e.g., Dancing, teen clubs, senior club, bridge, meal site for seniors, etc.	23.0	41.0	36.0
Sports & Athletics e.g., Basketball, volleyball, disc golf, indoor soccer, etc.	19.2	18.2	62.6

Personal Opinions

This section of the questionnaire contained several opinion statements with which respondents could agree or disagree. A four-point scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” was provided, along with a fifth “don’t know” option in case the respondents did not have enough experience with a particular issue to form an opinion about it. For the sake of simplicity of presentation, the results have been collapsed into the categories “agree,” “disagree” and “don’t know.” These opinion items were generated in part on the basis of the focus group meetings with staff and residents, and they reflect some of the larger issues surrounding the operation of BMRP facilities and programs. Although the items were arranged somewhat randomly in the questionnaire, the results are presented here around major topic areas.

Opinions about recreation facilities

Few of the items in the opinions section of the questionnaire address the facilities maintained by the BMRP. More specifically, the items tap into the residents’ opinions about parks and recreation facilities in Black Mountain. When considered alongside the facility-related ideas for new parks and recreation they will help the staff further understand what preferences and needs there may be.

Almost all the respondents considered parks and recreation as an essential service to the town and agreed that well-maintained parks added to the quality of life in the community. This is in compliance with the fact that 83% of the residents considered neighborhood parks as an important need for the community and more than 90% of the citizens visited parks such as Tomahawk Park and Black Mountain Recreation Park as mentioned in other parts of the study. About 82% felt there was a need for more walking facilities in the town. While 87% of the citizens felt Black Mountain could be made into a “walkable” city, 69% believed it could be made more “bikeable.” Based on these results, *the BMRP should continue to provide walking and biking facilities and well maintained park spaces for its residents as they add to the quality of life of the residents.*

The next set of opinions is related to type of facilities that people need. More than 65% of the respondents agreed that they need recreational programs for the whole family. Similar proportion of respondents believed that special programs were needed for people over the age of 55. Less than 15% of the respondents

reported that there weren't enough opportunities for people with disabilities but many more (33%) felt that there was a need for more opportunities. As such, the data suggests that the *BMRP should arrange for all-purpose recreational facilities with adequate access and opportunities for people with disabilities.*

The results from the facility-related opinion items are presented in the next table.

Table 2: Opinions about Recreation Facilities

	Agree	Disagree	DK
The existence of well-maintained parks adds to the quality of life in the community	95	2	3
Black Mountain can be made into a more "walkable" city	87	11	2
There is a need for more walking facilities in Black Mountain	82	15	3
Black Mountain can be made into a more "bikeable" city	69	26	5
There is a need for recreational programs in which the whole family can participate	68	9	23
There is a need for special programs for persons over age 55	64	11	25
There are enough opportunities for recreation for people with disabilities	14	33	53

Opinions about health-related issues

There was a section of the questionnaire that focused on the perceptions related to the health and fitness issues. The respondents were offered several different items about health. Generally, all the respondents felt that promoting healthy lifestyle should be a priority for the BMRP.

Nearly 91% of the respondents felt that Black Mountain was a healthy place to live in. Although 89% of the residents believed that they were in good health, 87% of them agreed that they could lead a healthier life with more exercise. More than four-fifths of the respondents felt that it was important to encourage good diet practices for healthier living. A significantly large number of people felt there was a need for greater access to recreation that encouraged a healthier lifestyle. Although half of the residents suggested that they would consider supporting sale of alcohol at events, the other half declined to do so. Based on these findings, *the*

BMPR should consider offering opportunities for exercise and activities that help to satisfy the community's need to live a healthy life.

The results related to health and fitness is presented in the next table.

Table 3: Opinions about Health-related Issues

	Agree	Disagree	DK
In general, I feel that Black Mountain is a healthy place to live	91	6	3
I believe that I am generally in good health	89	9	2
I need to exercise more to live a healthier life	87	12	1
It is important to encourage good diet practices for everyone in Black Mountain	81	14	5
There is a need for greater access to recreation that encourages a healthy lifestyle	70	13	17
I would support alcohol sales at events	51	46	3

Opinions about programs and administration

Some items in the opinions section of the questionnaire addressed issues related to programming and general operations of the BMPR. More specifically, the items tap into the residents' opinions about how the BMPR responds to programmatic needs of the community and the perceptions of the community with respect to the way the BMPR handles its internal activities. In general, more than three-fifths of the residents were aware of the leisure activities and opportunities provided to them.

About 72% of the respondents were satisfied with the recreational facilities provided to them. Nearly two-third of the citizens felt that the Recreation Department was responsive to the community's leisure needs. The respondents also felt that the Recreation Department should collaborate more with local

businesses and other agencies to provide more cooperative programs. Less than 45% of the respondents accepted the idea of Black Mountain promoting itself as a destination for sports activities. Given the lack of interest in sports activities and based on all the remaining data, it is safe to say: *BMRP should work towards promoting the opportunities that should be of high quality and suitable for the entire community.*

The results from these questions are presented in the next table.

Table 4: Opinions about Programs

	Agree	Disagree	DK
In general, the recreation facilities that I have visited satisfy my needs	72	21	7
I am aware of the recreation programs and activities available in Black Mountain	70	27	3
The Recreation Dept. is responsive to community recreation needs	64	15	21
The Recreation Dept. should increase the collaboration with local businesses	62	10	28
The Recreation Dept. needs to have more cooperative programs with other agencies	54	12	34
Black Mountain should promote itself as a destination for sports activities	44	42	15

Opinions about funding recreation

There was a section of the questionnaire that focused on funding issues to assess how the community felt about different funding mechanisms. The respondents were offered several different options including items like “bonds,” “user fees,” “grants,” “corporate sponsorship and donations” and “private individual donations” so that the respondents could express their opinions about each option on a 4 to 1 scale where 4 indicated “Most Favorable” and 1 indicated “Least Favorable.”

Respondents felt that user fees were an acceptable way of paying for recreation opportunities. About 78% of the respondents were willing to pay reasonable user fees for newer leisure activities. User fees were rated 2.6 on a scale of 1 to 4 as a means of funding recreational facilities in other parts of the study. Thus it is clear that reasonable user fees could be an appropriate way of funding BMRP activities. The BMRP could use this as a way to support activities that

would be of special interest to parts of the community. This being the case, the *BMRP should consider developing a fee schedule for some of its activities, keeping in mind that the resident fee needs to remain in line with local economics.*

The respondents also were partly satisfied with the value they get for their tax dollars. Near about 55% claimed satisfaction with the way their tax dollars were spent by BMRP and only 50% were contented with the amenities and programs that were provided. The residents mostly supported grants from government or private resources to fund recreational facilities and opportunities as indicated by a mean of 3.5 on a scale of 1 to 4. As such *BMRP should be careful about levying new taxes for recreation activities and facilities and instead utilize private or public sponsorship, besides also providing satisfying recreational opportunities against the tax paid.*

The results related to funding are presented in the next table.

Table 5: Opinions about Finances

	Agree	Disagree	DK
I am willing to pay reasonable users fees for new recreational opportunities	78	18	4
In general I am satisfied with the way in which my tax dollars are spent by the Town of Black Mountain	57	30	13
I am satisfied with the recreation opportunities I receive for my tax dollars	50	39	12

Areas of Importance

One section of the questionnaire was designed to determine the importance of various facilities and services in the community. Several recreation facilities and several programs were listed for the respondents, and they were asked to indicate whether the service or facility was needed by them or their family. These results can help the BMRP prioritize its future additions in terms of what the community perceives as necessary; they can also help the BMRP recognize areas that may be perceived as necessary simply because residents are not aware of existing provisions. The objective of this section was to develop a measure of the current and future needs for things that are already available and things that might become available in the near future.

To begin with, need for sidewalks and walking trails were highest in the list. 90% of the respondents indicated that sidewalks were extremely necessary while 87% of them found walking trails to be important. In other parts of the result, a large portion of the respondents viewed walking to be an important activity for them and almost 94% of them implied that they would use these walking tracks, if provided. As such, *the BMRP should explore ways to add different kinds walking tracks throughout the town.*

Another potential improvement choice made by the residents was year-round restroom facilities. About 87% of the respondents felt that there is a need for such facilities and 90% of the respondents have indicated that they would be using them. Hence, *the BMRP should make available such year-round restroom facilities.*

The need for special events came next. Given that the fairs and concerts were the topmost choice among the residents as a recreational interest, it is further bolstered here with 85% choosing it as of prime importance. An equal proportion of them indicate that they will attend these events. Based on these results, *the BMRP should focus on providing opportunities and spaces for their residents to participate in special events.*

The respondents were also in favor of greenspaces. More than four-fifth of the residents considered neighborhood parks, connected greenways and picnic pavilions as important to the community and were looking forward to using it. Community gardens were also given as much importance, although only 43% declared that they would use it. As such, *the BMRP should direct their attention towards developing and maintaining parks and greenspaces.*

The respondents also indicated the need for parking spaces and upgrading of existing facilities. More than three quarters of the residents were in support of improving the current recreational facilities and presence of more parking lots. Two-third of the respondents believed that BMRP should deal with water runoff and make facilities more accessible. Equal proportion of residents felt that access for the disabled should also be improved. *The Town should thus work towards providing more parking spots and improving the existing amenities and consider enhancing the accessibility of these amenities.*

Biking tracks were considered the next important need of the community. Whilst about 74% of the residents supported the presence of designated bike lanes,

more than two-third of them indicated bicycle trails and lanes were important and that they would be using it. This also aligns with the fact that residents largely believe that Black Mountain can be made into a more “bike-able” city. *So, the BMRP should endorse facilities suitable for biking.*

The respondents also pointed out the importance of water-related activities and facilities. More than 70% of the respondents indicated that swimming time for adults was required, while around two-third of them found water exercise classes necessary. These findings are consistent with the general interest in fitness and wellness as reflected in other parts of the results as well as aquatics being chosen by nearly 70% of the respondents as important recreational activities. *This being the case, BMRP can consider offering swimming, aquatic activities and facilities for the community.*

The respondents indicated the importance of some special interest activities and facilities that would be of interest to some distinct groups within the community. This includes the facilities like volleyball, tennis and basketball courts, tennis clinic support, dog parks and fishing facilities, baseball fields, rental spaces, campgrounds, summer camps, community kitchen and greenhouses. Since only less than about 55% of the respondents indicated an interest in these opportunities and the other half have deemed them unnecessary, they could be addressed after the more pressing needs have been met. These are not the top priorities for the BMRP, but the *BMRP should try and address the special needs of the smaller groups once the more widespread needs have been taken care of.*

The results are summarized in the following tables.

Table 6: Areas of Importance

NEED	Yes	No	Will use
Sidewalks	90	10	93
Walking trails	87	13	94
Year-round restroom facilities	87	13	90
Special events	85	15	86
Neighborhood parks	83	18	83
Connected greenways	80	20	84
Picnic pavilions	80	20	75
Parking	79	21	85
Greenways	77	23	82
Upgrading of existing facilities	76	24	64
Designated bike lanes	74	26	65
Community garden	73	27	43
Swim time for adults	71	29	56
Bicycle trails	70	30	66
Disabled access	68	32	37
Bicycle lanes	68	32	69
Accessible facilities	67	33	54
Deal with water runoff	66	34	65
Water exercise classes	65	35	58
Dog park	58	42	46
Fishing facilities	56	44	41
Restrooms at tennis complex	53	47	40
Greenhouse	53	47	48
Bike borrowing programs	51	49	39
Outdoor basketball courts	51	49	34
Aerobics	48	52	34
Community kitchen	48	52	29
Summer camp	45	55	22
Campgrounds	44	56	39
Rental spaces	39	61	23
Tennis courts	37	63	22
Indoor basketball courts	36	64	15
Tennis facilities	33	67	24
Tennis clinics support	30	70	9
Baseball fields	29	71	13

Information about Parks and Recreation Opportunities

The next section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate which methods of communication would be the most effective in keeping them informed about parks and recreation programs and activities. The scale included the options, “very effective,” “effective,” “ineffective,” “very ineffective” and “not sure.”

Direct e-mail appears at the top of the ranking, with more than 55% of the respondents indicating e-mail as an overall effective mode of communication while around 13% indicated it as non-effective and 15% were not sure about it. As a large number of people find e-mail a faster and easier mode of information exchange, *the BMRP should consider sending regular updates and notifications via direct e-mails.*

Advertisement through newspapers was considered the next effective mode of informing residents. While around 20% of the respondents considered newspaper ads as highly effective, more than 35% of the citizens found it moderately effective. *As such, the BMRP should consider the use of advertisement in newspapers for informing residents of forthcoming events.*

Information delivered through flyers and brochures appeared next in ranking. About 54% of the respondents indicated posters and flyers at public places to be an effective method for keeping them informed with 15% of them choosing it to be highly effective. Thus, *BMRP should consider using posters and flyers in public amenities and printed brochures to promote their activities and facilities.*

Notification through the websites appeared next in the ranking. Around 53% of the respondents recognized that information placed on the town and department websites was an effective way of keeping them informed about ongoing recreation and leisure activities. However, about 15-20% of the respondents did not find this method of announcements effective. Nevertheless, since majority of the respondents followed websites to remain up to date, *the BMRP should ascertain that the town regularly updates its websites.*

The respondents feel that word of mouth is significantly effective. More than half of the respondents felt that word of mouth was a good way of getting information to the community even though nearly one-fourth of them were not sure

about this approach. *Consequently, BMRP can rely on word of mouth to acquaint members with upcoming activities and events.*

Marketing recreational facilities and events on social media were considered moderately useful. While more than 45% of the residents found social media in general as an effective method of learning about upcoming events, close to a quarter of the respondents considered departmental Facebook page as highly effective. However, around one-fifth of the respondents did not find social interaction sites useful and similar proportions of the citizens were uncertain about this mode of communication. *So, the BMRP should consider using social media to communicate with residents and to inform them about facilities and upcoming programs, activities and services.*

The respondents indicated that direct text messages to mobile phones were somewhat an effective method of marketing recreational facilities and events. One-third of the respondents found text messages effective even though almost equal number of people did not find it as effective or were not sure about it. While this method of informing residents is lower in rank than some of the other means of communication, there is a growing tendency in most populations to rely on text messages. *As such, the BMRP should consider the use of text messages for broadcasting forthcoming events.*

Local cable access channels and flyers from schools appeared next. Less than a quarter of the respondents affirmed that information broadcasted through local cable access channels and flyers distributed while coming home from schools were effective methods. Approximately 38% of the respondents found it ineffective and more than a quarter of them were not sure about this method of communication. *Therefore public announcements through local cable and flyers can be used as a way of publicizing events, but the BMRP can avoid using these modes, if required, and use other effective ways of communication.*

The results from these items are presented in the following table.

Table 7: Information about Parks and Recreation Opportunities

INFORMATION MODES	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Not Sure	Effective	Very Effective
Direct e-mail announcements	6	7	15	22	34
Department Website	6	14	13	27	26
Department Facebook page	11	14	22	14	24
Town Website	4	13	18	30	24
Word of mouth	7	7	23	29	24
Newspaper ads	10	6	19	37	19
Social media in general	9	11	17	28	18
Brochures, flyers or posters at public facilities	5	9	20	39	15
Text message	17	15	19	19	14
Flyers coming home from schools	24	13	25	14	7
Local cable access channel	22	16	28	13	5

Time and Attendance

One section of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate which time of the day was convenient for residents to attend cultural events and facilities and how many times they and/or their family have visited various facilities in the past 12 months. The scale for attendance included the options, “never,” “once,” “2 to 6 times,” “7 to 12 times” and “More than 12 times” while the convenient time was ranged across the entire week between “6a.m-8a.m,” “8a.m-Noon,” “Noon-4p.m,” “4p.m-7p.m” and “7p.m-10p.m.”

Time

The residents were majorly available during the evening. More than half the population stated that they were available during the time slot of “4p.m-7p.m” both

on weekdays as well as weekends. They also considered events allotted during weekend afternoons as conveniently timed. More than a third of the respondents regarded late evening time slots throughout the week as suitable for visiting recreational facilities. Given the data, *the BMRP should ensure that all programs and events take place majorly during the evening.*

Less than a third of the respondents were available during the day. While approximately 30% of the people were free during the time slot “8a.m-Noon,” only a quarter of them were available in the afternoon during weekdays. As such, *the BMRP can consider this time slot to offer special programs to available groups interested in those events.*

The remaining early morning time slot from “6a.m-8a.m” was inconvenient for majority of the population. Only a tenth of the citizens were available during that time of the day. *Hence, the BMRP should consider other time slots to conduct events for its residents and, if possible, avoid early morning time periods.*

The results for convenient timings are presented in the next table.

Table 8: Hours of Operation

	Percent stating they are available						
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 a.m.-8 a.m.	4	10	10	10	11	10	10
8 a.m.-Noon.	26	32	30	32	29	30	43
Noon-4 p.m.	43	22	25	26	24	27	54
4 p.m.-7 p.m.	50	51	54	54	55	55	55
7 p.m.-10 p.m.	30	30	33	32	37	42	38

Attendance

Parks in general were the most widely visited facilities in Black Mountain. The respondents indicated that they frequently visit Black Mountain Recreation Park. The data implies that more than 90% of the residents visit Black Mountain Recreation Park and Tomahawk Park. The importance of parks is also reflected in the need for walking trails and high level of interest in outdoor activities and need

for picnic pavilions elsewhere in the study. As such, *BMRP needs to continue to promote the parks and offer activities and facilities that would make the parks attractive to the community.*

Greenways were significantly popular with the respondents. From the data, it can be seen that approximately a little less than three-quarters of the respondents have visited the greenways. Given the high interest in outdoor activities such as hiking and walking, as projected in other parts of the study, the BMRP *should make a concerted effort to maintain and promote more greenways.*

Community centric facilities were moderately popular with the respondents. It can be construed from the data that around three-fifth of the respondents had visited community centers like Carver. With close to four-fifth of the respondents have indicated a need in picnic pavilions and given that there are specialized interest needs of the residents in summer camps and indoor basketball courts in other section of the study, the BMRP *should make a modest effort to maintain and promote community centers.*

It can be seen from the data that approximately half of the population have never visited athletic fields, senior centers, community gardens or pools. This is consistent with the data elsewhere in the study where majority of the population did not find any interest in sports and athletics or were only slightly interested in senior centers. However, community gardens have been chosen as an important need by a little less than three-quarters of the population and the level of interest in aquatics among respondents were significantly high. *The BMRP should thus ensure that the aquatic activities and community gardens are kept available to the population.*

Locations like Grey Eagle Arena were visited infrequently. Over 70% of the respondents indicated never visiting these facilities.

This study was designed to provide information about the community-wide recreation needs and interests and was not intended to be a user study. As such, the low attendance figures reflect that there is an opportunity to attract more people to the facilities and programs offered by the BMRP. There are specific barriers to attendance, as discussed in the next section, but the BMRP should be able to overcome some of those barriers to boost the number of people visiting the facilities and participating in the programs. It should be noted that the attendance figures do not reflect how close to capacity each facility is. Indeed, if the facilities

are operating close to capacity, and the attendance level is reported as low here, it is an indication that more facilities should be considered before trying to attract more people to the current facilities.

The results from the attendance items are presented in the next table.

Table 9: Attendance

FACILITIES	Percent never visited
Parks such as Tomahawk Park, Black Mountain Recreation Park	9
Greenways	29
Community centers such as Carver	42
Athletic fields	48
Centers such as the senior center	50
Community gardens	51
Pools	54
Grey Eagle Arena	72

Reasons for Non-use

After the “Time and Attendance” section, another part of the questionnaire was aimed at investigating the possible factors that limit residents from participating in organized recreation activities offered by the BMRP. The results are described in terms of the percentages of respondents who selected each option as a reason why they or their family have not participated in programs, activities, and/or not visited facilities.

The most important factors affecting participation were lack of time and interest in activities. More than two-fifth of the respondents said that they have not attended or taken part in facilities or events because they did not have enough time. Similar proportions of the residents said they did not participate in BMRP programs and activities because the programs offered were unappealing in nature. It is possible to correct this issue by providing programs and activities that interest majority of the residents. However, this could also be due to a wrong perception about the appealing nature of the programs offered due to lack of information as seen next.

The next important factors affecting participation is lack of information About 39% of the respondents indicated that they have not participated in programs or attended facilities because they were not acquainted with the events or facilities. The actual lack of information, along with the perception that the BMRP does not promote its services could lead to fewer people attending events and coming to facilities. *As such, the BMRP should bring in variation in the programs offered to trigger interests and increase participation and should publicize the availability of facilities and list of events.*

Overcrowding and interesting events elsewhere were the next hindrances for the residents' participation. Nearly a third of the respondents claimed congestion and overcrowding in facilities as their reason for non-attendance. The availability of more interesting and varied programs elsewhere was also cited as a reason for non-use. This could also be caused by the perception of unappealing programs offered by BMRP due to lack of information about the activities offered. *The BMRP, therefore, should think of increasing the number of facilities for similar events as compared to the number of activities, upgrade the facilities and offer variety of facilities that suited the taste of the residents.*

Inconvenient event timings and uneconomical fees came next. In an economic climate where people have to watch household expenses in view of rising fuel costs along with the increasing cost of daily needs, it is important to consider ways in which recreation activities can be made more affordable. Even though only a little less than one-fifth of the residents claimed high price of facilities and unsuitable program timings as reasons for not attending recreational programs offered by the town, it is possible to correct this issue by providing more information about the schedule and comparing when activities are offered to when people are available for leisure activities. The perception of high cost could also be related to a lack of information about the true cost of participating in recreation activities. *As such, the BMRP can consider monitoring the availability of people and offering activities that are available at times more convenient to the community and also take into account ways in which different financing options can be considered as indicated in the funding section of this report.*

Around 11% respondents claimed distance from the facilities and lack of parking as a barrier to their participation. The respondents found the entertainment and leisure activities inconveniently located. Yet lack of transportation was not

considered a hindrance for majority of the respondents. The opinion of facilities being far from home could be due to insufficient awareness about the true location of events. The residents also claimed that not enough parking spots were available which is in accord to the fact that 80% of the residents considered increase in the parking spots as an important need to the community. As such *the BMRP should make sure correct information about place of events are given to the inhabitants, should provide easy access to the recreational centers and should ensure that sufficient parking areas are available.*

The remaining factors like lack of transportation, inadequate staff, insufficient child care facilities and programs getting filled up were not considered significant limitations since less than one-tenth of the respondents cited these factors as reasons for non-use. While they are the lowest-ranked issues relative to the others, they should not be ignored. However, the other factors need to be addressed first.

The results from the reasons for non-use are presented in the next table. Percentages reflect the proportion of respondents who indicated each response as a reason for limited participation in programs and/or not visiting facilities.

Table 10: Reasons for Non-use

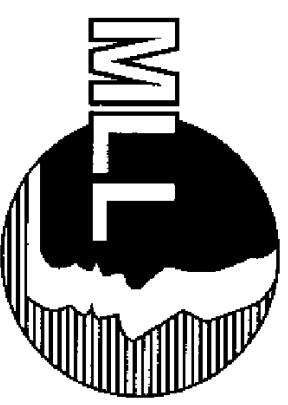
REASONS FOR NON-USE	Percent stating "Yes"
Not enough time	41
Not interested in the programs	41
Lack of information	39
Better opportunities elsewhere	31
Facilities too crowded	31
Inconvenient program times	19
Fees too high	17
Inconvenient location	11
Lack of parking	11
Inadequate staffing	10
Programs get filled up	9
Lack of child care	5
Don't have transportation	0

Black Mountain, NC Needs Assessment

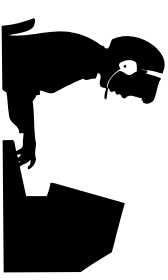
**Management
Learning
Laboratories**

September 2014

Management Learning Laboratories

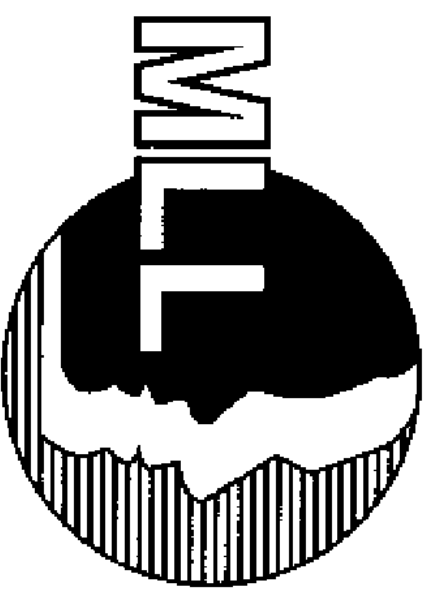


Method used in the needs assessment



- **Focus groups** with different segments of the community
- Questionnaire development
- **Aggregate analysis** of the adult data
- **Data interpretation**
- **Data-based recommendations**

Major Findings from Study



Attendance of Facilities and Participation in Programs

(Top 5)

1. *Parks such as Tomahawk Park, Black Mountain Recreation Park*
2. *Greenways*
3. *Community centers such as Carver*
4. *Athletic fields*
5. *Centers such as the senior center*

Factors that influence participation

- *Not enough time* 41%
- *Not interested in the programs* 41%
- *Lack of information* 39%
- *Better opportunities elsewhere* 31%
- *Facilities too crowded* 31%
- *Inconvenient program times* 19%
- *Fees too high* 17%

Communication

- *Direct e-mail announcements*
- *Department Website*
- *Department Facebook page*
- *Town Website*
- *Word of mouth*
- *Newspaper ads*
- *Social media in general*

Facilities Opinions

- The existence of well-maintained parks adds to the quality of life in the community (95%)
- In general, I feel that Black Mountain is a healthy place to live (91%)
- Black Mountain can be made into a more “walkable” city (87%)
- There is a need for more walking facilities in Black Mountain (82%)
- In general, the recreation facilities that I have visited satisfy my needs (72%)

Program Opinions

- I believe that I am generally in good health (89%)
- There is a need for greater access to recreation that encourages a healthy lifestyle (70%)
- There is a need for recreational programs in which the whole family can participate (68%)
- There is a need for special programs for persons over age 55 (64%)
- The Recreation Dept. should increase the collaboration with local businesses (62%)
- The Recreation Dept. needs to have more cooperative programs with other agencies (54%)
- I would support alcohol sales at events (51%)

Administration Opinions

- I am aware of the recreation programs and activities available in Black Mountain (70%)
- The Recreation Dept. is responsive to community recreation needs (64%)

Financial Options

- Grants (\$ from state, federal, & private sources)
- Corporate sponsorship and donations
- Private individual donations
- Program user fees
- Commercial activities within parks (e.g. cafes and restaurants in parks)
- Bonds to be paid by voter approved property taxes (local government borrowing)

Top Needs

(70% and more)

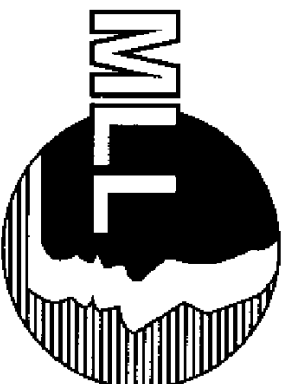
- *Sidewalks*
- *Walking trails*
- *Year-round restroom facilities*
- *Special events*
- *Neighborhood parks*
- *Connected greenways*
- *Picnic pavilions*
- *Parking*
- *Greenways*
- *Upgrading of existing facilities*
- *Designated bike lanes*
- *Community garden*
- *Swim time for adults*
- *Bicycle trails*

Questions and Comments

For more information contact Ananda Mitra at:

1-877-789-5247

<http://www.m-l-l.org>





Black Mountain Recreation and Parks

101 Carver Avenue • Black Mountain, North Carolina 28711
Telephone (828) 669-2052 • Fax (828) 669-0731 • TDD 1-800-735-2962

Dear Black Mountain Resident:

In continuing our commitment to provide quality leisure, recreational services, and the health of Black Mountain residents the city has contracted the nationally renowned Management Learning Laboratories (MLL) of Winston-Salem, NC, to conduct a community health and recreation needs assessment. This assessment will help judge the recreation, leisure and health needs of Black Mountain residents. The enclosed survey will be used as one of several tools in the development of the plans for providing recreation, leisure and health services.

It is with much enthusiasm that the city submits this survey to you and other Black Mountain residents who have been scientifically selected by a random sampling technique to represent the community. The questions contained in the survey were developed by participants in a series of focus groups. The focus group participants were residents of the Black Mountain area or city elected officials, staff and volunteers.

Please take a few moments from your busy schedule to read the instructions of each section carefully and respond accordingly. We ask that only an adult residing in the household complete the survey. It is important that you return the questionnaire to MLL in the envelope provided. Please return the survey within two weeks. Names are not requested, and individual responses are strictly confidential. If you need assistance with completing the questionnaire please feel free to call MLL at 877-789-5247.

We extend our sincere appreciation to you for your participation in this survey.

Sincerely,

Casey Conner
Recreation & Parks Director

RECREATION INTERESTS

Listed below are many different categories of recreational activities that can be enjoyed year-round. For each activity, please indicate whether **YOU** and/or your family would have **interest** in the activities.

Category	Example	No Interest	Some Interest	Great Interest
Arts & Crafts	Carving class, quilting etc.	1	2	3
Performing Arts	Theater, concerts, ballet, music, etc.	1	2	3
Sports & Athletics	Basketball, volleyball, disc golf, indoor soccer, etc.	1	2	3
Social	Dancing, teen clubs, senior club, bridge, meal site for seniors, etc.	1	2	3
Fitness	Aerobics, weights, etc.	1	2	3
Aquatics	Lap swim, swim lessons, open swim, family swim, etc	1	2	3
Outdoor recreation	Mountain biking, hiking, walking, etc.	1	2	3
Special events	4 th of July events, health fairs, summer concerts, etc.	1	2	3

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Please circle the following additional facilities and programs that are **needed** for the children, teens, adults or seniors in your family **and** if offered would you plan to **use** the program or facility in the next year.

	No	Yes	Not Use	Use		No	Yes	Not Use	Use
Accessible facilities	1	2	1	2	Indoor basketball courts	1	2	1	2
Aerobics	1	2	1	2	Lacrosse	1	2	1	2
Baseball fields	1	2	1	2	Neighborhood parks	1	2	1	2
Bicycle lanes	1	2	1	2	Outdoor basketball courts	1	2	1	2
Bicycle trails	1	2	1	2	Parking	1	2	1	2
Bike borrowing programs	1	2	1	2	Picnic pavilions	1	2	1	2
Bleachers at tennis complex	1	2	1	2	Rental spaces	1	2	1	2
Campgrounds	1	2	1	2	Restrooms at tennis complex	1	2	1	2
Community garden	1	2	1	2	Sidewalks	1	2	1	2
Community kitchen	1	2	1	2	Special events	1	2	1	2
Connected greenways	1	2	1	2	Summer camp	1	2	1	2
Deal with water runoff	1	2	1	2	Swim time for adults	1	2	1	2
Designated bike lanes	1	2	1	2	Tennis clinics support	1	2	1	2
Disabled access	1	2	1	2	Tennis courts	1	2	1	2
Dog park	1	2	1	2	Tennis facilities	1	2	1	2
Fishing facilities	1	2	1	2	Upgrading of existing facilities	1	2	1	2
Gazebo at tennis facility	1	2	1	2	Volleyball	1	2	1	2
Greenhouse	1	2	1	2	Walking trails	1	2	1	2
Greenways	1	2	1	2	Water exercise classes	1	2	1	2
Other:	1	2	1	2	Year-round restroom facilities	1	2	1	2

TIME AND ATTENDANCE

The Black Mountain Parks and Recreation Department wants to schedule recreational activities and special events when it is most convenient for you and your family. Please circle all the times when you and your family would attend recreation activities, programs and facilities.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 a.m.-8 a.m.	1	2	4	5	6	7	8
8 a.m.-Noon.	1	2	4	5	6	7	8
Noon-4 p.m.	1	2	4	5	6	7	8
4 p.m.-7 p.m.	1	2	4	5	6	7	8
7 p.m.-10 p.m.	1	2	4	5	6	7	8

Please indicate approximately how many times **YOU** and/or your family visited/attended the following in the past 12 months.

	Never	Once	2-6 times	7-12 times	More than 12 times
Athletic fields	0	1	2	3	4
Centers such as the senior center	0	1	2	3	4
Community centers such as Carver	0	1	2	3	4
Community gardens	0	1	2	3	4
Greenways	0	1	2	3	4
Grey Eagle Arena	0	1	2	3	4
Parks such as Tomahawk Park, Black Mountain Recreation Park	0	1	2	3	4
Pools	0	1	2	3	4

REASONS FOR NOT USING

There are many reasons why people might not be able or willing to participate in public recreation activities. By circling all reasons that apply, please indicate why you or other members of your household do not participate in recreation activities available in your community.

	Yes		Yes		Yes
Better opportunities elsewhere	1	Inconvenient location	1	Not enough time	1
Don't have transportation	1	Inconvenient program times	1	Not interested in the programs	1
Facilities too crowded	1	Lack of child care	1	Programs get filled up	1
Fees too high	1	Lack of information	1	Other	1
Inadequate staffing	1	Lack of parking	1	Other	1

INFORMATION ABOUT PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

We are interested in determining the best ways of informing you about parks and recreation programs and activities. To help us, please circle the appropriate numbers below to indicate how effective the following methods would be for keeping you informed.

	Very Ineffective	Ineffective	Not Sure	Effective	Very Effective
Brochures, flyers or posters at public facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Department Facebook page	1	2	3	4	5
Department Website	1	2	3	4	5
Direct e-mail announcements	1	2	3	4	5
Flyers coming home from schools	1	2	3	4	5
Local cable access channel	1	2	3	4	5
Newspaper ads	1	2	3	4	5
Social media in general	1	2	3	4	5
Text message	1	2	3	4	5
Town Website	1	2	3	4	5
Word of mouth	1	2	3	4	5

FUNDING

Please indicate which of the following ways your public parks and recreation facilities and programs should be funded by rating them on a 4 to 1 scale where 4 is the "Most Favorable" and 1 is the "Least Favorable."

	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
Bonds to be paid by voter approved property taxes (local government borrowing)					Private individual donations				
Commercial activities within parks (e.g. cafes and restaurants in parks)					Program user fees				
Corporate sponsorship and donations					Other (Specify):				
Grants (\$ from state, federal, & private sources)					Other (Specify):				

PERSONAL OPINIONS

Please circle the number that most closely reflects your attitudes.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Black Mountain can be made into a more "bikeable" city	1	2	3	4	8
Black Mountain can be made into a more "walkable" city	1	2	3	4	8
Black Mountain should promote itself as a destination for sports activities	1	2	3	4	8
I am aware of the recreation programs and activities available in Black Mountain	1	2	3	4	8
I am satisfied with the recreation opportunities I receive for my tax dollars	1	2	3	4	8
I am willing to pay reasonable users fees for new recreational opportunities	1	2	3	4	8
I believe that I am generally in good health	1	2	3	4	8
I need to exercise more to live a healthier life	1	2	3	4	8
I would support alcohol sales at events	1	2	3	4	8
In general I am satisfied with the way in which my tax dollars are spent by the Town of Black Mountain	1	2	3	4	8
In general, I feel that Black Mountain is a healthy place to live	1	2	3	4	8
In general, the recreation facilities that I have visited satisfy my needs	1	2	3	4	8
It is important to encourage good diet practices for everyone in Black Mountain	1	2	3	4	8
The existence of well-maintained parks adds to the quality of life in the community	1	2	3	4	8
The Recreation Dept. is responsive to community recreation needs	1	2	3	4	8
The Recreation Dept. needs to have more cooperative programs with other agencies	1	2	3	4	8
The Recreation Dept. should increase the collaboration with local businesses	1	2	3	4	8
There are enough opportunities for recreation for people with disabilities	1	2	3	4	8
There is a need for greater access to recreation that encourages a healthy lifestyle	1	2	3	4	8
There is a need for more walking facilities in Black Mountain	1	2	3	4	8
There is a need for recreational programs in which the whole family can participate	1	2	3	4	8
There is a need for special programs for persons over age 55	1	2	3	4	8

GENERAL INFORMATION

Please help us make better decisions by providing the following information. Please remember that the individual answers will be treated with confidence. Please circle the number of the response or fill in the blank.

What is your gender?

Male....1 Female....2

What is your age?

18-24...1 25-34...2 35-44...3 45-54...4
55-64...5 65-69...6 70-74...7 Over 75...8

What was your household income before taxes in 2001?

Under \$24,000.....1 \$75,000 to \$99,999.....4 \$150,000 to \$174,999...7
\$24,000 to \$49,999....2 \$100,000 to \$124,999 ...5 Over \$175,000.....8
\$50,000 to \$74,999....3 \$125,000 to \$149,999...6

What is your race?

1 - Caucasian 2 - African-American
3 - Hispanic 4 - American-Indian or Alaskan Native
5 - Asian 6 - Pacific Islander
7 - Other (Specify) _____

What is the highest level of education you have obtained?

1 - No school completed 2 - Elementary school 3 - Middle school 4 - High school
5 - Some college (no degree) 6 - Associate degree 7 - Bachelors degree 8 - Graduate or post-graduate degree

How many people, including yourself, age 19 and above, currently live in your household? _____

How many children in your household are: under age five ____; ages 5 to 10 ____; ages 11 to 14 ____; ages 15 to 18 ____

What is your marital status:

Married...1 Divorced/Separated...2 Single...3

Do you use the Internet at: Home...1 Work...2 Home and Work...3 No Access...4

How many years have you lived in Black Mountain? _____

Do you pay property tax in Black Mountain? Yes...1 No...2

About how many months in a year do you reside in Black Mountain: _____

6190 - RECREATION DEPARTMENT SUMMARY

The Black Mountain Recreation and Parks Department, in partnership with our citizens and with respect to our environment, will provide community-based recreation programs, wellness opportunities, facilities and services to enrich the quality of life in Black Mountain. The Department provides programming for children, adolescents, adults, and senior citizens.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Grey Eagle	15,000	-	-	-	50,000	-	65,000
Carver Renovation	120,000	70,000	60,000	75,000	35,000	-	360,000
Black Mountain Veterans Park	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000	300,000
Lakeview Center	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000
Paving Projects in Parks	-	-	37,000	8,500	30,000	-	75,500
New Parks	-	-	-	150,000	70,000	600,000	820,000
Greenways Projects	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
Cragmont Park Renovation	-	-	-	-	-	845,000	845,000
TOTAL	\$ 135,000	\$ 230,000	\$ 127,000	\$ 233,500	\$ 185,000	\$ 1,595,000	\$ 2,505,500

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	30,000	-	210,000	240,000
Land	-	-	30,000	-	70,000	-	100,000
Construction	-	-	37,000	128,500	80,000	1,385,000	1,630,500
Equipment	135,000	230,000	60,000	75,000	35,000	-	535,000
TOTAL	\$ 135,000	\$ 230,000	\$ 127,000	\$ 233,500	\$ 185,000	\$ 1,595,000	\$ 2,505,500

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	122,500	142,500	95,500	147,250	150,000	797,500	1,455,250
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	5,000	87,500	31,500	86,250	35,000	797,500	1,042,750
Other	7,500	-	-	-	-	-	7,500
TOTAL	\$ 135,000	\$ 230,000	\$ 127,000	\$ 233,500	\$ 185,000	\$ 1,595,000	\$ 2,505,500

Potential Grants	(12,500)	(87,500)	(31,500)	(86,250)	(35,000)	(797,500)	(1,050,250)
From Capital Reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recon to Operating Budget	122,500	142,500	95,500	147,250	150,000	797,500	1,455,250

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Grey Eagle	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER:	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 1
------------------------------	-----------------------------------	---------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

DESCRIPTION:

New Glass Dasher Boards - \$15,000

This glass will replace the wood panels that are currently on the north side viewing area. This glass will allow better viewing by patrons , especially for soccer with younger kids. This will also help make the Arena look more professional and well kept. The estimate for \$15,000 can be offset by selling sponsorships for the wall on the south side of the arena. This could offset as much as approximately half of the cost depending on sponsorship fees and the number that we are able to sell.

Lighting for Front Parking Area - \$

New Turf for Playing Surface - \$50,000 - I expect the turf to cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$40,000. I wanted to allow some extra money for flooring repair under the East end of the arena where the sub floor is wood. Once the turf is removed there could be damage discovered and possible repairs needed to this area.

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	-	-	-	-	50,000	-	50,000
Equipment	15,000	-	-	-	-	-	15,000
TOTAL	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 65,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	7,500	-	-	-	50,000	-	57,500
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	7,500	-	-	-	-	-	7,500
TOTAL	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 65,000

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Carver Renovation	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 2
<p>DESCRIPTION:</p> <p>Windows \$115,000, Swing Set \$5,000 - This would replace the old swing set that was removed because of safety hazards</p> <p>Cafeteria Flooring & Ceiling \$10,000 - This would replace the old drop down ceiling that was removed for installing the insulation as well as replacing the tile flooring that has some water damage. The new flooring would be able to create a better opportunity for rentals.</p> <p>Finish Insulation \$6,000 - The insulation in the annex section of the building needs to be completed. This was not done at the same time as the rest of the insulation because of extensive electrical work that needs to be completed for the insulation to be installed.</p> <p>Carver Kitchen \$45,000 - Renovation of the current carver kitchen to make the space useable for cooking demonstrations, canning, and rentals. The Carver Kitchen will be a good candidate for grant funding.</p> <p>Fire Alarm \$15,000 - The current fire alarm is out of date and needs to be upgraded.</p> <p>Electric Upgrades \$12,000 - The electrical work would be to change the electrical from fuses to breakers and to upgrade several of the rooms with more plugs and capacity.</p> <p>HVAC \$75,000 - HVAC upgrades would be to upgrade each room with air conditioning.</p> <p>Painting \$5,000 - The entire building needs to be repainted, especially the hallways and classrooms.</p> <p>Gutters \$7,500 - New gutters will be necessary as many of the gutters have been bent or broken over the years.</p> <p>Water Catch System \$12,500 - This project will be to establish a water catch cistern system much like the one at Grey Eagle. We may be able to use the water for watering the new raised bed garden plots but must be tested first. This system would also tie into the current bathrooms at Carver and allow us to use rainwater to flush toilets and possibly use for water replenishment of the boiler system. This project will be a good candidate for grant funding.</p> <p>Greenhouse \$11,000 - Carver has been the best site proposed for a greenhouse to supplement our community gardens. This greenhouse, depending on size, may be able to be rented in pieces to the gardeners for starts and winter gardening.</p> <p>Outside Shade/Stage \$6,000 - This would be to establish an area near the playground for small performances of either music or acting. This would also be used by parents/kids for shade during the hot summer months.</p> <p>Windows \$115,000</p>				

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment	120,000	70,000	60,000	75,000	35,000	-	360,000
TOTAL	\$ 120,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 35,000	\$ -	\$ 360,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	115,000	59,500	51,000	63,750	35,000	-	324,250
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	5,000	10,500	9,000	11,250	-	-	35,750
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 120,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 35,000	\$ -	\$ 360,000

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Black Mountain Veterans Park	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 3
--	-----------------------------------	--------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

DESCRIPTION:

The improvements at Veterans Park include the items that were not funded in the most recent PARTF application as well as several other improvements that are needed. These include:

Playground - \$40,000 - This playground would be similar in size to the playground at the Carver Center

Outdoor Kitchen - \$30,000 - This would be a covered area for cooking demonstrations and gatherings for gardeners as well as any park visitor. This would be located on the south side of the interstate.

Picnic Pavilion - \$30,000 - This pavilion would be located on the north side of the interstate near the baseball fields. This pavilion would be smaller than the pavilion located at Lake Tomahawk.

Updated Fencing - \$25,000 - This fencing would replace the current backstops and dugout fencing. This number may be able to be reduced if some of the current hardware (poles, etc) is able to be reused.

Drainage Improvements - \$150,000 - Drainage improvements would be throughout the park and would reduce the impact of high water situations in the river. This would not eliminate flooding but may reduce damage done during flooding situations. This drainage would also help reduce downtime for fields after rain events.

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	15,000	15,000
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	135,000	135,000
Equipment	-	150,000	-	-	-	-	150,000
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000	150,000
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	75,000	-	-	-	75,000	150,000
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 300,000

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Lakeview Center	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 4
-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

<p>DESCRIPTION</p> <p>New Flooring for Downstairs - \$10,000 - New flooring for the downstairs would replace the current flooring with flooring that is more durable. This would also be an opportunity to create a single style of flooring. Currently there are three different types of flooring in the downstairs area. This can be partially funded through senior center improvement grants. New Tables for the Picnic Pavilion.</p>
--

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	10,000	-	-	-	-	10,000
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	-	8,000	-	-	-	-	8,000
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	2,000	-	-	-	-	2,000
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Paving Projects in Parks	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 5
--	-----------------------------------	--------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

DESCRIPTION:

Re Pave In The Oaks Trail - This will require some asphalt removal, grading, rebuilding trail base, and repaving. This project is a high priority because of the high amount of use on this trail. This trail was originally created circa 1999. \$37,000

Carver Center - Add Additional parking to the rear of the Carver Center. This would add about 12 spaces to the current parking lot. The area to be paved is on the southern portion of the parking lot near the new playground. Currently this spot is grass. \$8,500

Grey Eagle Arena - This area is an area that currently could last a few more years but will need to be upgraded in the near future. This would be repaving the current parking area in the front of the building. Estimated at \$15,000

Black Mountain Recreation Park - Paving of this area could be paving areas around the fields for improved drainage. There are also areas of the current parking that need to be improved either through paving or re graveled. Estimated at \$15,000.

EXPENDI

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	-	-	37,000	8,500	30,000	-	75,500
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,000	\$ 8,500	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ 75,500

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	-	-	37,000	8,500	30,000	-	75,500
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 37,000	\$ 8,500	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ 75,500

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: New Parks	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER:	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 6
-----------------------------	-----------------------------------	---------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

DESCRIPTION:

World Class Disc Golf facility at either the watershed or at Goodson Cove or possibly another area that has not presented itself. \$150,000
-This project would be a good candidate for a TDA grant.

Mountain Biking Park at the watershed \$70,000

Outdoor basketball courts \$100,000

New Gymnasium \$500,000

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	30,000	-	100,000	130,000
Land	-	-	-	-	70,000	-	70,000
Construction	-	-	-	120,000	-	500,000	620,000
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 820,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	-	-	-	75,000	35,000	300,000	410,000
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	-	-	75,000	35,000	300,000	410,000
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 70,000	\$ 600,000	\$ 820,000

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Greenways Projects	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 7
--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	--------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

DESCRIPTION:

Completion of Trail at Carver Center - \$30,000 - This trail would be through the approximately three acres of wooded area behind the Carver Center. This would be a hiking/nature trail. This trail will be used by the summer day campers, Carver users and neighborhood residents. Neighborhood users could use this trail to connect to the Carver Center and its amenities. This could be funded through a Rec Trails GrantCompletion of Trail at Carver Center.

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Land	-	-	30,000	-	-	-	30,000
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	-	-	7,500	-	-	-	7,500
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	-	22,500	-	-	-	22,500
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000

CIP PROJECT REQUEST FORM

PROJECT TITLE: Cragmont Park Renovation	DEPARTMENT: Recreation & Parks	NUMBER	PRIORITY: ORGANIZATIONAL	PRIORITY: DEPARTMENTAL 8
--	-----------------------------------	--------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

DESCRIPTION:

Walking Trail \$40,000 - This walking trail will be similar to the trail at Lake Tomahawk. The trail will be around the perimeter of the park.

Year Round Restroom Facilities - \$100,000 - Similar to the restroom facilities at Town Square.

Small Pavilion - 30,000 - This pavilion would be similar in size to the pavilion proposed for Rec Park. This pavilion would be smaller than the pavilion located at Lake Tomahawk.

Six Tennis Courts - \$600,000 - These tennis courts would replace the two courts at Lake Tomahawk and the two courts currently at Cragmont Park.

Playground - \$75,000 - The proposed playground for Cragmont Park would be more of destination type of playground than the one currently at the Carver Center. This playground could have a section dedicated for children ages 2-5 as well as the standard 5-12 area. Currently we do not have a playground dedicated to the 2-5 age range.

Planning, engineering, survey, etc. - \$100,000 - This would be approximately 12% of the total cost of the project.

This project would be a good candidate for a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant as well as possible potential for private fundraising campaign.

EXPENDITURE CLASSIFICATION

	FY16-17	FY17-18	FY18-19	FY19-20	FY20-21	FUTURE	TOTAL
Planning/Design/Engineering	-	-	-	-	-	95,000	95,000
Land	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	-	-	-	-	-	750,000	750,000
Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 845,000	\$ 845,000

REVENUE CLASSIFICATION

Operating Revenues	-	-	-	-	-	422,500	422,500
Debt/Financing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Grant	-	-	-	-	-	422,500	422,500
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 845,000	\$ 845,000

Type (Administrative, Program, Facility)	Goal/Objective	Strategies	Action Steps	Responsible	Short Term (within the year)	Medium Term (within 2-3 years)	Long Term (more than 5 years)
Admin	Objective 1: Develop and Maintain Nationally Recognized Standards for Department	Strat 1.1: Seek CAPRA certification		Rec. Director	x		x
		Strat 1.2: Maintain standards of excellence with regular review, planning, and development		Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.		x	x
		Strat 1.3: Encourage staff to seek and maintain national certifications (ie. CPRP, CPRE, and other NPRA trainings)		Rec. Director	x	x	x
Admin	Objective 2: Develop and Implement Volunteer Management System	Strat 2.1: Develop Volunteer Management System	Action 2.1.1 Review existing volunteer opportunities, policy, training and management from ours and other agencies	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.	x		
		Action 2.1.2 Craft Plan, including training, tracking, recruiting, and retention		Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator	x		
		Strat 2.2: Pilot test		Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.	x	x	
		Strat 2.3: Maintain system with periodic reviews	Action 2.3.1 Review volunteer management system annually to ensure it meets reporting and planning needs	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.			x
Admin	Objective 3: Develop & Implement Employee Training Program	Strat 3.1: Review existing training	Action 3.1.1 Work with HR Coordinator to ensure all requirements are met, and determine any resources	Rec. Director	x		
		Strat 3.2: Develop Training Procedures for all employees	Action 3.1.2 Review departmental training to ensure any additional recreation requirements are met	Rec. Director	x		
			Action 3.2.1 Develop annual training plans for permanent employees, and generic plans for regular roles	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.	x	x	x
Admin	Objective 4: Improve Internship Opportunities	Strategy 4.1: Increase stipend available to competitive level		Rec. Director		x	
		Strat 4.2: Promote to state and regional Universities with Recreation dept	Action 4.2.1: Reach out to WCU, NCSU, ETSU	Rec. Director		x	
Admin	Objective 5: Maintain and Improve Good Staffing Practices	Strat 5.1: Review workloads for permanent employees		Rec. Director		x	x
		Strat 5.2 Budget for additional support as needed		Rec. Director		x	x
Admin	Objective 6: Support Facilities, Programs, and Coalitions to Foster a Healthy Community	Strat 6.1: Reinvigorate Health Initiative	Action 6.1.1: Survey past members and possible future members	Health Program Admin.	x		
			Action 6.1.2: Facilitate workgroups of interested members	Health Program Admin.	x		
			Action 6.1.3: Kickoff that celebrates accomplishment and possible goals	Health Program Admin.	x		
			Action 6.1.4: Encourage and support quarterly meetings and active workgroups	Health Program Admin.		x	x
Admin, Program, Facilities	Objective 7: Foster Equal Access to Programs and Facilities	Strat 6.2: Network with area programs and coalitions		Health Program Admin.	x	x	x
		Strat 7.1: Be trained/maintain training on access issues related to populations served (or that should be served)	Action 7.1.1: Rec Supervisor participate in at least 5 annual hours of training related to aging population	Rec. Supervisor	x	x	x
		Strat 8.1: Identify potential land acquisition opportunities	Action 7.1.2: At least one full-time staff member trained in basic ADA issues and updates	Rec. Director	x	x	x
Admin, Facilities	Objective 8: Increase Number of Parks and Facilities in Black Mountain, in Keeping with Master Plan Goals	Strat 8.2: Pursue opportunities to develop Town-owned property		Rec. Director		x	x
		Strat 9.1: Conduct a thorough examination of each building, park, and greenway	Action 9.1.1 List and rank improvements and repairs annually	Rec. Director	x	x	x
Facility	Objective 9: Conduct Regular Park Inventory	Strat 9.2: Annually assess landscaping needs	Action 9.2.1 List and rank improvements and repairs annually	Rec. Director			
		Strat 9.3: Develop and maintain park maintenance standards	Action 9.3.1 Develop maintenance checklist for each park (including quality and frequency of checking)	Rec. Director	x		
			Action 9.3.2 Conduct regular maintenance checks	Rec. Director	x	x	x
Facility	Objective 10: Increase Rentals of Park Buildings/Facilities	Strat 10.1: Promote un-reserved dates the week before	Action 10.1.1 Use Facebook and other social media to highlight last-minute rental dates with discount if they mention social media	Senior Admin. Assistant	x		
		Strat 10.2: Publicize rental options through local and regional outlets (highlighting low-volume opps)	Action 10.3.1: Review Annual Park Inventory	Senior Admin. Assistant	x	x	x

		Strat 10.3: Update & Improve cosmetics and function of facilities	Action 10.3.2: Identify funds or opportunities to address priority updates and improvements	Rec. Director		X		X
			Action 10.3.3: Make updates and improvements as possible	Rec. Director		X		X
Program, Facility, Admin	Objective 11: Develop and Improve Evaluation Process	Strat 11.1.1: Develop evaluation process	Action 11.1.1: Create Survey that can be used for each 'type' of responder (participants, renter, sponsors, and volunteers)	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.	X			
		Strat 11.2: Send survey to different types (first couple questions can identify which category: General programming, sports, active aging, facility/rental, Sports, events)		Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.	X	X		X
		Strat 12.1: Work with planning dept and greenways commission to identify projects and work toward		Health Program Admin.	X	X		X
		Strat 12.2: Budget for necessary improvements or updates as identified in park inventory		Health Program Admin.		X		X
Facility	Objective 12: Support Development of Greenway System	Strat 12.3: Partner with area coalitions to support and foster regional greenway connections		Rec. Director, Health Program Admin.	X	X		X
		Strat 13.1: Offer sponsorship packets 1x/year	Action 13.1.1: Test run a sponsorship packet in 2016	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.	X			
Admin, Program, Facility	Objective 13: Improve Sponsorship Opportunities	Strat 13.2: Annual review of sponsorship opportunities and packets	Action 13.1.2: Incorporate feedback to improve sponsorship packet for 2017	Rec. Director	X	X		
				Rec. Director		X		X
				Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.		X		X
			Action 14.1.1: Review program objectives	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.		X		X
Program	Objective 14: Implement Official Program Inventory	Strat 14.1: Update Programming Plan	Action 14.1.2: Conduct annual program inventory	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.		X		X
			Action 14.1.3: Develop new programs to meet newly-identified goals	Rec. Director, Rec. Supervisor, Rec. Coordinator, Health Programs Admin.		X		X

Reference Material

Documents, reports, and maps were referenced in preparation of the Master Plan which provided background information pertaining to land use, demographics, and recreation planning. These documents include:

Black Mountain Greenway Master Plan, 2003.

Union County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Union County North Carolina, May 1992.

Asheville Parks and Recreation Department 2015 Comprehensive Master Plan, Asheville, North Carolina, April 1998, Updated December 1998.

Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services, National Recreation and Park Association, 1992.

Buncombe County Land Use Plan, Buncombe County, NC.

Economic Impacts of Parks and Recreation Resource Book, National Park Service.

Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study, FY 1995-1996, FY 1996-1997, FY 1997-1998, North Carolina Recreation Resources Service, 1996, 1997, 1998.

Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, National Recreation and Parks Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Management, 1997.

YMCA Demographic Profile for Black Mountain, Montreat, and Swannanoa, 1998.

Outdoor Recreation Space Standards, US Department of Interior.

Guidelines for Evaluating Public Parks & Recreation, James A. Peterson, Indiana University.

National Park, Recreation and Open Space Standards, edited by Robert D. Buechner, National Recreation and Park Association.

North Carolina's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

A Guide to Community Park and Recreation Planning, Illinois Department of Conservation, RD Espeseth, Lisa Peterson, Mark Yergler, 1992.