



Department of Parks and Recreation
Swain County, North Carolina
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**SWAIN COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION
COMPREHENSIVE FACILITIES MASTER PLAN
2018-2028**



Swain County

**Accepted
Swain County Board of Commissioners**

, 2018

Acknowledgments

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Citizens of Swain County, North Carolina

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Project Information

Introduction

Consisting of just over 525 square miles of land area, Swain County is located in the far western region of North Carolina, and is adjacent to the federal government's Smoky Mountain National Park, and the Cherokee Indian Reservation. This rural, mountainous area of the Southern Appalachians is often recognized for its spectacular geographic diversity. With much of the land area located within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, including its highest peak, Clingmans Dome, the area includes the scenic beauty of four rivers, the Nantahala, the Tuckasegee, the Oconaluftee and the Little Tennessee, and a major creek, Deep Creek, which flow through the county and helps to form the sprawling Lake Fontana located just minutes west of Bryson City, the county seat.

The county also encompasses much of the Cherokee Indian Reservation, with its own independent government. Given this unique geography and co-location with two independent government organizations, Swain County government's capability to raise significant program revenues to support programs and services is particularly acute given that over eighty-five (85) percent of Swain County's total land area is currently not taxable by local governmental units due to its ownership by either the national government or the Cherokee Indian Tribal government. A funding scenario that provides minimal revenue generating potential at the local level while the local community attempts to address a growing high demand for services.

Formed in 1871 from parts of Jackson County and Swain County, the county was named for David L. Swain, governor of North Carolina from 1832 to 1835. With a population of just over 14,163 individuals according to 2016 census and other population estimates, Swain County is the 89th least populated of 100 counties in the state. Moreover, economic data indicates that despite significant increases in employment and income, Swain County continues to rank as 83rd of the 100 counties in terms of the number of children in poverty, nearly ten percentage points worse than the state average. Today, the average population density is still less than 26.5 people per square mile and the per capita income is less than \$21,000 per year. A population that is often isolated in terms of socialization activities due to the non-existence of public transportation resources and difficulties in travel due to the mountainous nature of the local terrain.

The major roadways that provide regional transit routes for Swain County include: US Highways 74 and 19 and State Highways 28. Most of the county's development occurs along these corridors and around the areas of the highway intersections including the area around the only incorporated municipality. The county is home to one incorporated municipality, Bryson City, and a number of local communities including but not limited to Alarka, Ela, Almond, Wesser, Lauda, Whittier, Deep Creek, and Fontana Lake. Major geographic attractions include the water oriented recreational uses of the Deep Creek and Fontana Lake areas as well as areas along the Tuckasegee River. Additional geographic attractions include the many hiking and trail paths including those in and out of the Smoky Mountain National Park areas and along other areas of the Great Smoky Mountains.

Primary responsibility for the development, maintenance, supervision, and operation of public parks and recreational activities in Swain County lies under the jurisdiction of the Swain County Board of County Commissioners with day to day operational control delegated through the Office of County Manager to its Department of Parks and Recreation. Presently, the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department provides year round programs for Adults and Youths and includes outdoor areas as well as an indoor recreation facility. Resources include basketball, soccer, football, tennis, free weights, playground, swimming, skateboarding and baseball. The indoor facility also has a meeting room for community use. The Department also works with a broad number of community organizations who offer Little League and other specialized programs, and who sponsor events such as the Santa Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt.

Purpose

The purpose of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan 2018-2028 document is to evaluate recreational facilities, activities and programs currently offered by the Swain County Parks & Recreation Department and guide the county to better service the communities and their recreational needs. The process used in compiling the information presented in this plan allows Swain County to inventory and assess all existing park facilities and programs, evaluate the communities' satisfaction with those facilities and programs and to recommend a clear direction for the department to grow facilities, programs and staff to meet the future recreational needs for the people of Swain County. This report is based upon the firm planning and development foundation that was established for Swain County Parks and Recreational facilities and programs through the park and recreation master plan that was initially conducted in 2002 and subsequently updated in 2008. Through this positive foundation, Swain County residents today benefit from a broad diversity of park improvements and enhancements that enable local residents to participate in a scope of activities ranging from passive activities to walking trails to swimming to active sports participation in baseball, soccer, basketball, etc. It is the purpose of this parks and recreation comprehensive master plan document to guide and direct future park and recreational improvements and development for the coming decade so that this positive tradition of responding to community needs can continue in our rural community.

Methodology

The Swain County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan 2018-2028 identifies the current recreation facility and program offerings for Swain County and creates a series of strategies that allows the Swain County Board of County Commissioners to meet the county's current and future needs as they relate to public parks and recreational resources. In order to compile the necessary information to determine these needs, the following process was used:

Step 1

- Identify existing parks, recreational and health based programs, greenways, open space, facilities, county controlled properties and geophysical site conditions for Swain County;
- Compile this information into organized text, tables, and mapping layers for evaluation;

- Analyze geographic and program data to identify key resources;
- Identify ways to incorporate these resources into the planning process.

Step 2

- Determine a “policy” plan for Swain County through the creation of a mission statement and supporting goals and objectives;
- Gather facilities information from Swain County and comparable communities;
- Inventory participation ratios of recreation program users to available facilities;
- Survey residents and users to determine how they feel about current programs and facilities and host review meetings involving the public;
- Tabulate and analyze survey results and comments made during the public input sessions;
- Gain input from Swain County Parks and Recreation Department employees regarding existing facilities, proposed facilities and maintenance issues, along with any other recreation based input they might have.

Step 3

- Create a set of Planning Criteria to be used as the basis for recreational facility and program recommendations;
- Gather and present overall and activity based recreation participation information, facility usage information and recreation/facility demand information outlining current recreational trends in Swain County
- Establish a Park Classification system and Park

Step 4

- Establish an Action Plan based on data and information gathered throughout Steps 1, 2 and 3.

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Existing Parks & Facilities

Swain County Government

The following is an inventory of existing parks and properties currently either owned and/or operated by Swain County:

Swain County Recreation Park - Approx. 32 acres

Located on Deep Creek Road in Bryson City, the Swain County Recreation Park on Deep Creek Road was initially created in 1974 as a 32-acre multi-purpose recreation and playground facility by Swain County Government. Today, this facility serves as the primary recreational facility in Swain County offering a variety of active and passive park and recreational activities including but not limited to:

- Outdoor Pool with Water Slide (230,000 gallons)
- Children’s Wading Pool and Splash Play Area
- Baseball Field (2)

- Softball Field (1)
- Skateboard Park (1)
- Soccer Field (1)
- Tennis Courts (4)
- Children and Toddler's Playgrounds (3)
- Outdoor Play and Passive Use Pavilions (3)
- Outdoor Volleyball (1)
- Shuffleboard Court (2)
- Walking Trail
- Concessions stands (2)
- Restrooms (4)
- Parking Areas (3)

Swain County Indoor Recreation Center – 14,400 sq. feet

Located on Deep Creek Road in Bryson City, the Swain County Indoor Recreation Center occupies what once was a Pepsi Distribution Center. Purchased by the County in mid-2000 and has been renovated over the years, the facility today includes 14,400 square feet of indoor recreational space plus outdoor parking and additional land for expanded recreational purposes. The Indoor Recreation Center presently offers a variety of active recreational activities including but not limited to:

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- Basketball Courts (2)
- Weight Lifting Area
- Indoor Batting Cage
- Restrooms
- Meeting Space
- Parking Area

Road 288 Recreational Park - approximately 2 acres

Located on State Road 288 and lying immediately adjacent to the Tuckaseegee River, the 288 Park serves as a special usage park on the river. The Park is located on land owned by the Tennessee Valley Authority but maintained by the County and offers the following passive recreational opportunities:

- Boat Ramp
- Picnic Pavilion and Tables
- Restrooms
- Fishing Pier

County Courthouse Square Park - approximately one acre

Located at the junction of Main Street and Everett Street in downtown Bryson City, the County Courthouse Square Park consists of approximately one acre of property immediately in front and to the river side of the historic County Courthouse. This park provides limited passive recreational benefits but serves as a cornerstone in downtown Bryson City and is highly used for street events

including festivals and other events. The following passive recreational resources are available:

- Park Benches
- Pavilion
- Fishing and Marine Habitat Viewing Deck

Riverfront Park – approximately 1.5 acres

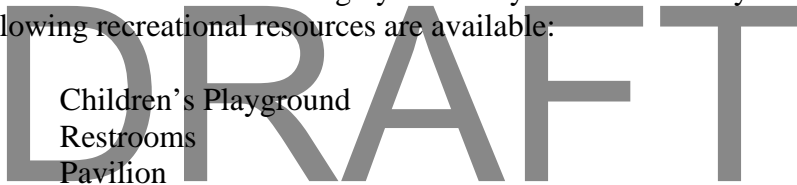
Located on land surrounding the County Court Building located on Mitchell Street in downtown Bryson City and bordering the Tuckasegee River, the Riverfront Park provides limited passive recreational benefits but is highly used for festivals and other gatherings requiring an off street site. The following passive recreational resources are available:

- Park Pavilion
- Park Benches
- Walking Path

Alarka Park – approximately 1 acre

Located on land in the Alarka community, the Alarka Park provides limited recreational benefits but is highly valued by local community residents. The following recreational resources are available:

- Children’s Playground
- Restrooms
- Pavilion



Swain Event Park – approximately 8 acres

Located on land adjacent to Hyatt Creek Road and previously known as part of the Inspiration Park land, this site was recently acquired by Swain County as the site of a future park facility. The land presently has limited development and resources for public use.

Railroad Park – approximately 1 acre

Located on land adjacent to the Great Smokey Mountain Railroad turntable and across the street from the County Court Building on Mitchell Street in downtown Bryson City, the Railroad Park provides limited passive benefits but has the potential for complementing festivals and other gatherings requiring off street site. The park is also across the street from the Riverfront Park and serves to complement and support this valuable County asset. The following passive recreational resources are available:

- Pavilion
- Walking Path
- Park Benches and Bicycle Racks

Town of Bryson City

Island Park – approximately 1 acre

Located in downtown Bryson City in the middle of the Tuckaseige River, the park is accessed by a recently installed new walking bridge. The following passive recreational resources are available:

Picnic Areas
Walking Trail
River Fishing Access

Swain County School Board

The following park and recreational properties are owned and operated by the Swain County School System. Although these facilities are primarily for the use of school sponsored activities, the public may have specified and limited use of these facilities during non-school hours.

Swain County High School

Football Field
Baseball Field (1)
Softball Field
Track
Gymnasium

Swain County Middle School

Multi-purpose Field
Gymnasium

Swain County East Elementary

Multi-purpose Field
Track
Gymnasium

Swain County West Elementary

Multi-purpose Field
Track
Gymnasium

Other Government

The Federal Government currently operates the Great Smoky Mountain National Park, the nation's most visited national park, through the federal Park Service. This park covers over 521,085.66 acres with approximately half or 276,343.88 acres located in North Carolina and 244,741.78 acres located in Tennessee. Park facilities include ten (10) campgrounds with a total of 1000 sites, recording more than 350,000 camper nights annually, eleven (11) picnic areas,

totaling 1,050 sites, more than backcountry campsites, including shelters providing more than 77,000 overnight visits per year and over 800 miles of backcountry trails serving over 400,000 hikers annually. Of this total, approximately 70 miles of the Appalachian Trail run through the Smoky Mountain National Park. In terms of Swain County impact, a major section of the region's park facilities are accessed through the Deep Creek community located just down the road from the Swain County Recreation Park or through other local access points.

Current Programs, Offerings & Special Events

Currently, the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department offers a broad range of recreational activities or programs with private groups managing and supporting additional local youth and adult sports leagues, activities and programs. These groups are able to use Swain County supported facilities for their respective recreation events for a small user's fee. Current offerings are:

Swain County Parks and Recreation Department Activities

County Active Sports - Youth

- Basketball league
- Football
- Swimming Lessons
- Summer Day Camp

County Active Sports - Adult

- Softball
- Senior Games
- Walking and Hiking Program
- Aqua-aerobics

Outside Sponsored Activities

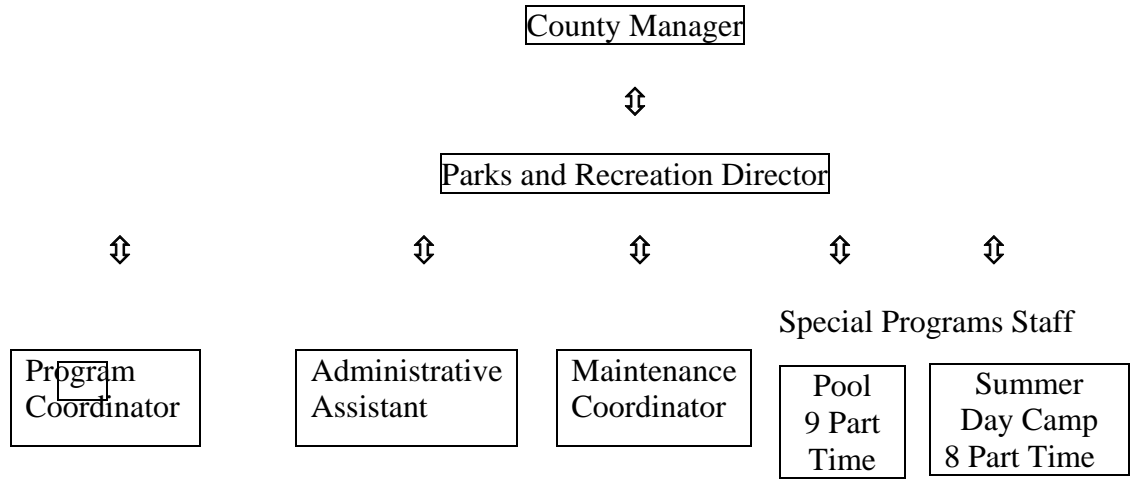
Active Sports – Youth

- Little League baseball
- Little League Softball
- Youth Soccer

Current Administrative Structure

The accompanying chart outlines the current staff of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department. These staff members are charged with organizing and scheduling recreation leagues and programs. A limited number of the recreational programs offered through the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department are offered through private individuals or organizations, but held within the county's facilities. The Swain County Parks and Recreation Department staff is also charged with planning, coordinating and supervising special events, as well as maintaining all of the county's recreation facilities.

**Swain County Parks and Recreation Department
Organizational Chart**



Revenue and Expenditures

The Swain County Parks and Recreation Department has one primary main source of revenue for the facilities and programs it operates: the Swain County General Fund. This fund supports all of the county’s staff, services, activities, facilities, utilities, insurance, etc. All monies received by the county and its departments through property taxes, fees and other municipal sources are placed into the General Fund. Some fees are generated through the Parks and Recreation Department, but are all placed into the General Fund. These fees are collected from various recreation fees associated with sports organizations and facility rentals, pool use during the summer months, vending services and concessions during events. It should be noted that some facilities may be reserved for free, such as the county’s picnic shelters.

The Swain County Parks and Recreation Department utilizes its funding in three main areas.

1. A portion of the budget from the county’s general fund is used for staff salaries. This ensures that the residents of the county will continue to have quality recreational activities and facilities to use for those activities for years to come.
2. Funds for operational expenses are taken from the departmental budget and fund the daily operation of the department. These expenses may include utility bills, facility upkeep, equipment upkeep and replacement, vehicle upkeep, supplies, materials, phone bills and postage. The remainder of the Parks and Recreation Department budget is used to maintain all indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. The funds generally cover the upkeep of existing facilities and amenities.
3. All new development projects, particularly those that require a large amount of funding, are ear marked specifically by the county and are included above and beyond the department’s annual budget.

For the 2017/18 fiscal year, the general program operating budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation totaled \$ 366,566.

Goals, Objectives & Input

Mission Statement

The mission of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department simply stated is:
“to provide a broad spectrum of quality leisure services and facilities in order to meet public needs for social, physical, moral, and economic benefits gained through park and recreational opportunities in the Swain County area”.

Goals & Objectives

In order to accomplish this mission, the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department has identified the following goals and objectives to meet the recreational needs of the people of Swain County.

1. Provide Swain with active recreation facilities and programming, especially:
 1. Baseball fields
 2. Practice facilities for football, baseball, softball, soccer and other sports.
 3. Outdoor swimming pool including children’s splash and play area
 4. Outdoor multipurpose pavilions
 5. Children and Toddler’s playground
 6. Provide a multiuse recreational facility and programming, especially:
Indoor basketball courts
2. Manage and maintain our existing and future facilities to assure the highest level of service and safe utilization to our citizens and user groups.
3. Seek and provide new programming for all ages, sexes and abilities.
4. To be open to public proposals and ideas for our community’s growing recreation needs.
5. Seek partnerships with the Swain County School system and other governmental units
6. Improve communication, coordination and opportunities all county owned and/or operated parks.
7. Establish strong Recreation Advisory Board representation from all areas of the community that meets on a regular basis
8. Target new areas of recreation.
9. Hold annual meetings with leaders of sports leagues and organizations to help determine needs for their programs and promote growth.
10. Serve as a central information resource for background and safety checks for all organized sports.
11. Keep the public involved and informed of recreational opportunities through the use of the County website and through other media outlets.

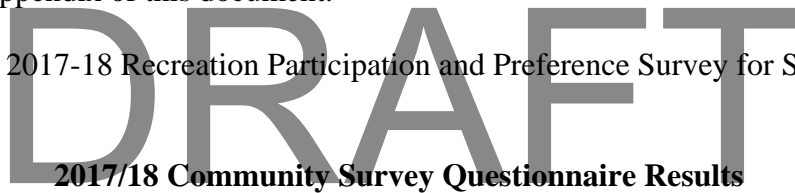
Public Input

The most helpful tool when completing a parks and recreation master plan is public input. In order to best plan, implement, understand and recommend recreational parks and recreational

facilities and programs, it is important to know what the residents of a certain area enjoy or desire in terms of park or recreational facilities or programs. In addition, it is essential to understand and know what these local residents would like to have in terms of future facilities and programs. This information is best gathered through a series of public surveys and public hearings as well as from input of the community’s parks and recreation experts, the staff of the County Parks and Recreation Department.

As part of the Public Input process for the Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan, a survey of local residents was conducted to identify and determine public interest in a variety of recreational and park resources, facilities, and interests was conducted both through printed distributed questionnaires as well as through internet based survey instruments. Recreation Participation and Preference Survey was created. The survey asked participants to identify some basic information, such as age, sex, family household income, and residential location. The survey specifically asks the public to list the improvements that they would like to see made to the continuum of county recreational resources in the near future including the County pool, Indoor Recreational Center, Ball Fields, Pavilions, Tennis Courts, Walking/Greenway Trails, New Park Development/Creation, and other potential park expansions/improvements. Finally, the public was offered an opportunity to provide unlimited input or comments on any other segment of the recreational or parks continuum or future program needs. A copy of the Swain County Recreation Participation and Preference Survey can be found in the Appendix of this document.

The results of the 2017-18 Recreation Participation and Preference Survey for Swain County are as follows:



Total Surveyed: 1,167 teenagers and adults

Conducted 12/15/17 – 03/01/18

1. List two improvements you would like to see the Swain County Recreation Department make in the near future? (Include any details you may have).

Pool Expansion/Indoor/New/Repairs	249	27.82%
Indoor Rec Center Expansion/Improve	122	13.30%
Park Expansion/Improvements	102	11.40%
Greenways/Walking Trails	51	5.70%
Playground Expansion/Improve	48	5.36%
Bike Path Expansion/Development	43	4.80%
Soccer Field Expansion/Improve	20	2.23%

2. Is there a need for additional programs and activities?

Yes	962	82.05%
No	199	18.22%

3. How can we improve the pool?

New/Expanded/Indoor	260	26.34%
Expanded/Improved Restrooms	80	8.10%
Expanded Hours/Season	79	8.00%
Diving Board	53	5.37%
Creation of Kids Pool	49	4.96%
Creation of Year Round Pool	28	2.84%
Addition of Shady Rest Areas	17	1.72%
Additional Lifeguards	17	1.72%

4. How can we improve the Recreation Center?

Construct New/Expanded Building	104	11.49%
Expand Activities/Programs	101	10.71%
Replace Floor	62	6.85%
Expand Equipment	54	5.97%
Expand Basketball	36	3.98%

5. How can we improve the ball fields?

Improved Seating	120	14.83%
Expanded/Improved fields	134	17.80%
Improved Dugouts	42	5.19%
Improved Restrooms	32	3.96%
Improved Lighting	26	3.21%

6. How can we improve the pavilions?

Improved/Enhanced Restrooms	119	22.66%
Additional and Larger Pavilions	48	9.14%
Expanded Seating/Tables	46	8.77%
Improved Lighting	38	7.24%

7. How can we improve the tennis courts?

Expand Courts	50	6.93%
Improved Lighting	49	6.80%
Improved Surface	49	6.80%
Replace Nets	47	6.52%

8. How can we improve the trails?

Improve Existing Trails	192	23.33%
Expand Number of Trails	168	20.41%
Improved Lighting	66	8.02%
Pave Existing Trails	20	2.43%

9. Do we need to create a new park facility in Swain?

Yes	684	65.27%
No	377	35.97%

(What amenities and programs should this park offer?)

Indoor/Year Round Pool	98	12.89%
Children's Playground/Activities	92	12.11%
Walking/Biking Paths	62	8.16%
Basketball Courts	25	3.29%

10. Would you be interested in attending events and festivals if a County Park were developed at Inspiration Park on Hyatt Creek Road?

Yes	816	76.33%
No	259	24.23%

If yes, what type of events would interest you?

Music Performances/Concerts	221	35.89%
Festivals/County Fair	125	22.56%
Special Events	104	18.77%

11. Would you be interested in disc golf facilities and participate in a league program?

Yes	423	35.35%
No	685	62.10%
No Answer	64	

12. Would you be interested in seeing the indoor recreation facility expanded?

Yes	962	88.34%
No	131	12.03%
No Answer	78	

13. Would you like to see expanded access to the Tuckasegee River for fishing, kayaking, boating, rafting, etc.?

Yes	895	80.27%
No	220	19.73%
No Answer	52	

If yes, how often would you use it?

Never	157	15.04%
Occasionally	340	32.57%
Once/month	187	17.91%
Once/week	213	20.40%
More than once week	147	14.08%
No Answer	123	

14. Would you like to see Swain County develop a lake access park on the shore of Fontana Lake?

Yes	932	83.66%
No	182	16.34%
No Answer	53	

15. Would you like to see the Island Park area enhanced in terms of park amenities?

Yes	930	82.96%
No	191	17.04%
No Answer	46	

16. Would you like to see any other downtown recreation/park developments in Bryson City?

Yes	863	79.17%
No	227	20.83%
No Answer	77	

17. What other suggestions or park improvements would you like to see the County implement?

More Parks	126	16.87%
More Trails/Greenway	92	12.31%
Indoor Pool	38	5.09%
Expand and Enhance Indoor Rec Center	23	3.08%

18. Do you support Tobacco-Free Parks and Rec in Swain County?

Yes	1,021	89.96%
No	119	10.48%
No Answer	32	

19. Are you in favor of Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways in Bryson City and Swain County? (i.e. vehicle-free, multi-use pathways for activities such as walking, jogging, biking, and dog-walking)

Yes	1,080	94.90%
No	67	5.89%
No Answer	29	

20. If Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways existed in Bryson City would you and/or your family use them?

Yes	1,035	91.51%
No	101	8.93%
No Answer	36	

21. Ideally, where would you like to see Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways in Swain County?

Within Town of Bryson City	68	21.03%
Along Riverfront	67	20.88%
Deep Creek Area	48	12.94%

We do not need your name, but please tell us....

I am:	Male	360	31.11%
	Female	802	69.32%
	No Answer	5	

My age is:	under 25	238	20.57%
	25-34	403	34.83%
	35-54	305	26.36%
	55-64	142	12.27%
	65+ years old	79	7.17%
	No Answer	0	

I live:	__ in the Town of Bryson City	324	28.47%
	__ East of town	259	22.76%
	__ West of town	400	35.15%
	__ North of town	109	9.58%
	__ South of town	65	5.71%
	No Answer	10	

Income Level (Household Family Income, in dollars)

Less than \$10,000	85	7.54%
10,000 – 14,999	95	8.42%
15,000 – 24,999	221	19.59%
25,000 – 34,999	163	14.45%
35,000 – 49,999	241	21.37%
50,000 – 74,999	180	15.96%
75,000 – 99,999	80	7.10%
100,000 – 149,999	40	3.55%
150,000 – 199,999	15	1.33%
200,000 or more	8	.71%
No Response	39	

This data was shared with the Parks and Recreation Department Advisory Board, with County staff, elected officials, and the general public and provided a base of information that was incorporated into the decision making process regarding projects identified for plan incorporation as well as their prioritization in the respective implementation timeline.

Advisory Board Input

The role of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department Advisory Board is as follows:

- To listen to all citizens of Swain County and inform the Department regarding overall public opinion on current recreational program offerings, facility use and overall department performance and maintenance.
- To give input and constructive comments regarding future programs, facility development and construction and land acquisition for future park sites as planned by Swain County.
- To advise and assist the Department on the current and future recreational program and facility needs and create a long-range plan to fulfill those needs.
- To increase understanding and support from the citizens of Swain County for future planned recreational program offerings and facility development.
- To educate the County Commission and the citizens of Swain County on the importance and benefits of recreational activity and influence County policy in regards to all recreational issues.
- To coordinate communications between the citizens of Swain County, the Department, and other local agencies in regards to future county development and parks and recreational needs.

- To increase public interest in Swain County recreational programs and special events, and recruit volunteers to assist in those activities.
- To be proactive in nature, creative in planning and current on all recreational trends, issues and challenges.

Based on their community perspectives and program expertise, the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department Advisory Board reviewed the public survey data and provided their perspectives and recommendations which were incorporated into the development of the overall plan for park and recreational improvements as well as the prioritization of such recommended improvements and enhancements.

Departmental Input

The current staff of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department was asked for input on what recreational facilities they believe are necessary to continue providing the residents of Swain County with a high quality of recreation parks and facilities. Their input was based upon day to day interaction with the public as well as on-going input from facility user groups. The following comments were taken from interviews with the staff of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department throughout this master plan process. The items below reflect the opinions of the staff, who work with the county's recreational facilities on a daily basis, and are included in no specific prioritized order:

- Up-grades and improvements to the Swimming Pool facility and complex.
- Up-grades and improvements to the Indoor Recreation Facility, including but not limited to:
 - Expansion of facility square footage and program capabilities.
 - Examination of the potential for an indoor or covered pool facility.
 - Installation of new insulation and wall coverings
 - Floors repainted
 - Carpets and mats installed over court area
 - New weight equipment
 - Up-dated lighting capabilities
- Improvement of the Parking Lots including repaving and improved lighting particularly in the area of the pavilion and pool complex.
- Improvements to the Tennis Court facility including:
 - Repair or replacement of lighting system and poles
 - Installation of money boxes and timer for night usage
- Expanded number of pavilions along walking trails
- Improvements to the County multi-purpose field including:
 - New grass
 - Installation of night lighting capability
 - Improvement of backstops and sun control at the baseball/softball fields
- Development and creation of additional park and recreational facilities within the County.
- Improvements to County pavilions including:

- Table repairs
- Flooring improvements
- Restroom expansion and enhancements.

Planning Criteria

Planning Criteria

In order to effectively plan for the future parks and recreational needs for the people of Swain County, a large amount of data and information has been gathered. Existing facility inventories have been completed for the county's park facilities, Swain County schools, the Town of Bryson City, federal agencies and private recreation providers. An understanding of the relationship between the Swain County Parks and Recreation Department with private sports organizations and recreation program providers was also examined, where appropriate and necessary. An understanding of funding resources for County Parks and Recreational resources was also essential to this comprehensive planning process given the large amount of County land held by the Federal, State, and Indian governmental units. Finally, in order to make recommendations for the future of the county's recreation facilities and programs, it was essential to receive input from the people of Swain County who regularly use the county recreational facilities and programs concerning their existing recreational habits, potential areas of improvement and additional facilities and programs they would enjoy in the future. While this information is imperative towards the creation of a master plan that will improve the quality of recreation in Swain County, it is also important to note that additional information is necessary to make accurate recommendations. The following planning criteria were also considered during the comprehensive parks and recreation master plan process:

Geographic Features/Land Ownership/Travel Perception

Like much of Western North Carolina, the topography of Swain County is mountainous and in some cases, extreme. These land features creates some potential issues in relation to providing quality recreation facilities and programs for people throughout Swain County. Moreover, it is important to remember that over 85 percent of the County land area lies within the federal national park system or within Cherokee Tribal Reservation lands. These factors should be considered when scheduling programs and events, as well as when planning facilities built for use by people across the county. These geographic features also make land development for park and recreation facilities difficult and costly. When identifying potential sites for recreational fields, it is important to remember the issues of accessibility and potential long-term land ownership of adjacent partials.

Recreation Participation

One key component of effective parks and recreation facility planning is the evaluation of existing offerings and the success and degree of community participation. In this regard, it is apparent that increases in participation more than likely reflects increased interest in a certain activity. Conversely, a decrease in participation rates would most likely indicate a decrease

interest in a certain activity or sport. The following sport and recreation event data, as provided by the staff of the County Parks and Recreation Department, indicates prior participation in scheduled activities:

Sport Activity

	Year	# Participants*
• Basketball	2015	60
	2016	65
	2017	70
• Football	2015	150
	2016	155
	2017	165
• Soccer	2015	150
	2016	156
	2017	162
• Softball	2015	42
	2016	44
	2017	45
• Baseball	2015	80
	2016	95
	2017	102
• Senior Games	2015	10
	2016	12
	2017	14
• Swimming Pool Activities		# Visits**
	2015	7,800
	2007	8,200
	2008	8,800

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* *average number of participants during program season*

** *number of visits to pool facilities during program season for all scheduled as well as individual uses*

Facility Usage

In the process of planning for appropriate park and recreational needs, it is also appropriate and necessary to review and evaluate the history of facility usage when determining whether to add another facility or expand an existing resource or program. Since many facilities are used for multiple purposes or programs, adding additional programs at the facility at any given time may significantly impact or effect programs that are already successfully operating. Moreover, when facilities are being used by multiple programs, adding additional uses may cause facility deterioration or cause a negative impact that ultimately may impact on all existing as well as future uses. Given these potential impacts, the following information is provided:

Basketball

- Currently includes Youth Basketball as well as individual play. Lack of competitive basketball court space forces practice sessions to be limited in Indoor Recreation Center facility with competitive games played primarily in local school gymnasiums. This usage pattern occurs primarily during months of November to March causing frequent schedule changes due to need to comply with school events and activities.

Football

- Currently includes Youth Football as well as individual play. All practice activity is centered on Little League and Softball fields during fall months with actual games at the High school field. This cause scheduling difficulties with school board activities. Suitability of practice fields is limited in terms of multiple games and simultaneous practice sessions. Usage of field for practice causes potential and actual field damage thereby forcing repairs and re-seeding for Little League and Softball uses.

Soccer

- Soccer field limited to only one field which creates heavy grass demand for field and grass maintenance. Conditions which limits the amount of practice or competitive soccer play. The lack of suitable soccer practice and play facilities causes scheduling difficulties and potential control issues for Swain County Parks and Recreation Department Staff. In addition, fields are not lighted thereby forcing scheduling of games to be completed prior to dark. Practice and play activities primarily held during September to December interval.

Swimming Pool Activities

- Currently includes youth swimming lessons, adult aqua-aerobics, and private individual use. Lessons and facility use are limited to summer and warm weather months due to non-heated pool and outdoor nature of facility. In addition, the only pool existing within the Swain County governmental inventory is located outdoors and includes limited seasonal usage. Moreover, the effects of winter weather including ground freezing, etc. create significant maintenance and long term operational impact on the existing facility as well as requiring on-going financial commitments for essential facility maintenance.

Softball

- Currently includes outside sponsored league use as well as adult softball. Includes both competition play as well as practice. Fields are limited in nature and often include back to back play as well as daily use during playing season. County fields are also used by Swain Middle School Softball and Baseball teams for both practice and competitive play thereby causing scheduling difficulties for league use. This also creates significant night-time play, heavy usage on fields and facilities, and potential parking difficulties.

Baseball

- Currently focused on outside sponsored league (T-ball) use including competitive games as well as practices. Fields are limited in nature and often include back to back play and practice sessions as well as daily use during playing season. County fields are also used by Swain Middle School Softball and Baseball teams for both practice and competitive play thereby causing scheduling difficulties for league use. This also creates significant night-time play, heavy usage on fields and facilities, and potential parking difficulties.

Walking and Hiking Program

- Currently focused primarily on use of Recreation Park walking trail. Program usage must compete with private users. This heavy usage on walking trails and facilities with limited rest locations for senior users.

Senior Games

- Senior Games use multiple facilities of Swain County Park and Recreation Department facilities with primary activities and practices occurring at Swain Recreation Park and Indoor Recreation facilities. These events and practice must compete with other programs often causing scheduling challenges.

Recreation/Facility Demand

As the numbers indicate, participation in most of Swain County's recreational activities continues to grow. This growth has begun to create scheduling conflicts due to the limited numbers of some types of facilities. These types of issues indicate:

- Fields have no chance to rest.
- Some fields are used 4 to 6 days a week, giving the department little to no opportunity to refurbish and maintain the fields.
- The number of appropriately sized/equipped facilities is limited.
- Scheduling for some activities forces games to be played well into the night.
- Existing park facilities are primarily located in the city limits and require outlying residents to travel to the downtown area in order to access park and recreational facilities.

Park Classifications

Although Swain County currently does not presently utilize a park classification system, it recognizes that such classifications are useful tools in helping to identify what types of recreation facilities can be found at a specific park. Classification systems can also be highly useful when

planning, programming and designing parks and recreational facilities during the master plan process. Such park classification scenarios have been developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) as well as those found in the North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan, also known as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). These guidelines help create a classification system that reflects the individual needs of communities. In developing a comprehensive master plan for park and recreational facilities, it is important to note that the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation recommends examining the following characteristics when establishing a specialized park classification system:

- Setting,
- Proximity to populated areas,
- Size,
- Facilities (existing and proposed),
- Natural resources available,
- Activities and
- The intended experience.

The following park classification recommendations take into account the State of North Carolina Classification System attributes and the recreational needs and desires of the people of Swain County.

Town Park

- 5 to 20 acres in size
- Facilities are limited and likely include non-programmed multiuse areas
- Serves small, local areas/communities
- Generally owned and operated by municipal governmental entities.

Community Center

- Size of center is variable
- Serves the entire community
- Should offer support services such as restrooms, concessions and parking
- Should provide a variety of indoor recreational activities and programs

Community Park

- 15 to 50 acres in size
- Serves larger, community based residents/groups
- Provides more variety of recreational activities
- May provide both active and passive types of recreation
- Can be used to protect natural/historic resources/land features

District Park

- 50 to 200 acres in size
- Provides a large variety of activities
- Used primarily for active recreation and tournaments
- Site should be relatively flat, easily developable
- Special uses may be located in these parks

Natural Resource Area

- Size varies according to resources being preserved
- Used to protect unique landscapes, cultural amenities and historic landmarks
- Used to preserve open space, natural buffers and view corridors
- Any recreation associated with these areas must be passive in nature

Special Use Park

- Varies in size according to use
- Provides single, specific use
- Uses can include historical site, indoor recreation facilities or outdoor recreational facilities and complexes

School Park

- Size of park varies depending on site, community need and function
- Combines two municipal expenditures into one location
- Ideal for rural areas with limited/no park facilities
- Depending on size, park could serve as a neighborhood, community or district park
- Joint use agreement

The following park classification's list categorizes Swain County's recreational parks and facilities, as well as other municipal-owned parks within the county.

Town Park

- Island Park

Community Center

- Swain Indoor Recreation Center

Community Park

- Swain County Recreation Park

District Park

- None

Natural Resource Area

- Island Park

Special Use Park

- Courthouse Square Park
- Road 288 Park
- Riverfront Park
- Railroad Park
- Swain Event Park

School Park

- None

Action Plan

Action Plan

The purpose of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan document is to provide an effective, usable document that will serve as a guide and resource as Swain County's Parks and Recreation Department resources, facilities, and programs continues to grow and expand in response to community demand and needs. As a part of this planning process, significant amounts of information and data was gathered, analyzed, and studied in an attempt to develop realistic and definitive recommendations. The information gathered throughout this planning process presented in previous sections of this report and includes such information as:

- Geographic locations,
- Current and projected populations,
- Current facility use,
- Current program and activity participation,
- Other area provided recreational opportunities,
- Adjacent county recreational facilities and participation rates,
- Input from the public survey through community surveys and public hearings, and
- Input from staff and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.

The Parks and Recreation Action Plan for Swain County attempts to fully consider and incorporate all of these considerations and attempts to outline specific recommendations that will help to guide Swain County in coming years in order to provide quality parks and recreational resources, activities and programs to all residents of Swain County. The Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan shall serve as a guide to enable the County to make sound decisions for facility and staff programming expansions and acquisitions that result in a higher quality of parks and recreational usage and increased positive community usage.

Countywide Recreation Recommendations

Recognizing that the financial resources of the Swain County Governmental general operating budget are limited and stretched in terms of service provision or expansion, the Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan recognizes that certain parks and recreational facilities and programs must often be limited to a single location within the county. This is the result of several factors.

1. Budgets simply cannot support duplicative facilities, services, or programs being offered in several areas of the county.
2. Demand for certain types of facilities or programs may be much higher in one area of the county than another.
3. Land, topography, availability or cost could force a facility to be located in one area of the county over another.

In light of all these factors and given the input from the community, professional staff, and other segments of the community, the following park and recreation improvements and developments are recommended and are offered (in no specific priority order within the noted timeframes):

Immediate Program and Facility Needs (present to three years)

- **Swain Event Park**

Development of a new park in the eastern portion of the County adjacent to Hyatt Creek Road on approximately eight (8) acres of County owned land that would provide the following amenities and resources:

- Event Stage and Performance Platform including electricity, sound system capability, lighting resources and other presentation/performance support.
- Walking and Biking Trail
- Children's Playground
- Restroom facilities including water support
- Parking and Improved road access to park site
- Development of Event Scheduling capabilities and facility usage calendar for long term impact

- **Swain Indoor Recreation Center**

Expansion of the existing Indoor Recreation Center to include space for expanded services and ability to offer new program resources. Expansion of the new facility will include consideration of land acquisition potential immediately adjacent to the existing site of the Indoor Recreation facility. The expansion shall include review and consideration of such options as:

- Expansion of Center by adding an upper story addition
- Expansion of a new addition located to the right of existing facility
- Construction of an addition to the rear of the building provided additional land is acquired to provide additional facility space

In planning for this expansion effort, consideration shall include space for the creation of expanded factors and programming capabilities including but not limited to:

- Creation of new multi-purpose space
- Expansion of basketball facilities
- Expansion of weight facilities
- Creation of Shower Facilities in Recreation Center

- **Swain Swimming Pool Facility**

Improvements to the existing swimming pool facility including but not limited to:

- Improvements to pool liner and filter system
- Improvements to pool restroom facilities
- Improvement to pool deck
- Creation of a covered pool facility

- **Swain Soccer Field Enhancements**

Improvements to the existing Soccer Field including the following:

- Construction of Restrooms and Water Fountains
- Installation of field lighting

Intermediate Program and Facility Needs (three to five years)

- **Creation of New Park Facilities and Greenways**

Expansion of park and recreational resources including but not limited to:

- Identification of sites and creation of new park facilities along the Tuckasegee Riverfront
- Development of expanded greenway trails and walkways along riverfront and in other areas of Swain County.

- **Swain County Recreation Park**

Improvements to existing ball fields including:

- Improved backstops to provide expanded sun and player viewing control
- Improved seating and bleachers
- Improved paving of parking lots adjacent to Swimming Pool Complex and Recreation Department offices.

- **Swain Indoor Recreation Center**

Improvements to the County's Indoor Recreation Complex including:

- Installation of new insulation and wall coverings
- Floors repainted
- Carpets and mats installed over court area
- New weight equipment
- Up-dated lighting capabilities
- Renovations to facility

Long term Program and Facility Needs (five to ten years)

Swain County Recreation Park

Improvements to the resources of the Recreational Park including but not limited to:

- Expanded number of pavilions along walking trails
- Development of additional multi-purpose fields
- Improvements to walking trail including walking surface and lighting.

Improvements to the Tennis Court facility including:

- Repair of lighting system

- Addition of small shelter at tennis court
- Installation of benches and rest area
- Installation of money boxes and timer for night usage

- **Swain Indoor Recreation Center**

Additional improvements to the Indoor Recreation Center including but not limited to:

- Consideration of development of Indoor/covered pool facility within the Indoor Recreation Center facility

- **Pavilion Improvements**

Improvements to Morgan and related multi-purpose pavilions including but not limited to:

- Paving of Morgan Pavilion Parking area
- Improved handicapped access to pavilions
- Improvements of seating and table facilities
- Improved Restroom facilities

It must be carefully noted that all of these recommendations as well as the suggestions from the general public have been offered with the understanding that the recommendations and implementation schedule are static in time; that is, there may be a need for changes in the specific improvements being offered as well as the implementation timeframe given the impact of outside influences and factors such as funding availability, changes in the condition of the existing recreational or park resources, availability of labor and materials, new demand factors, legislative changes, and other factors not anticipated or known at the time the recommendations were gathered and this plan developed or adopted. The right to change the implementation plan or scope of improvements as contained in this plan ultimately lies with the Board of County Commissioners depending upon their interpretation of community need and availability of financial capabilities/resources.

Funding Sources and Recommendations

In addition to general revenues and funding from the County budget, Swain County should continue to pursue a variety of funding sources for future recreation land acquisition, planning and development. The funding sources listed below represent several funding opportunities that may be useful and considered by County staff in the implementation of the Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan.

Grants:

Swain County should continue to apply for and access a broad range of private, state and federal grant programs as another method of financing parks and recreation facility acquisition and development. Several grant programs that might be investigated are listed below:

- American Academy of Dermatology
Accepts grant applications of up to \$8,000 to develop shade structures along outdoor play areas including walking trails, pool, and parks.
- US Handball Association
Accepts grant applications of up to \$10,000 for equipment and program support to expand or start up handball projects
- Women's Sport Foundation
Accepts grant applications of up to \$ 10,000 to support expansion of recreational resources and programs directed at women
- American Hiking Association
Accepts grant applications of up to \$10,000 to help local groups to establish and expand walking trails
- Bikes Belong Coalition
Accepts grant applications of up to \$10,000 to assist location organizations in bicycle facility development.
- The Conservation Fund
The Fund administers the American Greenways Kodak Awards Program that targets local greenway planning and offers grants of up to \$2,500.
- Eat Smart, Move More
A statewide initiative that promotes increased opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating through policy and environmental change.
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
The Fund supports the creation of park and recreation areas that guarantee perpetual public outdoor recreational opportunities. Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant funds may be used for planning, acquisition and development of facilities that provide active and/or passive recreation opportunities.
- North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PART F):
This funding source provides matching funds annually for local park land acquisition, development and renovation to communities across the state. The funding source, which comes from a real estate transfer tax, requires a 50-50 match from local government and no more than \$500,000 can be requested.
- Transportation Enhancement Funds
The North Carolina General Assembly enacted legislation (G.S. 136-71.12 Funds) that authorizes the North Carolina Department of Transportation to spend any federal, state, local or private funds available to the Department and designated for the accomplishment of Article 4A, Bicycle and Bikeway Act of 1974.
- The North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation Trails Program
DENR, has two trail grants: 1) NC Adopt-A-Trail, 2) NC Recreational Trails Program. Both provide funding assistance for acquisition and development of public trails. They offer full funding up to \$5,000, while the recreation trails grant requires 80:20 cost share up to \$50,000.
- U.S. Tennis Association Southern
This funding source provides grants up to \$100,000 to expand tennis participation

among adults and youth in the southern portion of the United States with a maximum contribution of \$30,000 per identified tennis player in the community.

- **Private Foundations and Corporations**

A number of private foundations and corporations support programs to improve recreational and park resources. These include such entities as: 1) Kaboom which provides playground improvements for children, 2) People for Bikes Foundation which provides bike path development funding for new and expand bikeways and walkways, 3) Walgreens which provides funding for bike and walking pathways and exercise/recreational improvements, and 4) North Face Explore Fund which provides funding for expanded outdoor recreational improvements and activities.

Sponsorships:

- **“Adopt-A” Series :**

Swain County can promote parks and greenways and generate interest by developing a local Adopt-A-Park, Adopt-A-Trail, Adopt-A-Greenway or Adopt-A-Playground program that identifies the organization for providing a walk through cleanup four times a year. Donators are identified with plaques and recognition markers.

- **Athletic Programs:**

Successful programs are made by donations of time, in-kind gifts and cash donations.

- **Annual Programs and Special Events:**

Underwriting, in-kind gifts and financial support help keep these popular traditions going. Local, private companies partner with the Parks and Recreation Department to bring free or low-cost events to the public. This allows the Department to offer more activities and save tax dollars.

Other Funding Mechanisms:

- The County may also wish to consider funding governmental funding mechanisms such as: Bond Referendums, Imposition of Impact Fees, and Increased Property Taxation. Although each of these methods imposes significant increased costs on the local community and will have significant impacts on relatively small taxing jurisdiction such as imposed on the Swain County area, they remain potential funding mechanisms for park and recreational improvements.

Public Review and Involvement

Recognizing that a plan for the improvement of park and recreational resources in Swain County would not be truly effective unless reviewed by a variety of community groups, advisory boards, and local government officials, it is important to note the following:

- The plan is based on a series of surveys conducted to gain the input of local residents with the most recent data collected during the interval of 12/15/17 – 03/01/18. This

complete data collection forms the primary foundation for the identification of future park and recreational improvements.

- The various components of the plan as well as specific improvements being recommended by this plan were discussed with the County Parks and Recreational Advisory Board on March 15, 2018 with significant input received. Their suggested changes and additions have been incorporated into this final plan document as well as the recommendations and timeline for implementation.
- The plan was shared and presented to a number of civic groups and other organizations interested in the future development of park and recreational resources in our community. Their suggestions and comments have been incorporated into this final plan document.
- The plan was also thoroughly reviewed and discussed with the professional staff of the County Department of Parks and Recreation. Similarly, their input and suggestions have also been incorporated into this final plan.
- Finally, the Swain County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Facilities Master Plan 2018-2028 was presented to the Board of County Commissioners at a public hearing held on April 5, 2018 and adopted/accepted by the Board at its formal meeting on the same date.

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APPENDIX

Appendix One: Community Survey Questionnaire – Conducted 12/15/17 – 03/01/18

Survey Methodology

The survey instrument was made available on the County website during the approximately three month interval specified above as well as provided to the community in hard copy through such outlets as the County Administration Building, the County Recreation Office, the Swain/Bryson City Chamber of Commerce Office, through the public and private schools located in the County, and through the County Recycling Center facility. Finally, copies of the survey forms were distributed to a variety of community organizations including recreational support groups. Completed responses were returned to the Parks and Recreation Office for tabulation and analysis either in person, by mail, and combined with results of the on line survey through the Survey Jockey software system.

In total, 1,167 completed forms and responses were obtained from participating County residents as input for this public data gathering effort. In terms of statistical qualifications, it should be noted that there was no tracking of individual participants thereby providing the possibility that individuals may have responded more than once to the survey questionnaire although no identical or duplicative responses were noted or observed. Finally, it should be noted that multiple responses were permitted in many cases with only the top responses categorized and reported in the summary of survey results. A copy of the survey questionnaire and the results of this input are summarized as follows:

2017/18 Community Survey Questionnaire



Community Survey Questionnaire Tell Us How We Can Improve Your Recreational Department

We're conducting a survey to get your opinion on possible new programs or improvements to existing ones. We would like your thoughts about improvements to existing facilities at the recreation department.

1. List two improvements you would like to see the Swain County Recreation Department make in the near future? (Include any details you may have).

2. Is there a need for additional programs and activities?
yes no
3. How can we improve the pool?
4. How can we improve the Recreation Center?
5. How can we improve the ball fields?
6. How can we improve the pavilions?
7. How can we improve the tennis courts?
8. How can we improve the trails?
9. Do we need to create a new park facility in Swain?
yes no
(What amenities and programs should this park offer?)
10. Would you be interested in attending events and festivals if a County Park were developed at Inspiration Park on Hyatt Creek Road?
yes no
If yes, what type of events would interest you?
11. Would you be interested in disc golf facilities and participate in a league program?
yes no
12. Would you be interested in seeing the indoor recreation facility expanded?
yes no
13. Would you like to see expanded access to the Tuckaseegee River for fishing, kayaking, boating, rafting, etc.?
yes no
If yes, how often would you use it?
never occasionally once/month once/week more than once week
14. Would you like to see Swain County develop a lake access park on the shore of Fontana Lake?
yes no

15. Would you like to see the Island Park area enhanced in terms of park amenities?
yes no
16. Would you like to see any other downtown recreation/park developments in Bryson City?
yes no
17. What other suggestions or park improvements would you like to see the County implement?
18. Do you support Tobacco-Free Parks and Rec in Swain County?
yes no
19. Are you in favor of Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways in Bryson City and Swain County? (i.e. vehicle-free, multi-use pathways for activities such as walking, jogging, biking, and dog-walking)
yes no Comments: _____
20. If Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways existed in Bryson City would you and/or your family use them?
yes no
21. Ideally, where would you like to see Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways in Swain County?

We do not need your name, but please tell us....

I am: male female

My age is: under 25 25-34 35-54 55-64 65+ years old

I live: in the Town of Bryson City east of town west of town north of town
 south of town

Please return to: Parks and Recreation Department or Administration Building, 101 Mitchell Street, Bryson City, NC 28713 or mail to P.O. Box 2321, Bryson City, NC 28713 no later than February 15, 2018

2017/18 Community Survey Questionnaire Results

Total Surveyed: 1,167 teenagers and adults

Conducted 12/15/17 – 03/01/18

1. List two improvements you would like to see the Swain County Recreation Department make in the near future? (Include any details you may have).

Pool Expansion/Indoor/New/Repairs	249	27.82%
Indoor Rec Center Expansion/Improve	122	13.30%
Park Expansion/Improvements	102	11.40%
Greenways/Walking Trails	51	5.70%
Playground Expansion/Improve	48	5.36%
Bike Path Expansion/Development	43	4.80%
Soccer Field Expansion/Improve	20	2.23%

2. Is there a need for additional programs and activities?

Yes	962	82.05%
No	199	18.22%

3. How can we improve the pool?

New/Expanded/Indoor	260	26.34%
Expanded/Improved Restrooms	80	8.10%
Expanded Hours/Season	79	8.00%
Diving Board	53	5.37%
Creation of Kids Pool	49	4.96%
Creation of Year Round Pool	28	2.84%
Addition of Shady Rest Areas	17	1.72%
Additional Lifeguards	17	1.72%

4. How can we improve the Recreation Center?

Construct New/Expanded Building	104	11.49%
Expand Activities/Programs	101	10.71%
Replace Floor	62	6.85%
Expand Equipment	54	5.97%
Expand Basketball	36	3.98%

5. How can we improve the ball fields?

Improved Seating	120	14.83%
Expanded/Improved fields	134	17.80%

Improved Dugouts	42	5.19%
Improved Restrooms	32	3.96%
Improved Lighting	26	3.21%

6. How can we improve the pavilions?

Improved/Enhanced Restrooms	119	22.66%
Additional and Larger Pavilions	48	9.14%
Expanded Seating/Tables	46	8.77%
Improved Lighting	38	7.24%

7. How can we improve the tennis courts?

Expand Courts	50	6.93%
Improved Lighting	49	6.80%
Improved Surface	49	6.80%
Replace Nets	47	6.52%

8. How can we improve the trails?

Improve Existing Trails	192	23.33%
Expand Number of Trails	168	20.41%
Improved Lighting	66	8.02%
Pave Existing Trails	20	2.43%

9. Do we need to create a new park facility in Swain?

Yes	684	65.27%
No	377	35.97%

(What amenities and programs should this park offer?)

Indoor/Year Round Pool	98	12.89%
Children's Playground/Activities	92	12.11%
Walking/Biking Paths	62	8.16%
Basketball Courts	25	3.29%

10. Would you be interested in attending events and festivals if a County Park were developed at Inspiration Park on Hyatt Creek Road?

Yes	816	76.33%
No	259	24.23%

If yes, what type of events would interest you?

Music Performances/Concerts	221	35.89%
Festivals/County Fair	125	22.56%
Special Events	104	18.77%

11. Would you be interested in disc golf facilities and participate in a league program?

Yes	423	35.35%
No	685	62.10%
No Answer	64	

12. Would you be interested in seeing the indoor recreation facility expanded?

Yes	962	88.34%
No	131	12.03%
No Answer	78	

13. Would you like to see expanded access to the Tuckasegee River for fishing, kayaking, boating, rafting, etc.?

Yes	895	80.27%
No	220	19.73%
No Answer	52	

If yes, how often would you use it?

Never	157	15.04%
Occasionally	340	32.57%
Once/month	187	17.91%
Once/week	213	20.40%
More than once week	147	14.08%
No Answer	123	

14. Would you like to see Swain County develop a lake access park on the shore of Fontana Lake?

Yes	932	83.66%
No	182	16.34%
No Answer	53	

15. Would you like to see the Island Park area enhanced in terms of park amenities?

Yes	930	82.96%
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No	191	17.04%
No Answer	46	

16. Would you like to see any other downtown recreation/park developments in Bryson City?

Yes	863	79.17%
No	227	20.83%
No Answer	77	

17. What other suggestions or park improvements would you like to see the County implement?

More Parks	126	16.87%
More Trails/Greenway	92	12.31%
Indoor Pool	38	5.09%
Expand and Enhance Indoor Rec Center	23	3.08%

18. Do you support Tobacco-Free Parks and Rec in Swain County?

Yes	1,021	89.96%
No	119	10.48%
No Answer	32	

19. Are you in favor of Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways in Bryson City and Swain County? (i.e. vehicle-free, multi-use pathways for activities such as walking, jogging, biking, and dog-walking)

Yes	1,080	94.90%
No	67	5.89%
No Answer	29	

20. If Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways existed in Bryson City would you and/or your family use them?

Yes	1,035	91.51%
No	101	8.93%
No Answer	36	

21. Ideally, where would you like to see Safe Multiuse Pathways and Greenways in Swain County?

Within Town of Bryson City	68	21.03%
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Along Riverfront	67	20.88%
Deep Creek Area	48	12.94%

We do not need your name, but please tell us....

I am:	Male	360	31.11%
	Female	802	69.32%
	No Answer	5	

My age is:	under 25	238	20.57%
	25-34	403	34.83%
	35-54	305	26.36%
	55-64	142	12.27%
	65+ years old	79	7.17%
	No Answer	0	

I live:	___ in the Town of Bryson City	324	28.47%
	___ East of town	259	22.76%
	___ West of town	400	35.15%
	___ North of town	109	9.58%
	___ South of town	65	5.71%
	No Answer	10	

Income Level (Household Family Income, in dollars)

Less than \$10,000	85	7.54%
10,000 – 14,999	95	8.42%
15,000 – 24,999	221	19.59%
25,000 – 34,999	163	14.45%
35,000 – 49,999	241	21.37%
50,000 – 74,999	180	15.96%
75,000 – 99,999	80	7.10%
100,000 – 149,999	40	3.55%
150,000 – 199,999	15	1.33%
200,000 or more	8	.71%
No Response	39	