



**Rutherfordton**  
NORTH CAROLINA

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**2018**

**Parks and Recreation Master Plan**



Adopted June 6, 2018

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# Acknowledgments

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# Table of Contents

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<b>Plan Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Purpose and Scope</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1. Review of Demographic, Physical, and Historical Characteristics</b>	<b>5</b>
Introduction	
<b>Physical Characteristics</b>	
Location	
Geography	
Existing Land Use	
Future Land Use	<b>6</b>
Floodplains	
Infrastructure	
Historic Characteristics	<b>8</b>
<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>	<b>9</b>
Population Characteristics	
Socio-Economic Characteristics	<b>10</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Section 2. Inventory and Analysis of Existing Recreation Facilities and Programming</b>	<b>12</b>
Introduction	
<b>Facilities</b>	
Crestview Park	
Second Street Park	<b>16</b>
Main Street Park	<b>18</b>
Kiwanis Park	<b>20</b>
Greenway System	<b>23</b>
Rutherfordton Clubhouse	<b>25</b>
Rutherfordton Golf Course	<b>27</b>
Organized Sports Leagues	<b>28</b>
<b>Budget</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Section 3. Community Needs Assessment</b>	<b>30</b>
Introduction	
Development	





Methodology	
Survey Results	31
<b>Summary</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Section 4. Recommendations and Implementation</b>	<b>47</b>
Introduction	
Facility Linkage	48
Walking Opportunities	
Explore New Park Opportunities	49
Park Maintenance	50
Funding Sources	51
Partnerships	52
Information and Communication	54
Enhance Existing Programming and Increase Programming Options	55
Rutherfordton Clubhouse Renovations	56
Crestview Park Renovations	57
Rutherfordton Golf Course Improvements	58
Establish Kiwanis Park as a Gateway	59
Other Capital Projects	60
<b>Summary</b>	<b>61</b>
Section 4 Summary Chart	62
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Map 1</b> Recreation Areas	
<b>Map 2</b> Floodplain Areas	
<b>Map 3</b> Five Minute Walk Map	
<b>Map 4</b> Ten Minute Walk Map	
<b>Map 5</b> Fifteen Minute Walk Map	
<b>Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey</b>	
<b>Workshop Questionnaire</b>	
<b>Additional Park Pictures</b>	



# Introduction

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Contained herein is the Town of Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This is an update to the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Town of Rutherfordton in 2005. This updated plan involved documenting and analyzing data, taking detailed inventory of existing facilities, conducting a survey of users, and the work of a volunteer committee that is committed to providing quality parks and recreation facilities and programming to the citizens of Rutherfordton and Rutherford County.

Currently, the Town of Rutherfordton provides passive recreation opportunities for citizens of Rutherfordton and Rutherford County (as do the municipalities of Chimney Rock, Lake Lure, Bostic, Ellenboro, Ruth, and Rutherford County). Passive recreation means that these local governments provide parks and recreation areas for individual usage and organized leagues but do not have full time staffs or offer programming. The nearby towns of Spindale and Forest City offer active recreation departments.

Through this planning process, it is envisioned that Rutherfordton will be able to meet current and future needs for parks and recreation. It is also envisioned that Rutherford County will take more of an active role in recreation to take some of the resource load off the municipalities. Hopefully, all of the local government entities within Rutherford County will work together to assist and complement each other to offer more diverse types of recreation and to help each other meet future needs.

*Why Plan for Parks and Recreation?* Because parks are valuable and desired.

According to City Parks Alliance, there is a public health, environmental, community, and educational value to public parks. “If you want to stay heart healthy, then communing with nature at your local park is a good first step. People living near parks have greater opportunities to be physically active by running, walking or participating in other heart happy activities” (City Parks Alliance - <http://www.cityparksalliance.org/why-urban-parks-matter/public-health-value>). Even a passive, non-recreational park can achieve many public health benefits. Public parks provide opportunities for people of all ages to get in touch with nature without having to travel far from home. Parks are a valuable benefit that everyone can share.



Parks and open spaces also have an economic impact on neighborhoods, homeowners, and local governments. Active Living Research found that “walkable neighborhoods, parks and open spaces can generate economic benefits to local governments, home owners and businesses through increasing property values and related property tax revenues” (Active Living Research - <https://activelivingresearch.org/economic-benefits-open-space-recreation-facilities-and-walkable-community-design>). Additionally, the National Parks and Recreation Association determined that “...parks are one of the most direct ways to put a dent in the approximately \$147 billion direct and indirect costs of the obesity epidemic” (National Research and Park Papers: The Key Benefits).

The Town of Rutherfordton not only recognizes the public health, environmental, community, educational and economic values of public parks, but understands citizens’ desire for well-planned parks, open spaces, and recreation opportunities. It is not enough to keep parks maintained and operating - which is a big operation in and of itself, but it is important for the town to take a close look at its parks’ long-term needs and the needs, opinions, and interests of those who use them. This plan will help keep Rutherfordton’s parks aligned with the constantly changing world around them.

This plan is designed to be implemented over a number of years and should be serviceable through the year 2028.

## **Purpose and Scope**

Rutherfordton’s 2005 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan planning process began from a recommendation in the Rutherford County Land Use Plan which was completed in 2001. Issue #5 within the Land Use Plan is “The need for recreational opportunities in Rutherford County”. The goal to be addressed from this issue is “to inventory all facilities, programs and participants throughout the County to determine what needs exist, and determine how those needs are to be addressed”. The Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Steering Committee achieved that goal in 2005 and recognized the importance of developing a modern update.

The main purpose of this document is to provide the Town of Rutherfordton with an accurate, usable plan to guide its actions and decisions regarding:

- Future parks and recreation programs and facilities
- Renovation of existing parks and/or facilities



- Cooperative efforts in providing recreation needs
- Possible land acquisitions
- Provide assistance in obtaining grants

This document sets forth a plan for the parks within Rutherfordton's municipal boundary but will benefit anyone who uses or will use Rutherfordton's park system. The recreational needs survey did not limit input to those residing within Rutherfordton's municipal boundary – just as access to the parks themselves are not limited.

The Rutherfordton Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan is organized into four sections:

- Review of physical, demographic and historical characteristics
- Inventory and analysis of existing recreation facilities
- Community survey and needs assessment
- Recommendations and implementation

## Methodology

The information utilized for this plan was gathered from a number of sources including the Town of Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey, The U.S. Census Bureau, North Carolina State Data Center, North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rutherford County Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Rutherford County Economic Development Department, North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Survey, and town staff.

An inventory of existing programming and facilities was carried out over the course of the planning process.

The Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey, mailed to every household in Rutherfordton through rural mail routes, was developed and performed during the planning process.

The Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Committee representing a cross section of interest and expertise assisted the planner in the preparation of the Plan. The



committee's duties and responsibilities included the following:

- Assisting with the creation and review of the community survey
- Analyzing existing programming and facilities
- Identifying the issues, strengths and weaknesses of Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation
- Assisting the planner in formulating recommendations
- Reviewing the draft plan and recommendations





# Section 1

## Review of Demographic, Physical, and Historical Characteristics

### Introduction

The analysis of physical, demographic and economic characteristics of a municipality is very important when planning for future growth and development. This is especially true when considering parks and recreation. By reviewing and analyzing past and present data and projecting future data, we should be able to determine what impacts the Town of Rutherfordton may expect regarding parks and recreation.

### Physical Characteristics

#### Location

The Town of Rutherfordton is located in the central portion of Rutherford County at latitude North 35 degrees 22 minutes 04 seconds, and longitude West -81 degrees 57 minutes 26 seconds at the intersections of US Highways 74 Business and 221, and North Carolina Highway 108. Rutherfordton is bounded to the east by the Town of Spindale. Rutherfordton is approximately 60 miles east of Asheville, 60 miles west of Charlotte, and 25 miles north of Spartanburg, South Carolina.

#### Geography

Rutherfordton is located within a geographic zone of the State typically referred to as foothills (gently rolling terrain). Elevations within Rutherfordton range from approximately 780 feet above sea level at the Rutherfordton Wastewater Treatment Plant, to over 1,100 feet above sea level at RS Middle School. Underlying rock formations are generally gneiss and schist from the Paleozoic Era, and because much of the Town is developed, much of the typical Appalachian hardwood forests have been replaced by roads, buildings, and other landscaping. All 4.02 square miles of the Town of Rutherfordton are located within the Broad River Basin.



## Climate

Rutherfordton is located within a climate zone in North Carolina known as the Thermal Belt. Summers in Rutherfordton are typically moderately warm and very humid. Winters are moderately cold. Precipitation is evenly distributed throughout the year. According to data collected from the Southeast Regional Climate Center, the average annual temperature is 58 degrees, with an average high temperature of 71 degrees, and an average low temperature of 45 degrees. The highest temperature of 107 degrees was recorded in August of 1999. The lowest temperature of -8 degrees was recorded in January of 1982. In the summer months the average high temperature is 88 degrees, and the average low temperature is 63 degrees. In the winter months the average high temperature is 53 degrees, and the average low temperature is 28 degrees.

The yearly precipitation average is 50 inches, and is generally spread out evenly throughout the year. The heaviest average monthly rainfall amounts occurred during the months of March (5.26 inches), and January (4.7 inches). The lowest monthly averages occurred during the months of April (3.63 inches), and December (3.76 inches). The average annual snowfall amount is 5.5 inches with the heaviest monthly averages occurring in January (2.9 inches), February (1.4 inches), and March (0.9 inches).

## Existing Land Use

While most of Rutherford County would be classified as rural, Rutherfordton would be classified as developed (urban environment with normal municipal services) and urban transitional (outlying municipal areas being developed for urban purposes). Rutherfordton has a mix of several residential zoning classifications, several commercial zoning classifications, and two manufacturing zoning classifications. The older downtown commercial growth has occurred along US Highway 221. Newer highway commercial growth has occurred south along US Highway 221, and along US Highway 74 Business. Industrial areas are located along Laurel Hill Drive, Executive Drive and Industrial Park Road in the southeastern quadrant of Rutherfordton. According to the 2016 ACS data, Rutherfordton has a population density of 1,010 persons per square mile.



## Future Land Use

It is anticipated that land uses will continue to intensify within both the municipal boundaries, and transitional areas around Rutherfordton. Extensions of water and sewer utilities will encourage growth. One trend that should be noted within Rutherford County is that most residential growth in the last 10 year census period occurred outside of municipal boundaries. None of the municipalities of Rutherfordton, Chimney Rock, and Lake Lure increased their populations in 2016 over 2010 US Census. It is anticipated the commercial and industrial growth will continue where water and sewer utilities are available. It is also anticipated that residential growth will continue to dominate rural areas outside of the municipalities of Rutherford County. Current projections by the US Census show little population growth through 2020 US Census, less than 0.2% annual growth.

## Floodplains

The Town of Rutherfordton has flood plains that are delineated on the National Flood Insurance Rate Maps. For most locations these flood prone areas are within prescribed elevations of known streams or creeks. These maps were updated using LIDAR (Laser Imaging Detection and Ranging) technology. These maps should continue to be used in the future for creating greenways or open space along creeks, streams and rivers. (Greenways along floodplains are also recommended within the Rutherford County Hazard Mitigation Plan to help mitigate flood damage).—see map 2.

## Infrastructure

Infrastructure is typically defined as utilities (water, sewer, electricity, gas) and roads.

*Electricity* - Duke Power Company supplies Rutherfordton's electric utilities. This utility also serves areas outside of the Town's corporate limits.

*Water* - Broad River Water Authority (of which Rutherfordton is a member) supplies the Town's water utilities. This utility is available in areas outside of the Town's corporate limits.



*Natural Gas* - Natural gas where available is furnished by Public Service Company of North Carolina.

*Wastewater* - The Town of Rutherfordton operates a 3 million gallon per day wastewater treatment facility with a collection system that covers approximately 5 square miles. This system also serves the Town of Ruth, and other areas outside of the municipality. The Town may also soon be treating sewage from eastern Polk County.

*Streets, Roads and Sidewalks* - There is a large number of streets, roads and sidewalks within the corporate limits of Rutherfordton. The majority of streets are maintained by the Town of Rutherfordton. Some of the streets and roads falling under state maintenance include; Main Street, Washington Street, Mountain Street, Railroad Avenue, Charlotte Road, Maple Street, Ridgecrest Street, Industrial Drive, and Edwards Street. Rutherfordton maintains all of the sidewalks within the corporate limits. We will discuss sidewalks in another section of this plan.

## **Historic Characteristics**

Although Rutherford County was officially formed in 1779, there is much history dating back to the pre-revolutionary period. Prior to white settlers, the area was part of the Great Cherokee Nation. Although Indians did not have permanent settlements here, there were many small encampments and trails that were used to move and trade with their lands to the west and the north. During the 1700's white settlers from the east and south began to filter through using the Indian trails.

According to the History of Rutherford County, written by Nancy Ellen Ferguson, Tryon County was formed from Mecklenburg County in 1768. In April of 1779 Lincoln and Rutherford County's were formed from Tryon County. Rutherford County was named in honor of Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford who fought in the Revolutionary War.

The original County seat was Gilberttown (located approximately 2 miles north of present-day Rutherfordton), which also served as an encampment for the British and Tory Troops under Major Patrick Ferguson. In 1787 the County seat was moved to Rutherford Town (which later became Rutherfordton). The General Assembly appointed a commission of five men: Thomas Rowland, William Nevill, Felix Walker, James Miller, and James Whiteside, to select a new site for



the County Seat. This commission purchased fifty acres of land from James Adair located on a hill with a good water supply. Just as Rutherford County was the parent county of the sixteen western counties in North Carolina, Rutherfordton is the oldest County Seat.

The Bechtler Mint was originally located in Rutherfordton, and the Town of Rutherfordton is the convergence of several trails including the Overmountain Victory Trail.

## Demographic Characteristics

### Population Characteristics

According to the 2010 US Census, the Town of Rutherfordton’s population was 4,213. Rutherfordton Township’s population was 13,107. Rutherford County’s population was 67,810. Over the past forty years there have been substantial changes to these populations (see table below).

Location	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Rutherfordton	3,245	3,424	3,617	4,131	4,213
Rutherfordton Tnsp.	10,593	10,684	10,766	12,080	13,107
Rutherford County	47,337	53,787	56,918	62,899	67,810

Rutherford County has experienced a 43.2% increase in population since 1970. The US Census Bureau is projecting 0.02% annual growth rate through the year 2035 estimating that Rutherford County’s population will be 68,312.

Rutherfordton’s population has grown by 29.8% since 1970. However, the population only increased 100 people from 2000 to 2010. Recent estimates see this trend continuing with a projected population of 4,150 in 2022. This is also consistent with NC Demographer’s projections for the County which sees an increase of only 560 people from 2010 to 2037, or an annual increase of 0.04%. It should be noted that the County is still rising out of the 2008 Recession and recent investments in the County and surrounding Region could substantially alter these projections within the next five years. This Plan will remain optimistic and plan for positive population growth.

Since some of the recreation participants (mostly league participants such as Little League baseball and football) live outside of the municipal boundaries of the Town of Rutherfordton, we will look at the populations that live with a 5-, 10- or 15- minute drive of Rutherfordton (see Maps 3 - 5). Within 5 minutes, there





are 4,238 people and 1,919 households. 16% live below the poverty line. Within a 10-minute drive, there are 13,363 people (or 20.1% of Rutherford County). They represent 5,864 households. 13.1% live below the poverty level.

Rutherfordton's 2015 median age of 49.5 is higher than Rutherford County's (43.3), and higher than the state average of 38.0. It is estimated that by the next census period the Rutherfordton median age will be over 50 years of age.

1,046 persons (or 24.9%) within Rutherfordton are between the ages of 0 to 19. 1,126 persons (or 26.8%) within Rutherfordton are between the ages of 20 to 44. 1,097 persons (or 26.1%) within Rutherfordton are between the ages of 45 to 64. 933 persons (or 22.2%) within Rutherfordton are age 65 and older.

Regarding race, 3,032 (72.2%) persons are white, 465 (11.1%) are African American, 251 (6.0%) are of some other race, 179 or 4.3% are of two or more races, 267 (6.4%) are Hispanic, and less than 10 persons are of either Asian, or American Indian descents.

### ***Socio-Economic Characteristics***

According to the 2016 ACS data, Rutherford County's labor force participation rate has decreased 12.4 percentage points or 65% to 52.6% from 1990 to 2016. However, the actual number of people working has barely budged, from 29,083 workers age 16 and older in 1990 to 28,851 workers 16 and older (2016 ACS data), which suggests that much of the population increase over those years were people that were retirement-aged.

87.1% of the population in Rutherfordton has received a high school diploma, compared to 81% in Rutherford County, and 86.3% in North Carolina.

23.4% of the population in Rutherfordton has received a bachelor's degree, compared to 16.7% in Rutherford County, and 19.6% in North Carolina.

According to the 2010 US Census, the manufacturing sector was the primary employer in the County with 40.5% of the workforce. The service sector was second with 15.7%. The retail sector was third with 14.9%, and the government sector was fourth with 13.9%. Today, the government sector leads with 17.0% of the workforce. Manufacturing is second with 13.3% and then health care and social services sector and retail trade with 13.2 % and 12.5%, respectively (EMSI 2017).



It is projected that Rutherford County will continue to lose manufacturing jobs but not at the 2008-2010 rate. In addition, there will be some minimal job replacement due to gains in service and small business jobs. Because of changes in international trade, it is unlikely that textile manufacturing (which dominated Rutherford County's economy) will be resurrected. Instead, it is believed that the manufacturing sector will transition into advanced manufacturing with smaller gains in other industries such as data centers, service and health care.

The Town of Rutherfordton has several industries, a vibrant downtown, and several outlying commercial areas along Railroad Avenue, Charlotte Road, and US Highway 221 South. However, it should be noted that a large part of Rutherfordton's economy relies on it being the County seat, as well as the home to Rutherford Regional Medical Center.

Given these facts, it is not surprising that the median household income for Rutherfordton in 2009 at \$52,448 was higher than either the County or State's median at \$35,364 and \$45,570, respectively.

## **Section 1 Summary**

Rutherfordton's economy has changed plenty since before the Great Recession. As Rutherfordton and the surround area continue to transition from a manufacturing-dominated economy, a focus on quality of life will be integral to maintaining growth and retaining current residents. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, "just as water, sewer, and public safety are considered essential public services, parks are vitally important to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community, ensuring the health of families and youth, and contributing to the economic and environmental well-being of a community and a region." (<https://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Advocacy/Resources/Parks-Recreation-Essential-Public-Services-January-2010.pdf>)

The Town of Rutherfordton has laid the ground work and is maintaining a healthy parks and recreation system. Infrastructure and Town services are in place. Hopefully, by taking advantage of these studies and enhancing its recreational and cultural resources, the Town of Rutherfordton will continue to make positive strides into the future. Regardless of the population estimates used to project future growth in Rutherfordton, good planning practices will help maintain the town's positive trends and guide future growth.



# Section 2

## Inventory and Analysis of Existing Facilities and Programming

### Introduction

The Town of Rutherfordton offers numerous recreational amenities at various locations. In this section, each park location and its amenities will be examined. Park and recreation areas are noted on Map 1 in the appendix. Additional park photos can be found in the appendix as well.

### Crestview Park

Crestview Park is a multi-purpose, recreation-focused park located off of Park Street, between Crestview Street and US Highway 221. Crestview is Rutherfordton's largest and most heavily used park. It not only provides recreation opportunities to visitors but offers youth sports leagues and schools facilities for a variety of recreational programming.

#### *History*

The Crestview Park land was originally purchased by Dr. Ernest Yelton to donate to the Rutherford County Board of Education for the construction of a new elementary school. At the time, the Board of Education was not sold on the idea of new school construction, and voted not to proceed with this plan. Dr. Yelton in turn donated the property to the Town of Rutherfordton (two tracts: one in 1965, the other in 1967) with the stipulation that the property be used as a recreational park.



#### **Amenities**

- 3 Regulation Little League Fields (200')
- 1 Regulation Senior League Field (500')
- 1 T Ball Field (75-100')
- 1/3 Mile Paved Walking Path



- Concessions Stand
- 2 Bathrooms
- 2 Outdoor Basketball Courts
- 4 Asphalt Tennis Courts
- Children's Play Area (assorted equipment)
- 1 picnic shelter with tables)
- 1 Multipurpose Field
- Bleachers near baseball fields, tennis courts
- Benches near playgrounds
- 2 grills (next to picnic shelter)
- 100 Marked Parking Spaces (Additional Unmarked)
- 1 Overflow Parking Lot
- Free High-speed Wi-Fi
- Creek Access to Mile Branch



## Lighting

All field and court lighting automatically turns off at 10:30p.m. Tennis and Basketball Court visitors can turn lights on manually before 10:30 each evening. When Little League is in season, the lights for the baseball fields are synced to the team schedules. All amenities are lit except for T-Ball field and multipurpose Field. There is additional lighting on the 1/3rd Mile Walking Path and over the Children's Play Area.

## Location of Amenities

The Children's Play Area is on the west end of the park, north of the parking lot and Crestview St. entrance. The Picnic Shelter and Grills are adjacent to the Children's Play Area. The three Little League Fields (200'), bathrooms and concession stand are grouped together on the west end of the park, south of the parking lot and Crestview Street entrance. There is no sidewalk feeding into the park on the west end near Crestview Street.

East of the Little League Fields are the Basketball Courts and T-ball Field. The





Basketball Court is along the paved path and the T-ball Field is behind the Basketball Courts, closer to Mile Creek. Farther east are the Tennis Courts and Overflow Parking Lot. On the east end of the overflow parking lot is the Senior Field (500').

North and west of the Senior Field, across Park St is the Multi-purpose Field. The 1/3rd Mile Walking Track travels around the multi-purpose field, connecting to the Children's Play Area and to a sidewalk along Park Street that crosses US 221 for convenient access to the Purple Martin Greenway.



## Ball Field Amenities

The baseball fields include a dirt-covered infield and grass-covered outfield. Each field has two dugouts adjacent to the infield except for the T-ball field which instead has a bench on either side of the infield. The Little League fields (200') can be easily viewed from the slope in between the fields and concession stand which is held up by a retaining wall, protected at the top by a chain-link fence. There are two sets of bleachers for each Little League field along the paved path. The T-ball field has one set of bleachers on the East side of the infield. The Senior Field has one set of bleachers on the west side of the infield. All fields are irrigated.

## Paved Surfaces

The marked parking spaces provide a paved, angled parking lot that creates a one-way loop connecting to Crestview St at one end and Park St at the other. Park St is paved all the way to US 221. There is a paved sidewalk that connects the marked parking spaces to the concession stand and little league baseball fields. A paved path between the concession stand and the Little



League baseball fields continues east to the basketball courts, ending at the unpaved overflow lot. The unpaved overflow parking lot connects to Park St and provides access to the Tennis Courts and Senior Field. The 1/3rd Mile Walking Path around the Multi-purpose Field is paved and connects to the marked parking spaces through the Children's Play Area.





## Children's Play Area

There are two playgrounds in the Children's Play Area. One is considerably larger than the other and both are separated by a paved path which leads to the 1/3rd Mile Walking Path. Both playground surfaces are mulched regularly and bordered by recently installed plastic barriers. Near the larger playground (which was installed in 2010) are two additional mulched surfaces. One contains a swing set and a climbing dome, the other contains a swing set. A third swing set is adjacent to the smaller playground which is on the same side of the path as the picnic shelter.



## Programming Use of Amenities

Rutherfordton Little League and RBA (Rutherford Baseball Academy) regularly use the baseball fields. Rutherfordton Little League assists in Little League Ball Field maintenance. Lake Lure Classical Academy uses the Senior League Field. RS Central High School and RS Middle School use the Tennis Courts regularly. The Tennis Courts can also be reserved through the Town Clerk's Office. Additionally, Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy uses the parking lot as a school bus drop-off and pick-up location.





## Second Street Park

Second Street Park is a small community park located off of East Second Street. It consists of .17 acres and is accessed by Levi Street and Recreation Street.

### History

Second Street Park was developed when the property was conveyed to the Annie Mock Trustees and the Women's Civic Club of Rutherfordton in 1947. This property is currently listed as owned by the Women's Civic Club of Rutherfordton. It should also be noted that because the Town of Rutherfordton does not own or lease this park, this park would not be eligible for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund monies.



Second Street Park serves the recreational needs of residents east of Hwy 221 (Main St). Without Second Street Park, residents east of Main Street would have to travel over 1.5 miles to Crestview Park for access to a public basketball court and playground. The park sees low usage now which could be due to a lack of children living in nearby dwellings. Second Street Park serves an important role to residents living east of Main Street - it offers them a public recreational facility within walking distance.

### Amenities

- 1 Basketball Court
- Children's Play Area
- 2 benches
- 1 Water Fountain
- Unmarked Parking for 10 to 15 Vehicles located on an adjacent, privately owned parcel





## **Basketball Court**

The full-sized basketball court is located at the edge of a slope and is protected on the sloped side (also the north and west edge of the park) by a high fence. There is an occupied house behind the goal post on the west end of the court. Behind that post, the fence height is extended almost to the height of the goal post. This fence is likely high enough to keep basketballs out of the adjacent yard most of the time but there is still a risk of hitting the house or players having to retrieve a ball from the yard. There are two long benches between the court and the Children's Play Area.

## **Children's Play Area**

The Children's Play Area includes a small playground with one covered slide, one uncovered slide, a climbing area and a tunnel. The playground is noticeably older than both playgrounds at Crestview Park. The Children's Play Area is mulched regularly and bordered by plastic barriers. A chain-link fence separates the Children's Play Area from the adjacent Recreation Street to the south and the privately owned, occupied lot to the west.

## **Additional Amenities**

A streetlight directly over the Children's Play Area partially illuminates the basketball court but is not enough to consider the court lit for proper use after dark. The town-maintained water fountain is between the privately-owned parking area and Children's Play Area. There is a small slope between the Basketball Court and the more elevated Children's Play Area but no paved path or stairs between the two.

## **Location**

There are several dilapidated, abandoned buildings across Recreation Street from Second Street Park. The town is well aware of the abandoned buildings and is taking steps to tidy up the area. It is also worth considering the park's proximity to the new US 221 bypass (R2232). The bypass has been funded and will likely be constructed within the next 10 years. After construction of the bypass, East Second Street will end about two tenths of a mile uphill from the park at a cul-de-sac. The park will still be connected to downtown via East Second Street but will no longer be connected to Railroad Ave and the Middle School to the east. There are no sidewalks or bikeways feeding into the park.





## Main Street Park

Main Street Park is a small downtown park that was created by closing First Street between Main Street and Central Street. Main Street Park consists of .08 acres that is maintained as open space for the downtown area.

### History

Main Street Park was established in 1979 by the Rutherfordton Town Council and The Appearance Commission of 1979 with additional support from Isothermal Garden Club, Rutherfordton Garden Club, New Cherokee Corporation, Community Bank & Trust, Rutherfordton Kiwanis Club, Rutherfordton Appearance Commission, and Rutherford Town. There is an historical plaque at the park explaining this which was placed in 1991. Main Street Park serves as a gathering space for downtown and contributes to downtown's status as a destination for town residents and visitors.

### Amenities

- 6 Concrete Tables
- 8 Wooden Benches
- 2 Brick Planters
- 3 Moveable Planters
- 10 Metal Arches
- 2 Historical Information Kiosks
- 1 Directional Kiosks
- 6 Banner Flag Posts
- Various Hanging Art



### Location

Main Street Park is two-sided. The side that fronts Main Street reflects the side that fronts Central St. The majority of the park has a decorative brick surface with a sidewalk-sized concrete strip along the south side. There is a sidewalk along Main Street that accesses the park but no sidewalk along Central Street. The commercial buildings on both sides have windows that face the park. The building on the south side has an entrance facing the park.



## Metal Arches

At each entrance is a decorative arch with a lighted “Main Street Park” sign. Behind the decorative entrance arch on each side are 4 additional arches, each connected and supported by 6 decorative posts. The additional arches contain smaller lights that illuminate the middle of the park.



## Kiosks

There are two Historical Information Kiosks the center of the park and stand in a patch of grass, bordered on all sides by the brick surface. They explain the history of Rutherfordton and Bechtler’s Mint. The directional kiosk on the Main Street side presents an inventory of downtown’s restaurants and shops and provides an aerial map of downtown.

## Planters

There is a brick planter at both park entrances between the entrance arch and additional arches. They are permanent and unmovable. There are moveable planters on the north side of the park.



## Art Exhibits

The Rutherford Arts Council periodically changes the art exhibits in the park. This provides exposure to the nonprofit arts council, art education for park visitors, and variety to the park’s appearance. In addition to visual art, an outdoor stage is often set up on the Central Street end of the park to provide music at town events.





## Kiwanis Park

Kiwanis Park is a large, passive park adjacent to downtown Rutherfordton, providing attractive open space in the middle of town. The property consists of seven separate tracts of land totaling 3.7 acres

### History

Kiwanis Park was donated to the Town of Rutherfordton between the years of 1995 and 1997 by the Kiwanis Club of Rutherfordton. Prior to the park's donation to the town, Bill and Peggy McBrayer and Viola Cowan Young donated the underutilized, overgrown land to the Kiwanis Club of Rutherfordton. The Kiwanis Club of Rutherfordton was not interested in owning and maintaining property but wanted to see the land utilized to its full potential while preserving its natural beauty as an asset to town residents. A stipulation to the property's donation to the town was for it to be utilized as a passive, non-recreation park.

Before the park was established, the seven parcels were badly overgrown. The overgrowth presented security and safety issues for the town. Several sewer lines and an unnamed stream converge on the property, making the land difficult to develop. Currently, the Town of Rutherfordton is working with an outside contractor to develop a Kiwanis Park Master Plan to help guide this park's enormous potential.

### Amenities

- 5 Picnic Tables
- 2 Grills
- 1 Swing set
- 3 Benches
- Driveway Access
- Entrance Gate
- 2 Wooden Bridges
- Stream and Creek Access
- Greenway Access
- 5 Marked Parking Spaces
- Pet Waster Bag Dispenser with Waste Basket





## Location

The Kiwanis Park gate is located at the corner of Main and Green Streets. A park sign with the Kiwanis Club logo is by the gate along with a short fence. The marked, parallel parking spaces are along Green Street near the entrance gate. It is a short walk downhill from the gate to the bridge over the unnamed stream but there is no marked path between the two. The entrance gate area is well landscaped, fed by sidewalks on Green Street and Main Street, and clearly visible from the road, however, it is not clear that this is supposed to be the main entrance to the park.

At the intersection of Toms Street and Seventh Street at the South end of the park, Toms Street appears to continue, unpaved, into Kiwanis Park up to the center picnic table area. Many park visitors likely use this as their entrance to the park. There are no sidewalks along Seventh Street or Toms Street feeding the park or marked parking spaces, but it is not difficult to park or walk along Toms or Seventh due to the lower volume of traffic as compared to Green and Main Streets.



The east side of the park is along Cleghorn Street. There are no amenities between Cleghorn Creek and Cleghorn Street – just a grassy area. At the west end of the park along Main Street is an old wall protected by a metal fence. The wall supports a hillside and the fence prevents pedestrians along Main Street from walking directly into the park without going through the entrance gate or walking down Seventh Street. The wall does not pose any noticeable safety concerns.

There are several churches within walking distance and a Boy Scout Hut next to the park along Toms Street. The Boy Scout Troop often uses the park's open space for games and training campouts. KidSenses Museum is in walking distance from the park. When school trips come to Rutherfordton to visit KidSenses, they will often eat lunch in Kiwanis Park, using the Toms Street driveway to park the buses. The Kid Tracks Scavenger Hunt Main Street Safari begins in the park with a decorative brochure and map kiosk by the bridge over the unnamed stream.



## Picnic Shelters and Grills

The picnic tables and grills are scattered throughout the park. Three of the tables are together in the center of the park near the driveway access from Toms St. There is one table by the swing and another in between the entrance gate and the unnamed stream. The tables can be moved around and are often repaired by the Boy Scout Troop.

## Bridges

There are two bridges in Kiwanis Park. The largest bridge connects the Green Street parking spaces and entrance gate access to the rest of the park over the unnamed stream. The other connects the area near the Toms and Seventh Street intersection to the empty space along Cleghorn Street over Cleghorn Creek.



## Waterways

The unnamed stream travels from the west side of the park to Cleghorn Creek on the east side of the park. It is fed from a pipe that travels under Main Street which is clearly visible from the park. The walls of the stream are eroding and steep in areas – causing a potential safety concern. Cleghorn Creek travels from the north end of the park to the south end at Green Street (and continues down the Purple Martin Greenway corridor). The two waterways intersect near the swing set.

## Greenway Access

The Purple Martin Greenway will travel through Kiwanis Park along Cleghorn Creek. This will greatly affect Kiwanis Park access and will surely make Kiwanis Park one of the key destinations along the Purple Martin which will connect to the Thermal Belt Rail Trail.





## Greenway System

The Town of Rutherfordton has a rapidly expanding greenway system within its municipal boundary. Most notably: the Purple Martin Greenway, which will travel from just north of the Water Treatment Plant to the Thermal Belt Rail Trail. Phases 1, 2, and 3 of the Purple Martin Greenway have seen heavy use and popularity with town residents.

### Purple Martin Greenway

Named after the Purple Martin bird that appeared on General Griffith Rutherford's family crest, the Purple Martin Greenway is Rutherfordton's first natural trail system. Along this trail, you can explore wildlife, creeks, waterfalls, and local plant life. The trail is bike, kid, and pet friendly as well as handicap accessible. Located just off US Hwy 221, south of downtown Rutherfordton, the greenway is a hidden gem that feels like a true wilderness escape yet has the convenience of being close to shopping and restaurants.

Phase 1 opened in the fall of 2015 and includes an easy .5 mile stroll along Cleghorn Creek complete with picnic shelter and a small creek waterfall. The picnic shelter area contains 4 picnic tables, a waste and recycling bin and a Purple Martin sculpture.

Phase 2 launched in 2017 and added .7 mile to the trail, bringing the total length 1.2 miles. Phase 3 added .7 mile in late 2017, extending the trail to almost 2 miles and connecting it to the Charlotte Road which runs perpendicular to downtown.

Amenities along the Purple Martin Trail include a clubhouse with 4 picnic shelters, waste and recycling receptacles, a sculpture of the purple martin bird, and a bridge. Additionally, there are wildlife viewing stations along the trail.





The Purple Martin Trail will run parallel to downtown Rutherfordton's Main Street and will include connections to downtown's shops and restaurants. In the near future, the Purple Martin will continue along Cleghorn Creek, through Kiwanis Park and ultimately connecting to the Thermal Belt Rail Trail. The Purple Martin is a part of the nationally recognized Overmountain Victory Trail system.



## Thermal Belt Rail Trail

The Thermal Belt Rail Trail runs between Forest Hunt School in Forest City and Gilkey, an unincorporated area north of Rutherfordton. The trail is about 13 miles long and will be paved 12ft wide. A significant portion of the rail trail travels through Rutherfordton between Spindale and Ruth.

According to the Thermal Belt Master Plan (completed in 2017), "anticipated benefits of [the completed Thermal Belt Rail Trail] include the creation of a premier linear park/outdoor recreational facility to improve the health and wellness of the community and a vital non-vehicular link between Rutherford County communities..."

The Purple Martin Greenway connecting to the Thermal Belt Rail Trail will create connectivity not only within Rutherfordton town limits but throughout the surrounding area.



After construction of the 12ft wide Thermal Belt Rail Trail, distance markers, bike racks, trail signage, and other amenities - in addition to the benches that are already in place - will be placed along its Rutherfordton portion.





## Rutherfordton Clubhouse

The Rutherfordton Clubhouse is located on Clubhouse Drive off of NC Highway 108, consisting of 3.61 acres. The Rutherfordton Clubhouse is located adjacent to the Rutherfordton Golf Course and the Rutherford Hospital. It serves as one of Rutherfordton's community gathering spaces and a private event space upon reservation.

### History

The Rutherfordton Clubhouse and grounds originally served as the first recreational park for the Town of Rutherfordton. The original tract of land was donated by Rutherford Hospital in 1933. Built in 1937, the project was constructed by a partnership that included the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Town of Rutherfordton, Rutherford Hospital, and other private donors.



Originally, the park included a swimming pool, horseshoe pits, and a picnic shelter. Tennis courts were added later. The pool was closed in the 1980's for health and safety reasons and the tennis courts were converted into a skatepark after new tennis courts were constructed at Crestview Park. The skatepark was later discontinued (in July of 2006) due to vandalism and the Town's inability to provide supervision. The Clubhouse is a log and stone structure, constructed of pine logs that were cut on site.

### Amenities

- 2 Parking lots, over 25 marked parking spaces throughout property
- Unfinished basement with ground-level entrance
- Planned space for elevator shaft
- Upstairs meeting space, recently renovated
- Large stone fireplace
- Commercial Kitchen, recently renovated



- 2 recently renovated bathrooms
- Decorative Foyer
- Large monitor for projections
- Ceiling Fans
- Remote climate control
- Free Wi-Fi throughout



## Common Uses

The Rutherford Clubhouse is often reserved for wedding receptions. The large commercial kitchen, recently renovated bathrooms, adaptable meeting space (ability to move tables and chairs where desired), and rustic charm make this a popular wedding destination. The Clubhouse is often the location for business meetings and other parties. 2018 rates for Clubhouse rental: \$175 on Friday - Sunday, \$115 Monday - Thursday. There is a \$25 discount for multi-day rentals.

## Unfinished Basement

There is ground level access to the Clubhouse basement. The basement is currently unfinished and only used for storage. The basement could make the Clubhouse more popular for wedding events because it would provide adequate dressing room space. There is room for an elevator shaft to be installed in the future if the town decides to renovate the clubhouse basement.



## Potential for Growth

The grounds surrounding the Clubhouse, including the now vacant tennis courts/ former skate park, have the potential to further serve the town's recreational needs. Additionally, there is potential for an outdoor wedding space in front of the Clubhouse.





## Rutherfordton Golf Course

The Rutherfordton Golf Course offers a full-service pro shop with club pro, a snack bar, cart rentals, a putting green, and has parking available to approximately 40 vehicles. The course is 9 holes, 2,787 yards from the white tees, and has a par of 36. The course rating is 33.1 and it has a slope rating of 118 on Bermuda grass. It sits on 45 acres of land in the middle of town and is independently operated by the Rutherfordton Golf Club. The Town of Rutherfordton has provided operational support since it was first donated.

### History

The Rutherfordton Golf Course was originally built by Dr. Henry Norris around 1929 and was privately operated. It is rumored that infamous golf course designer, Donald Ross, contributed to the course design because he was building similar courses in the region at the time. There is no evidence of Ross's contributions to the course design, but the anecdote is still passed down. Between 1936 and 1940, the course was donated by Dr. Norris and his wife to the Town of Rutherfordton along with land from Rutherford Hospital for use as a public course.



For years, course management was housed in the basement of the Rutherfordton Clubhouse. During the 1950's, the emergence of golf carts and heavy course use prompted the golfers to ask for a separate golf course facility. The group of golfers committed to building the space with the stipulation that they would take over the management of the golf course. The town allowed for the Rutherfordton Golf Club to construct a clubhouse and the course was realigned to accommodate the new facility. Though the course was no longer managed by the town, it has remained town property and has always been open to the public.

Anyone has the option to pay each time they play or to pay an annual "green fee." Green fees are collected by the Rutherfordton Golf Club and used for course maintenance and operations. There was a time during the 1970's that the club





relied less on the town budget because golfing was so popular and so many users paid green fees. Golf has seen a decline in popularity but the Golf Club still receives around 80 green fees per year.

## Location

The Rutherfordton Golf Course is located at Leroy Mull Drive and is accessed from Edwards Street and NC Highway 108 adjacent to Rutherford Hospital and the Rutherfordton Clubhouse. The address is 191 Twitty Ford Rd. The Rutherfordton Clubhouse property borders the golf course but there is no longer any access to the course from the Clubhouse.



## Other Recreation Facilities in Rutherfordton

There are other facilities that the Town of Rutherfordton does not own but could partner with to offer athletic and fitness activities. Rutherfordton Elementary School and R S Middle School are located within the municipal limits of Rutherfordton and offer athletic fields (football, soccer, and baseball), multi-purpose fields, playground equipment, gyms, and a walking/running track. Additionally, there are several churches in town limits with playgrounds and recreational space.

## Organized Sports Leagues

### *Rutherfordton Little League (Baseball and Softball)*

The Rutherfordton Little League is one of three local divisions of the Little League of America offered in Rutherford County. It encompasses tee ball through senior league teams for boys and girls. Games are played at Crestview Park and Rutherfordton Little League offers both spring and fall leagues. Spring league is the largest with approximately 30 to 35 teams and a range of 500 to 600 children participating. It should be noted, because of the division of Rutherford County by the three little league charters, a large portion of participants in the Rutherfordton Little League are from outside of Rutherfordton's municipal boundaries. This program is partially funded by the Town of Rutherfordton Recreation Budget, but is operated by a volunteer board of directors.





## Rutherfordton Raiders (Football)

The Rutherfordton Raiders youth football program is one of four youth football leagues offered in Rutherford County, and plays in a regional league that includes teams from Polk County and the Town's of Inman and Landrum, South Carolina. The Rutherfordton Raiders program includes four age groups and includes cheerleaders. The team practices at Crestview Park and plays at RS Middle School or RS Central High School when playing at home. This program is operated by a volunteer board of directors.

## Parks and Recreation Budget

According to the Town of Rutherfordton Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending on June 30, 2018, the budgeted appropriations and expenditures for Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation were as follows:

Recreation Expenditures 10-6200							
Account	FY 16 Budget	FY 16 Actual	FY 17 Budget	FY 17 YTD	FY 18 Mgr. Recommended	FY 18 vs. FY 17	Budget Change
10-6200-2990 Department Supplies	\$2,000	\$2,038	\$2,000	\$801	\$2,000	\$0	0%
10-6200-3110 Travel & Training	\$1,000	\$669	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	0%
10-6200-3310 Utilities	\$24,100	\$29,847	\$23,500	\$22,594	\$24,500	\$1,000	4%
10-6200-3510 Building & Grounds	\$1,500	\$1,690	\$2,000	\$2,185	\$2,500	\$500	25%
10-6200-3560 Crestview/Kiwanis Maintenance	\$10,000	\$13,758	\$10,000	\$6,902	\$12,000	\$2,000	20%
10-6200-3580 Second Street Park	\$0	\$0	\$2,000	\$420	\$1,000	-\$1,000	-50%
10-6200-3585 Kiwanis Park Master Plan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$12,500	\$12,500	
10-6200-3590 Town Entrances	\$15,000	\$16,472	\$10,000	\$4,309	\$7,000	-\$3,000	-30%
10-6200-4640 Grants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
10-6200-4990 Miscellaneous	\$250	\$220	\$250	\$140	\$250	\$0	0%
10-6200-5000 Clubhouse Utilities & Cleaning	\$13,500	\$13,840	\$13,000	\$12,331	\$14,000	\$1,000	8%
10-6200-5100 Clubhouse Maintenance	\$0	\$7,650	\$2,500	\$2,348	\$2,500	\$0	0%
10-6200-5500 Capital Outlay	\$35,000	\$27,388	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
10-6200-5600 Golf Course Capital Improveme	\$7,000	\$6,659	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	-\$5,000	-100%
10-6200-6950 Appearance Commission	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	
10-6200-6970 Little League Field	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$1,499	\$2,000	\$0	0%
10-6200-6990 Golf Course	\$30,000	\$21,199	\$20,000	\$18,213	\$20,000	\$0	0%
10-6200-7010 Greenways & Trails	\$15,775	\$15,775	\$20,000	\$1,601	\$20,000	\$0	0%
10-6200-9930 Clubhouse Reserve	\$1,200	\$644	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$0	0%
<b>6200 RECREATION TOTALS</b>	<b>\$158,325</b>	<b>\$157,849</b>	<b>\$114,450</b>	<b>\$74,543</b>	<b>\$122,450</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>7%</b>

**Rutherfordton**  
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# Section 3

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## Community Survey of Recreation Needs

### Introduction

In an effort to get more public input regarding parks and recreation programming and facilities in Rutherfordton, a community survey was conducted. This survey, along with analysis of existing programming and facilities, the expertise of town staff and the members of the Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Steering Committee is the basis of this Plan. The survey was used to obtain demographic information of respondents to ensure a representative sample, obtain which facilities the respondent was currently using, obtain what activities the respondent is interested in and gather specific, open-ended comments. Also, the meetings of the Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Steering Committee were open meetings and could be used to gather further information.

### Development

In developing the Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey, the Rutherfordton Parks Recreation Steering Committee based the new survey on its successful 2005 Community Needs Assessment. Additionally, the survey was developed within the recreational needs survey guidelines set forth in the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) 2017-2018 Grant Application. The goal of the survey was not only to meet PARTF standards, but to find out what type of recreation activities park users and town residents are interested in. The survey also provided an opportunity for the town to find out what recreation needs the Rutherfordton park system is currently not meeting and what users and town residents would like the town to prioritize when making future recreation decisions.

### Methodology

A two-sided survey was developed and printed for distribution to all households in Rutherfordton via a rural mail route. The front page described the purpose of the survey and directions on how to turn the survey in. It also provided a link to the online, Survey Monkey version of the survey. The handouts were primarily intended to direct respondents to the Survey Monkey link - [www.surveymonkey.com/r/RutherfordtonParks](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RutherfordtonParks). It also let respondents know that it is ok to prefer the hard copy version. Overall, only 42 surveys were filled



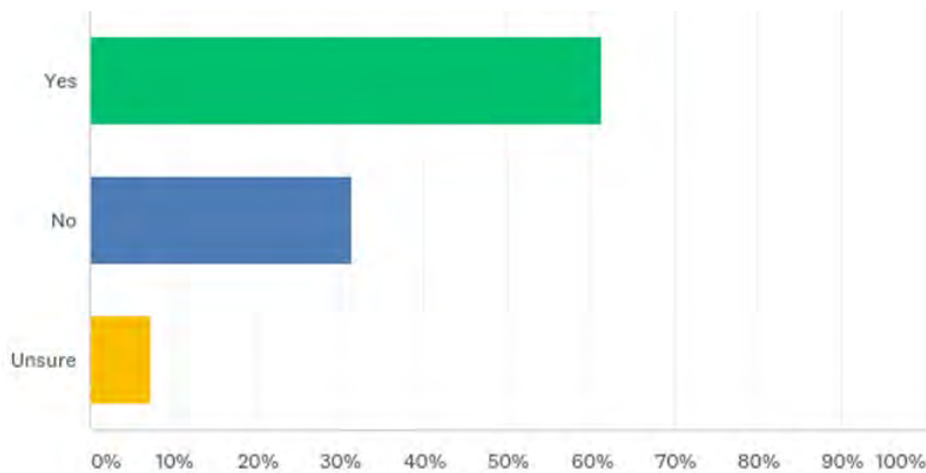
out by hand. Those surveys were entered into Survey Monkey by staff. The handouts provided the Town with the exposure the survey needed. In addition to the mailed handouts, the Town of Rutherfordton’s social media pages, including the MyRutherfordton Facebook page, shared the survey link on several occasions. The survey link was also emailed to principals of Rutherfordton Elementary School, Rutherfordton-Spindale Middle School, and Rutherfordton-Spindale High School, requesting that they distribute the survey to teachers and students. A large amount of online responses were collected in the days immediately after the survey link was sent to the school principals. Success of this outreach effort can also be seen in the amount of respondents who claimed their highest level of education was “less than high school diploma” in the days following the school emails. 665 responses were collected between October 2017 and January 2018.

The survey as it appeared to respondents can be found in the Appendix of this plan. Contact Rutherfordton Town Hall if you are interested in seeing all open-ended survey responses.

## Survey Results

### Question 1: Do you live within the Rutherfordton town limits?

Answered: 645 Skipped: 20

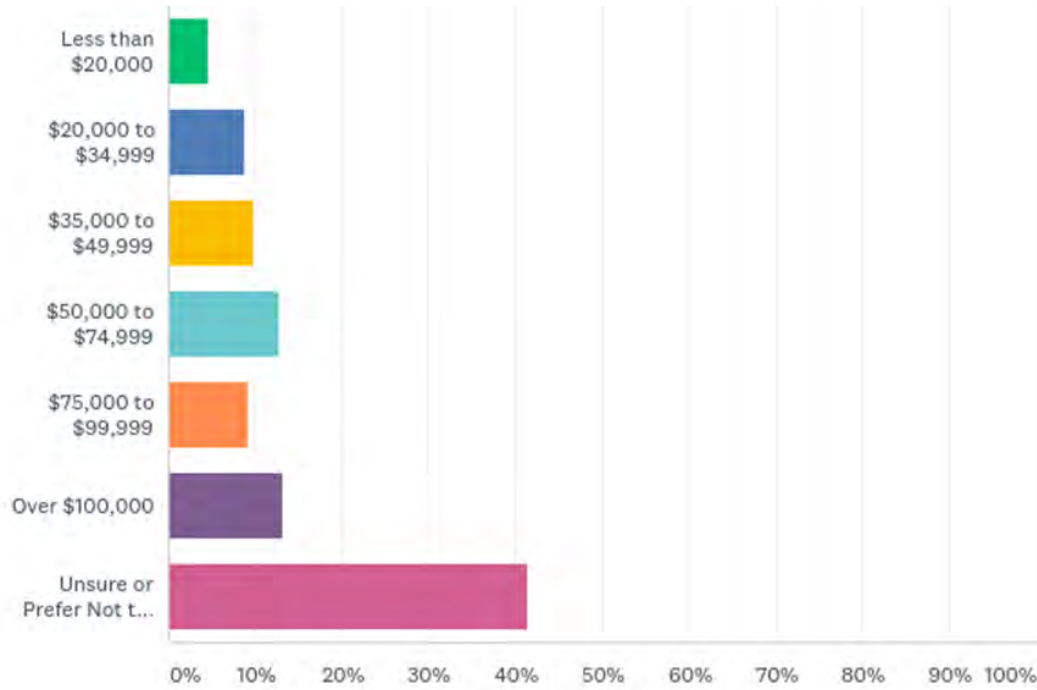


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.24%	395
No	31.47%	203
Unsure	7.29%	47
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>645</b>



# Question 2: What was your approximate household income in 2016?

Answered: 635 Skipped: 30



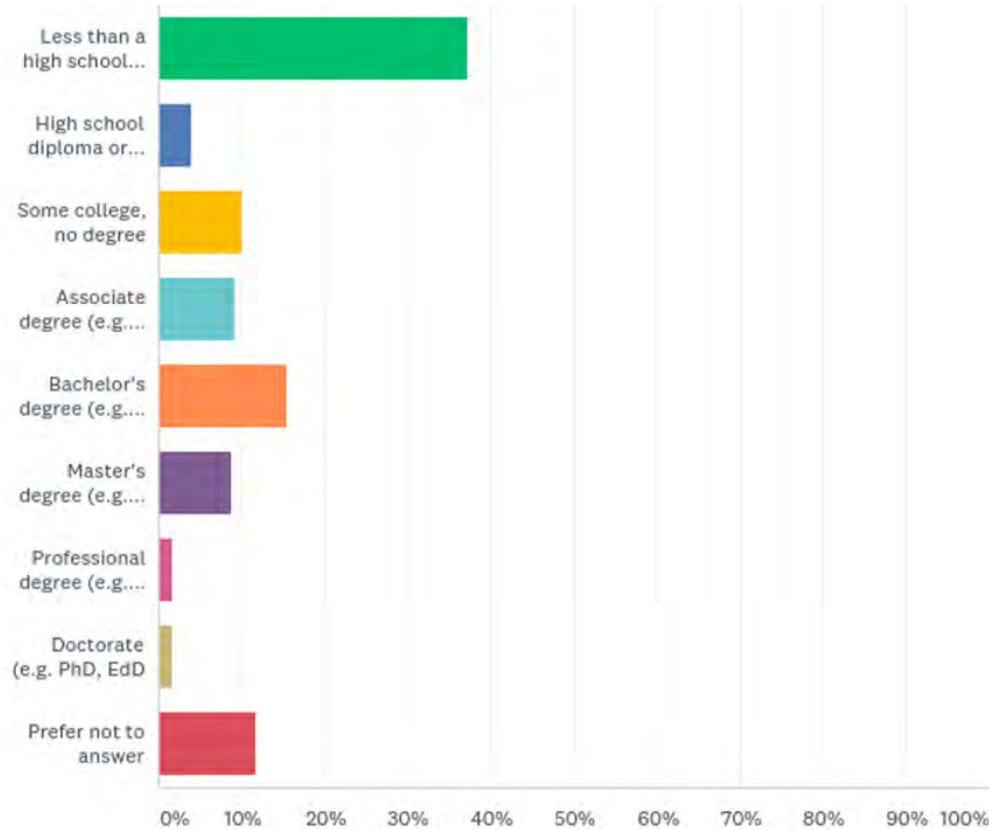
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than \$20,000	4.57%	29
\$20,000 to \$34,999	8.82%	56
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9.92%	63
\$50,000 to \$74,999	12.76%	81
\$75,000 to \$99,999	9.29%	59
Over \$100,000	13.23%	84
Unsure or Prefer Not to Answer	41.42%	263
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>635</b>





### Question 3: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (if you are currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received).

Answered: 638 Skipped: 27



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than a high school diploma	37.15%	237
High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)	4.08%	26
Some college, no degree	10.03%	64
Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)	9.25%	59
Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)	15.52%	99
Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)	8.78%	56
Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM)	1.72%	11
Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)	1.72%	11
Prefer not to answer	11.76%	75
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>638</b>



### Question 4: For each individual in your household, please indicate their age and gender. Example: *Individual 1* [12, Male] *Individual 2* [34, Female]

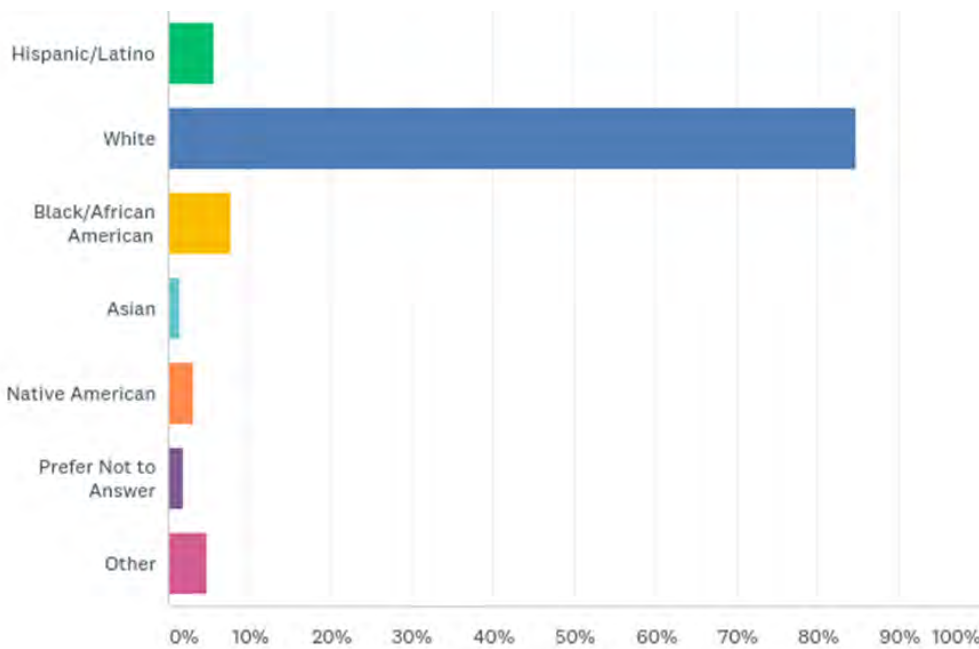
Answered : 620 Skipped: 45

422 respondents live in a household with at least 1 child under the age of 18.

80 respondents live in a household with at least 1 adult age 65 or older.

### Question 5: Please indicate your race/ethnicity below:

Answered: 639 Skipped: 26

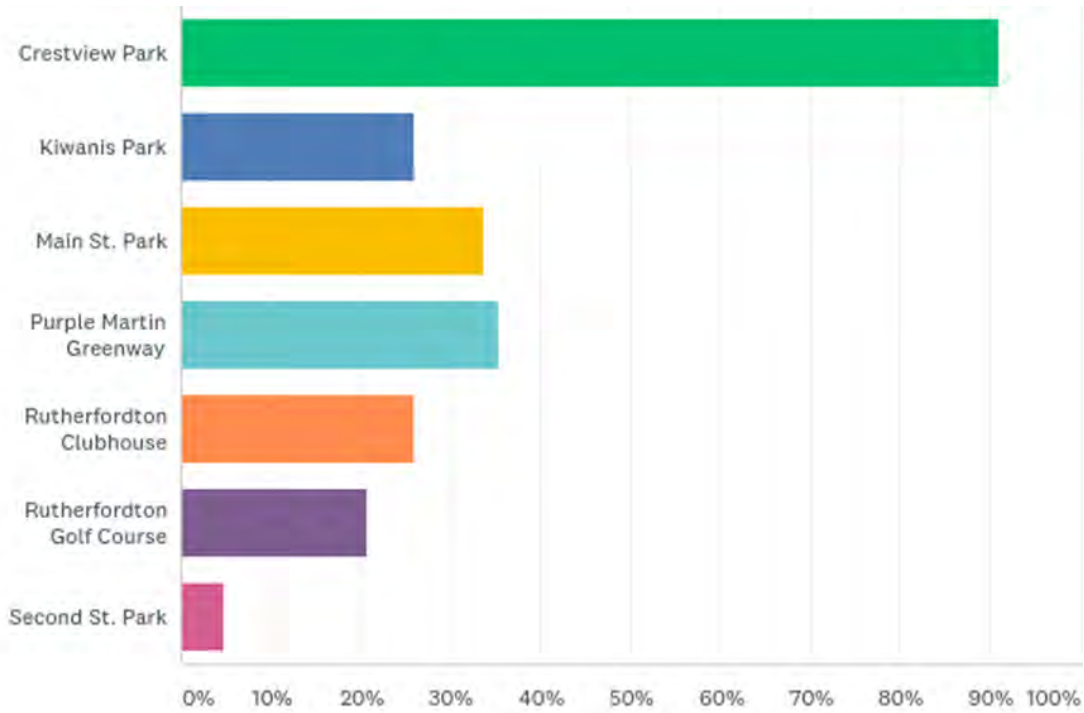


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Hispanic/Latino	5.63%	36
White	84.82%	542
Black/African American	7.82%	50
Asian	1.41%	9
Native American	3.13%	20
Prefer Not to Answer	1.88%	12
Other	4.85%	31
<b>Total Respondents: 639</b>		



# Question 6: Which parks have you visited during the past year? (select all that apply)

Answered: 615 Skipped: 50

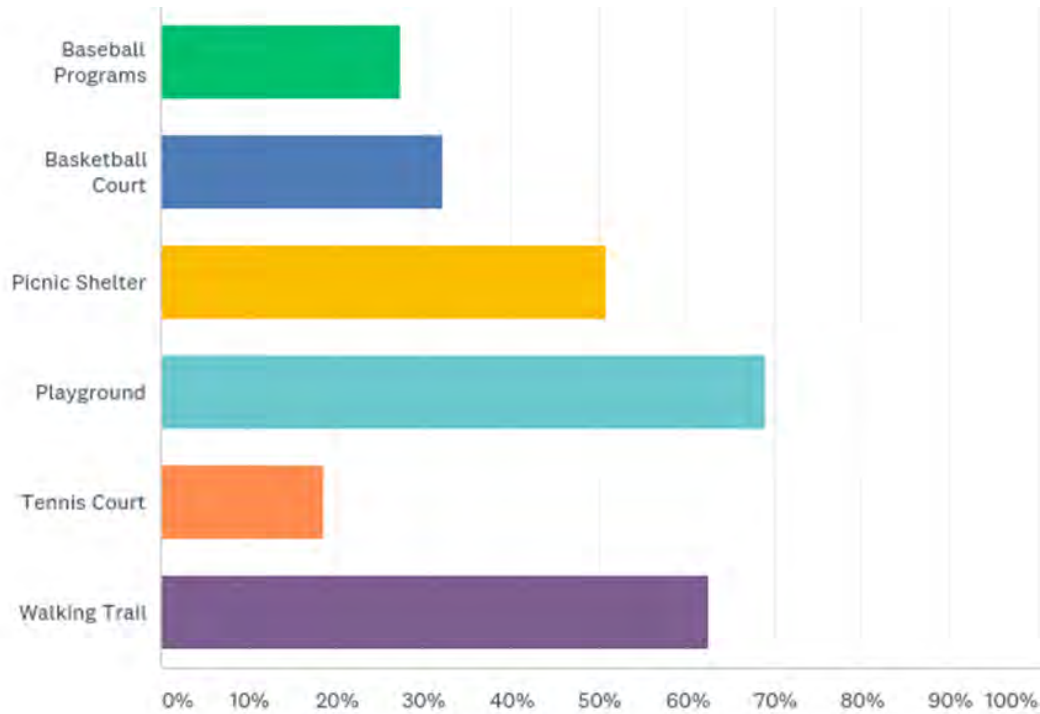


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Crestview Park	91.06%	560
Kiwanis Park	25.85%	159
Main St. Park	33.66%	207
Purple Martin Greenway	35.45%	218
Rutherfordton Clubhouse	26.02%	160
Rutherfordton Golf Course	20.81%	128
Second St. Park	4.72%	29
Total Respondents: 615		



# Question 7: Which Crestview Park amenities have you utilized during the past year? (select none or all that apply)

Answered: 607 Skipped: 58



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Baseball Programs	27.35%	166
Basketball Court	32.29%	196
Picnic Shelter	50.74%	308
Playground	69.03%	419
Tennis Court	18.62%	113
Walking Trail	62.60%	380
<b>Total Respondents: 607</b>		





# Question 8: Please list any recreation facilities that you have visited in the past year that is not listed as an option within question 5 (e.g. church or school playground, private gym)

Answered: 435    Skipped: 230

## ***Top Answers:***

Church Recreation Facility:	164
School Recreation Facility:	131
Private Gym:	108
Public Park outside of Rutherfordton:	82

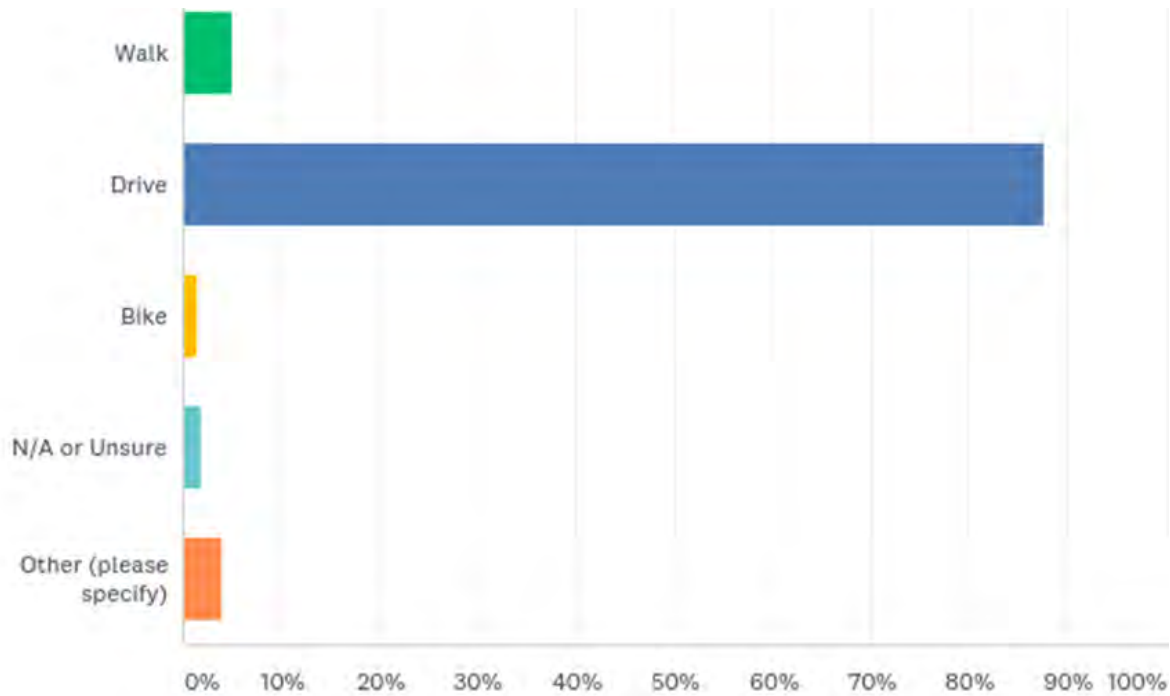
## *Other Common Answers:*

- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Boy Scouts of America
- Forest City Pool
- Isothermal Community College Pool
- Isothermal Community College Soccer Field
- Marion City Parks
- Marion Splash Pad
- RS Central High School Soccer Field
- RS Central High School Softball Field
- Spindale House
- State Parks and associated trails



# Question 9: How do you normally travel to any recreation facility/park location?

Answered: 653 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walk	5.05%	33
Drive	87.60%	572
Bike	1.53%	10
N/A or Unsure	1.84%	12
Other (please specify)	3.98%	26
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>653</b>

6 comments mentioned school busses or public transit

13 respondents used the “other” section to share that they do some combination of the choices.

1 comment stated the following: “would bike to all, often, if we had safe bike paths into Rton. Then I would buy stuff.”



# Question 10: Please share your thoughts on any long-term needs to the existing park facilities in Rutherfordton. (e.g. lighting improvements, equipment, upgrades, parking)

Answered: 490    Skipped: 175

## **Top Answers:**

Equipment Upgrades:	199
Improved Maintenance:	90
Parking Improvements:	72
Lighting Improvements:	69
Security/Safety Needs:	24
Additional Programming:	36

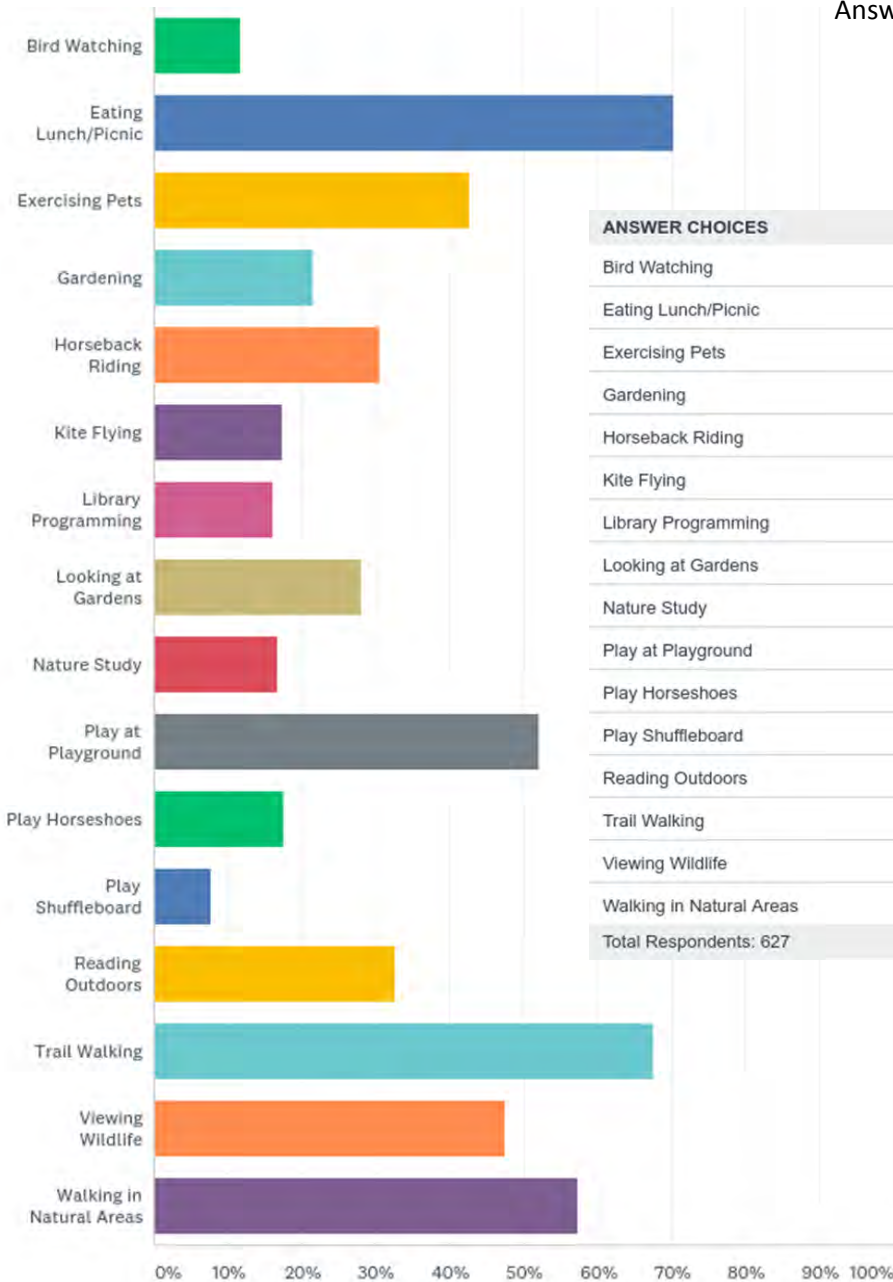
## *Other Common Answers:*

- Additional Picnic Shelters and Crestview Park
- Amphitheater at Kiwanis Park
- Bathrooms along Purple Martin Greenway
- Climbing Wall/Climbing Tree
- Community Pool
- Disc Golf Course
- Distance Markers on Trail
- Dog Park
- Drink Machines/Improved Water Fountains
- Golf Course Upgrades
- Improved Drainage at Ball Fields
- Indoor Walking Trail
- Interactive Exercise and Children’s Equipment on Purple Martin Greenway
- More Sidewalks
- Splash Pad/Water Park



# Question 11: Which Leisure activities are you interested in?

Answered: 627 Skipped: 38



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bird Watching	11.80%	74
Eating Lunch/Picnic	70.33%	441
Exercising Pets	42.58%	267
Gardening	21.53%	135
Horseback Riding	30.62%	192
Kite Flying	17.38%	109
Library Programming	16.11%	101
Looking at Gardens	28.07%	176
Nature Study	16.75%	105
Play at Playground	52.15%	327
Play Horseshoes	17.54%	110
Play Shuffleboard	7.81%	49
Reading Outdoors	32.70%	205
Trail Walking	67.62%	424
Viewing Wildlife	47.53%	298
Walking in Natural Areas	57.42%	360
Total Respondents: 627		

## Additional Answers

Biking

Cornhole

Dance

Disc Golf

Golf

Hiking

Running

Skateboarding

Swimming

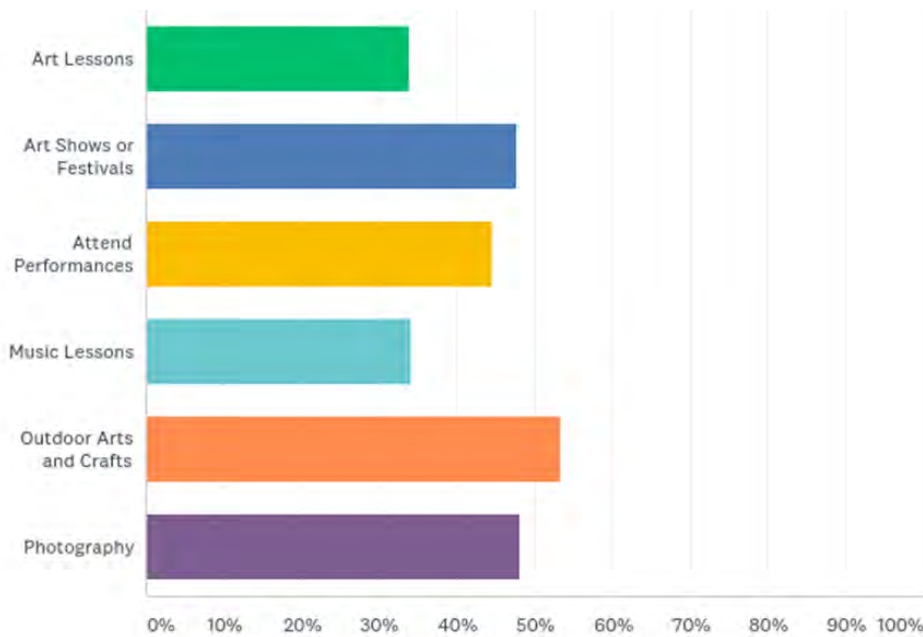
Visiting Greenways





# Question 12: Which Artistic activities are you interested in?

Answered: 585 Skipped: 80



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Art Lessons	33.85%	198
Art Shows or Festivals	47.69%	279
Attend Performances	44.62%	261
Music Lessons	34.19%	200
Outdoor Arts and Crafts	53.33%	312
Photography	48.21%	282
Total Respondents: 585		

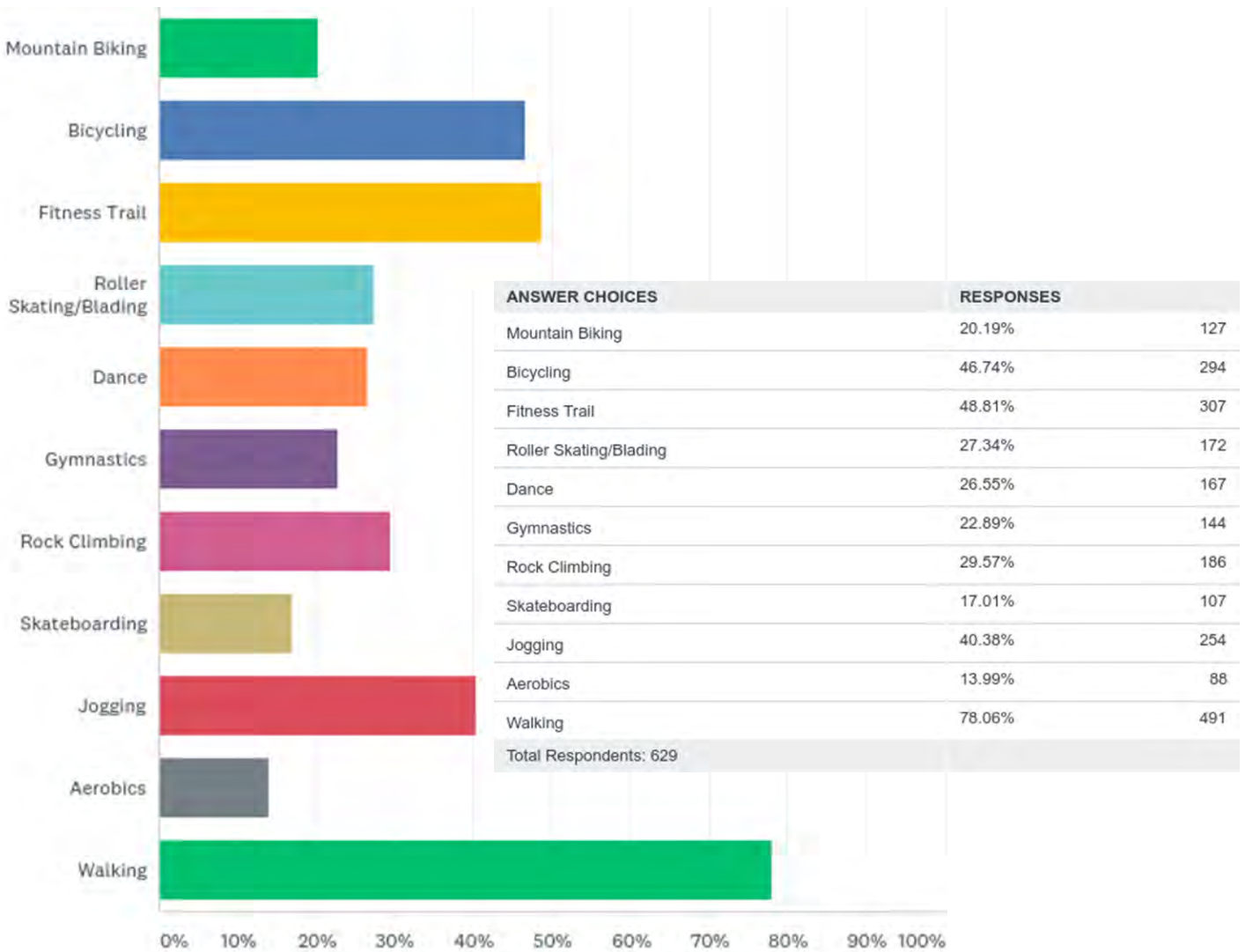
## Additional Answers

- Dance
- Knitting
- Painting
- Sewing
- Singing
- Writing
- Video Games



# Question 13: Which Fitness activities are you interested in?

Answered: 629 Skipped: 36



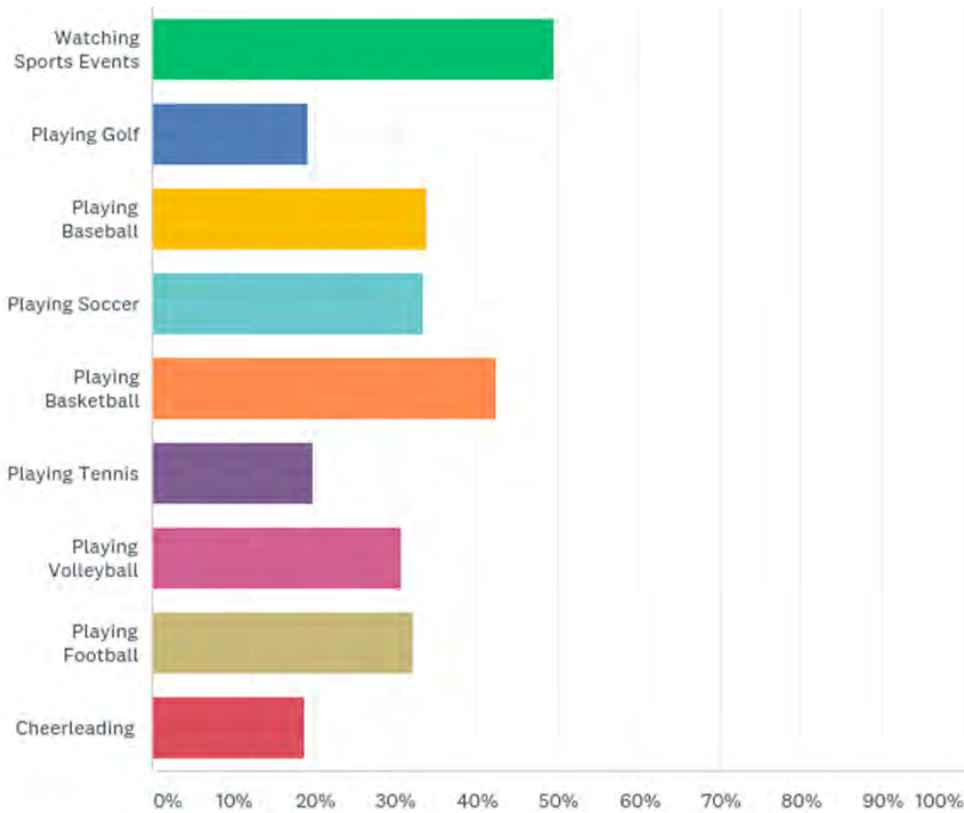
## Additional Answers

- Bowling
- Challenge Course/Obstacle Course
- Fly Tying
- Hiking
- Running
- Swimming
- Tai Chi
- Walking Dogs
- Weight Lifting
- Yoga



# Question 14: Which Sports activities are you interested in?

Answered: 576 Skipped: 89



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Watching Sports Events	49.65%	286
Playing Golf	19.27%	111
Playing Baseball	33.85%	195
Playing Soccer	33.51%	193
Playing Basketball	42.53%	245
Playing Tennis	19.79%	114
Playing Volleyball	30.73%	177
Playing Football	32.29%	186
Cheerleading	18.92%	109
Total Respondents: 576		

## Additional Answers

- Archery
- Badminton
- Bowling
- Cheerleading
- Cross Country
- Curling
- Dance
- Dodgeball
- Fishing
- Gymnastics
- Hunting
- Kickball
- Lacrosse
- Skateboarding
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tether Ball
- Track
- Wrestling



# Question 15: If there are recreational needs the Town of Rutherfordton is currently not meeting, please describe below:

Answered: 347    Skipped: 318

## **Top Answers:**

Equipment Upgrades:	36
More Programming for Youth and Adults:	32
Soccer Field/Programming:	24
Pool:	22
Splash Pad/Water Park:	16
Indoor Facility/Recreation Center:	16
Cleaner Parks:	14
Volleyball Court/Programming:	12
Skateboard Facility:	12
Dog Park:	9

## *Other Common Answers:*

- Climbing Wall
- Connectivity Between Parks
- Fitness League
- Horse Trails
- Indoor “chill spot” for teens
- More Golf Course Involvement
- More Landscaping/Open-space/Scenery
- More Senior-oriented Programming (with transportation)
- More Youth-oriented Programming
- Movie Theater
- Partnerships with other Organizations
- Playground Closer to Downtown
- Sidewalk/Road Improvements





# Question 16: What should the Town of Rutherfordton’s top recreational priorities be? (name as many as you want)

Answered: 392 Skipped: 273

## ***Top Answers Mentioned:***

Sports:	54
Youth:	45
Trails:	41
Safety:	37
Pool/Splash Pad:	23

## *Other Common Answers:*

- Accessibility for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities
- Dog Park
- Educational Programming
- Equipment Upgrades
- Expanding the Park System
- Golf Course Upgrades
- Improve Trail and Sidewalk Connectivity
- Improved Parking Lots at Parks
- Indoor Recreational Facility
- More Events Downtown
- Music/Theater Outdoor Programming
- Nature Preservation
- Park Cleanliness



## Section 3 Summary

The Town of Rutherfordton sent a hard copy survey to every residence and place of business in town limits via the rural mail route, reached a large audience via its MyRutherfordton social media pages when sharing the survey link and connected the survey with local Elementary, Middle, and High School students. Considering that 665 is over 15% of Rutherfordton's total population (4,213 according to the 2010 Census) and that not more than 2,000 surveys were printed and distributed, we are very confident in this survey's response rate. We feel that we received quality responses from a representative population of park users and are thrilled that the elementary, middle, and high school outreach was so successful.

Additionally, a public input workshop was held on March 13, 2018 in the Rutherfordton Town Council Chambers. At the workshop, attendees were presented with the final survey data and asked to fill out an additional questionnaire (see Appendix) - this gave the survey even more community buy-in. The information gathered from this survey will help the Town of Rutherfordton make system-wide parks and recreation decisions over the next 10 years. Additionally, the success of this survey should instill confidence in town staff that these surveys can be done periodically to effectively update the town's knowledge of its park users' needs and concerns.





# Section 4

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## Recommendations and Implementation

### Introduction

The Town of Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Plan is based upon a review of the community, an analysis of existing programs and facilities, identification of user needs, and an adherence to stated proposals and recommendations. The plan is designed to provide a framework from which the Town of Rutherfordton can enhance its parks and recreation system. This plan is intended to be implemented over a period of 10 years.

Instrumental to implementation of the 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 funding as a major challenge, but something that must be met head-on to ensure the continued high quality of life, an environment that North Carolinians have come to love and expect. Though funding for parks and recreation is and will likely remain a challenge statewide, it does not appear to impact the high value citizens place on parks and recreation.

Implementing the plan will result in meeting the present and future needs for parks and recreation services, as well as preserving conservation areas in Rutherfordton. The Town of Rutherfordton will have to continue to consider parks and recreation as an important part of its budget and earmark funds to continue this important service. The 2005 planning process identified numerous recommendations - many that have already come to fruition. This 2018 update has kept some of the previous pertinent recommendations, updated them and combined them with new recommendations. The Town of Rutherfordton should continue to look at the long-term needs and goals of its highly used and popular park system.

In this section we will transform the thoughts collected from the community needs assessment (Section 3) and our observations into recommendations with a implementation strategies. In addition to the assessment and our observations, this section considers input gathering during the parks and recreation steering committee's public input workshop. The workshop, which was held at town hall and advertised on Facebook, gave attendees a chance to



review the parks and recreation survey results in addition to Section 1, Section 2 and the maps presented in this section and throughout the plan. While we feel that all of the recommendations are important, we realize that some are more important than others, so as we identify each recommendation we will give it some type of prioritization. The recommendations are not listed in order of priority, but are presented by theme: infrastructure, policy, then park-specific. The Section 4 Summary Chart is located on page 62.

## **Facility Linkage**

**(Medium Priority)**

One item that both State and National Parks and Recreational people like to see (especially when applying for grant funding) is how park and recreation facilities are linked. This can be accomplished by sidewalks, bikeways, greenways with trails, and rails to trails. Crestview Park, the Rutherfordton Clubhouse and Second Street Park are not easy parks for pedestrians to get to without walking along busy streets. Map 2 in the appendix shows where all 100 year floodplains are located within Rutherfordton that could be utilized to create greenways with trails or additional parks. Some funding sources are identified in the next item entitled Walking Opportunities.

## **Walking Opportunities**

**(High Priority)**

National surveys, as well as the survey used to form the basis of this plan, have pointed out that walking (in many forms) is the number 1 recreational activity for all ages. Section 3 - specifically the results of questions 7 and 11 - shows that walking is a popular activity in Rutherfordton (62.60% utilized the Crestview trail, 67.62% enjoy trail walking). Additionally, question 9 shows us that 87.60% of respondents have to drive to parks. Considering that walking is such a popular activity, Rutherfordton should consider providing as many walking opportunities as possible in all areas of the town. Walking opportunities can be provided by constructing walking trails, hiking trails, more sidewalks, rails to trails, trails along greenways, as well as others. Some areas that should be prioritized include:

- Developing a sidewalk along Second Street and Cleghorn Street to not only provide access to Second Street Park and Kiwanis Park, but to improve pedestrian safety in that area of town.
- Connecting Cleghorn Street (where future phases of the Purple Martin Greenway will run) to downtown. This will provide downtown visitors pedestrian access to parks and residents to downtown.





- Providing access to the Rutherfordton Clubhouse either by the golf course or down 108 to the hospital.
- Connecting the high school and future middle school site to downtown.
- Require all new subdivision developments to build sidewalks that connect to existing sidewalks, where possible.
- Prioritize sidewalk maintenance and development in areas near park facilities.
- Adding crosswalks to all greenway road crossings.

Maps 3 – 5 in the appendix show the amount of time it takes to walk from each park location. For example, on map 3, locations outside of any buffer zone are more than a 5 minute walk from any park. Map 4 considers a 10 minute walk and map 5 considers a 15 minute walk. Any location outside of a buffer zone on map 5 is more than a 15 minute walk from any park location. The town should consider the areas close to parks a high priority for sidewalk development.

Funding for sidewalks on state roads could be accomplished by utilizing NCDOT enhancement grants or discretionary funding. Powell Bill Funds could be utilized to construct sidewalks on Town streets. Land and Water Conservation Funds, Parks and Recreation Trust Funds, and Clean Water Trust Funds could be utilized to purchase land and construct greenways.

## **Explore New Park Opportunities**

### **(High Priority)**

There is a new park location identified in Map 1 along the Purple Martin Greenway corridor. The Purple Martin Greenway is already full of amenities and there are vast opportunities to add more over time. Additional wildlife viewing areas, event spaces, fitness areas, or recreation areas should be added along the trail. The new park location identified should include low-impact recreational amenities that complement the natural surroundings similar to what is found at Catawba Park in Morganton.

Rutherfordton-Spindale Middle School's planned move to a site near the high school will provide a unique opportunity for the town to partner with Rutherford County Schools for a new park. The Town should consider annexing the new middle school into town limits and developing another recreation-focused park with a shared-use agreement. An indoor recreation facility was identified as a high priority in Section 3 of this plan - a partnership with the new middle school is the most realistic opportunity for the town to establish an indoor recreation facility.



To determine where new parks are needed, the town should consult Map 2 and Maps 3 - 5. Map 2, showing floodplains, can help the town utilize land that may not otherwise be appropriate to develop upon. Maps 3 - 5 show area where town residents have a long walk to the nearest park location. The northwest portion of town is in need of a park facility according to maps 3 - 5. A new park at the planned middle school location may mitigate this issue, for example.

In addition to these potential park locations, the town should make reasonable efforts to assess the benefits and costs of the acquisition of land when properties adjacent to existing park facilities become available. All land offered to the town as donation by fee simple title with no restrictions should be surveyed for natural heritage significance and relationship to existing plans and parks. Though not all donated land will be useful for the park system, it should always be looked into as a potential park asset.

## **Park Maintenance**

### **(High Priority)**

Because Rutherfordton is a small Town with limited personnel and financial resources and because Rutherfordton's parks and recreational opportunities are passive, the Town does not have a full time recreation department with staff whose sole responsibility is maintenance and upkeep of the parks and recreation areas. The Town relies upon the public works department for maintenance and upkeep of parks and recreational areas. The public works department can handle park maintenance, but their responsibilities go far beyond parks and recreation (garbage collection, recycling collection, grass and leaf collection, sidewalk and street maintenance, cemetery maintenance, etc.). Couple this with the fact that during some of the lean budget years personnel were cut from this department, and you can imagine that parks and recreation are not a high priority (compared to other responsibilities within the public works department).

The Town should create a parks and recreation maintenance crew (it can be within the public works department, or separate) whose sole responsibility is upkeep and maintenance of park and recreational areas. This two or three person crew plus equipment could cost the town in the range of \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually. Funding would come from general tax revenues. This recommendation should be implemented as soon as financially feasible. Rutherfordton should also ensure that a portion of the parks maintenance or public works staff is trained in risk management for recreation areas to make playground equipment safety inspections. Playground equipment gets a lot of usage and should get monitored periodically to ensure that the children utilizing the equipment remain safe from accidents.



## Funding Sources

### (High Priority)

We have found that the key issue to the implementation of this plan involves the ability to be able to fund the recommendations. We recommend that the Town of Rutherfordton utilize various means to plan for and fund these recommendations such as Capital Improvement Programs, general tax revenues, user fees, sponsorships, and various grant programs (such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Community Development Block Grant, Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and NCDOT grants).

**Capital Improvement Program** - This important budget tool would allow the Town to plan for and prioritize large projects, and then fund them. Generally, capital improvement programs include all Town departments and show what services or facilities the Town will build or replace, where these services or facilities will be located, and when the construction or replacement will take place. Usually these CIP's are 5 to 10 year plans.

**User Fees and Sponsorships** - Practically all recreation departments whether active or passive researched for the Rutherford County Recreation Plan included the use of user fees and sponsorships. User fees are paid by the participant and help to offset whatever program the participant is utilizing. Most municipalities charge a higher fee for participants from outside the municipal boundaries. Sponsorships are generally paid by an individual, business or industry and generally include the team name, uniforms and equipment to be used in team sports programs. (User fees and sponsorships are currently being used by Rutherfordton Little League.)

**General Tax Revenues** - The operation and maintenance of most parks and recreation departments are funded primarily by general tax revenues. Recreation is a public service, and funding should be scheduled along with other Town services. It is also important that as other sources of recreation revenue increase, the town should not decrease the amount of funds available from general tax revenues for recreational purposes. Ultimately, it is the decision of the governing body to distribute general tax revenues, but as budgets have been increasingly difficult to balance, recreation budgets seem to be the first cut.

**Grant Programs** - There are numerous grant programs that can be utilized for parks and recreation programs. Federal programs include the Land and Water



Conservation Fund (which can be used for land acquisition and park development), the Appalachian Regional Commission (goal 4 supports natural and cultural assets), and Community Development Block Grants (which along with housing and infrastructure may be used for recreation purposes). State programs include the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund which provides a dollar for dollar match up to \$500,000 for the development and rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund which provides funding for acquisition of riparian property and greenways, and NCDOT which can provide enhancement funding for bikeways, sidewalks and other types of trails. It is important that the town continue its relationship with RHI Legacy Foundation, a local funding group that focuses on public health in Rutherford County. The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, based in Winston-Salem and the Duke Endowment, based in Charlotte both fund projects that strengthen communities in North Carolina. There are numerous other grant programs, foundations, and funding sources that could be utilized.

**Rutherford County Assistance** - It should also be noted that the Rutherford Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan requested that Rutherford County assist its municipalities financially for providing parks and recreation facilities and programming for residents outside of corporate boundaries. As shown in Section 3, many of Rutherfordton's park users do not live within the Rutherfordton municipal boundary. It is understood that so many park users live outside of Rutherfordton's boundary because there are not enough options in the county. Because Rutherfordton's park system serves so many Rutherford County residents, the county should contribute financially to the Rutherfordton's park system.

## Partnerships

### (High Priority)

Parks and recreation opportunities are provided in contemporary societies through a diverse collection of organizations that exist at the neighborhood, state and national level. Leisure service organizations meet the needs of the community by operating within a broad range of missions, motivations, structures, resources and techniques. With such a large number of organizations (public, private, and non-profit), playing vital roles in the community, coordination and cooperation between providers is crucial. Partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities.

Opportunities for recreation in both the Town of Rutherfordton and in Rutherford County may include partnerships with the following types of entities:

- RHI Legacy Foundation





- Rutherford County Government
- Rutherford County Schools
- Rutherford Outdoor Coalition
- Other Municipalities (priority: Ruth, Spindale)
- User Groups (such as Little League, or RC Soccer Association)
- Adopt a Park Programs
- Adopt a Trail Programs
- Rutherford Hospital or another medical provider (Fitness Activities)
- Private Sector (such as Business, Industry, Developers, etc.)
- Tryon International Equestrian Center
- Churches
- Other Non-Profits (such as Boy Scouts, 4-H, Youth Empowerment, etc.)

Partnership agreements are essential to demonstrate the commitment of each party and identify the resources each party will contribute. Regardless of which party (or combination) contributes acquisition, development, operational, maintenance, replacement or other resources, tracking these contributions to strive for a dollar for dollar cost sharing between partners over the life of the project is the goal. Negotiations for these contributions should focus on demonstrating the advantages and disadvantages of each partner's participation. Issues need to be identified between both parties and solutions to overcome them need to be demonstrated. Some of the key priority issues that need to be addressed within a partnership agreement are:

- Liability issues that face both parties.
- Addressing how both parties will try to reach an equity position of 50/50 cost sharing during a specific time frame.
- Land use and management needs to be addressed so neither parties' environmental concerns are compromised.
- Joint capital cost development and how both parties need to be involved in the design component, equipment needs, and storage needs.
- It is important that each party share with the other what their mission statement is so there is a greater appreciation of what each party desires to achieve. The key is to getting both parties to think on behalf of the overall community first and their respective needs second.
- In the partnership agreement, each party needs to make a decision on how they will resolve conflicts with each other.



- The partnership agreement is a living document and needs to change in time based on the needs of the community. Facility usage and contribution philosophy will remain consistent in the agreement, but the conditions of the agreement may change.
- Contributions by each partner need to be tracked and shared with all parties while trying to achieve the 50/50 cost sharing goal within the time frame agreed upon.
- If both parties jointly develop a facility or park, a capital enhancement fund needs to be established for ongoing maintenance and facility upgrades.
- Usage within facilities, pricing of activities, schedule of events, equipment, operational issues, tracking process of partner contributions, and review sessions need to be evaluated periodically by all entities involved in the partnership.

Potential partners for the Town of Rutherfordton would include Rutherford County Schools (additional park space either at present middle school after new school is constructed, or at the new school similar to the partnership that Forest City has with Rutherford County Schools at the Dunbar Facility, Rutherford Hospital (adjoins Rutherfordton Clubhouse and Rutherfordton Golf Course, could be source of property or fitness programming), and the Town of Spindale (adjoining municipality) or the Town of Ruth (adjoining municipality). The Town of Rutherfordton could also partner with Rutherford County (after they hire a parks and recreation director) to offer programming at its facilities.

Partnerships can start small, like joining together to host a 5k, joining together to host a special event, or offering naming rights to a facility (like the Crestview tennis courts) for a recurring fee. A great example of a successful partnership between municipalities was the Thermal Belt Rail Trail master planning process. Through that process, the Towns of Forest City, Spindale, Rutherfordton, Ruth, and Rutherford County met together regularly to plan for the trail that passes through each jurisdiction with planning consultants and other regional leaders. Though the trail itself will not benefit each jurisdiction equally, the partnership enhanced the benefit of the rail trail for all and resulted in a lasting document to guide the growth of the trail.

## **Information and Communication**

### **(Medium Priority)**

One of the issues identified by the parks and recreation steering committee throughout the survey review process was that there were numerous respondents that do not know what is offered, who contacts are for various leagues, where



facilities are located, and where parks and amenities are located. In the Rutherford County Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan it was recommended that a clearinghouse be created to disseminate this information. It was recommended that a part-time person be hired at the Tourism Development Authority to put together a contact list, and be able to put this information (by local forms of media) out on a monthly or quarterly basis. The Town of Rutherfordton needs to identify a contact person to work with the County/TDA for information related to Rutherfordton. Rutherfordton could also create its own means of information sharing such as brochures, web site or signage that would ensure Rutherfordton's citizens would know where, when and how for parks and recreation. A recreational resource guide designed for visitors and available at strategic locations in the area would make a great project for a town intern or volunteer group. A great example of why this is needed is the lack of usage at Second Street Park.

It is also important that the Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Steering Committee continue to meet on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and report to Town Council about the health of the park system and progress on park improvements at least quarterly. The Town of Rutherfordton social media pages should continue to advertise park system news through video blogs and regular posts, advertising programming opportunities, partnerships, and steering committee meetings.

## **Enhance Existing Programming and Increase Programming Options**

**(Medium - High Priority)**

One of the major priorities identified throughout this plan's public involvement process was to increase recreation programming for youth and seniors. The town does not have a parks and recreation department to develop and execute recreation programs on a regular basis but has already proven that programs can be established when working with other organizations. The Rutherfordton Little League is a great example of a successful programming partnership.

Considering that not all recreation programming requires ball field maintenance or concession stand operation, the town should pursue additional youth sports programming (sports were identified as a major priority in Section 3) as well as more low-maintenance programming opportunities that utilize existing facilities. Health-oriented and senior-service organizations and can assist the town in developing programs for senior citizens including leisure activities such as field trips and organized indoor games, a low-impact tennis league, low-impact cardio programs and other creative ways to keep senior citizens active and involved in their community. The town should establish a parks and recreation focused



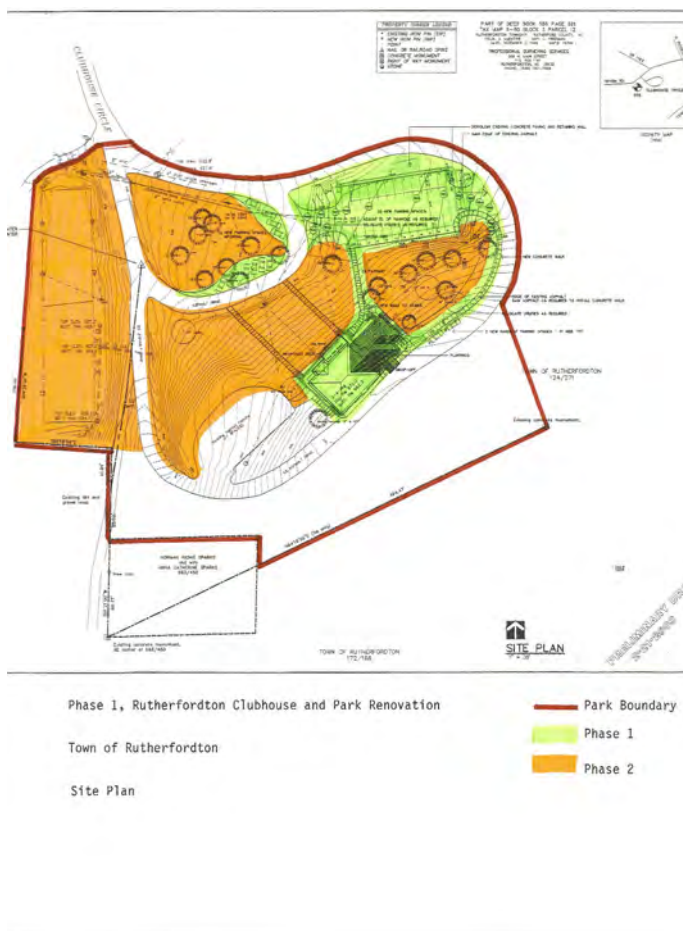
internship program. A parks and recreation intern can help identify programming partnership opportunities, ways to enhance existing programming and carry out programs.

In addition to providing low-impact senior programming, youth programming in other than sports programming should be established. Programs focused around community service and environmental education would not require dedicated facilities and would be a benefit to existing summer camps, regional Boy Scout Troops and other youth-oriented organizations. Interactive and educational signage along trails can enhance youth environmental education throughout Rutherfordton’s park system.

## Rutherfordton Clubhouse Renovations

(Medium Priority)

The Rutherfordton Clubhouse has undergone part of a major renovation project (partially funded through a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant) which renovated the upstairs meeting area, bathrooms, kitchen, and parking areas. The second phase of the Clubhouse updates includes developing the remaining park acreage for open space, a new picnic shelter, individual picnic areas, walkways connecting to existing Town sidewalks, the possible development of a greenway connecting the clubhouse property to the Rutherfordton Golf Course and Crestview Park, linkage with the developing Overmountain Victory Trail spur from Polk County, and the possibility of a fitness partnership with Rutherford Hospital.



The next phase (Phase 2) of renovations will include the unused tennis courts and finishing the basement area of the clubhouse for additional areas for classrooms, meetings, and special events (including elevator installation). It is estimated that all improvements would cost in excess of \$800,000. The town should pursue that funding from PARTF, Town general fund revenues, the Rutherfordton Recreation Trust Fund and other donations. Renovation of the Clubhouse grounds and basement would greatly increase the site’s current status as a quality wedding





venue. The town should prioritize the renovation of the basement area to add additional dressing rooms and Clubhouse's front yard as an outdoor wedding and special event space. Throughout the Clubhouse renovations - specifically the unused tennis court area renovations, the town should consider its proximity to Willow Ridge Rehabilitation & Living Center and Rutherford Hospital as an opportunity to integrate low-impact, senior-focused recreation facilities and programming.

## **Crestview Park Renovations**

**(Medium Priority)**

Crestview Park boasts some of the highest usage of any park in Rutherford County. The Town has done a good job maintaining Crestview Park and has added many features as funding has become available. Some of the more recent projects included new playground equipment, lighting for the walking trail, drainage maintenance at the baseball fields, and upgraded access and bleacher areas, including accessibility for citizens with disabilities. Future upgrades should address:

- Upgrading the bathroom facilities (more modern facilities are needed that can stand up to tough park usage and can be cleaned easily)
- Upgrading concession facilities
- Utilizing of the mile creek area for nature viewing
- Addition of picnic areas near the baseball fields or creek (est. \$25,000 to \$60,000)
- Paving of the overflow parking lot between the tennis courts and senior league field (est. \$20,000 to \$35,000)
- Resurfacing of the basketball court (est. \$25,000 to \$60,000)
- Resurfacing of the tennis courts (\$30,000 to \$80,000)
- Utilization of the unused area by the Cottages at Crestview Apartments for a volleyball court area (30.73% are interested in volleyball in survey question 10)
- Installation of new playground equipment by 2020
- Permanent installation of soccer goals and lighting at the Multipurpose Field

Crestview Park is also the ideal location to integrate amenities that are inclusionary to children and adults with disabilities such as "Bankshot Basketball," or activities designed to develop motor skills as identified by the National Association for Recreation Equality. Smaller projects needed include:

- Fixing the Ray Morris Memorial in front of the tennis courts,
- Updating and consolidating signage at the tennis courts and throughout the park



- Adding benches at the basketball court and tennis court
- Building a new pathway in front of the concession stand
- Installing a more durable fence between the little league fields

Each of these items should be planned for in the Town's capital improvement budget, and funds should be obtained by utilizing the Town's Recreation Trust Fund and application of grant funds through the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. Crestview renovations should be implemented as funding is available over the next ten years.

## **Rutherfordton Golf Course Improvements**

### **(High Priority)**

The Town of Rutherfordton should continue its partnership with the Rutherfordton Golf Club through funding and maintenance assistance. The Rutherfordton Golf Course sees relatively low usage as compared to other golf courses in the area but has loyal and devoted supporters. Strong support for golf course improvements is evident throughout the results of the Parks and Recreation Survey presented in Section 3. Capital improvements that will improve the golf course experience and increase usage include:

- 10 new green surfaces (est. \$60,000 - \$85,000)
- 9 tee area surfaces (est. \$30,000 to \$45,000)
- Irrigation system upgrades (est. \$25,000 to \$100,000)
- First tee practice area between Hole 1 and Hole 6 (est. \$15,000 - \$50,000)
- New Bermuda Sod for fairways (est. \$30,000 - \$75,000)
- General ground improvements (est. \$25,000)

One way to further the partnership is for the town to consider a reciprocal agreement with the Rutherfordton Golf Club to aerate, fertilize and seed the grass area at Crestview Park. The golf course has the equipment and personnel to accomplish this task and is located very close to Crestview. In turn, the town may assist more with golf course needs. In addition to capital projects and regular maintenance, the town should work with the Golf Club to implement strategies to increase usage such as Footgolf or fundraising golf classics.

Footgolf, a mixture of soccer and golf that became an official sport in the United States in 2011, would involve the installation of 21" holes on the greens. Footgolf holes should be installed in a way that does not prevent the golf course from operating primarily as a regular golf course. The Golf Club could open the course



for Footgolf only on certain, pre-planned days to increase course exposure.

Golf Classics would be hosted by a non-profit or private entity for a cause – participants will pay a fee set by the hosting organization to play on a team (for example \$30/player or \$100/team of 4). Most of the fee to play will go to the fundraiser's cause but a portion per player or an agreed upon total amount will go to the golf course. Hosting occasional Golf Classics will further establish the Rutherfordton Golf Course's role as an asset to the town and surrounding area.

## **Establish Kiwanis Park as a Gateway**

**(High Priority)**

The town should continue its long-range planning efforts at Kiwanis Park. The park-specific master plan will contribute towards a competitive PARTF application when a specific project is decided upon. Due to its natural beauty, proximity to churches and schools, downtown location, its future connection to the Purple Martin Greenway and the Thermal Belt Rail Trail, and its status as an asset to the Boy Scout Troop and starting point for the Main Street Safari, Kiwanis Park has the most potential for growth of Rutherfordton's existing facilities.

It is important that the town adheres to the non-recreation, passive park goal of the Kiwanis Club upon its park land donation. Kiwanis Park can remain a passive park and preserve its natural features while also providing more amenities to visitors. For instance, Kiwanis Park has the ideal space for a dog park. There is enough shade and space for a dog park at Kiwanis - when considering specific projects for Kiwanis Park, the town should discuss the option of installing a dog park there. Exercising with pets was identified as a high priority in Section 3.

Kiwanis Park is also the ideal space for a natural playground that compliments the park's natural beauty. Project such as improving access to the stream running through the park, building a path from the Green Street parallel parking spaces to the bridge, building a large picnic shelter that can serve the Purple Martin Greenway and the park, building a stage or music pavilion to establish Kiwanis a the go-to location for town music events, and establishing free Wi-Fi like at Crestview should be considered as well. Kiwanis Park can easily serve as the gateway to downtown Rutherfordton, the Purple Martin Greenway, and the western gateway to the Thermal Belt Rail Trail.



To enhance the park's future projects and increase park use, the empty lot along Cleghorn Street across the smaller pedestrian bridge should be paved and established as a parking lot. A bathroom facility near that parking lot will serve the Purple Martin Greenway, Thermal Belt Rail Trail, Kiwanis Park, and Downtown Rutherfordton as a whole (est. \$300/sqft). The town should also consider partnering with the Boy Scout Troop and church youth organizations for occasional maintenance and improvements of the park through community service projects.

## **Other Capital Projects**

### **(Low - Medium Priority)**

Several other projects have been identified as needs for Rutherfordton's parks such as:

- Resurface bricks at Main Street Park, offering a section of new bricks for sponsorships
- Resurface the basketball court at Second Street Park
- Replace aging equipment at Second Street Park. For example, when one of the playgrounds at Crestview is replaced, the older playground can replace the one currently at Second Street Park.
- Replace fence between Little League Fields and Concession Stands at Crestview Park
- Solve accessibility issues for citizens with disabilities - improving park accessibility and inclusion.
- Install signage along major roadways directing visitors to the Purple Martin Greenway
- Work with NCDOT to install a crosswalk along S Main St/NC 221 between Cottage Ln and Skyline Drive (improving connectivity between Crestview Park and the Purple Martin Greenway)
- Add distance markers and fitness amenities along the Purple Martin Greenway (similar to what is called for in the Thermal Belt Rail Trail Master Plan), ensure that established trail access areas are well lit.
- Establish facilities for creative ball games at Crestview and Second Street Park such as Gaga Ball, Corn Hole, Ladder Ball, Pickle Ball, Croquet, and other fun and low-maintenance games to increase park usage and inclusion for adults and children with disabilities.

These smaller capital items could be addressed through the yearly budget, or through a capital improvements plan.



## Section 4 Summary

The Town of Rutherfordton needs to make a positive commitment to parks and recreation. Parks and recreation funding is an easy mark for budget cuts, particularly when there is no active department. It was proven in this plan's public involvement process that the park facilities in Rutherfordton mean a lot town residents and residents of the surrounding area. The parks system is a major asset to Rutherfordton residents, Rutherford County residents and visitors.

Each existing parks facility discussed in Section 2 of this plan is worthy of the town's continued development and attention. Though not all are seeing the use they were once designed for (Second Street Park, Golf Course), they all currently serve park users well and have potential for growth. Providing ample opportunities for wellness and community involvement through park usage should be a high priority for the Parks and Recreation Steering Committee and the Rutherfordton Town Council. There are many funding opportunities to achieve the park system's goals and this plan's recommendations.

As stated earlier, this plan is to be implemented over the next 10 years. However, as with all plans, changes and amendments should occur as they are anticipated. This plan and its recommendations should be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Parks and Recreation Committee and town staff, to review what recommendations have been implemented, which recommendations need to be addressed in the short term, and to determine if any changes or new recommendations need to be addressed or included within this plan. Additionally, this plan should be completely updated by the end of 2028.





## Section 4 Summary Chart

Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
High	<b>Funding Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilize various means to plan for an fund this plan’s recommendations including Capital Improvement Programs, general tax revenues, user fees, sponsorships and various grant programs.</li> <li>Request funding assistance from Rutherford County because the Rutherfordton park system serves so many Rutherford County residents</li> </ul>
High	<b>Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The town should seek partnerships with a range of organizations to assist with park system programming and/or fundraising</li> <li>Consider local groups with a consistent mission</li> <li>Identify and solve potential challenges before entering into a partnership</li> <li>Partnerships can start small (5k, naming rights, co-hosting special events)</li> </ul>
High	<b>Park Maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire or designate a parks and recreation maintenance crew</li> <li>Train current public works staff and future park maintenance crew on risk management as it relates to park use</li> </ul>
High	<b>Explore New Park Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a new park along the Purple Martin Greenway (Map 1)</li> <li>Leverage the new middle school as a park opportunity</li> <li>Consider walk lengths, utilizing maps 3 - 5</li> <li>Survey all donated land for natural heritage</li> </ul>



Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
High	<b>Walking Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect Cleghorn Street to downtown (and improve pedestrian safety along Cleghorn Street)</li> <li>• Provide pedestrian access to Rutherfordton Clubhouse</li> <li>• Connect schools and new subdivisions to existing sidewalks</li> <li>• Prioritize sidewalk development and maintenance near park locations</li> <li>• Add marked crosswalks to all greenway street crossings</li> </ul>
High	<b>Golf Course Improvements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue partnership and funding relationship between the town and the Rutherfordton Golf Club</li> <li>• Pursue capital improvement projects to upgrade the course</li> <li>• Consider asking the Golf Club to assist with Crestview Park maintenance</li> <li>• Integrate footgolf or golf classics to help increase regular course use</li> </ul>
High	<b>Establish Kiwanis Park as a Gateway</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue long-range planning efforts</li> <li>• Establish Kiwanis Park as a gateway to downtown and the Purple Martin Greenway</li> <li>• Kiwanis Park is the ideal space for a dog park and amphitheater/music pavilion</li> <li>• Install picnic shelter, park Wi-Fi, bathroom facility and new parking area along Green Street</li> <li>• Partner with the Boy Scout Troop, local churches or schools for park maintenance through community service projects</li> </ul>



Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
Medium-High	<b>Enhance Existing Programming and Increase Programming Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue additional youth sports funding</li> <li>• Explore low-maintenance programming opportunities that utilize existing facilities</li> <li>• Partner with health-oriented or senior-service organizations to assist with developing programs for senior citizens (utilize an intern to identify programming opportunities)</li> <li>• Offer youth programs focused around community service and environmental education</li> </ul>
Medium	<b>Facility Linkage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect Park Locations for bike and pedestrian facilities</li> <li>• Utilize Maps 3 - 5 to determine where new trails should be constructed</li> </ul>
Medium	<b>Information and Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work closely with the Tourism Development Authority and Rutherford County to maintain information about Rutherfordton</li> <li>• Create a Recreation Resource Guide to help residents and visitors find park amenities (town intern or volunteer group can create and maintain)</li> <li>• Utilize social media to advertise park system news and progress on park improvements</li> </ul>
Medium	<b>Rutherfordton Clubhouse Renovations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue funding for phase 2 from a combination of sources</li> <li>• Prioritize renovation of the basement, front yard and installing an elevator</li> <li>• Leverage proximity to Rutherford Hospital and Willow Ridge Rehabilitation &amp; Living Center</li> </ul>



Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
Medium	<b>Crestview Park Renovations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade bathroom facilities and concession facilities</li> <li>• Utilize the unused area by Cottages at Crestview Apartments as a volleyball court area and utilize the mile creek area as a nature viewing area</li> <li>• Add a new picnic area near the baseball fields or creek, install soccer goals and lighting at multipurpose field</li> <li>• Resurface basketball and tennis courts</li> <li>• Install new playground equipment by 2020</li> <li>• Pave the overflow parking area between the tennis courts and senior league field</li> <li>• Complete smaller projects such as fixing the Ray Morris Memorial Fountain, adding benches, updating signage and installing more durable fencing</li> </ul>
Low - Medium	<b>Other Capital Projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resurface bricks at Main Street Park and basketball court at Second Street Park</li> <li>• Replacing aging equipment at Second Street Park and fencing at Crestview Park</li> <li>• Solve accessibility issues for citizens with disabilities</li> <li>• Establish low-impact, low-maintenance ball game areas at Crestview (gaga ball, cornhole, ladder ball)</li> <li>• Add distance markers along Purple Martin Greenway and install crosswalks</li> <li>• Install signage along major roadways directing drivers to the Purple Martin Greenway</li> </ul>



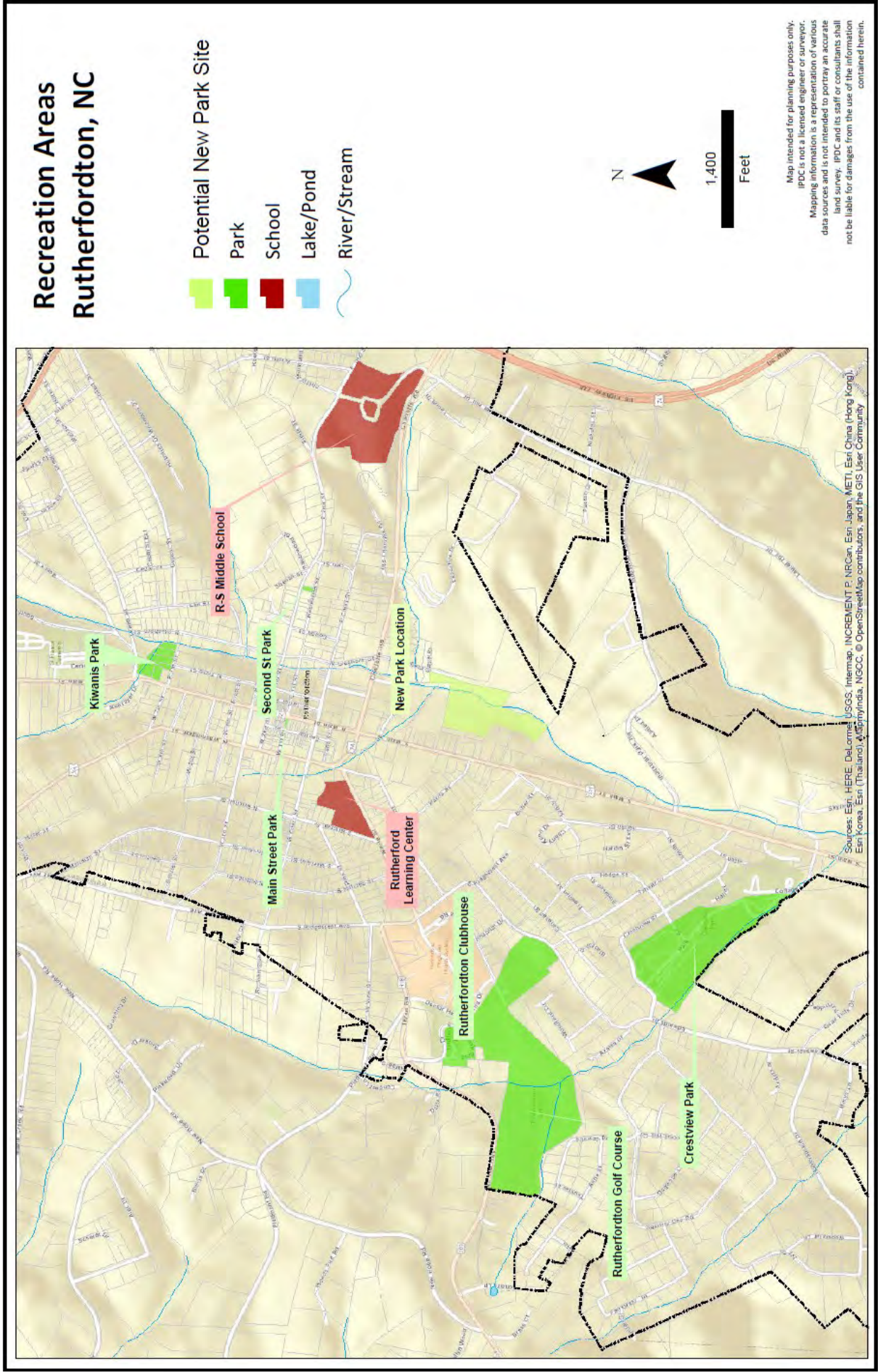
# Appendix

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<b>Map 1 - Recreation Areas:</b>	<b>Page I</b>
<b>Map 2 - Floodplain Areas:</b>	<b>Page II</b>
<b>Map 3 - Five Minute Walk Map:</b>	<b>Page III</b>
<b>Map 4 - Ten Minute Walk Map:</b>	<b>Page IV</b>
<b>Map 5 - Fifteen Minute Walk Map:</b>	<b>Page V</b>
<b>Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey</b> All survey responses are available at Rutherfordton Town Hall	<b>Page VI</b>
<b>Public Input Workshop Questionnaire</b> All questionnaire responses are available at Rutherfordton Town Hall	<b>Page XIII</b>
<b>Additional Section 2 Photos</b>	<b>Page XIV</b>



# Map 1 - Recreation Areas









# Map 3 - Five Minute Walk

## Walking Distance from the Park (5 Minutes) Rutherfordton, NC

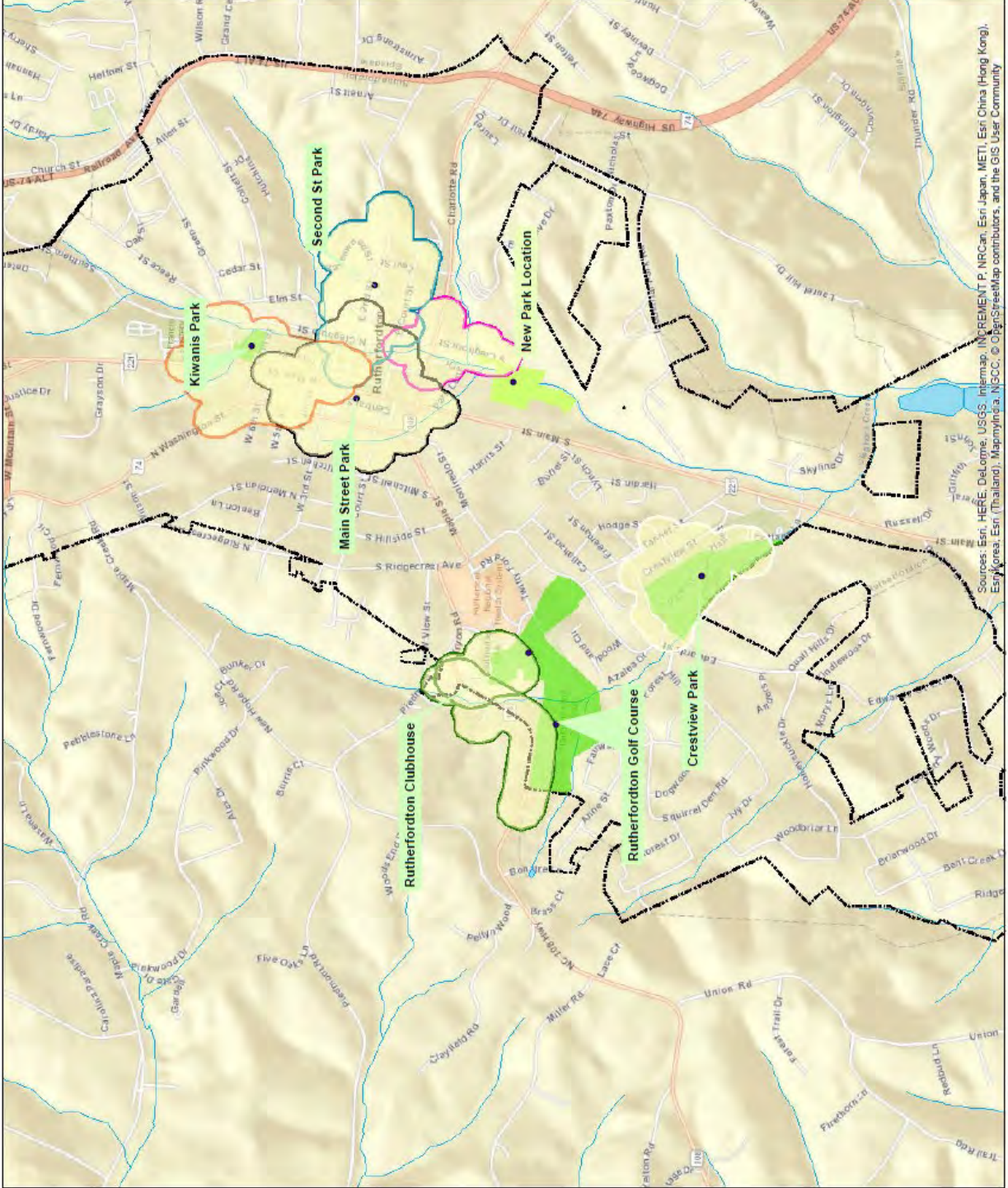
- 5-Minute Travel Time Park
- Potential New Park Site
- Crestview Park
- Kiwanas Park
- Main Street Park
- New Park
- Rutherfordton Golf Course
- Second Street Park



2,000

Feet

Map intended for planning purposes only.  
 IPCC is not a licensed engineer or surveyor.  
 Mapping information is a representation of various  
 data sources and is not intended to portray an accurate  
 land survey. IPCC and its staff or consultants shall  
 not be liable for damages from the use of the information  
 contained herein.



Sources: Esri, HERE, DeLorme, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), MapmyIndia, NSCC, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community













# Rutherfordton Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey

NORTH CAROLINA

## Town of Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Plan Survey

The Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Steering Committee is in the process of updating Rutherfordton's Parks and Recreation Plan on behalf of the Rutherfordton Town Council.

Your input is the most important part of this process. Please take a few moments to tell us about the recreational activities you and your family enjoy and provide some feedback on our parks system.

We appreciate your response. If you have any questions or need help regarding the survey, please contact Ben Farmer at (828)-351-2338. If you have any questions about our park system or the parks and recreation master planning process, contact Doug Barrick at (828)-287-3520.

Responses are anonymous.

**Please respond to this survey before 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 29th!**

### 1. Do you live within the Rutherfordton town limits?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

### 2. What was your approximate household income in 2016?

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- Over \$100,000
- Unsure or Prefer Not to Answer



**3. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (if you are currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received).**

- Less than a high school diploma
- High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)
- Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)
- Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)
- Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM)
- Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)
- Prefer not to answer

**4. For each individual in your household, please indicate their age and gender:  
Example: Individual 1 [12, male]. Individual 2 [34, Female].**

Individual 1	<input type="text"/>
Individual 2	<input type="text"/>
Individual 3	<input type="text"/>
Individual 4	<input type="text"/>
Individual 5	<input type="text"/>
Individual 6	<input type="text"/>

If there are more than 6 individuals in your household, please let us know how many there are here:



**5. Please indicate your race/ethnicity below:**

- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Black/African American
- Asian
- Native American
- Prefer Not to Answer
- Other

**For the rest of this survey, you may answer on behalf of the children in your household in addition to yourself.**

**6. Which parks have you visited during the past year? (select all that apply)**

- Kiwanis Park
- Rutherfordton Golf Course
- Rutherfordton Clubhouse
- Second St. Park
- Crestview Park
- Purple Martin Greenway
- Main St. Park

**7. Which Crestview Park amenities have you utilized during the past year? (select none or all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playground     | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball Court  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic Shelter | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Court      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking Trail  | <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball Programs |

**8. Please list any recreation facilities that you have visited in the past year that is not listed as an option within question 5 (e.g. church or school playground, private gym)**



**9. How do you normally travel to any recreation facility/park location?**

- Walk
- Drive
- Bike
- N/A or Unsure
- Other (please specify)

**10. Please share your thoughts on any long-term needs for the existing park facilities in Rutherfordton. (e.g. lighting improvements, equipment upgrades, parking)**

**11. Which leisure activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird Watching            | <input type="checkbox"/> Looking at Gardens  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eating Lunch/Picnic      | <input type="checkbox"/> Viewing Wildlife    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play Horseshoes          | <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Walking       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play at Playground       | <input type="checkbox"/> Kite Flying         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Outdoors         | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Study        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play Shuffleboard        | <input type="checkbox"/> Library Programming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercising Pets          | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback Riding    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walking in Natural Areas | <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening           |

Add any other activities here





**12. Which artistic activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Performances    | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Arts and Crafts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Shows or Festivals | <input type="checkbox"/> Art Lessons             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography            | <input type="checkbox"/> Music Lessons           |

Add any other activities here

**13. Which fitness activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)**

- Mountain Biking
- Bicycling
- Fitness Trail
- Roller Skating/Blading
- Dance
- Gymnastics
- Rock Climbing
- Skateboarding
- Jogging
- Aerobics
- Walking

Add any other activities here





**14. Which sport activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)**

- Watching Sports Events
- Playing Golf
- Playing Baseball
- Playing Soccer
- Playing Basketball
- Playing Tennis
- Playing Volleyball
- Playing Football
- Cheerleading

Add any other activities here

**15. If there are recreational needs the Town of Rutherfordton is currently not meeting, please describe below:**

**16. What should the Town of Rutherfordton's top recreational priorities be? (share as many as you want)**



# Rural Route Survey Handout - Front and Back



Rutherfordton  
NORTH CAROLINA

## Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey

TOWN OF RUTHERFORDTON SURVEY

TOWN OF RUTHERFORDTON SURVEY

The Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Steering Committee is in the process of updating **Rutherfordton's Parks and Recreation Plan** on behalf of the Rutherfordton Town Council.

Your input is the most important part of this process. **Please take a few moments to tell us about the recreational activities you and your family enjoy and provide some feedback on our parks system.** We appreciate your response.

If you have any questions or need help regarding the survey, please contact Ben Farmer at (828)-351-2338 or [bfarmer@regionc.org](mailto:bfarmer@regionc.org).

If you have any questions about our park system or the parks and recreation master planning process, contact Doug Barrick at (828)-287-3520 or [dbarrick@rutherfordton.net](mailto:dbarrick@rutherfordton.net).

Flip the page for survey questions. Responses are anonymous.

**Note:** This survey is available online at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/RutherfordtonParks](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RutherfordtonParks)

If you choose to take the paper version, please drop the completed copy off at Rutherfordton Town Hall, Norris Library, or scan to [bfarmer@regionc.org](mailto:bfarmer@regionc.org). Additional copies can be picked up at either location.

[www.rutherfordton.net](http://www.rutherfordton.net) Town Hall: 129 N. Main St. Rutherfordton, North Carolina 28139

SECTION 1 OF 2—BEGIN HERE

1. Do you live within the Rutherfordton Town Limits? (circle or check your answer)

Yes  No  Unsure

2. What was your approximate household income in 2016?

Less than \$20,000  \$20,000 to \$34,000  
 \$35,000 to \$49,999  \$50,000 to \$74,999  
 \$75,000 to \$99,999  Over \$100,000  
 Unsure or Prefer Not to Answer

3. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

Less than a high school diploma  
 High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)  
 Some college, no degree  
 Associate's degree (e.g. AA, AS)  
 Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)  
 Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)  
 Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)  
 Prefer not to answer

4. For each individual in your household, please indicate their age and gender:

Example: Individual 1 [12, Male]

Individual 2 [34, Female]

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
2 \_\_\_\_\_ 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
3 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_

If there are more than 6 individuals in your household, please let us know how many there are here: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please indicate your race/ethnicity below:

Hispanic/Latino  Black/African American  
 White  Asian  Native American  
 Prefer Not to Answer  Other

For the rest of this survey, you may answer on behalf of the children in your household in addition to yourself.

SECTION 2 OF 2

6. Which parks have you visited during the past year? (circle or check all that apply)

Second St. Park  Kiwanis Park  
 Purple Martin Greenway  Crestview Park  
 Rutherfordton Golf Course  Main St. Park  
 Rutherfordton Clubhouse

7. Which Crestview Park amenities have you utilized during the past year?

Playground  Picnic Shelter  Basketball Court  
 Tennis Court  Walking Trail  
 Baseball Programs  Other \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please list any recreation facilities that you have visited in the past year that is not listed as an option within question 5 (e.g. church or school playground, private gym):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. How do you normally travel to any recreation facility/park location?

Walk  Drive  Bike  
 N/A or Unsure  Other \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please share your thoughts on any long-term needs for the existing park facilities in Rutherfordton (e.g. lighting improvements, equipment upgrades, parking):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Which leisure activities are you interested in?

Bird Watching  Looking at Gardens  Viewing Wildlife  
 Eating Lunch/Picnic  Play Horseshoes  Trail Walking  
 Play at Playground  Kite Flying  Reading Outdoors  
 Gardening  Nature Study  Play Shuffleboard  
 Library Programming  Exercising Pets  Visiting Dog Park  
 Horseback Riding  Disc Golf  Cornhole  Visiting Greenway  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

12. Which artistic activities are you interested in?

Attend Performances  Outdoor Arts and Crafts  
 Photography  Art Lessons  Music Lessons  
 Art Shows or Festivals  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

13. Which fitness activities are you interested in?

Mountain Biking  Bicycling  Fitness Trail  Dance  
 Roller Skating/Blading  Gymnastics  Rock Climbing  
 Skateboarding  Jogging  Aerobics  Walking  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. Which sport activities are you interested in?

Watching Sport Events  Playing Golf  Playing Baseball  
 Playing Soccer  Playing Tennis  Playing Volleyball  
 Cheerleading  Playing Football  Playing Basketball  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

15. If there are recreational needs the Town of Rutherfordton is currently not meeting, please describe below:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. What should the Town of Rutherfordton's top recreational priorities be? (share as many as you want):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Rutherfordton**  
NORTH CAROLINA

# Parks and Recreation Master Plan Workshop Questionnaire

Please fill out this quick questionnaire before you leave the workshop so we can add your input to the final plan. You can use the back of the page if needed. Thank you!

**What are the top 3 recreational changes or additions you want to see in Rutherfordton?**

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**Are there any recreational activities you leave the Rutherfordton area to do? Please share:**

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**Check any of the activities you are interested in from the list below:**

- Corn Hole                       Disc Golf                       Foot Golf                       Ladder Ball
- Gaga Ball                       Pickle Ball                       Croquet                       Badminton
- I want to share another: \_\_\_\_\_

**What did you see at this workshop that stood out to you as particularly important?**

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**Please share any other thoughts on what needs to be included in the final plan, recreation in Rutherfordton, Rutherfordton's current/future parks, or additional points here:**

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(Optional) We may want to follow up with you after the workshop. If you are ok with us getting in touch with you, please include your contact information below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_





**Purple Martin Statue along Phase 2 of the Purple Martin Greenway**

**Fence between Little League Fields and Concession Stand at Crestview Park**



**Dedication plaque at Main Street Park**





**Picnic tables on the balcony of the Rutherfordton Clubhouse**

**Swing Set at Kiwanis Park**



**Looking south from the Rutherfordton Golf Course parking lot**





**Children's Play Area at  
Second Street Park**

**Climbing Dome and swing set  
in the Children's Play Area at  
Crestview Park**



**Main Street Park from across  
Main Street**