

# TOWN OF SWANSBORO PARKS & RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN September 2008







# Swansboro Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan

September 2008

Prepared by:

  
Eastern Carolina Council



## Acknowledgements

The staff of the Eastern Carolina Council would like to acknowledge those individuals that have eagerly participated and generously given of their time and talents to assist in the data collection and development of this master plan. The assistance of the staff of the Town of Swansboro and its Parks and Recreation Board members was invaluable throughout this process.

The 2007 Parks and Recreation Board members were:

Donna Chadwick, Chair  
Mary Donnelly, Vice Chair  
Tina Siegel  
Bob Fox  
Neva Tucker  
Brynn Ashton  
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Swansboro staff included:  
Pat Thomas, Town Manager  
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The outcome desired for this project is a robust Parks and Recreation Program for the citizens of the Town of Swansboro that includes adequate facilities. Using this comprehensive plan as a guide will facilitate achieving that objective.



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## **Executive Summary**

This Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan for the Town of Swansboro was prepared by the Swansboro Parks and Recreation Board with the assistance of Judy Hills, Eastern Carolina Council, and the staff of the Town of Swansboro. The plan is intended to provide a road map for needed improvements in parks and recreation facilities and program to meet the current and future needs of the citizens of Swansboro.

### **General Information**

According to the Town's draft Land Use Plan update, Swansboro had 976 residents on 1980 and had nearly doubled to 1,702 in 2004.

[additional demographic information will be added here]

According to a survey conducted by NC State University's Recreation Resources Services in 2006-2007, the average per capita expenditures by municipal and county parks and recreation services in North Carolina was \$77.23 and the average in southeastern North Carolina was \$53.23. Small municipalities (under 5,000 population) had an average annual expenditure for parks and recreation of \$280,842 and an average staff for recreation programming of three full-time and 11 part-time employees (does not include maintenance staff).

### **Public Input**

As part of the plan's preparation, a survey of recreation needs and ideas was distributed to Swansboro residents and nearby residents through local schools, at a business showcase, and through several churches. A total of 861 surveys were returned, 47% of who were Swansboro residents.

Participants were asked about their interest in a variety of indoor and outdoor recreational opportunities, as well as their interest in a various recreation programming possibilities. The survey responses indicate strong interest in several types of indoor facilities with significant costs – such as indoor swimming, basketball courts, arts and crafts rooms, and an indoor running tracks – as well as major outdoor recreation opportunity possibilities, including a splash park, nature trails, bike trails, a skate park, and miniature golf.

Activity-wise, significant areas of interest included summer camps, sport camps, senior activities, sporting events, family activities. Improvements to park facilities and a multi-purpose recreation center to house many activities (such as arts and crafts, fitness, classes, table tennis, indoor track, indoor soccer, racquetball, senior activities, and family activities) were high on respondents' "wish lists".

## Facilities and Standards

The Town's existing parks facilities were compared to the widely-recognized standards of the National Parks and Recreation Association. This evaluation found the following:

- Swansboro's current total parks acreage of 20.7 is within NPRA guidelines, although there are deficiencies in the availability of baseball, softball, and football fields.
- Projected park acreage needs for 2020 are 60 acres – nearly 40 more than current acreage.

Specific evaluations were conducted of the Town's current parks, with the following results:

1. Seashore Park. This very small mini-park (0.1 acre) has no specific purpose and minimal equipment. It is poorly located between two mobile home lots.
2. Pineland Park. This small (0.2 acres) park is located in a neighborhood with high demand with park facilities for youths and families, but has old play equipment, only one picnic table, no benches, and a lack of safety cushioning. Its role is not well-defined, and its small size limits re-development or further improvements.
3. Ward Shore Park. This passive strip park of .36 acres on the White Oak River turning basin has a beautiful water view, but only a few amenities and has noticeable maintenance issues (picnic tables, seawall). There is no significant landscaping, and it is difficult to distinguish between the park area and an adjoining private lot. Parking is very limited.
4. Bicentennial Park. Located on both sides of the bridge at the White Oak River, this .56 acres site has some very attractive features (pier, Otway Burns statue, brick pavers, attractive dock walk areas), but has rough paving in the parking area, a broken bench, an unattractively located dumpster, a lack of fish cleaning facilities (with related adverse impact on restrooms), and a need for shoreline erosion controls. The restrooms were recently repainted.
5. Tot Lot. This .62-acre area between Broad and Shore streets was apparently designed as a children's play area, but suffers from outdated equipment, a lack of shade in most areas, limited seating, and no water fountain. Some of the amenities appear to be haphazardly placed, and the park – which is sometimes primarily a hangout for older teens – lacks a strong focal point and needs a good overall design and additional quality amenities.
6. Dock Walk. This .78 acre passive-use park adjacent to NC 24 has a large, permeable-surface parking lot and a long dock walk along the waterfront over a tidal marsh area. However, the dock walk is not suitable for fishing, and there is no seating of any kind available on the dock walk or on the land. A covered observation platform and interpretive signage are scheduled to be added.
7. Swansboro Municipal Park. The largest of the community's parks, with 87% of the Town's total park space, this 18.07 acres site is located between Commercial and the Main Street Extension. The dominant use of the park is for youth soccer fields, with a related concession facility. The park also contains a picnic pavilion, tennis courts, beach volleyball area, playground structure (new), restrooms, and a nature trail. The park has a number of mismatched and poorly maintained amenities, has limited

seating, a lack of water for drinking and maintenance, has no ADA-compliant restrooms, no interpretive signage on the trail, and no bicycle racks.

8. Town Pier. The town pier at the waterfront end of Main Street includes a fishing pier and a dinghy dock. There are no directional signs and a misleading “no docking” sign on the pier.

### **Staffing**

The Town currently has only one employee who works mostly in parks maintenance (with no seasonal help) and no recreational programming staff – regular or seasonal. This is significantly less than the average parks and recreational staff resources of community’s under 5,000 in North Carolina, as indicated above. There is no organized recreational programming sponsored by the Town, other than the Independence Day fireworks display.

### **Other Issues**

There are no constructed or designated bike trails in Swansboro, the Town has no uniform rules and regulations for park facilities, internal signage in parks is limited and inconsistent, and directional signage to parks is non-existent. Few of the facilities indicated any concern with handicapped access. Heightened attention to safety and security is desirable throughout the parks.

### **Recommendations**

- A. Existing Park Facilities. The Town’s first priority should be bringing its existing parks up to a level of quality consistent with modern design, safety, and accessibility standards. To accomplish this, the Town (a) needs a master plan for each park, (b) should replace obsolete, unattractive, and unsafe features, (c) should install selected improvements consistent with the new park plans, (d) should cure safety and accessibility deficiencies, and (e) should adopt and post uniform park regulations.
- B. Park Land and Facilities. To address a looming deficiency in the amount of park land available to serve a growing community, the Town (a) should begin setting aside funds for park land acquisition, (b) should begin aggressively working to identify appropriate park sites, (c) should begin exploring grant sources for park land acquisition and development, and (d) should strengthen its park land dedication and payment-in-lieu requirements.
- C. Parks and Recreation Staffing. The Town (a) should immediately strengthen its personnel resources for park maintenance, (b) should begin utilizing seasonal or contract staff to begin offering recreation programs, and (c) should, within several years, hire a parks and recreation director.

- D. Funding. To more adequately meet the needs of the community for park improvements, park acquisition and development, and recreational programming, the Town (a) should more adequately fund this service need in annual budgets, (b) reserve a portion of the Town's fund balance for park land and facilities needs, (c) consider a dedicated tax levy for parks and recreation, (d) aggressively seek grants to help meet parks and recreation needs, (e) develop a multi-year capital improvements program for parks, (f) develop a bicycle paths plan as a precursor to seeking NCDOT funding, (g) establish a vehicle for encouragement and receipt of donations for park needs (h) and (h) pursue business and civic sponsorships for specific park improvements.

## **Section 1: Introduction**

Due to its proximity to Bogue Inlet and the White Oak River, the Town of Swansboro has its origins in the shipbuilding industry. As a port it continued to prosper until the advent of the Civil War. After the war it returned to its seafaring roots as a commercial fishing town. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune's nearby presence caused military families to take up residence in Swansboro. The town has a historic downtown area along the water that attracts tourists. Swansboro continues to attract young and old alike because of its seaside charm.

The Town of Swansboro in Onslow County is blessed with a wonderful mild four-season climate. Located along the White Oak River, the town is bisected by Highway 24. Swansboro is an attractive community in which to raise a family, to live or to retire. In order to meet the recreational needs of its citizens, the Town provides a number of parks and recreational areas.

Swansboro Town Council appoints citizens to serve on the Parks & Recreation Board. The Board members are appointed for a three year term and may be reappointed with no limit on the number of terms they may serve. The Board meets monthly generally on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. The Board members serve in an advisory capacity only. The Board is staffed by two town employees: the Public Works Director and a Planner from the Planning/Zoning and Code Enforcement Department.



## Section 2: General Information

Swansboro's population has steadily climbed over the years. In 1980 the population was 976 and in 2006 the estimated population was 1,820. According to the Census 2000 statistics, 90.2% of the population was Caucasian. Age distribution for Census 2000 showed that 20.8% of the population was ages 0-14, 24.1% were 15-34, 26.9% were 35-54, 11.3% were 55-64, 9.5% were 65-74 and 7.4% were 75 and older. The school age population (5-18) represented 19.6% of the population and 62.9% of the population were working age (16-64). Of the population 29.6% attained a high school education and 24.7% had a Bachelor's degree or higher. Only 10% of the population had less than a 12<sup>th</sup> grade education (no diploma). The per capita income was \$19,625 and the poverty rate was 11.9%. Of the households in Swansboro, 33.4% had incomes of greater than \$50,000 per year and 36% made less than \$25,000 annually.

According the high growth scenario in the town's Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Plan, the corporate limits of Swansboro is predicted to have a population of 2,786. The Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) area is predicted to have 1,669 and the Swansboro Planning Area will have another 2,025. The total area prediction for 2020 is 6,480. For the purpose of this planning document a 2020 population of 6,000 was used since people in the surrounding areas will use Swansboro's Parks and Recreational facilities.

Swansboro has no industries located within the town. The town has a mix of service industries, retail, and commercial.

### *Trends impacting recreation*

#### *Obesity*

"One trend that has a negative impact on outdoor recreation demand is increased obesity. In the United States, obesity has risen at an epidemic rate in the past 20 years. Research indicates that the situation is worsening...Addressing overweight and obesity has become a national health objective." <http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp.html> Resources are being brought to bear on this issue and the Town would be well advised to capitalize on this issue as funding becomes available.

#### *Longevity and aging of population*

"People are living longer...the trend of increased life expectancy is projected to continue. Lifestyle choices, including participating in recreation and exercise, can affect an individual's life span." They are also likely to be healthier at all ages and healthier people are more likely to participate in outdoor recreation creating additional demand for outdoor recreation areas and facilities. <http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp.html>

"Between 2010 and 2020, the number of citizens 65 and older is projected to increase by 35%...Retired persons often have more free time than other adults, and, to a lesser extent, more financial resources...Increased demand can therefore be expected for activities that have a high participation by older Americans. These include walking, sightseeing, attending family gatherings, visiting a beach or waterside, picnicking, visiting a historic site or nature center, bird watching and attending sporting events. Older Americans also participate in a

wide variety of other outdoor recreation activities including wildlife viewing, attending concerts, nature study, fishing, swimming, motor boating, biking and golf.”  
[http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp/scorp\\_ch4.pdf](http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp/scorp_ch4.pdf)

The aging population, the anticipated influx of retirees and the military retirees from nearby Marine Corps training facilities mean that additional recreational facilities will be needed to serve this group. As the population ages, their recreational needs become more passive and the need for senior-friendly (and ADA compliant) facilities increases.

#### *Outdoor Recreation Participation in North Carolina*

“The five most popular outdoor recreation activities in North Carolina are walking for pleasure, driving for pleasure, viewing scenery, participating in beach activities, and visiting historical sites. Three out of every four households participated in walking for pleasure at least once in the past 12 months (Table IV-2). In addition to the five most popular activities, over fifty percent of the households responding to a 1989 survey participated at least once in the following activities: swimming (in lakes, rivers, or oceans), visiting natural areas, picnicking, attending sports events, visiting zoos, and freshwater fishing.

“The North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey was mailed to 3,100 randomly selected residents in the spring of 1989. Forty-five percent, or 1,399 people, returned completed surveys. Each person receiving the survey was asked to estimate the number of times that household members had participated in each of 43 activities. The survey results provide good insight into the current participation of North Carolinians in a wide range of outdoor recreation activities. The survey results also closely mirror those of the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment conducted in 1994-1995 and 2000.” <http://ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/jone/trend.pdf>

Bird watching has had the largest percentage increase of any activity tracked by the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, growing 235.9% since 1982. Swansboro is a bird sanctuary. The town might establish a bird watching trail. Hammocks Beach State Park is part of the North Carolina Birding Trail.

[http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp/scorp\\_ch4.pdf](http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp/scorp_ch4.pdf)

A short-term trend that has implications for Swansboro is the use of personal watercraft (PWC). Nationally about 20.3 million people use PWCs. Also the number of registered boaters in North Carolina has increased almost 24% from 1992 to 2002.  
[http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp/scorp\\_ch4.pdf](http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp/scorp_ch4.pdf) Families and retirees are attracted to areas like Swansboro where there is an opportunity for recreational boating.

North Carolina is concerned about survival of its natural diversity. Habitats are being destroyed as developers seize the opportunity to create new communities in Onslow County and Swansboro. A list of threatened and endangered species and their habitats can be found at: <http://nc-es.fws.gov/es/cntylist/Onslow.html> As the Town is able to identify areas where these habitats and species exist, it would behoove the Town, if feasible, to purchase these parcels (or partner with a conservation group) to protect this habitat for future generations to enjoy.

### *The Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services*

"In a 1992 nationwide study conducted at Pennsylvania State University, researchers compiled a listing of the benefits of local recreation and park services as perceived by the American public. Participants in the study could be divided into two groups: users of local recreation and park services and non-users. Surprisingly, 71% of non-users said they received some benefit from their communities' parks and recreational services".

Benefits identified by non-users were as follows:

- Availability
- Keeping kids off the streets
- Keeping kids occupied
- Community awareness
- Giving kids a place to go
- Feeling good because of being there
- Exercise, fitness & conditioning
- Good for kids
- Kids' enjoyment
- Having a place to go

Individual and family benefits identified by users of local parks and recreation services were numerous.

### Conclusions of the Study

- The vast majority of the American public uses local recreation and park services.
- Park and playground use is the most common use.
- Park and recreational service use continues throughout the life cycle.<sup>110</sup>
- Recreational participation declines with age, but park use does not. In fact, people between the ages of 65 and 74 use local parks more frequently than any other age group from those 15 and older.
- The majority of people that do not use parks and recreational services still perceive substantial benefit from them.
- Sixty percent of the study's respondents perceive a "great deal" of community benefit from such services.
- Seventy-five percent of respondents said that "local recreation and park services are worth \$45.00 or more per member of their household" per year.
- Local parks and recreation are associated with a sense of community. Community level benefits are considered more important than individual or household level benefits." <http://www.lib.niu.edu/ipo/1992/ip921137.html>

"The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space - How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line".

- Growing Smart
  - Development actually costs towns more than it gives because schools, streets, police officers, and other necessary municipal services drain more than they are required to pay in taxes.
  - Open space preservation helps communities grow smart, preventing the higher costs of unplanned development.
  - Open space reduces pressure to construct on valuable farmland and natural areas on the urban fringe.
  - A community must decide which lands to protect for recreation, community character, the conservation of natural resources, and open space. This in turn determines where compact development will occur.
- Attracting Investment
  - Parks and open space create a high quality of life that attracts tax-paying businesses and residents to communities.
  - Corporate CEOs say that employee quality of life is the third most important factor in locating a new business.
  - Small company owners say recreation, parks, and open space are the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business.
  - Arizona's "outdoor lifestyle and recreation opportunities" were cited as the reason for the location or expansion of 70 firms in that state.
  - In Salem, Oregon, land next to a greenbelt was found to be worth approximately \$1,200 per acre more than land just 1,000 feet away.
  - In Oakland, California, a three mile greenbelt around a lake at the Town's center added \$41 million to the surrounding area's property values.
  - Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, California, increases the value of nearby property from \$500 million to \$1 billion while generating \$5-\$10 million in annual property taxes.
  - Across the U.S., access to parks and open spaces has become a measure of community wealth - a tool for attracting businesses and residents by guaranteeing quality of life and economic health.
- Revitalizing Cities
  - Urban parks, gardens, and recreational open space stimulate commercial growth and promote inner-Town revitalization.
- Boosting Tourism
  - Open space boosts local economies by attracting tourists and supporting outdoor recreation.
  - Across the U.S., parks, rivers, scenic lands, wildlife areas, and open space help to support the \$502 billion tourism industry.
  - According to the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of America, outdoor recreation generated at least \$40 billion in 1996, creating 768,000 full-time jobs and \$13 billion in annual wages.

- Because tourists cite natural beauty and quality of view to be the most important criteria in selecting a destination, many communities are now striving to protect scenic views and vistas by moving utility wires underground and protecting trees and historic buildings.
- In 1993, the National Park Service estimated that national park visitors contributed more than \$10 billion in direct and indirect benefits to local economies.
- According to the National Park Service, the tourism/leisure industry will soon become the leading U.S. industry of any kind at its present rate of growth.
- Wildlife enthusiasts visiting our nation's parks also contribute significantly to the economy. Sport fishing generated \$108.4 billion in 1996, supporting 1.2 million jobs. Sport fishing produced \$2.4 billion in state taxes (nearly 1% of all state tax receipts) and \$3.1 billion in federal income taxes. People interested in birds and wildlife photography contributed another \$85.4 billion to the U.S. economy.
- Safeguarding the Environment
  - Open space conservation is often the cheapest way to safeguard drinking water, clean the air, and achieve other environmental goals.
  - One acre of wetland is estimated to generate \$150,000 to \$200,000 in economic benefits.
  - Forested lands control erosion, help clean the air of pollutants, absorb carbon dioxide and other harmful greenhouse gasses, help shelter our houses from heat and wind.
  - Wetlands serve as wildlife habitat, absorb storm and flood water, and reduce pollutant and sediment loads in watershed runoff. Without wetlands, society would have to pay for these services. With wetlands, they are free.”

[http://www.gocolumbiainmo.com/ParksandRec/About Us/benefits.php#Benefits%20of%20Local%20Parks%20&%20Rec](http://www.gocolumbiainmo.com/ParksandRec/About%20Us/benefits.php#Benefits%20of%20Local%20Parks%20&%20Rec)

#### *Benchmarking and Performance Measures*

The following information was taken from the Executive Summary of the Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study, Fiscal Year 2006/2007 conducted by North Carolina State University's Recreation Resources Services.

“The source of funds by percentage for the 05/06 budget for all reporting Parks and Recreation Towns was 71% from the general fund, 11% from grants, 10 % from fees & charges and 8% from other.”

The average per capita expenditure based on all reporting agencies was \$77.23 in 2006/2007.

Mean per capita expenditure for agencies in southeast NC was \$53.23 in 2006/2007.

Municipalities with small populations (less than 4,999), employed an average of three full-time staff and 11 part-time staff just for recreational programming. That does not include maintenance personnel.

This is a table of small municipal (pop. <4,999) averages for spending:

Personnel	Contracted personnel	Contracted operations	Travel/training	Supplies/Material	Maint./Repair	Other	Total
\$156,685	\$19,529	\$17,131	\$1,809	\$28,309	\$19,746	\$63,464	\$280,842

Facilities: [http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/RRS\\_mcprss07\\_facilities.pdf](http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/RRS_mcprss07_facilities.pdf)  
 Salaries: [http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/RRS\\_mcprss06\\_Salary.pdf](http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/RRS_mcprss06_Salary.pdf)  
 Fees & charges: [http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/RRS\\_mcprss05\\_Fees.pdf](http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/RRS_mcprss05_Fees.pdf)

#### *Technology and Productivity*

The Town's productivity could be enhanced with the use of technology and computer programs. For example, scheduling of facilities is done by hand when there are computer programs available that specifically process these types of requests. There should also be a method for the public to pay directly online via credit cards, especially if the Town goes online with a catalog of items to purchase or items to purchase as memorials.

#### *Parks and Recreation Public Input*

The Parks & Recreation Board is a valuable asset for assistance in helping the Town of Swansboro to develop and execute its plan for parks and recreational facilities and programs for the citizens. Swansboro's Parks & Recreation Board has been actively engaged in the development of this document.

### Section 3: Population Analysis

The demographic information in this section was taken from the draft of the Town's CAMA Plan, from the NC Demographer's webpage and from the US Census Bureau's website.

#### *Introduction*

Demographics for the Town of Swansboro are central to the planning process.

Changes in population and local demographics create differing demands for recreational amenities—active and passive.

The Town of Swansboro, "The Friendly City by the Sea," is located in Onslow County and has a population of 1,820 residents (State demographer 2006 municipal estimates). The Town serves as a regional center for activities for people living in eastern Onslow County.

#### *Population and Growth Trends*

##### *1. Population*

Long-term demographic projections by the North Carolina Office of State Planning indicate that Onslow County's population under the age of 18 years and college-age will decrease slightly, the working-age population will increase slightly, and the elderly population will experience the largest growth rate. The median age in Swansboro in 2000 was 39.6 years. Between April 2000 and July 2006, the population of Swansboro grew 24.74%. Recreational facilities will need to keep up with the growing population. As land cost continues to rise, the challenge will be to purchase the needed land as soon as feasible.

##### *2. Gender*

In 2000, Swansboro's 1,426 population consisted of 649 males (45.5%) and 777 females (54.5%). By comparison, 55.2% of Onslow County's 2000 population was males and 44.8% were females.

According to a 2005 Recreation Study in South Carolina, "Men and women demonstrate different patterns of recreational participation, with men exhibiting higher overall participation levels than women. Men were particularly more likely than women to participate in activities such as hunting, other shooting sports, hunting dog field trials, fresh water and salt water fishing, shell fishing or shrimping, camping, motor boating, waterskiing, jet skiing, and lake or river swimming. The activities for which women were more likely to participate than men tended to be more passive recreational activities, and included picnicking, visiting a museum, visiting a zoo, walking for pleasure or exercise, bird watching, visiting historical sites, and walking on a guided nature trail."

<http://www.scprtr.com/files/RPE/2005%20Rec%20Study%20Summary.pdf>

As the population ages, it is a known fact that women tend to outlive men, therefore when considering senior activities, it may be advantageous to focus more on those activities that women would participate in.

### *3. Racial Composition*

Racial composition data in 2000, shows the Town's population was 90.2% white, 4.6% black, and 5.2% all other races. The Town's majority population remains considerably higher than that of Onslow County and North Carolina.

The South Carolina Recreation Study completed in 2005 shows that the participation patterns of blacks and whites differ significantly. Some of the largest differences in participation were in water-related or traditional outdoor activities, with whites more likely to participate than African Americans. These activities included motor boating, lake or river swimming, going to the beach to swim or sunbathe, camping, hiking, and hunting. The activities for which African American participation was higher than that of whites generally involved physically active sports, and included playing basketball, football, volleyball, and softball, as well as bicycling, jogging or running, and working out with weights or exercise machines. <http://www.scprtr.com/files/RPE/2005%20Rec%20Study%20Summary.pdf>

### *4. Density*

Swansboro is 1.3 square miles. In 2000, Swansboro contained 1,168 persons per square mile. A population that is more compacted to the town limits makes it easier to ensure that recreational facilities are within a short travel distance for residents.

### *5. Seasonal Population*

While seasonal and recreational populations are an important part in the overall picture of Onslow County, it does not have a significant impact on the total population of Swansboro. There are limited overnight accommodations in Swansboro. There is little impact on public facilities and services, including recreation except for visitors to the historic downtown area.

### *6. Families and Households*

In Census 2000, Swansboro had 655 households with an average household size of 2.18 persons.

As retirees begin to flock to the area, the number of households will increase while the number of persons per household may continue to shrink. The only bearing this information may have on recreation is that land is quickly being purchased by developers making it more difficult in the future for the Town to purchase land at reasonable prices. Water access property will be especially difficult, if not impossible, to purchase in the future.

### *7. Poverty*

According to Census 2000 data there are 171 individuals living in poverty (12%) in the town. Over 50% of the recreational survey respondents who answered this survey item had family incomes of greater than \$50,000.

The South Carolina Recreation Study done in 2005 shows that family income has a significant effect on participation in a number of recreational activities, with the general tendency being for those from higher income families to show higher participation rates than those with lower incomes. Activities for which differences were particularly large across income groups included going to the beach to swim or sunbathe, visiting historical sites, and golf. Those activities for which the highest income group had the lowest participation rate or for which the differences across income groups were not statistically significant tended to be

either team sports in which participation is relatively inexpensive (such as basketball, volleyball, football, baseball, softball, or soccer) or fairly standard, almost day-to-day activities (such as walking for pleasure or exercise, jogging or running, bird watching, or driving a motorcycle for pleasure).

<http://www.scprrt.com/files/RPE/2005%20Rec%20Study%20Summary.pdf>

#### 8. *Disabled*

According to the 2000 Census data there are 287 civilian non-institutionalized individuals ages five and older who have one or more disability items imputed (22.3%). As the population continues to age, there will be more and more adults with permanent and temporary disabilities.

Census data are imputed when the information is missing or inconsistent and relies on the homogeneity of the tendency of households within a small geographic area to be similar in most cases.

When planning for recreation, the needs and interests of the disabled need to be considered. As the population ages and as the Town begins to attract more retirees, ADA compliant facilities will need to be the norm.

#### 9. *Military*

Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and Marine Corps Air Station New River are located approximately 12 miles from Swansboro. According to statistics provided by Marine Corps East, there are 1,482 military and dependents living in the Swansboro area zip code of 28584. Granted, that zip code covers more than just Swansboro town limits, but these are probably area residents that would be served by Swansboro P&R facilities. These military families are young and their children would participate in recreational activities.

Wherever there are military facilities there are those who are based there that retire from the service to live in the area. These military retirees tend to be younger.

#### *Population Projections*

Births, deaths, and net migration are among the natural processes affecting population growth. Military, local, State, and Federal initiatives may also affect Swansboro's population growth. Economic and industrial development in and around Swansboro have been negligible with the exception of the military. Tourism and a growing retirement community will also impact the size and composition of the population.

Due to a variety of reasons, projections of future population at the municipal level are not generated by the State.

#### *Implications*

Swansboro's population is getting older and will probably continue to follow this national trend. In the future, the baby boom generation and the desirability of Swansboro as a retirement location will impact the type of recreation being sought by this population. The influx of retirees to Swansboro not only increases the population; it also brings cultural diversity and a valuable volunteer base.

At the national level baby-boomers (born 1946-1964) will be reaching retirement age around the year 2008. An influx of retirees to the area has the potential to increase the need for services and infrastructure, including recreational facilities.

At the same time the retiree population will cause an increase in service oriented businesses and in healthcare. Young families will be attracted to the area to fill these jobs, so the recreational needs of all segments of the population will need to continue to be met.

This trend will also increase the need for and perhaps interest in health and wellness programs.

## Section 4: Public Input Survey

The Parks and Recreation Board undertook the task of surveying the area residents on their needs and ideas for recreation. The surveys were distributed in the following manner:

- Schools—copies of the survey were distributed to every child in the four schools in Swansboro: Swansboro High School, Swansboro Middle School, Swansboro Elementary and Queens Creek Elementary. The students took the survey home for a parent or guardian to complete. The surveys were returned to the school and were picked up by members of the P&R Board.
- The P&R Board members distributed surveys at the local Business Showcase. People filled them out on the spot and they were collected by the P&R Board members.
- The survey was distributed to the congregations of three local churches. Completed surveys were collected by P&R Board members.

While the town only has a population of 1,459 (July 2006 NC Demographer Population Estimate), there were 861 surveys returned. Of those who completed the survey 44% were residents of Swansboro. This is a summary of that survey:

The highest ranking desires included:

Indoor Swimming Pool (766)  
Splash Park (520)  
Nature Trails (471)  
Bike Trails (469)  
Skate Park (467)  
Indoor Basketball Courts (452)  
Putt-putt golf (375)  
Arts & crafts rooms (344)  
Indoor running Track (331)

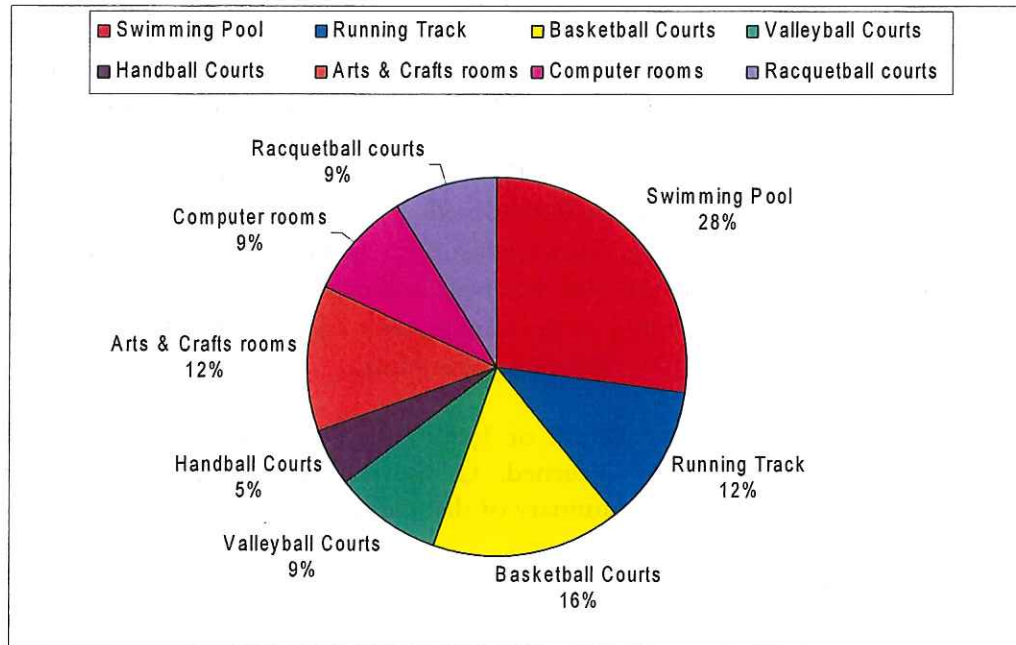
Respondents had an opportunity on the survey to write in their response to this question: "When we develop a City Parks & Recreation Department to plan recreational events, what do you think they should do, example: senior games, sporting events, bike safety, summer camps, sports camps, etc.?"

In analyzing the response, there was an overwhelming interest in summer camps and sport camps. Senior activities and sporting events also ranked high. Many mentioned family gatherings from picnics to old fashioned games to competitions. When a Parks & Recreation Department is established, it would help for the new Director to review this list.

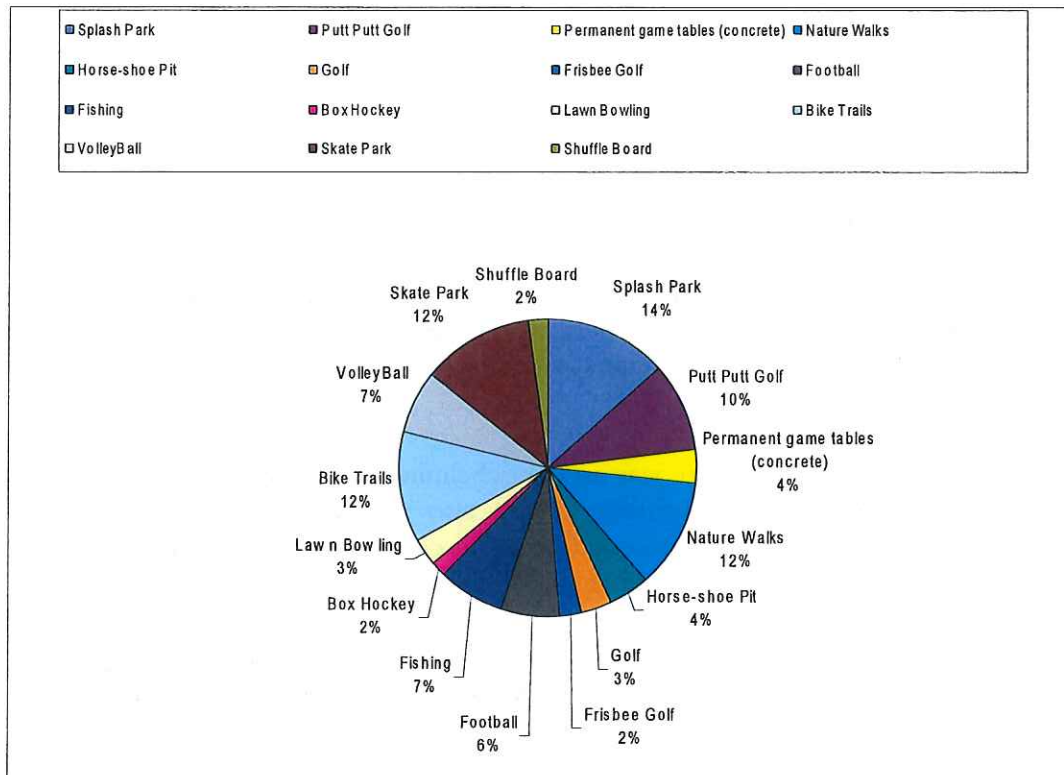
Respondents were also asked for their "Wish List". Items that ranked high on this list included: an indoor recreation center that would house a number of activities (arts, crafts, fitness, health, weight, classes, yoga, ping pong, indoor running track, indoor soccer, racquetball, indoor skate park, family games, senior activities, etc.) and improvements to playgrounds. While not scoring high, there were a number of requests for a dog park.

Several mentioned better tennis courts. There were several comments about accommodating the handicapped at the facilities. The new Director, when hired, should also review this list.

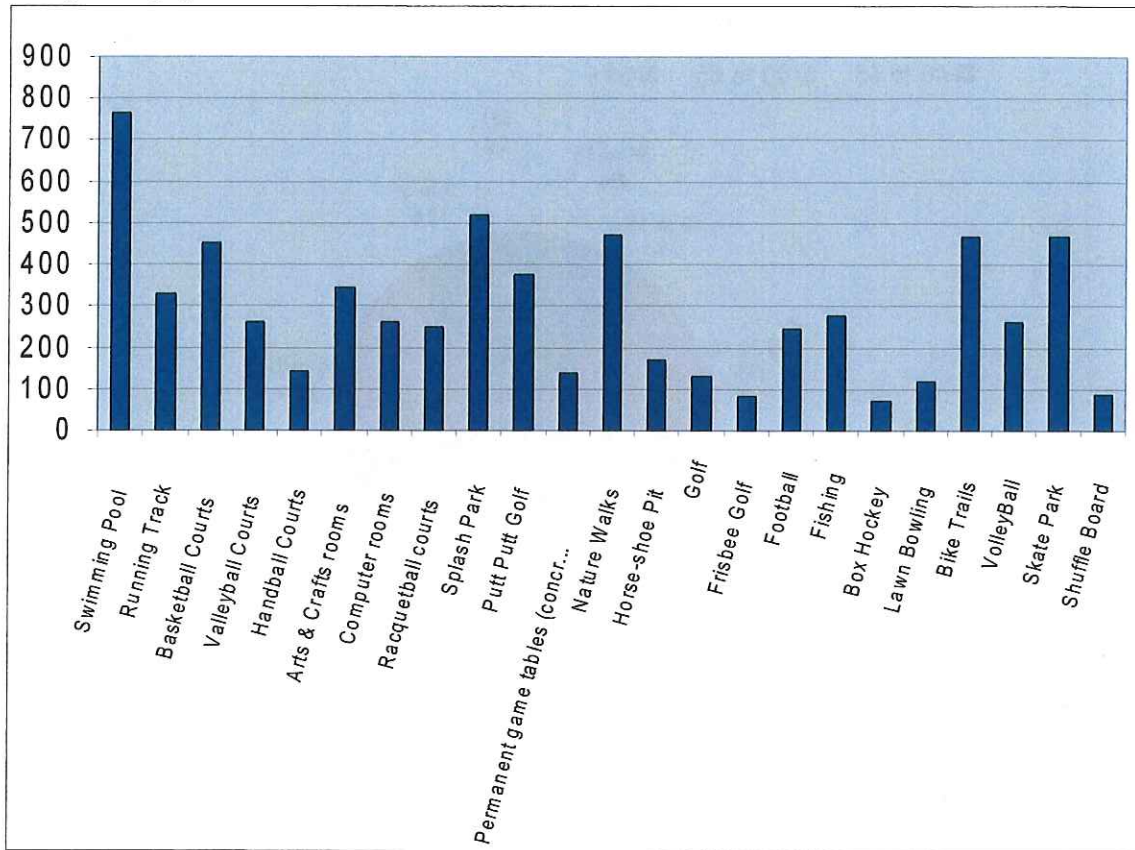
#### Indoor complex desires:



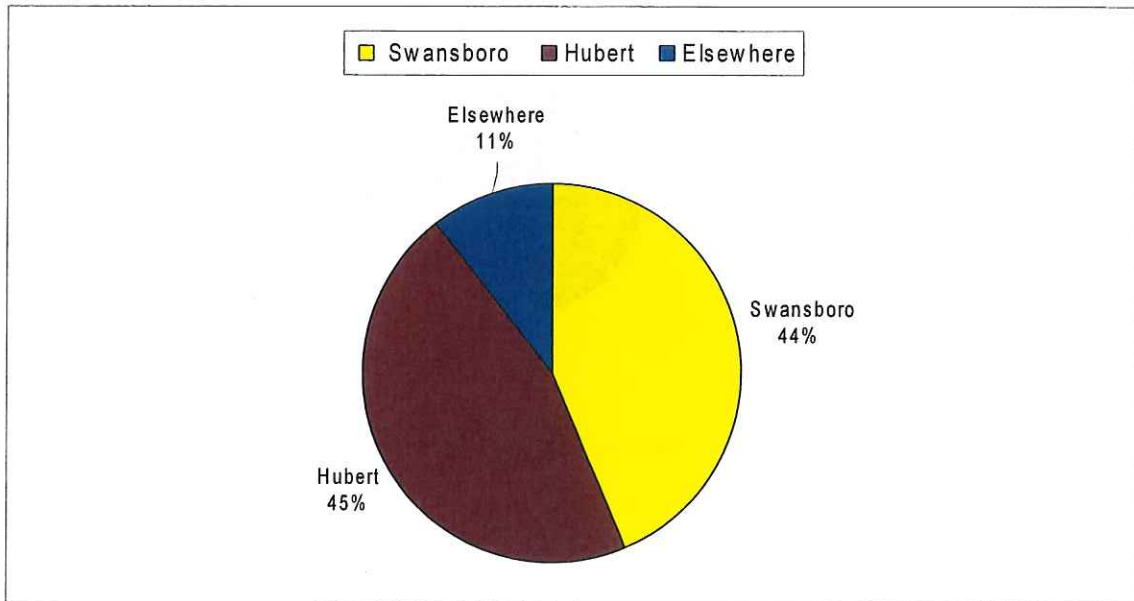
#### Outdoor Desires:



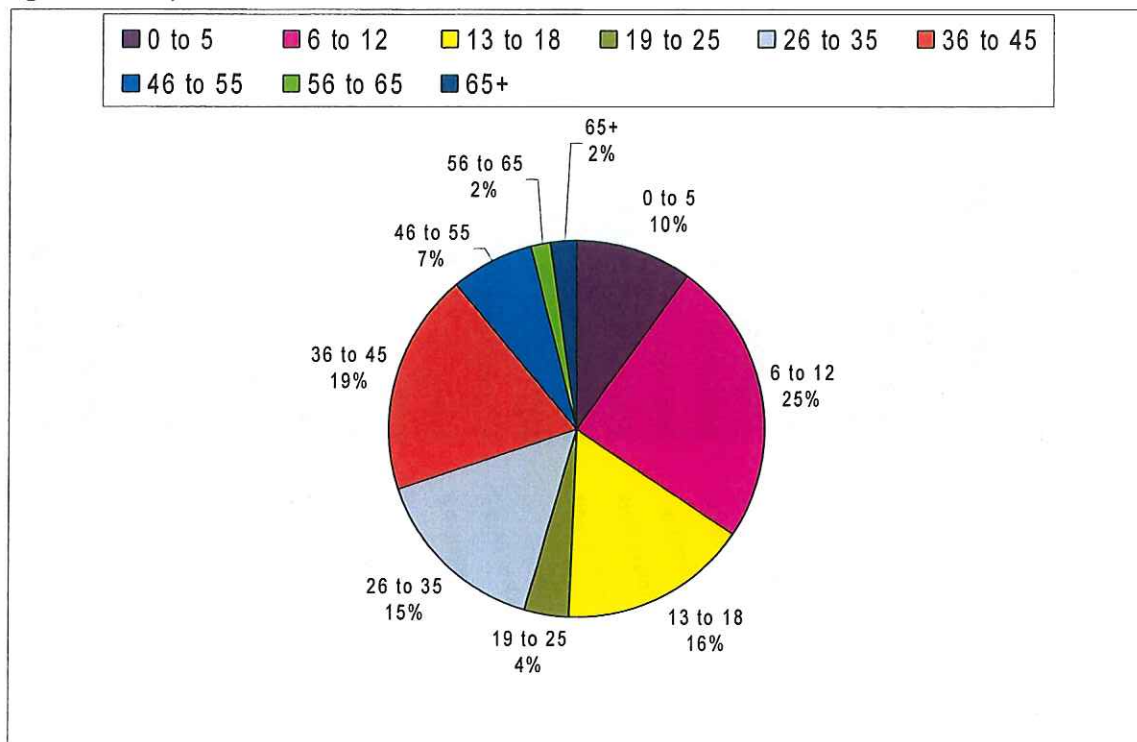
Composite graph: all activities



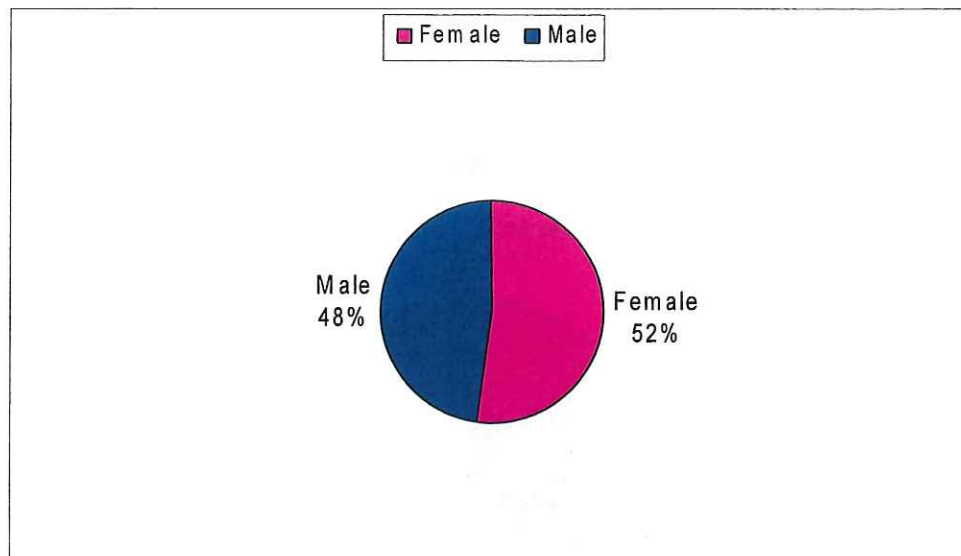
Where they live:



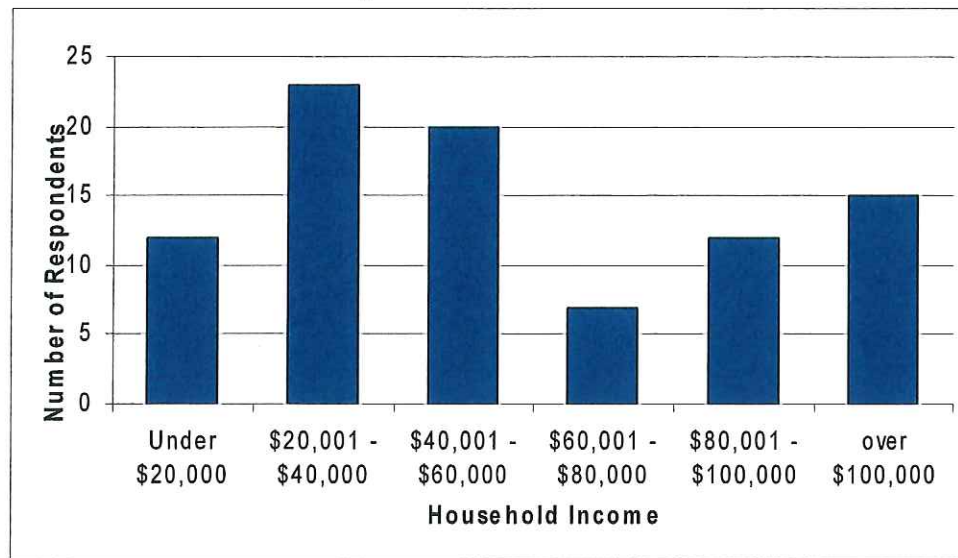
Ages of family members:



Genders of family members:



Graph of household incomes of respondents:



Because over 90% of Swansboro residents are Caucasian, the question of race was not asked. Also, the schools objected to this question being asked.

#### *Summary*

Based on a review of this survey, the following are recommended:

- Construction of an aquatic complex that would include a swimming pool and a splash park. Make it so that it could be open to the air in the summer and enclosed in the cooler months (like the New Bern YMCA's pool).
- Construction of an indoor multi-purpose facility that would serve all ages.
- Create a unique playground area for children ages 1-12.
- Create an outdoor skate park.
- Create a nature trail.
- Create a bike trail.



## Section 5: Facilities and Standards

### *General*

A field trip to each facility listed in this section took place in the fall of 2007. The parks were found to be clean and mostly free of litter. The grass had been mowed. The restrooms that were visited were mostly clean.

While there is no designated Parks and Recreation staff, there is a public works department that keeps up the grounds.

### *Playgrounds*

“Two sets of playground safety guidelines provide recommendations for creating safe public playgrounds: the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety and the American Society for Testing and Materials' (ASTM) F1487 Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use. Protective surfacing is one of the most important safety factors on playgrounds. Shock absorbing surfaces can help disperse the impact of a child's falling body or head, thus reducing the risk of life-threatening injuries. An important aspect of reducing playground injuries is to provide cushioned surfaces beneath and around equipment at depths appropriate to equipment height. Limiting the height of playground equipment can also reduce the severity of a fall injury.” <http://www.safetypolicy.org/pm/playgrnd.htm>

The Town has one playground that is of modern design. The playground area located at the municipal park has mulch spread as a safety feature, but it has worn thin in some places and needs to be replenished. Some neighborhood parks have older swing sets and various playground equipment pieces such as climbing gyms. These do not have shock absorbent material underneath—just dirt. Several pieces of older playground climbing equipment are rusting and children are at risk of receiving scratches from the sharp edges.

It is recommended that at least one person on staff be a certified playground safety inspector. This training is available from Recreation Resources Services.  
[http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/educational\\_opportunities.html](http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/educational_opportunities.html)

### *Standards for Public Facilities*

In this section, each existing park and facility will be reviewed and needed or desired changes will also be discussed.

**Standards for Public Facilities**  
**Town of Swansboro**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>NRPA*</b>	<b>Standard Used</b>
<b>Fields</b>		
Baseball	1/5000	1/5000
Softball/Youth Fields	1/5000	1/5000
Football	1/20000	1/20000
Soccer	1/10000	1/10000
<b>Courts</b>		
Basketball	1/5000	1/5000
Tennis	1/2000	1/2000
Volleyball	1/5000	1/5000
<b>Indoor Facilities</b>	1/20000	1/20000
<b>Outdoor Facilities</b>		
Picnic Shelters	N/A	1/3000
Active Rec Acres	N/A	5ac/1000
Passive Rec Acres	N/A	5ac/1000
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1/20000	1/20000

\*National Recreation and Parks Association Standards

[http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM423/recreation\\_standards.htm](http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM423/recreation_standards.htm)

These standards are suggestions and the needs and desires of the residents and users of the facilities must be taken into account when applying them. For example, while the standard for soccer is one field per 10,000 in population, soccer is a very active sport in Swansboro and more fields are needed than the standard.

Interest in tennis comes and goes over the years, depending on whether or not leagues are formed and lessons given on a regular basis.

A higher level of acres per 1000 population for recreation areas was chosen to enhance the quality of life and to make Swansboro an attractive tourist destination.

This table varies from the one on page 99 of the CAMA plan. The CAMA plan suggested that there would be approximately 8,502 people in the Swansboro planning area by 2030. For this report the population figure of 6,000 was used for the year 2020.

### Public Facilities Needs

Facility	NRPA Standards	Existing Facilities	Current Demand 1,500	2020 Demand 6,000	Projected Additional Need
<b>Fields</b>					
Baseball	1/5000	0	1	2	2
Softball/Youth Fields	1/5000	0	1	2	2
Football	1/20000	0	1	1	1
Soccer	1/10000	1	1	1	0
<b>Courts</b>					
Basketball	1/5000	1	1	1	0
Tennis	1/2000	2	1	3	1
Volleyball	1/5000	1	1	2	1
<b>Indoor Facilities</b>	1/10000	0	1	1	1
<b>Outdoor Facilities</b>					
Picnic Shelters	1/3000	1	1	1	0
Recreation Acres	10ac/1000*	20.69 ac	15 ac	60 ac	39.31 ac
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1/20000	0	1	1	1

\* For the purpose of this table, the active and passive recreation areas were combined as the larger parks contain elements of both. (10 acres/1,000 population)

The demand for soccer fields exceeds the standard, but is being met by a nonprofit group that has constructed their own soccer complex.

Table of amenities by park:

Park	Size in acres	Picnic tables	Picnic Shelters	Play ground	Soccer	Tennis	Basket ball	Volley-ball	Fishing pier	Walk-ing Trail
Ward Shore	0.36	.								
Bicenten-nial	0.56	.							.	
Tot Lot	0.62	.		.						
Municipal Park	18.07	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		.
Pineland	0.2	.		.						
Seashore	0.1	.								
Dock Walk	0.78									.
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>20.69</b>									

## The Parks

Various organizations and individual governmental agencies have established a varying range of definitions and standards including park type, size, access requirements, and site development guidelines. The standard was the expression of acres of park land per unit of population. Over time, six to ten acres per 1,000 population came to be the commonly accepted standard recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Association and used by a majority of communities.

Experts caution against the use of standards without consideration for local factors such as existing land use, housing densities, demographic characteristics, economic feasibility, topography, and perceived needs. Other factors for consideration included proximity to other communities with park and recreation facilities, proximity to county park and recreation facilities, adequacy of public school facilities, and availability of church, private and other institutional facilities. Church and private facilities were not factored into the mix as they are essentially unavailable to the Town's economically disadvantaged or fixed income population.

Riparian, wetland, sensitive habitats, unusual topography and other natural constraints limit the usable land within certain parks. While these are certainly desirable resources, it limits what can be done on the parcel. Onslow County and the Town of Swansboro fall under the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA). CAMA rules serve to further constrain what can be done on certain parcels. As minimum guidelines, the standards are intended to be used as a flexible planning tool. In practice, some standards will most likely not be met while others may be abundantly met due to need.

Mini, neighborhood, community parks, and district parks were the terms used for this assessment. The standards established in this plan have resulted from analysis of existing conditions, user needs, demographic information, and the desire by the community to support a program of park development and recreational programming. (See chart at the end of this section)

### *Mini Parks (less than 4 acres)*

A mini-park is a facility designed to provide recreational opportunities for a small area within a neighborhood. Generally, a mini-park is designed for young children, however in some cases it may be designed for aesthetic purposes. 1/2 acre is the recommended minimum size to provide adequate buffer space and diversity of uses; however, in some cases smaller sites may be developed. One or more mini-parks should be provided in each neighborhood. Mini parks have a service radius of up to .5 miles

### *Neighborhood Parks (4 to 12 acres)*

The neighborhood park is designed to serve the recreational needs of children 6-15 years of age, as well as adults, pre-schoolers, and seniors. It would typically include family picnic areas, open turf areas for informal sports and play equipment. Lighted athletic fields would not be included. At least one neighborhood park should be provided in each neighborhood planning area. Neighborhood Parks have a service radius of .5 to .75 miles.

#### *Community Parks (13 to 50 acres)*

This park is designed to serve a wide variety of needs for youths and adults in both active and passive recreation. Facilities for sports fields, open turf areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, and off-street parking could include restrooms and related facilities. The park should also include facilities for pre-schoolers, young children, senior citizens and families. Components of neighborhood parks and mini-parks should be included in the Community Park. Lighted athletic fields for active sports are included. The Community Park includes facilities which serve a community the size of Swansboro. Community Parks have a service radius of 1-2 miles.

#### *District Parks (over 50 acres)*

Open space areas characterized by significant natural resources which provide passive recreation opportunities for both the local population and the surrounding metropolitan area; small portions of a district park might be allocated to fulfill neighborhood park requirements. District Parks have a Town-wide service radius. There are no district parks within the town border; however, Hammocks Beach State Park is located adjacent to Swansboro. This 892-acre park includes Bear Island, Huggins Island, part of Jones Island, and 33 acres on the mainland. Ferries operate between the mainland and Bear Island.

#### *Special Facility*

A facility such as a community center with recreation building, gymnasium, teen center, aquatic center, public access to public trust waters or other cultural or athletic facility that serves a specific need for a portion of the area population. These facilities may be constructed as part of a Community Park. Special Facilities have a Town-wide service radius. Swansboro has a public pier which fits this definition.

*Table for Park Types*

<b>Park Type</b>	<b>Acres/Pop 1000</b>	<b>Size in acres</b>	<b>Service Radius</b>
Mini	0.5 or less	Less than 4	0.25 to .5 miles
Neighborhood	.5 to 1.5	4 to 12	.5 to .75 miles
Community	4	13-50	1-2 miles
District	10	Over 50	Town wide
Special Facility	varies	varies	Town wide

#### *Projected need*

<b>Park Type</b>	<b>2006 Standards Ac/1000</b>	<b>Existing Facilities</b>	<b>Current Demand 1,500</b>	<b>2020 Demand 6,000</b>	<b>Projected Additional Need</b>
Mini	.5/1000	.96 acres	.75 acres	1.5 acres	.75 acres
Neighborhood	1.0/1000	1.18 acres	1.5 acres	3 acres	1.82 acres
Community	4/1000	18.07 acres	6 acres	24 acres	5.93 acres
District	10/1000	0 acres	15 acres	60 acres	60 acres
Recreation Ctr.	varies	0	1	1	1

*Parks 2008*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Seashore Park	Mini	0.1
Pineland Park	Mini	0.2
Ward Shore	Mini	0.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>Mini</b>	<b>0.66</b>
Bicentennial Park	Neighborhood	0.56
Tot Lot	Neighborhood	0.62
Dock Walk	Neighborhood	0.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>1.96</b>
Municipal Park	Community	18.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>18.07</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Town Pier	Special Use Facility	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>Special Use Facility</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>System-wide</b>	<b>20.69</b>

## **Evaluation and Recommendations for Swansboro Parks**

### **Mini Parks (less than four acres)**

Generally, a mini-park is designed for young children, however in some cases it may be designed for aesthetic purposes. 1/2 acre is the recommended minimum size to provide adequate buffer space and diversity of uses; however, in some cases smaller sites may be developed. One or more mini-parks should be provided in each neighborhood. Mini parks have a service radius of 0.25 to .5 miles.

#### *Seashore Park*

Seashore Park is a nondescript 0.1 acre parcel that is basically a road end parcel between two residences.

#### *Observations on first visit:*

- What purpose does it serve?
- No parking
- No equipment
- No interesting features
- One picnic table



#### *Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

Park, which was actually situated on unused street right-of-way area, was abandoned as a municipal park facility by action of the Town Board.

#### *Recommendations for consideration:*

- Sell land and put money toward another park project.

#### *Pineland Park (formerly known as Edgewater Heights Park)*

Pineland Park appears at first glance to be a mini-park for young children.

*Observations on first visit:*

- Needs proper surfaces under play equipment
- Old metal climbing equipment is a liability and is not being used
- Only one picnic table
- No benches





*Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

- Mulch has been placed under equipment
- Plan to remove rusted climbing gym

*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Add bike rack
- Add security lighting
- Add signage—park rules
- Convert use from young children to teens
- Add a half-basketball court
- Add benches
- Add picnic tables
- Add water fountain
- Repair or replace park sign.

### *Ward Shore Park*

Ward Shore Park is an adult passive viewing park. It has a water view, picnic tables and a raised seating area.

#### *Observations on first visit:*

- Wooden picnic tables are splintered
- Lack of shrubs and trees
- Lack of parking except for one labeled handicapped space
- Erosion behind seawall
- Lack of rules for use (suggest consistency among parks)
- Lack of benches (this is a passive viewing area)
- Can't see water when seated on elevated bench (looking at slats)
- Only one garbage can
- Holes in pavement
- Unable to tell where park ends and private property begins
- No sign of a throw able ring buoy with a line attached (water safety)







*Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

- Holes in seawall have been filled

*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Add bike rack
- Add security lighting
- Provide a firmer surface for handicapped parking
- Add a parallel or angled parking area
- Landscape a focal area
- Add some trees (away from water)
- Add more picnic tables—perhaps a small covered shelter
- Replace rope barrier with something more substantial to prevent parking on grass and/or to barrier with a nautical theme
- Delineate town-owned property from private property
- Remove seawall and replace with eco-friendly design—signage to educate public on benefit (may be safer for children than a seawall)
- Add benches, gliders, adult swings
- Add a bocce ball court
- Add binoculars fixed to observation deck
- Add signage—park rules

## **Neighborhood Parks (4 to 12 acres)**

As indicated above, a neighborhood park is designed to serve the recreational needs of children 6-15 years of age, as well as adults, pre-schoolers, and seniors. It would typically include family picnic areas, open turf areas for informal sports and play equipment. Lighted athletic fields would not be included. At least one neighborhood park should be provided in each neighborhood planning area. Neighborhood Parks have a service radius of .5 to .75 miles.

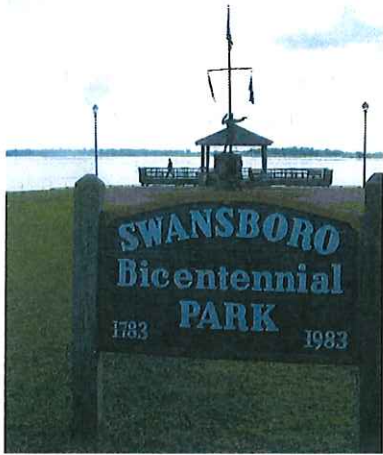
### *Bicentennial Park*

#### **Bicentennial Park—fishing area and passive viewing**

##### *Observations on first visit:*

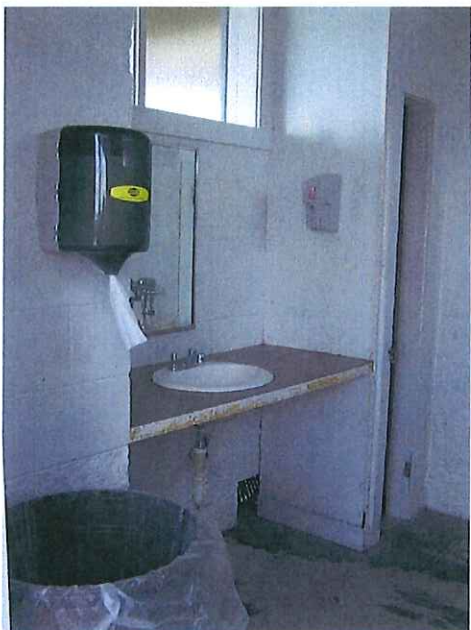
- Location of dumpster (not aesthetically pleasing—it is first thing you see looking from Front Street and may be contributing to water pollution) also question ownership of dumpster and area it sits on
- Large holes in parking area—question ownership of parking area and responsibility for upkeep
- Signs—many types, scattered
- Unattractive appearance of rest rooms—only public restrooms in the downtown area at this time
- Lack of fish cleaning area—bathroom sink had fish scales in it
- Attractive statue of Otway Burns
- Attractive paving bricks on walkways
- Attractive and interesting stone bench
- No sign of a throw able ring buoy with a line attached (water safety)

Staff indicates that the cleaning of fish in the restrooms is a continuing problem. Fishermen were tired of their tackle being caught on the rocks, so they have removed some of them from the water and placed them on the land. The rocks are needed at the water's edge to prevent erosion. Staff also said that the side of park nearest to town is going to change from a passive park to a stormwater education area with a boardwalk.













*Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

- Replaced broken wooden bench
- Added some fossil rock fill

*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Add a bike rack
- Add a fish cleaning station (may decrease use of restrooms to clean fish)
- Remodel the restrooms
- Add benches
- Add more trash cans
- Relocate the dumpster away from the water
- Repair street/parking area
- Add a vending machine with fishing gear (revenue stream)
- Add a fishing line recycling tube
- Add a kiosk for notices to fishermen
- Add railing around seawall to prevent children from falling in
- Extend the boardwalk through the eroded, graveled shoreline area
- Consistency of message to public regarding use for all parks. In this park, used primarily by adults, there is a “no alcohol” sign, but at the municipal park used by all ages, there is no such restriction. There is no restriction for animals at this park, but there is at the municipal park which is primarily used by families who generally have pets.

#### *Tot Lot*

The Tot Lot is a 0.62 acre fenced triangular shaped children’s play area. The Parks & Recreation Board has been told by area residents that it has become a place where teens congregate and smoke.

*Observations on first visit:*

- Fence—rusted, broken
- Rules of use?
- Lack of proper surface under equipment
- Old metal equipment is a hazard—mothers have complained
- Metal slide can burn children
- Lack of shade trees (a few near sign)
- Looks tired and unattractive
- Has one covered picnic table and two other picnic tables
- Has only one bench and one trash can
- No water fountain









*Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

- Fence has been repaired
- Rusted geo-dome has been removed
- Mulch has been placed under equipment
- Graffiti has been removed
- New roof was added to small covered picnic table

*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Change the name of the park to something more fun and interesting
- Make this an exciting destination playground
- Add a bike rack
- Make it a themed facility
- Add security lighting
- Add unique playground equipment for ages 1-12
- Add restrooms (ADA compliant) & water fountain & vending machine area (revenue generator). Parents with small children need a restroom nearby.
- Add parking area perhaps move the fence back some and let cars nose-in or park on angle
- Add large covered picnic shelter for birthday parties
- Add back-to-back benches under small shelter
- Add benches
- Add a paved trail around the inside of the fence. This will provide an area for mothers with strollers to walk while the older children play on the playground. It will give the younger children a place to play with ride-on trucks, toys, etc.
- Add a children's gardening area
- Add grills
- Add an interesting landscaped area
- Add some color
- Add signage—park rules

### *Dock Walk*

The Dock Walk is a 0.78 acre site. There is a good size parking area that is paved with permeable pavers. There is a long elevated boardwalk at the edge of the water. There is no seating on the boardwalk.

*Observations on first visit: (still under construction when viewed)*

- Great boardwalk—but doesn't go anywhere
- Possible to use private dock presently blocked off?
- No place to sit
- Can't fish off it
- Trash in water
- What is planned for the site?





*Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

The parking area has been paved and an area has been cleared.

*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Add a bike rack
- Add security lighting
- Add signage—park rules
- Add a gazebo
- Add a kayak launch area
- Add a picnic area
- Add signage – public education on permeable pavers
- Add an interpretive sign of Jones Island
- Rename to Swansboro Boardwalk or Jones Island Overlook and continue boardwalk at least to Elm Street or Bicentennial Park.

Staff indicates that it is possible that this boardwalk will eventually extend all the way to the historic district.

**Community Parks (13-50 acres)**

This type of park is designed to serve a wide variety of needs for youths and adults in both active and passive recreation. Facilities for sports fields, open turf areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, and off-street parking could include restrooms and related facilities. The park should also include facilities for pre-schoolers, young children, senior citizens and families. Components of neighborhood parks and mini-parks should be included in the Community Park. Lighted athletic fields for active sports are included. The Community Park includes facilities which serve neighborhoods and/or the Town of Swansboro. Community Parks have a service radius of 1-2 miles.

*Swansboro Municipal Park*

This 18.07 acre municipal park has a number of amenities including: several soccer fields, picnic pavilion, tennis courts, basketball court, beach volleyball area, new playground, restrooms, nature trail and a concession stand. A large part of the park is utilized by the soccer association. By the time this report is published, the soccer association is to have its own soccer complex so that these fields can be re-programmed.

*Observations on first visit:*

- Rules for use (no consistency from park to park)—only signs are “no littering” “no pets” and “no skateboards”
- Park is very sterile looking—mostly grass—no planting areas to soften the look
- Why no pets allowed in a family area?
- Broken wood (screen for trash can)
- Pile of pipes and old sign--liability
- Playground surface not being maintained (dirt shows through mulch)
- Old buildings not well maintained (restrooms/concession & storage)
- Lack of water throughout park (for watering grass and for drinking)
- Broken bench near restrooms
- Few picnic tables at picnic pavilion (2/3 of pavilion not in use due to lack of tables)

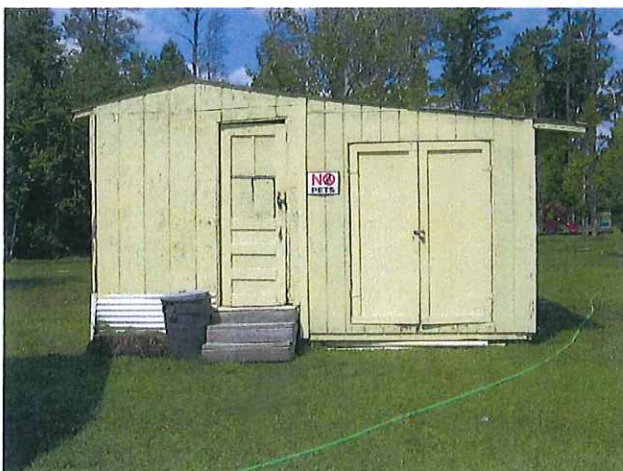
- No amenities for seniors
- Nature trail exists but is not marked as such
- Restrooms not ADA compliant
- Surfaces on tennis courts are in good condition
- No lights for night use of tennis courts or basketball courts

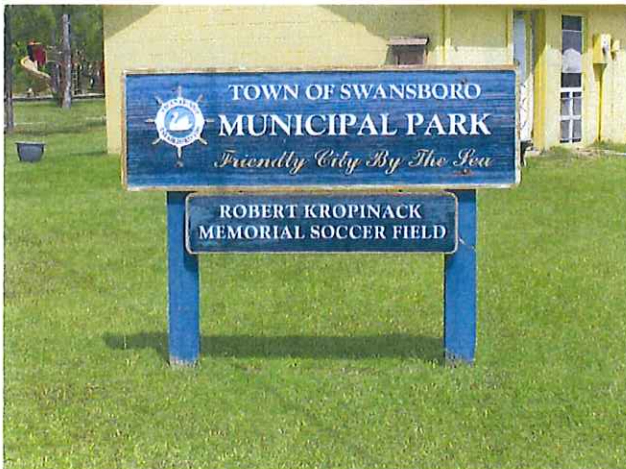
















*Changes that were made after September 2007 presentation to P&R Board:*

- Mulch added to playground surfacing
- Restriped the basketball court and added a logo to the middle. Put up new goals and nets. Added some benches. (Eagle Scout Project)

*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Create a formal agreement with the soccer league for use of the fields
- Add signage to include all amenities and rules of use
- Add interpretive signage for nature trail (and mark it)
- Add a bike rack to both ends of the park
- Add additional security lighting for new amenities
- Add a lighted softball field
- Add lighting to tennis courts and basketball court
- Replace concession stand and restrooms (ADA compliant)
- Replace storage building
- Add water fountains around park and faucets for maintenance staff use (or a sprinkler system)
- Add benches and unify type of bench used throughout the parks
- Add a skateboard park
- Add grills (plus a large grill for each large picnic pavilion)
- Add more picnic tables
- Add another large picnic shelter with water & electric so larger groups can convene
- Add more trash cans. Replace current ones. Unify type of trash container and use throughout the parks
- Add a defined multi-purpose field area
- Add a climbing wall
- Add a Frisbee golf course
- Add a Heart Trail around perimeter of park or at least a walking trail.
- Add a free weight area

- Replace rusted/unstable bleachers
- Add more grills

### *Special facilities*

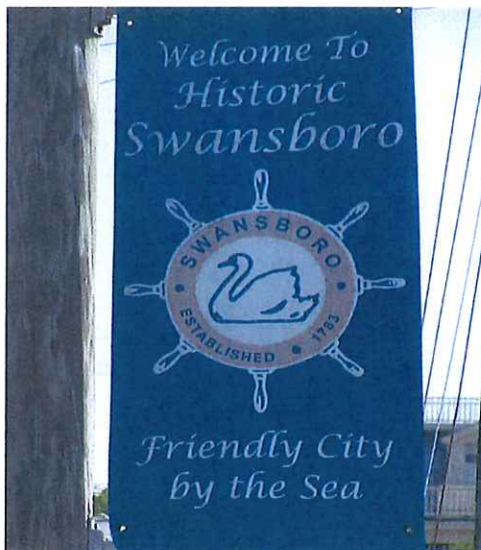
#### *Downtown*

While not specifically a park, when one considers recreation and leisure for a community, a historic downtown area can be considered an asset. All ages of people can stroll through the downtown area and enjoy the sites, restaurants, and retail establishments. Swansboro has an interesting historical waterfront downtown. It does however have a few needs: sidewalk repairs, additional parking and public restrooms. At this time the town is in the process of constructing a parking area and restrooms in close proximity to the downtown area.

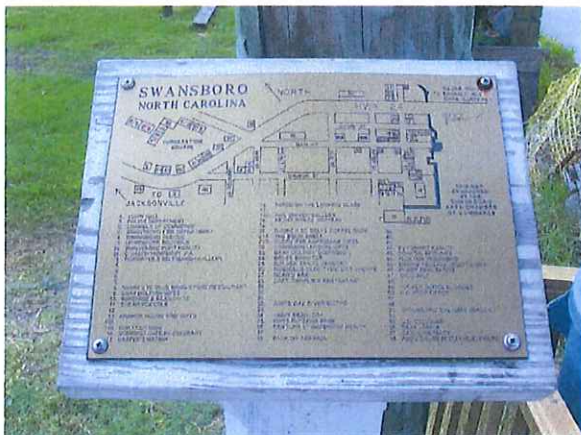
When the public speaks of needing more walking trails, the historic district is not mentioned as a place to walk, yet is a very pleasant, secure place to stroll or walk. In order to encourage citizens and visitors to take advantage of this wonderful “walking trail” through the historic district, pamphlets (trail maps) should be developed showing routes and distances.

The flags on the light poles in the downtown area help to make it attractive. There is an interesting mix of businesses on Front Street.

The Town needs to take every advantage of its natural scenic beauty and encourage residents and visitors alike to use what exists for recreation and not think that they need to go to a special place to get exercise.







*Recommendations for consideration:*

- Add bike racks in several areas
- Need to add containers for cigarette butts throughout the downtown area
- Place attractive trash cans throughout the area
- Place flower containers either on the light poles or on the sidewalks
- Replace light fixtures with historic type lighting
- Place utilities underground

- Consider making street one-way with parking only on one side
- Add off-site parking lot nearby
- Fix the sidewalks—preferably brick them over
- Encourage shopkeepers and owners to clean up and/or screen off unsightly areas (provide incentives?)
- Add attractive, decorative directional signs and maps
- Add additional areas of interest
- Remove overhead wires
- Add more parking off site
- Consider removing traffic from Front Street and making it a pedestrian walkway or else make it one-way with only one lane of traffic and no parking

#### *Town pier*

Off of the end of Main Street there is a public water access called the town pier. It does not appear to have a specific use. There is a “no public parking” sign on the lot. There are no directional signs to the pier although it can be seen from Front Street.



#### *Town Pier*

#### *Road Ends*

In Swansboro there are a number of roads that dead-end at the water's edge. These include:

- S. Chestnut Street
  - Two homes located very close to parcel
  - No parking
  - Homeowners in area have stabilized the shoreline
- S. Walnut Street
  - Bulkhead at water access
  - Would not be able to launch a kayak at low tide
  - Only room enough for one car to park
- Church Street (who owns this parcel?)
  - Sign in parking area indicated parking for Gourmet and Looking Glass customers only
  - If stone at water's edge were removed, could put in a kayak launch ramp
  - There is a discharge pipe
- Main Street
  - Why is there a “no public parking” sign?

- Located adjacent to town pier
- Bulkhead is in disrepair—could pose a liability
- Enough room for a kayak launch area, but no room for trailer parking
- Front Street (ends at Bicentennial Park)
  - Not suitable for kayak launch site
- Elm Street
  - Flat easy access
  - Room for two vehicles to park
  - Located between a restaurant and a residence
- Moore Street

First it is necessary to establish ownership of these parcels. It would behoove the town to take a close look at each of these to see if there is some recreational value that could be gained from them. For example, is there room for a kayak launch area? Is there room for an attractive bench? Is there room for a community garden? Is there room for a constructed wetland to handle stormwater runoff from the road? Any plans for these areas would need to be reviewed for compliance with CAMA regulations.

Members of the P&R Board remarked that residents whose property is adjacent to a small park or road end sometimes view this parcel as an extension of their land and object to changes in its usage. Some also will place something of their own on the parcel. For example on the South Chestnut Street road end, someone has placed a bench.

The following photos were contributed by P&R Advisory Chair Mary Donnelly:



South Walnut Street End



South Chestnut Street End



Main Street Road End with a private pier in the background.



Front Street Road End (Bicentennial Park)



Elm Street Road End



Church Street Road End—this parcel owned by the Gourmet Café according to the tax records.

*Indoor recreational facility*

A facility such as a community center with a recreation building, gymnasium, teen center, aquatic center, or other cultural or athletic facility that serves a specific need for a portion of the area population would be a welcome addition. At this time per the Director of Parks & Recreation, Onslow County does not have any plans for indoor or aquatic recreational facilities in the Swansboro area. Such a facility might be constructed as part of the existing municipal park or on another site to be purchased in the future. There is an old building adjacent to the Municipal Park that is available, however, it has a low ceiling and appears to need a lot of work.

### *Canoes/kayaks*

Canoeing and kayaking are becoming more and more popular, especially in sheltered waters such as the White Oak River; however there are no put-in ramps within the town. The paddlers say their preferred put-in is a sandy beach or some smooth sloped area which allows them to board their craft easily.

### *Boats*

It is predicted that more and more vessels will be mooring off-shore as they are displaced from docks that have been turned into dockominiums or whose slips are now occupied by condo owners' boats. While Swansboro does have Casper's Marina on Water Street, off Ward Shore Park might be an ideal place for the Parks and Recreation Town to place a mooring field for the use of transient boaters provided the water depth is sufficient and it meets other requirements. A dinghy dock could be placed at one of the road end areas or at Ward Shore Park. As part of the mooring fee, a floating pump-out vessel could empty the holding tanks of these vessels weekly. This would ensure that effluent was not dumped into the water. The Town could lease out this concession and get revenue from this venture.

Taking it one step further, docking slips could be constructed and a ship's store, restroom and laundry area constructed, if the right site could be purchased. This, too, could be leased. Another concession for this park could be renting small sailing dinghies, canoes, kayaks and row boats.

There is serious concern about the loss of marina slips and related marine industry jobs. Private marinas are being sold off at alarming rates and condominiums are springing up in their place. Swansboro should be proactive in helping to ensure the continued availability of marinas and slips for the boating public. Local residents will need places to dock and moor their larger vessels. Those with vessels need a place to have them serviced. In keeping with its maritime heritage, the town should consider ways to enhance its water access and fulfill the needs of the boating public.

According to the NC Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), "Where possible, federal, state, and local government agencies should emphasize the acquisition and development of water-based and beach access sites for the public's use and enjoyment." If there are opportunities to secure waterfront property on navigable waterways, the Town should do so if possible. The price of waterfront property in this area is only going to continue to increase and fewer and fewer waterfront parcels will be available.

## **Section 6:           Staffing, Parks & Recreation Board, Programs, Events**

### *Staffing*

Presently Swansboro does not have staff devoted solely to recreational programming. Public Works staff is assigned to keep the parks mowed and maintained. Planning staff is assigned to facilitate the Parks & Recreation Board meetings. Town staff book the fields and facilities as needed by various groups.

### *Parks & Recreation Board*

The Town Council appoints interested citizens to the Parks & Recreation Board. The Board has a Chair and Vice-Chair and five other members. The Board elects its own Chair and Vice-Chair each year.

This Board assists in drafting policies, plans, and budgets for Parks & Recreation for the town. The Board prioritizes projects and helps to facilitate events. The Board acts in an advisory capacity only and has no authority to act unless it is explicitly given that authority by the Town Council.

Many of the members have jobs in addition to volunteering to serve on this Board. This limits the amount of time that they can give to projects and events. At times the members have expressed frustration because there is no staff to help plan and implement projects. Their good ideas and intentions remain just that. They have no real successes to celebrate. The lack of funding is certainly a component of that frustration.

### *Programs*

The town does not run any organized recreational programs. The town relies on organized groups within the community to do that. The town staff merely books the needed field or facility. This limits the number of recreational options available to the community.

### *Events*

There are a number of events held annually in Swansboro. They include:

- Swansboro Oyster Roast & Pig Out—this is a yearly event held at the Swansboro Rotary Civic Center. This eating event generally happens around St. Patrick's Day and the proceeds fund various scholarships.
- Swansboro Rotary King Mackerel Bluewater Tournament—held at the end of May, this annual event is a fishing competition. The proceeds fund a variety of projects.
- Arts by the Sea Festival and Storytelling—event in June.
- Fireworks display on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
- Mullet Festival—held the second Saturday in October; this event benefits local civic organizations.
- Christmas Flotilla—decorated boats can be seen parading down the waterway in front of the historic district.
- Candlelight Shopping--event held in December
- Speckled Trout Tournament--held in December

Events are good opportunities for the Parks & Recreation Committee to set up a booth to get continued input and support from the public.

#### *Health and Wellness*

Due to the increased obesity of the population, there is quite a bit of funding available for programs to increase the activity levels. Health and wellness should be a component of a well-rounded recreation & leisure program.

#### *Recommendations*

- Hire a full-time Parks & Recreation Director to help the Parks & Recreation Board carry out the planned improvements and to design and implement programs. Staff can also work on seeking funds for facilities, improvements and programs, as well as helping to plan, promote and execute events. This decision will require the Town Council to make a commitment to recreation. This plan is a good roadmap and provides numerous ideas and resources.
- Weekend coverage is needed during seasons when there is heavy usage of the parks.
- Incorporate health & wellness into recreation & leisure opportunities.

## Section 7: Other Local Recreational/Leisure Facilities

The information on public and private facilities in this section was taken from the draft of the CAMA Plan and from talking directly with staff at the facilities.

### *Public*

There are several public schools within the Town limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction of Swansboro. These include:

- Queens Creek Elementary K-5—159 Queens Creek Road
- Swansboro Elementary K-5—118 School Road
- Swansboro Middle School 6-8—1240 W. Corbett Avenue
- Swansboro High School 9-12—161 Queens Creek Road

Queens Creek Elementary is a new facility that has:

- Playground—open to public use when school is not in session
- Soccer field—contract with Swansboro Soccer Association for use
- Multi-purpose gym—not available for use by public

Swansboro Elementary School has:

- Playground
- Gym/Multipurpose Center

The Middle School has:

- football field
- gym

The High School has:

- gym
- lighted football field with a running track
- lighted tennis courts
- lighted soccer field
- lighted baseball field
- lighted softball field

### *Hammocks Beach State Park*

Hammocks Beach State Park is located adjacent to Swansboro. This 892-acre park includes Bear Island, Huggins Island, much of Jones Island, and 33 acres on the mainland, including a Visitors Center. Ferries operate between the mainland and the island. On Bear Island there are primitive camping sites. Boating, fishing, picnicking, and nature walks are activities to be enjoyed on Bear Island. <http://www.ncparks.gov>

### *Rotary Civic Center*

Located on Main Street Extension in Swansboro, the Rotary Club has a Civic Center that can be rented by the community for indoor events.

<http://www.swansbororotary.com/html/center.htm>

### *Library*

Swansboro has a library located at 1460 West Corbett Avenue. It is a branch of the Onslow County library system. The library is not open on Sunday and is only open on Saturday until 3 p.m. The library closes at 6 p.m. except for Thursdays when it closes at 7 p.m. The library has four computers that may be used by those with a library card. The facility has a meeting room that holds 30. They offer various reading programs all year long.

### *Swansboro Soccer Association Soccer Complex*

The Swansboro Soccer Association is an all volunteer nonprofit “which is dedicated to providing an enjoyable and rewarding experience to youngsters and their families through the game of soccer.” The Swansboro Soccer Association has developed its own soccer complex on Hammocks Beach Road. They anticipate that it will be ready for play in the fall of 2008. Up until then they will continue to primarily use the Municipal Park for practice and games. After the opening of their soccer complex, they may continue to need the Municipal Park for practice and games. An agreement is to be developed between the soccer association and the town for the use of this facility. <http://www.ssa-nc.com/>

### *Sanders Park*

This privately owned park is located in Swansboro’s ETJ area on Swansboro Loop Road. It has multiple baseball and softball fields.

## Section 8: Special Issues

### *Bicycles*

There are no bike trails listed by Onslow County Parks & Recreation for the Swansboro area. A search of the yellow pages for Swansboro did not reveal any bicycle shops or bike rental concessions. There are no bike racks in the Town center or in the parks. If Swansboro wishes to encourage this mode of travel, bike racks and designated bike lanes would be a start. The NCDOT Enhancement program provides funds to plan Bike and Pedestrian paths.

Bike parking considerations need to include convenience as well as security. The racks should be located in a highly visible, well lit place. The racks should support the frames instead of the wheel as a theft deterrent. <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/>

### *Transportation*

At the time of this report, gasoline prices are at an all-time high. The most affected are those with the least resources to be able to cope—the working poor and those living in poverty or on fixed incomes. The Town does not have a mass transit system. The lack of transportation may affect the residents' ability to access parks.

### *Signage*

Signage is also an important aspect of park design. Signage provides park users with information they need to use the facility. To avoid having an overabundance of signs and clutter, it is important to maximize the amount of information on each sign. Each sign should be clear, concise, and legible. Pictographs have become the most popular method of communicating information on signs. Unfortunately, pictograph signs are not useful to visually impaired park users. Of equal importance is the location of signage. Locating signs where they will be useful and where the maximum number of park users will see them is paramount to an effective use of signage. Signage should consist of six categories: informational, directional, regulatory, warning, festival, and educational.

- *Informational* signs provide an overview of the park and its facilities and orient users to their position in the park. Mileposts are also a common form of informational sign on a trail.
- *Directional* signs tend to be in the form of graphic symbols and brief descriptions of location. These signs are used to point the park users in the right direction.
- *Regulatory* signs are used to describe laws and regulations that apply within the park. These signs typically include hours of accessibility, permitted uses, speed limits, and other prohibitory regulations.
- *Warning* signs are used to alert park users of hazards. These signs can warn users of wildlife, curves in the trail, steep grades, and blind intersections.
- *Festival* signs are used to publicize and commemorate special events and holidays. These signs can also be used as decoration.
- *Educational* or interpretive signs are used to describe the significance of natural, historical, or cultural features that are located in or near the park.

There is no consistency of rules and signage from park to park in Swansboro. Unless there is a strong reason to deviate, it is recommended that all Swansboro parks have the exact same rules and signage.

#### *Restrooms*

Removing obstacles to fitness and exercise is one way to encourage the public to be physically active. There is evidence that some people hesitate to participate in fitness activities that put them out of range of toilet facilities. Some people, especially the elderly, are on medications or have medical conditions that cause them to have to urinate frequently. The availability of restrooms is of particular concern to women—young and old. As one young mother said, “Walking home to go to the bathroom is not an option for a 4-year old that has to go now”. The article went on to discuss the restroom needs of pregnant mothers and women with incontinence problems. <http://www.americanrestroom.org/>

Not all parks have restrooms. Consideration should be given to increasing the number of restrooms available at the parks or to the placement of port-a-johns at those parks where restrooms are not feasible.

Another consideration with regard to restrooms is their accessibility. All permanent public restrooms should be ADA compliant. The restrooms should be open during times when the public is apt to use the park. Restrooms should be kept clean and in good repair. Installing eco-friendly facilities such as waterless urinals will help keep costs down.

#### *Water*

Fitness experts agree that hydration is essential during exercise. If residents are being encouraged to be physically active, the Town should ensure that an adequate number of ADA compliant water fountains are conveniently placed at all parks.

Water is also needed at the picnic shelters and areas where there are picnic tables. Families may need water to prepare food or to clean up afterward (sanitation).

Water is also needed for park maintenance. At the 18 acre municipal park, there is only one water faucet in the entire park for maintenance staff to use. Dragging hoses all over the park to water the grass is a waste of personnel time. It is recommended that a sprinkler system be installed or at least put more water faucets in the park—all parks.

#### *Cooperative Ventures*

What is often overlooked is the opportunity to partner with other agencies, surrounding towns and the county. It is not necessary that a facility be only for one purpose. For example, the Town Public Works Department has need of stormwater control projects. If the Town were to create a constructed wetland, this would also be an ideal place for passive activities such as bird watching or a nature park. Partnering with the NC Cooperative Extension Service to create an educational component of a park would also be desirable. For example, several existing parks would be good locations for rain gardens.

#### *Open Space & Greenways*

The Town’s Planning and Inspections Department should address open space and greenways through the planning process and developer exaction.

A conservation easement is one vehicle that allows landowners to voluntarily protect natural assets. Conservation easements should be encouraged. Purchase of property for the purpose of conservation is another option, especially if a large percentage of the property is wetlands. There are many different funding sources for conservation projects. As the opportunity to purchase such parcels presents itself, it should be explored.

Whenever possible, wetlands should be preserved and used as passive wildlife viewing areas.

#### *Graffiti & Vandalism*

Graffiti is a continuing problem with all public areas as is vandalism. Keeping areas well lit and keeping screening shrubbery under control is one way to ensure that the areas can be viewed by area residents and those driving by. For other ideas on how to control graffiti and vandalism go to: [http://www.graffitihurts.org/community\\_resources/prevention.cfm](http://www.graffitihurts.org/community_resources/prevention.cfm)

#### *Seniors*

The number of senior citizens will continue to climb as the baby-boomers enter retirement age and as people discover the attractiveness of Swansboro as a place to retire. At present there is no place for seniors to gather to enjoy passive activities.

#### *Disabled/Handicapped*

There are no areas where the disabled or handicapped person can easily enjoy a park within the town of Swansboro. Yes, there is handicapped parking at the Municipal Park, but that is about the extent of it. The wheelchair bound individual would have to roll across grass to get to the amenities.

#### *Public information on Parks & Recreation*

As of April 2008 there was nothing on Swansboro's website related to parks & recreation except that the events were listed (no dates or links were given) and the members of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board were listed. The public has no idea what is available or where it is located. They don't know what is available to rent nor do they know how to go about doing so.



## **Section 9: Maintenance and Security**

The Town's maintenance staff maintains the 20+ acres of grounds, the buildings and the equipment at the parks. This includes lawn and shrub maintenance, building maintenance, keeping the restrooms clean, picking up the litter, and related duties.

It is recommended that at least one staff member be a certified playground inspector and that the playgrounds be inspected several times a week. Mulch should be placed under all playground equipment in the appropriate depth and replenished as needed.

Involving the residents in creating and maintaining interesting planting areas would help to create civic pride in the appearance of their Town. The town should consider establishing an appearance committee to partner with neighborhood associations. This Appearance Committee could make periodic awards to the best landscaped homes and businesses in the town.

The maintenance staff could involve youth projects to increase the youths' ownership of projects. This helps to decrease vandalism.

It is suggested that the Swansboro Police Department initiate the principles of community policing. The police could open and lock up the bathrooms at the various parks. They could enforce parking regulations and park use rules. The police should work hand-in-hand with the town staff to support the various events held throughout the town.



## Section 10: Examples from other communities



Example of use of universal signage to indicate the park amenities.



Example of an attractive trash can for use in areas like downtown.



Example of an informational kiosk to contain notices.



Pet waste station.



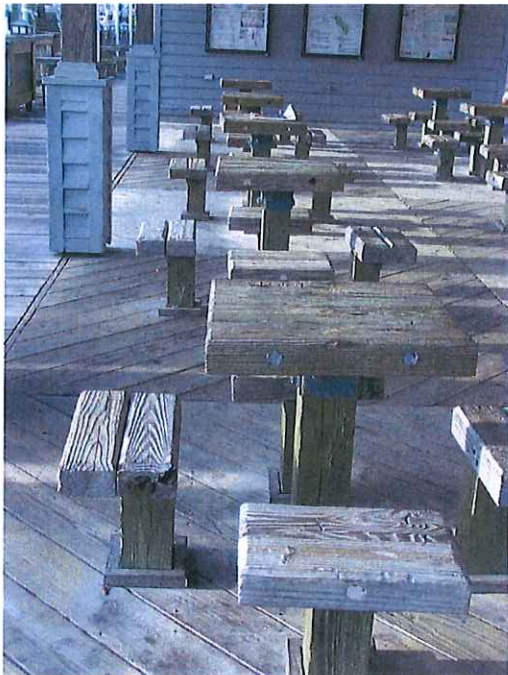
Examples of a pet waste station: suggest allowing dogs in the parks, but create a leash law and a law regarding picking up pet waste. Place pet waste stations strategically around parks and the downtown area.



Example of creating a constructed wetland for stormwater retention and using that same parcel as a passive park.



Attractive benches with plantings in a historic waterfront area.



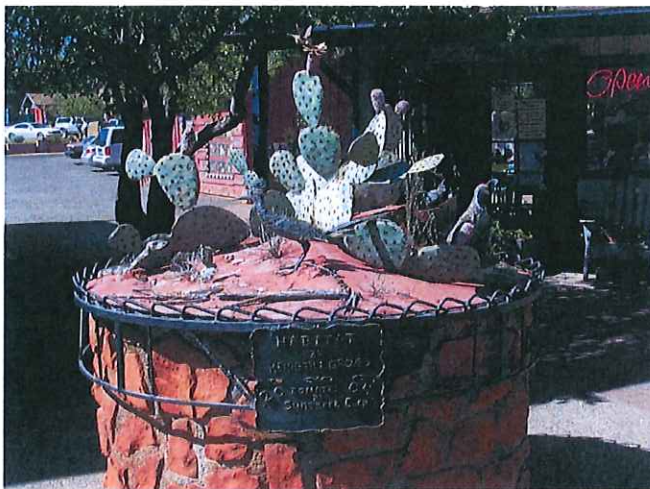
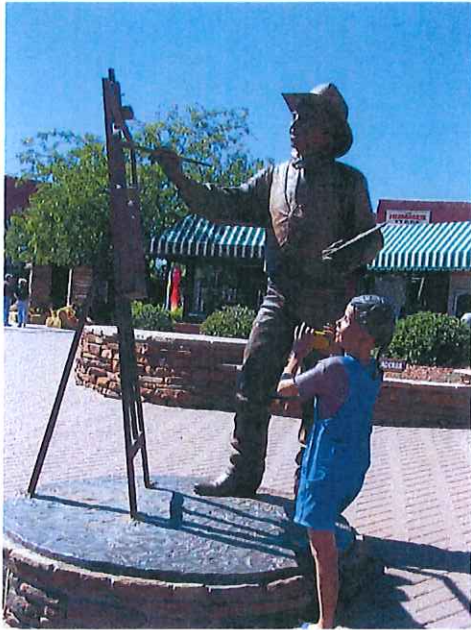
Example of a covered game table area: in good weather people can be seen eating, reading, playing cards and playing board games in this area.



A fishing line recycling container.



Example of proper surfacing for a playground area.



Examples of interesting art work in a downtown area.



Some inexpensive examples of whimsy.



Example of an attractive downtown historic area walkway.



Example of an attractive passive waterfront viewing area.

## Section 11: Existing Plans and Ordinances

### *Unified Development Ordinance*

The Town of Swansboro has a Unified Development Ordinance which was amended on September 18, 2007. All the parks in the system were created before this UDO was developed; however, it is recommended that the town review the sections of the UDO that apply to parks and recreation. These standards should be applied to all future improvements.

### *Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Plan*

Pages 99-100 of the CAMA Plan address recreation. The standards for facilities differ slightly from the ones listed in this plan. These standards are merely benchmarks and they may or may not apply to the town's situation. Common sense and local knowledge should drive the final decisions with regard to facilities. The CAMA Plan projects needs to 2030. This plan only projects needs through 2020.

The source of the data is not stated in the CAMA plan for the "top ten priority needs" for recreation that are listed. It is assumed that this list was developed by those working with the consultant. This plan was completed in September 2007 and the results of the P&R Survey had not been published at that time. The top 10 list from the CAMA Plan includes:

- Need new parks/upgrade existing parks
- Boat docks/ramps/access
- Playground equipment
- Senior/Community Center
- Skating rink/skate park
- Walking paths/trails
- New soccer fields/complex
- Community pool
- Bike paths
- Recreational opportunities for all ages.

On page six of the CAMA plan, the document lists concerns and aspirations for recreation:

- Develop a recreation center adjacent to the current municipal park. A senior center shall be developed as part of the recreation center and an increase emphasis placed on providing organized senior activities.
- The town should develop one or more community parks of 10-15 acres and shall have two smaller parks of approximately five acres each.
- New subdivisions should be required to provide pocket parks for the residents or contribute to a general recreation facility fund for area parks.
- The town should strive to connect all areas of the town, present and future, with sidewalks, walking paths, and other off-road pedestrian ways to provide safe areas for walking, jogging, and biking. Where possible, bikeways and bike paths shall be encouraged, but not at the expense of pedestrian facilities.
- Water access and boating facilities should be developed.
- The town will continue to improve the boating access to the Downtown Waterfront and encourage water-based recreation and tourism.

*Comprehensive Planning Guide (undated)*

Pages 32 through 35 of this document discuss the Central Business District/Historic District. One of the highest priority actions listed was waterfront improvements to attract Intracoastal Waterway boaters to Swansboro. Those responding to the questionnaire stated many of the same issues as related in this document with regard to the historic downtown area: lack of parking, lack of water access, poor appearance of area, broken/uneven sidewalks, and lack of directional signage, unsightly overhead wiring, and lack of restrooms.

## **Section 12: Recommendations**

### **A. Approach**

In development of a comprehensive plan for parks and recreation in Swansboro, the Parks and Recreation Board reviewed a substantial amount of information regarding the community, recreation standards, recreation facilities, and recreation opportunities. The Board was importantly assisted in compiling and expressing this information by Judy Hills of the Eastern Carolina Council, which contracted with the Town to help produce this plan. The information reviewed included:

- Trends impacting recreation in the nation and in the Swansboro area;
- Demographic information on Swansboro and the surrounding area, as well as national trends;
- Information from public surveys of parks and recreation interests and needs;
- National and state standards for recreation facilities, based on community sizes;
- The availability and conditions of existing municipal parks facilities in the community, as well as other, non-municipal recreation facilities and potential recreation facilities;
- Existing staff and volunteer resources, plus recreation-related community events operated by volunteers or other community organizations;
- Special issues that affect facilities access and usability, as well as facilities maintenance and security;
- Existing comprehensive planning documents, such as the Unified Development Ordinance and the CAMA Land Use Plan, which include provisions related to community recreation.

In addition, the Parks and Recreation Board reviewed current funding for Parks and Recreation.

### **B. Findings**

As a result of the review described above, the Parks and Recreation Board made the following significant findings:

1. The total amount of land available for most recreation needs in Swansboro is, according to most recognized standards, currently adequate for a community of Swansboro's size.
2. The amount of municipal park land available to meet recreation needs in Swansboro by the year 2020 is, according to recognized standards, significantly deficient and will require acquisition and development of 30-40 additional acres of land to meet community needs.
3. Most of the Town's current park facilities suffer from very noticeable equipment and facilities maintenance issues and contained a significant amount of obsolete equipment, safety hazards, and accessibility problems.

4. There is no master plan for most of the Town's parks, which have largely been developed incrementally without a clear plan concept. The majority of the Town's largest park is devoted to a single sport, and there is no formal working agreement between the Town and a youth sports association regarding the use of the facilities for this purpose.
5. The amount of municipal personnel and funding currently devoted to parks and recreation is minimal and is inadequate to even properly maintain existing facilities. There are no personnel to handle weekend park maintenance functions in a community that desires to improve its attractiveness to tourists.
6. Public input regarding recreation needs in Swansboro indicated that there is significant interest in the community in major recreation facilities – such as an indoor swimming pool, a multi-purpose recreation center, a skate boarding facility, a splash park, and new bike and walking trails – that would require major funding for construction and staffing.

### **C. Recommendations**

#### **1. Existing Park Facilities**

While public demand for new, major facilities appears to be significant, the Town's first priority should be to move quickly to bring its existing facilities up to a level of quality consistent with modern design, safety, and accessibility standards. Swansboro should set a new, higher standard for the condition and appearance of its parks, consistent with the community's desire to be known as a preferred living location in the area. To accomplish this, the Town should, within 2-3 years:

- a. Develop a specific design concept – a master plan – for each of its parks;
- b. Replace outdated equipment, renovate or replace deteriorated facilities, and add essential park amenities, as identified in the review and inventory of existing parks in this plan;
- c. Adopt uniform parks and recreation regulations, in the form of town ordinances;
- d. Address needs for improved accessibility and uniform signage in the current parks;
- e. Select and post an appropriate name for the dock walk park and select a better name for the Tot Lot park;
- f. Dispose of the Seashore Park, which is too small and poorly located to be a viable park, and use to sale proceeds to help meet other park needs.
- g. Fund and install, within two years, selected significant facilities improvements to the Municipal Park and the Tot Lot Park to improve overall community utilization of Swansboro's two largest parks. The suggested improvements are (1) a paved walking trail around the perimeter of the Municipal Park and (2) a major play structure, designed primarily for use for ages 1-12, at the Tot Lot Park.
- h. Secure a specific agreement with the youth soccer association regarding its use of Municipal Park.

## 2. Park Land and Facilities Acquisition

Since there is a significant deficiency in park land acreage anticipated within the next decade and most of the desires expressed by the public for new facilities would require appropriate sites, the Town should take following steps to meet this need:

- a. Begin immediately setting aside funds for the purchase and development of park land;
- b. Develop, as an addition to this plan, a study of future park service zones to guide the location of future parks;
- c. Begin aggressively identifying potential, appropriate sites for park land acquisition;
- d. Begin investigating park facilities grants to help meet future needs;
- e. Revise the Town's park land dedication and payment-in-lieu requirements, contained in its Unified Development Ordinance, to require more substantial contributions.
- f. Provide a location, in the Catholic Church building or in other existing community buildings, where recreation programming for adults and senior citizens may occur.

## 3. Parks and Recreation Staffing

While the community would benefit from the availability of a parks and recreation director and other seasonal recreation staff, the most immediate need, until park conditions are significantly improved, is for additional personnel and equipment for park maintenance. The following approach is recommended in parks and recreation personnel resources:

- a. Concentrate, for the next two years, on staffing to handle maintenance and repairs, including at least one new maintenance person or seasonal equivalents. Provide staffing for essential weekend maintenance.
- b. Begin funding part-time, seasonal, or contract positions to begin offering more recreation programming for adults and senior citizens.
- c. Attempt to fund, by 2010, a parks and recreation director position.

## 4. Parks and Recreation Funding

Because of the current very low funding of parks and recreation opportunities in the community, the following measures are recommended to more adequately fund parks and recreation needs in Swansboro:

- a. More adequately recognize the importance of parks and recreation in the Town's annual budget appropriations, including the importance of parks and recreation to the citizens of the community, to the community's attractiveness for new residents and businesses, and to the development of tourism in Swansboro.
- b. Set aside a significant portion of the Town's existing (and growing) General Fund balance for parks and recreation facilities improvements, land acquisition, future facilities, and grant matching funds.
- c. Consider levying a dedicated ad valorem tax of approximately \$.04 per \$100 valuation for parks and recreation capital needs.

- d. Aggressively seek grants – such as Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grants, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants, Waterfront Access grants, and similar funding – to help meet recreation needs in Swansboro.
- e. Adopt a multi-year Capital Improvements Program for parks.
- f. Seek Department of Transportation funding for planning and construction of bike paths in Swansboro.
- g. Create a specific means and opportunity for public donations to park needs.
- h. Seek civic and business sponsors for specific facility improvement initiatives.
- i. Utilize community events and other communication opportunities to keep Swansboro citizens well-informed regarding plans for parks and recreation needs and improvement projects.

### **Section 13: Capital Improvements Plan Recommendations**

A number of recommendations have been made. It is up to the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee to recommend a course of action and to prioritize the list of actions. The Committee is advised to:

1. Make a decision as to which items they feel should be addressed.
2. Separate the minor needs from the major needs.
3. Prioritize the items on those two lists. Items on the major needs list should be included in the CIP.
4. As funding becomes available (Town budget allocation, bonds, grants, donations, other sources) identify which of the needs should be addressed.
5. The lists and needs should be revisited each year at the time when the Town is developing its budget and adjustments made as necessary.

This document is only a planning tool. It needs to be flexible because prices, circumstances, plans, material, shipping costs and standards change. It is difficult to predict in any given year what the Town will be able to replace, repair, construct or purchase. It is suggested that the Town keep a running list of needs and address them as they are able. It is recommended that the town develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Parks & Recreation. The plan should extend over a five year period.



## Section 14: Funding

The following is a list of potential funding sources for recreational projects, but please note that funding and grant opportunities do change without notice.

The most common method for funding recreational projects is to combine local, public sector and private sector funds with funds from state, federal and additional private sector sources. There are some municipalities that choose to leverage local money as a match for outside funding sources. It is essential that a wide variety of funding sources be sought, to ensure that the project's success does not depend on one source of funding. The most important issue is to have strong local support, both in terms of finances and volunteerism.

Grant funding comes and goes. Some grants are cyclic. This list contains pertinent links as of the date of this document. The list should be updated yearly.

### ***Federal Government***

#### *The Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21)*

This is the primary source of federal funding for greenways. Administered by the state, this program caters to greenways and is called the *Recreational Trails Program*. Reimbursing up to 80 percent of the total cost (up to \$50,000); the budget for this program has increased to nearly \$45 million annually. The application deadline is at the end of January. The *Transportation Enhancements* program sets aside 10 percent of the total funds allocated under TEA-21 for funding trails that will improve the overall transportation system of the community. In February of 2004, this program changed in scope and name and is now called the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA). <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reauthorization/safetea.htm>

#### *National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA)*

The RTCA is a program to further the mission of the NPS by working with community groups and local, State, and federal government agencies to preserve open space, conserve rivers, and develop trails and greenways. RTCA staff can facilitate and bring expertise to the implementation of project(s) recommended in a watershed plan that coincide with the RTCA and NPS mission of outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation. The RTCA program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of the National Park Service in communities across America. More information can be found at: <http://www.nps.gov/rtca/>

#### *USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding to state and local agencies or nonprofit organizations authorized to carry out, maintain and operate watershed improvements involving less than 250,000 acres. The NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to eligible projects to improve watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, public water-based fish and wildlife enhancements, and recreation planning. The NRCS requires a 50 percent local match for public recreation. <http://www.nps.gov/rtca/>

#### *Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants*

This Federal funding source was established to provide “close to home” park and recreation opportunities. Specifically, the purpose of this grant is to provide funding to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources including but not limited to parks, trails, wildlife lands, and other lands and facilities desirable for individual active participation. Grant recipients must provide at least 50% matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions. This funding is not consistently available from year-to-year. In North Carolina, this funding is handled through the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund (Recreation Resources Services) <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/>

#### *Wetlands Reserve Program*

The USDA provides direct payments to private landowners who agree to place sensitive wetlands under permanent easements. This program can be used to fund the protection of open space and greenways with riparian corridors. It is administered by the NRCS in North Carolina. This program usually results in tax benefits for local landowners as well.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/>

#### *Environmental Protection Agency*

The Grants Program sponsored by EPA’s Office of Environmental Education supports environmental education projects that enhance the public’s awareness, knowledge, and skills to help people make informed decisions that affect environmental quality. EPA awards grants each year based on funding appropriated by Congress. Annual funding for the program ranges between \$2 and \$3 million. More than 75 percent of the grants awarded by this program receive less than \$15,000. <http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html>

#### **State Funds**

##### *North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF)*

This grant is designed to fund improvements in the state’s park system, to fund grants for local governments and to increase the public’s access to the state’s beaches. The funding amounts vary from year to year but municipalities are required to match the funds dollar-for-dollar. Generally, the application for this grant is in late January of each year.

<http://www.partf.net/>

##### *NC Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program*

The USDA provides small grants of up to \$10,000 to communities for the purchase of trees to plant along Town streets, greenways, and parks. To qualify for this program, a community must pledge to develop a street-tree inventory; a municipal tree ordinance; a tree commission, committee or Town; and an urban forestry management plan.

[http://www.dfr.state.nc.us/urban/urban\\_grantprogram.htm](http://www.dfr.state.nc.us/urban/urban_grantprogram.htm)

##### *North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources*

The Division of Parks and Recreation has a grant program that funds up to 80% of a Recreational Trails Program, with a maximum grant of \$50,000. The 20% match from a municipality may be in in-kind monies or property purchases for the use of recreational trails. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Division also have Adopt-A-Trail grants

available. These grants are highly sought after by North Carolina municipalities, and fund up to \$5,000 per project. <http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/trails/grant.html>

#### *North Carolina DOT Transportation Enhancement Program*

Through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), the NCDOT allocates federal funds for projects that encourage alternative modes of transportation via the Transportation Enhancement Program. In addition to funding trails and greenways, this program is also effective for funding sidewalks. (This program will change names and be called the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA) in the future. In addition, there are Federal Aid Construction Funds, State Construction Funds, and the Governors Highway Safety Program (GHSP) that have contributed to bicycle and pedestrian needs in the past.

[http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle/funding/funding\\_sources.html](http://www.ncdot.org/transit/bicycle/funding/funding_sources.html)

#### *Governor's Crime Commission Grants*

The Governor's Crime Commission Grants Management Section administers federal block grants for new criminal justice and juvenile justice programs in North Carolina. The Governor's Crime Commission administers over \$30 million of grants each year and assures that money is spent according to federal and state governmental regulations during the life of the grants. The grants are awarded to government, education and social service agencies to start new and innovative programs in the following areas:

- Drug Control and System Improvement
- Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Juvenile Accountability
- Victims of Crime Act
- Violence against Women Act.

The Governor's Crime Commission staff announces the availability of grant funds statewide every fall on its web site. Applicants have up to six weeks to complete the application. The appropriate committee, the Commission, and the secretary of Crime Control and Public Safety make decisions on the grant recipients and the awards are made in the spring.

<http://www.ncgccd.org/planning/grantinfo/grants.cfm>

#### *Community Development Block Grants*

Through its State CDBG Program, the U.S. Town of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides states with annual direct grants, which they turn into an award to smaller communities and rural areas for use in revitalizing neighborhoods and improving community facilities and services. <http://149.168.102.28/cdbg/>

#### *State Clean Water Management Trust Funds*

Funds established to protect or improve water quality could apply if the proposed greenway has a strong link to potentially improving the quality of nearby/adjacent watercourses/water bodies. The North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund has funded a greenway study in Jackson County, North Carolina in the past. <http://www.cwmtf.net/>

*Coastal Area Management Act—NC Division of Coastal Management*

Water access grants are available through the NC Division of Coastal Management.  
<http://dcm2.enr.state.nc.us/Access/grants.htm>

***Local government***

*Funding through local budget*

Maintenance and upkeep are normally funded through a line item in the town's budget. The town should also budget each year for lesser cost items to improve the facilities like benches, tables, etc.

*Funding through Local Capital Improvement Plans*

By adding parks and recreation funding into the Capital Improvements Plan, the parks and facilities can be built and maintained with funds on an annual basis. Swansboro should include parks and recreation in its CIP.

*Bond Referendums for Projects*

Some communities around the nation have successfully placed propositions on local ballots to support greenway development. There are a number of North Carolina examples of this, most notably with Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, City of New Bern and Guilford County.

*Establishment of a Foundation*

There are some foundations that will not award funds to local governments. Setting up a 501(c)3 corporation would allow the foundation to apply for these funds.

***Private Sources of Funding***

*Kodak American Greenways Awards Program*

Kodak, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society, provide small grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout America. This provides grants of \$500 to \$2,500 to local greenway projects. Grants can be used for almost any activity that serves as a catalyst for local greenway planning, design, or development. <http://www.conservationfund.org/?article=2106>

*BC/BS NC mini-grants*

<http://www.bcbsnc.com/foundation/grants.html#four>

The foundation funds programs and services that promote physical activity among North Carolinians. A key strategy in addressing North Carolina's overweight and obesity epidemic is to increase physical activity levels. The Foundation funds innovative programs that will help North Carolinians increase their physical activity levels while simultaneously increasing their overall health.

*Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation*

The Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation provides grants to 501(c)3 tax-exempt charities in the United States. An application is available on the Lowes.com website. This foundation provides 1.5 million dollars in grants annually. Additionally, the Lowe's Heroes program provides volunteers for community service activities.

<http://www.lowes.com/lkn?action=pg&p=AboutLowes/Community#hero&rn=none>

#### *The Home Depot Foundation*

The Home Depot Foundation provides grants to 501 (c)3 tax-exempt public charities in the United States. Grants typically range from \$5,000 to \$25,000. For funds of up to \$1,000, an organization is eligible to go to a local Home Depot store and ask for assistance with a community project. In that case, the grant may be given in the form of cash, or materials. <http://www.homedepotfoundation.org/>

#### *Tourism Cares for Tomorrow*

Tourism Cares for Tomorrow considers projects or programs with either or both of the following goals:

- Projects that protect, restore, or conserve sites of exceptional cultural, historic, or natural significance
- Programs that educate local host communities and the traveling public about conservation and preservation of sites

<http://www.tourismcaresfortomorrow.org/TourismCares/What+We+Do/Grants/Worldwide+Grant+Program/>

#### *Hometown Helper*

My Hometown Helper grants are given for projects to benefit communities.

<http://www.myhometownhelper.com/>

#### *Tony Hawk Foundation—funds skateboard parks*

The Board favors projects that demonstrate the greatest need, significant involvement of skaters at every step of the skatepark process, and a commitment to hiring experienced skatepark specialists to ensure a quality park. <http://www.tonyhawkfoundation.org/>

#### *Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation*

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation believes that people and place are intricately connected and that the quality of life and health of North Carolinians depends on strong stewardship of the environment. <http://www.zsr.org/>

### **Local Foundations**

#### *Onslow County Community Foundation*

The Onslow Community Foundation offers grants from its unrestricted endowment fund. Proposals are sought that will assist in initiating projects and programs designed to address a community need, affect a broad segment of our community and will attract additional funding from local groups, government or other foundations.

<http://www.nccommunityfoundation.org/affiliates/southeastern/onslow/funds.php>

### **Other sources of revenue**

#### *Gift Catalog*

It is suggested that the gift catalog list, and preferably illustrate, each desired improvement along with its cost. A system of recognizing donors or honorees should be created. This suggestion is still relevant and should be created and posted on the Town's web site. Further, the "cost" of the gift should include installation (if needed) plus a small percentage

for handling. These items should have donor appeal. Some examples previously given include: park benches, special purpose room, memorial trees, walks, landscaped areas and picnic shelters. Campaigns to solicit gifts should be held around holidays like Christmas, Father's Day, Mother's Day, etc. Gift catalogs and memorials:

<http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Parks/financepg.aspx#Donations>

This next catalog includes policies and procedures for donations.

<https://www.oakharbor.org/pages.cfm?id=13&pid=47>

#### *Adopt-A-Trail Programs*

These are typically small grant programs that fund new construction, repair/renovation, maps, trail brochures and facilities (bike racks, picnic areas, etc.). Trails can also be adopted by local businesses. <http://ils.unc.edu/parkproject/trails/home.html>

#### *Adopt-A-Park*

The previous study also recommended the Adopt-A-Park program where agencies, clubs or groups contribute time or money to help maintain or improve an area. This is still a recommendation. Here is an example of a municipal Adopt-A-Park program:

<http://www.lee-county.com/AdminCodes/PDF14-0/ac14-6.pdf>

If staff does not have the time to pursue these ideas, then perhaps a volunteer could be recruited to do so.

#### *North Carolina Division of Community Corrections*

Low security prison labor can be used to construct and maintain greenways and parks. Amenities such as picnic tables, signs and benches can be constructed using prison labor.

<http://www.doc.state.nc.us/dcc/index.htm>

#### *Local Private Sector Funding*

Oftentimes, local industries and private businesses may agree to provide support for greenway development through one or more of the following methods:

- Donations of cash or supplies (hardware/home improvement centers) to a specific project or project component.
- Donations of services by companies/corporations to reduce cost of project implementation, including equipment (rental/construction companies) and labor (having employees help during business hours).
- Reduced costs for supplies by local businesses.

In Cary, North Carolina, a greenway was constructed using \$40,000 worth of donated materials and labor. Some materials used in that plan were considered waste by local industries.

#### *"Buy-A-Foot" Programs*

These programs have been successful in many local fundraising endeavors throughout North Carolina. This method encourages citizens to purchase one linear foot of the greenway by donating the cost of construction for that foot. In exchange, the purchaser often receives a

certificate and a T-shirt. This is very similar to the Buy-a-Brick program that some communities' parks and recreation Towns have used to renovate older parks. This concept could also be used for improvements such as benches, trees, fountains, etc.

#### *Volunteer Work*

Community volunteers may donate their time through aiding in construction or conducting a fundraiser. Excellent sources of volunteers include Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Church Groups, High School Clubs and shop classes, Civic Organizations, the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Sierra Club. Also, a convict work crew or a person in need of completing community service hours would be a method of gaining some additional volunteers. This volunteer work could also be done once the project is complete in the form of Adopt-a-Spot program, in which volunteers are responsible for keeping a section of the project beautified or updated.

[http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?62+Law+&+Contemp.+Probs.+219+\(Autumn+1999\)](http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?62+Law+&+Contemp.+Probs.+219+(Autumn+1999))

#### *Sponsorship & naming right*

In tight budget times, sponsorships can be a much-needed source of revenue for local governments. But if potential sponsors are turned away, there are legal ramifications. Learn how to craft a wise sponsorship policy and avoid legal pitfalls. The link below provides a sample policy, which you can modify and adapt to your jurisdiction.

[Sample Sponsorship Policy for Local Governments](#)

#### *Miscellaneous*

Here is a link to a number of ideas for financing park projects:

<http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Parks/financepg.aspx>



## Section 15: Reference List

This section is a compilation of links to material related to parks and recreation.

### General

National Parks and Recreation Association <http://www.nrpa.org/>

Natural Resources Research Information Page <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~leung/nrrips.html>

North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)  
<http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/resource/scorp.html>

North Carolina Division of Environment and Natural Resources <http://www.enr.state.nc.us>

North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation  
<http://ils.unc.edu/parkproject/ncparks.html>

North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study, Fiscal Year 2005-06 [http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/services\\_study.html](http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/services_study.html)

North Carolina Parks and Recreation Association <http://www.ncrpa.net/>

North Carolina Recreation Resources Services <http://cnr.ncsu.edu/rrs/>

Promoting Physical Activity through School Ground Greening  
<http://www.evergreen.ca/en/lg/pdf/PHACreport.pdf>

Recreation Access Rights under ADA <http://www.indiana.edu/~nca/ncpad/rights.shtml>

Recreation.GOV <http://www.recreation.gov/>

Recreation, Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines  
[http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM423/recreation\\_standards.htm](http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM423/recreation_standards.htm)

Links to articles of interest: <http://www.mrsc.org/focus/focusarcsbj.aspx?sid=12#2111>

Sample CIP <http://www.ci.glendale.ca.us/parks/CIP.asp>

Intergovernmental cooperation—P&R <http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Parks/ig-parks.aspx>

[Project for Public Spaces, Inc.](#) - Features information on parks, plazas and public squares, transportation, public markets, public buildings and public art.

[Urban Parks Online](#) - An interactive site of information, ideas, and models on urban parks.

[Washington Recreation and Park Association](#)

Virginia Beach P&R Fact sheet

[http://www.vbgov.com/file\\_source/dept/parks/Document/ADM\\_Facts.pdf](http://www.vbgov.com/file_source/dept/parks/Document/ADM_Facts.pdf)

**Rules/Regulations/Security/Signage/Vandalism Prevention**

Parks & Recreation ordinance

<http://www.townofpagosasprings.com/vertical/Sites/%7B175F1D4C-10BE-47AA-AF3E-C1BCDE2446A6%7D/uploads/%7B9DB8C475-0E1B-4487-B7B3-A83F247C924A%7D.PDF>

Fort Lauderdale, FL—park rules <http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/life/rules.htm>

Comprehensive Park rules and regulations

<http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Parks/parkrl.aspx>

Lighting for security

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1145/is\\_n11\\_v29/ai\\_17883946/pg\\_2](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1145/is_n11_v29/ai_17883946/pg_2)

Security cameras

<http://www.securityinfowatch.com/article/article.jsp?id=11021&siteSection=417>

Parks security manger job description

<http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=14181>

Public/private solution to management of skateboard park

<http://bikesbelong.oli.us/BMX/PublicPrivatePartnership.pdf>

Offenses related to P&R facilities [http://northglenn.org/municode/ch9/content\\_9-10.html](http://northglenn.org/municode/ch9/content_9-10.html)

Aquatic and Recreational signage style guide <http://www.vcc.vic.gov.au/aquaticsignage.htm>

Manual <http://www.vcc.vic.gov.au/pdf/SignageManual3.pdf>

Recreation international signage

<http://www.blm.gov/nstc/mapstandards/downloads/inter.pdf>

Samples of international recreational signs

<http://www.westernsafety.com/zumar/zumarsigns2.html>

Interpretative signage <http://www.interpretivebsg.co.uk/>

Signage policy

<http://recsports.osu.edu/uploads/Recreational%20Sports%20Posting%20Policy.pdf>

Code regarding signage—drug free parks

<http://www.peoriaaz.com/CityCode/PDF/Ch18/sec18-31.pdf>

Wayfinding provides a methodology for people to find their way (hence “wayfinding”) to and around a destination. By gaining an understanding of a place, who its users are, and what they need to find, wayfinding planners develop a signage master plan that guides people through a facility. This process includes defining functions of various signs, and the specific message and location of each sign. These are typically compiled into sign message schedules and locator maps. Regardless of the type of facility for which the wayfinding planning is being done, certain basic principles such as legibility, prioritization of messages and amount of information that can be comprehended apply. Here is an article on wayfinding by the Disney group: <http://www.mouseplanet.com/articles.php?art=ma071206jk>

Vandalism in general

[http://www.troopers.state.ny.us/Crime\\_Prevention/Juvenile\\_Crime/Vandalism/](http://www.troopers.state.ny.us/Crime_Prevention/Juvenile_Crime/Vandalism/)

Park vandalism

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Beauty+interrupted:+vandalism+can+paint+an+ugly+picture+of+an...-a0152259431>

Vandalism prevention and Hooked on Fishing, not on drugs

[http://www.ci.mansfield.oh.us/parks/parks\\_park\\_programs.htm](http://www.ci.mansfield.oh.us/parks/parks_park_programs.htm)

Prevention of crime in parks

[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1145/is\\_7\\_35/ai\\_63973906](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1145/is_7_35/ai_63973906)

Recreation and sports facilities user rights and responsibilities

[http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM423/recreation\\_standards.htm](http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM423/recreation_standards.htm)

### **Programming/Scheduling/Rental/Reservations**

City of Knightdale, NC <http://www.activenetwork.com/organizations.htm>

Keene, NH <http://www.ci.keene.nh.us/parks/>

Reservations <http://www.holtonks.net/city/parks/reservations.html>

Online reservations <http://www2.monroeville.pa.us/parks/registration/registration.html>

Rentals/reservations

[http://www.ci.frisco.tx.us/departments/Parks\\_Recreation/index.aspx?id=315](http://www.ci.frisco.tx.us/departments/Parks_Recreation/index.aspx?id=315)

Fees and charges—High Point, NC <http://www.high-point.net/pr/fees.cfm>

Rentals—High Point, NC <http://www.high-point.net/pr/rental.cfm>

Renting a park or facility <http://www.ci.victorville.ca.us/services/parks/park-renting.html>

[Longview-Kelso Parks & Recreation Department](#)

[Metropolitan Parks District of Tacoma](#)

[Portland Parks and Recreation Department](#)

[Seattle Parks and Recreation Department](#)

[Spokane Parks and Recreation Department](#)

City of Spokane - <http://www.spokanegolf.org/>

City of Spokane - <http://www.spokaneparks.org/swimming/aquamain.htm>

Respecting religious traditions in recreational programming  
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-123580267.html>

Benefits based programming in P&R  
[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1145/is\\_n5\\_v33/ai\\_20640533](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1145/is_n5_v33/ai_20640533)

Austin, TX Programs for seniors <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/seniors.htm>

Seattle P&R for Seniors <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/seniors/index.htm>

Gaston County NC—P&R for seniors  
<http://www.co.gaston.nc.us/ParksAndRec/SeniorPrograms.HTM>

New Bern P&R <http://www.ci.new-bern.nc.us/RP/index.php>

Skateboard Park  
<http://www.skatepark.org/>  
<http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/Skatepark/index.php>  
<http://www.customskateboarding.com/>

Skateboard park operational plan  
<http://www.ci.costa-mesa.ca.us/council/parks/2005-03-23/03%2023%2005%20Skatepark%20Operational%20Plan-9e.pdf>  
[http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1145/is\\_6\\_38/ai\\_105045981](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1145/is_6_38/ai_105045981)

Dogs in Park  
<http://www.brevardparks.com/dogs/index.php>  
<http://www.tudekdogpark.org/>  
<http://www.monroeville.pa.us/content/?Page=89>

People, dogs and parks <http://www.toronto.ca/parks/dogs.htm>

Policies on geocaching in parks  
<http://www.crpr.org/agency/GeoGames/geocache-policy.html>

Geocaching [http://www.cityofmartin.net/parksrec\\_sports\\_geocaching.htm](http://www.cityofmartin.net/parksrec_sports_geocaching.htm)  
<http://www.google.com/Top/Recreation/Outdoors/Geocaching/>

### **Beautification/Art**

Outer Banks Winged Horses  
<http://www.outerbankspress.com/whe/winged-horses.html>

Greenville Pirates  
<http://www.greenvillenc.org/docs/The%20Painted%20Pirate%20Project.pdf>

Washington Crabs  
<http://good-times.webshots.com/photo/2854020060074044252MVkJdJ>

Art in public places <http://artinpublicplaces.org/>

Art in public places Miami FL <http://www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/publicart/>

Art in public places Austin, TX <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/aipp/>

Art in public place—variety of links <http://www.artslynx.org/heal/public.htm>

P&R landscaping  
<http://www.vbgov.com/vgn.aspx?vgnextchannel=a59ac67a3e83b010VgnVCM100000870b640aRCRD&vgnnextparchannel=dfce54cf18ad9010VgnVCM100000870b640aRCRD>

Community gardens <http://www.mrsc.org/subjects/parks/comgarden.aspx>

Bloom to grow <http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=3765>

Keep San Jose beautiful <http://www.sjbeautiful.org/index.html>

### **Maintenance/Safety**

Playground Rating System by Joe Frost  
<http://www.sc.edu/childrenscenter/doc/playgroundratingscale.pdf>

Recreation Facility Evaluation Tool  
[http://prevention.sph.sc.edu/tools/docs/documents\\_recfacility.pdf](http://prevention.sph.sc.edu/tools/docs/documents_recfacility.pdf)

Water safety plan [http://www.tams.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/58184/2004-2007\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.tams.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/58184/2004-2007_Action_Plan.pdf)

Public Playground Safety Handbook <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf>

Park Maintenance Plan <http://www.horsham.org/pdf/parks/puchapter8.pdf>



## **APPENDIX A**

### **Parks and Recreation Survey Instrument**



**TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**

This is a request by your Parks and Recreation Board to gather information to better serve you, the citizens of Swansboro. We need to know what YOU want for recreation services. Please take the time to fill this form out and return it to your church by Monday, April 23.

**1. What would you like to see built at an indoor recreation complex:**

<input type="checkbox"/> swimming pool	<input type="checkbox"/> handball courts
<input type="checkbox"/> running track	<input type="checkbox"/> arts and crafts room
<input type="checkbox"/> basketball courts	<input type="checkbox"/> computer rooms
<input type="checkbox"/> volleyball courts	<input type="checkbox"/> racquetball courts

**2. What would you like to see for outdoor recreation:**

<input type="checkbox"/> splash park	<input type="checkbox"/> fishing
<input type="checkbox"/> putt putt golf	<input type="checkbox"/> box hockey
<input type="checkbox"/> permanent game tables (concrete)	<input type="checkbox"/> lawn bowling
<input type="checkbox"/> nature walks	<input type="checkbox"/> bike trails
<input type="checkbox"/> horseshoe pit	<input type="checkbox"/> volleyball
<input type="checkbox"/> golf	<input type="checkbox"/> skate park
<input type="checkbox"/> Frisbee golf	<input type="checkbox"/> shuffle board
<input type="checkbox"/> football	

**3. When we develop a City Parks and Recreation Department to plan recreational events, what do you think they should do, example: senior games, sporting events, bike safety, summer camps, sports camps, etc.:**

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**4. Your wish list:**

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**Please circle appropriate answers:**

**Do you live in Swansboro:**                      **Yes**                      **No**

**If not, where:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Facts:**

Household size: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 other: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of family members: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender of family members (how many of each): F \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_

**Yearly Income: (not required)**

Under \$20,000

\$20,001 - \$40,000

\$40,001 - \$60,000

\$60,001 - \$80,000

\$80,001 - \$100,000

Over \$100,000

**Thank you so much, now let's work together to see this dream grow and come true!**

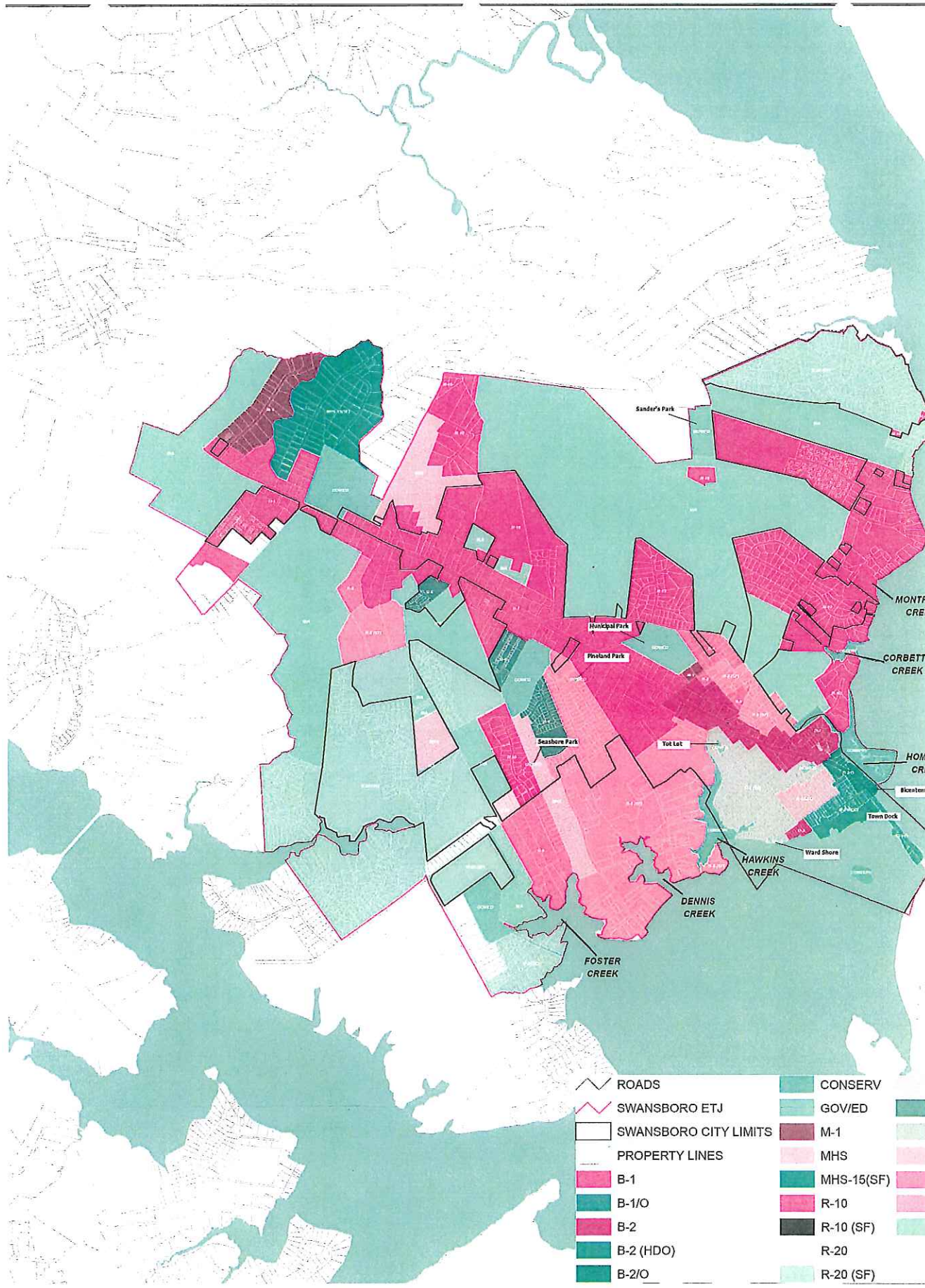
**Better recreation for a better life!**



## **APPENDIX B**

Map: Street Map Locating Existing Facilities





# SWANSBORO ZONING MAP

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 19, 2008

ZONING INFORMATION PROVIDED BY MUNICIPALITY. ONSLOW COUNTY GIS TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACCURACY OF ZONING INFORMATION.

1 inch equals 600 feet

PRODUCED BY ONSLOW COUNTY GIS

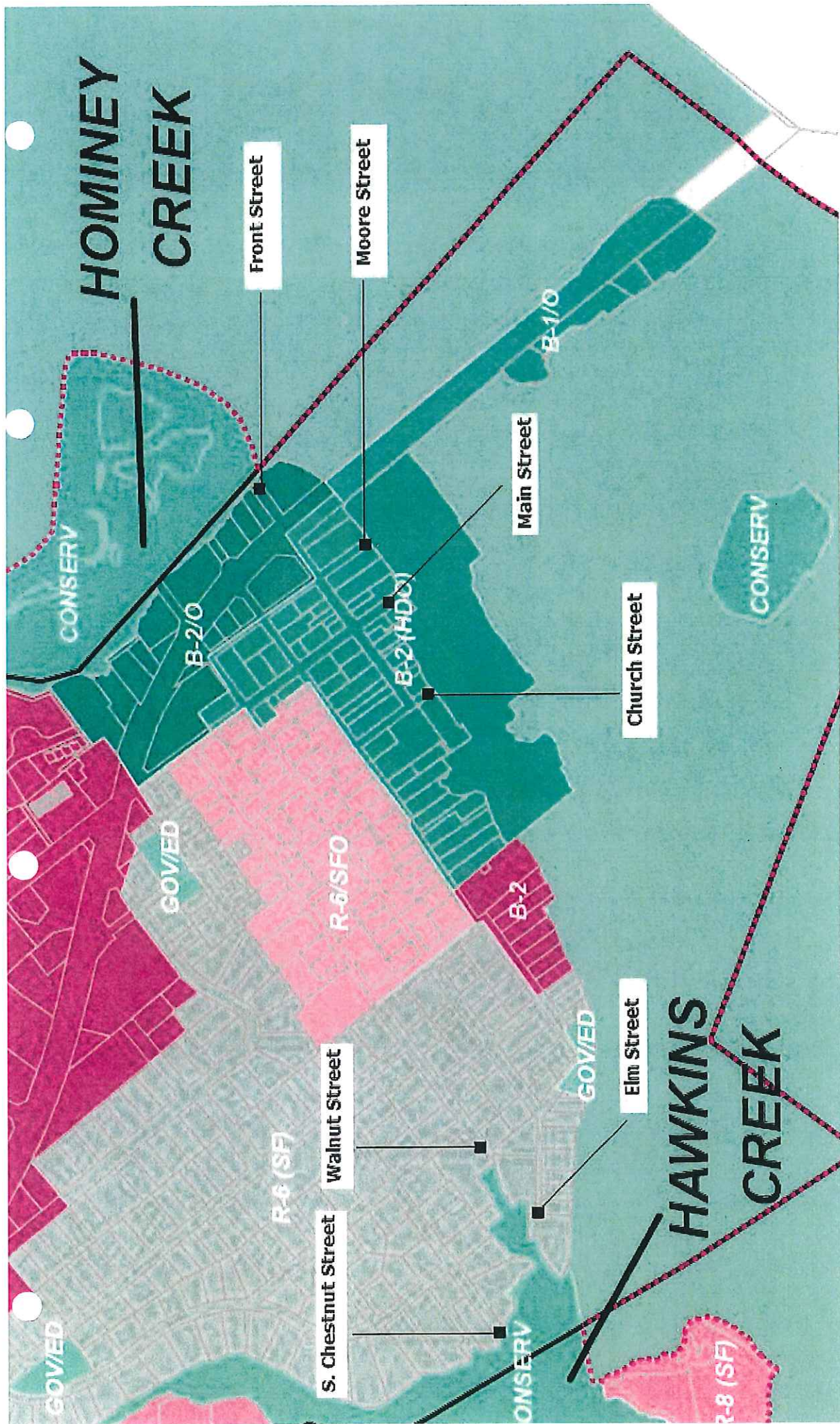
MARCH 5, 2008  
THIS MAP IS INTENDED FOR REFERENCE ONLY. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE APPROXIMATE. AS PER NORTH CAROLINA G.S. 132-10, THIS MAP IS RESOLD OR OTHERWISE USED FOR COMMERCIAL



## **APPENDIX C:**

Map: Street Map Locating Road Ends







## **APPENDIX D:**

Map: Aerial Maps of Parks











