



COLUMBIA COUNTY, GEORGIA PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

APPROVED FEBRUARY 7, 2023



Cranston
Engineering
Group, P.C.

ENGINEERS - PLANNERS - SURVEYORS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

COLUMBIA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Doug Duncan, Chairman
Connie Melear, District One
Don Skinner, District Two
Gary L. Richardson, District Three
Dewey Galeas, District Four

COLUMBIA COUNTY MANAGER

Scott D. Johnson

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGERS

Glenn A. Kennedy, II
Matt Schlachter

COLUMBIA COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

John Luton, Division Director
Dennis Hodges, Deputy Director
Wes Horton, Park Operations Manager
Scott Sterling, Planning Director
Will Butler, Planning Manager

PROJECT LEAD CONSULTANT

WOOD+PARTNERS INC.
Mark Baker, President
Kyle Theodore, Vice President
Eric Walsnovich, Principal
Chandler Corsino, Park Planner
Liah Masterson, Marketing Coordinator

PROJECT SUB-CONSULTANTS

PROS CONSULTING
Leon Younger, President

NEXT PRACTICE PARTNERS, LLC

Neelay Bhatt, CEO
Jason Elissalde
Dale Neuburger

ETC INSTITUTE

Jason Murado, Vice President and Director of Community Research

SABINE & WATERS, INC.

Ryan M. Wenzel, Principal

CRANSTON ENGINEERING

Mitchell Murchison, Design Group Manager
Caroline Beckum, Project Engineer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	I
	Introduction	
	Planning Process	
	Overview	
02	PUBLIC OUTREACH & COMMUNITY INPUT	9
	County Commission, Administrative & Department Staff, Key Leaders & Focus Group Meetings	
	Public Workshop	
	Synopsis of Input	
	Website	
	Statistically Valid Public Opinion Survey	
	Priority Investment Ratings (PIR)	
	Online Survey (SurveyMonkey)	
03	COMMUNITY PROFILE	42
	Introduction	
	Demographic Analysis	
	Recreational Trends Analysis	
	Key Findings	
	Benchmarking	
04	PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY ASSESSMENT	68
	On-Site Inventory & Assessment	
	Columbia County Park Models	
	Recommended Levels Of Service	
	System-Wide Observations and Recommendations	
	Equity Maps	
05	RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT	93
	Introduction	
	Overview	
	Current Operations	
	Program Strategy Analysis	
	Marketing, Volunteers, and Partnerships	
06	NATURAL RESOURCE PLAN	113
	Introduction	
	Planning, Acquisition, & Collaboration	
	Vegetation Management	
	Wildlife Management	
	Wildlife Quality and Erosion Control	
	Human Interactions and Education	
	Conclusion	
	Works Cited	

TABLE OF CONTENTS

07	OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS	134
	Introduction	
	Facility Rental Rate Comparisons	
	Financial Stability & Funding Strategies	
08	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS	152
	Capital Improvements Plan	
	Proposed Park Level of Service Improvements	
	Proposed Outdoor & Indoor Facilities Level of Service Improvements	
	Proposed Improvements to Existing Parks / Facilities	
	Renovations to Upgrade Existing Parks / Amenities	
	Other Possible Improvements to Parks / Facilities	
	System-Wide Additions	
	Combined Capital Costs	
	SPLOST Referendum 2022	
09	STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	156
	Overview, Accreditation, and Core Values	
	Recommendations	
	Conclusions	
10	APPENDICES	
	A – Public Input – Comprehensive List of Comments	
	B – Survey Instrument	
	C – Core vs. Casual Participation Trends	
	D – County Owned Park & Facility Inventory and Analysis	
	E – Park & Facility (By Others) Inventory and Analysis	
	F – Park Models	
	G – Park Improvement and Renovation Capitol Cost Estimates	
	H – Program Classifications	
	I – Similar Providers	
	J – Mini Business Plan	
	K – Volunteer / Partnership Best Practices and Recommendations	
	L – Park Prototype Cost Analysis	
	M – Facility Prototype Cost Analysis	
	N-Establishing a Parks Foundation	



01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Columbia County, Georgia is bounded on the northeast by the Savannah River; to the north by Clarks Hill Reservoir, to the west by McDuffie County and to the southeast by Richmond County. Blessed with an abundance of natural resources, the County also includes the incorporated cities of Harlem and Grovetown as well as the unincorporated area of Evans. In 2020, Evans, Georgia was named Money magazine's 2020 Best Place to Live in America. Along with that recognition, Columbia County is experiencing phenomenal population growth. Attracting new residents are plenty of good-paying jobs in healthcare, administration and the nearby military (Fort Gordon & the U.S. Army's Cyber Command). Each year Money examines thousands of U.S. cities and hundreds of data points to create their "best places to live" list. Quality of life weighs heavily in their evaluation and in addition to a low cost of living and high income levels they include the County's parks and recreation, trails, water access and events as contributors to Evans' #1 ranking.

The Parks, Recreation and Events Department is responsible for serving a growing community of over 160,000 citizens who can select from a variety of events, programs and recreational activities throughout the County. They host nearly a million visitors each year, offering a multitude of active and passive use amenities including campgrounds, a skate park, dog parks, concert venues, walking trails, athletic fields and a senior center. In an effort to plan for the future, the department conducted this recreation master plan. The planning team of Wood+Partners Inc., Next Practice, PROS Consulting, ETC Institute, Sabine & Waters and Cranston Engineering was hired to assist with preparation of a comprehensive plan that addresses parks, facilities and programs as well as establishing direction for the future. The plan responds to existing gaps in current programs and facilities, unmet needs and anticipated need for future facilities and services. The plan also provides guidelines for addressing the abundant natural resources found in Columbia County. The final chapter of the study provides an action plan supported by implementation strategies.

1.2 PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process involved a comprehensive community driven approach that assesses existing conditions and plans for anticipated demographic changes within Columbia County. The planning process included:

- Public Outreach & Community Input through discussions with:
 - Columbia County Commissioners
 - Columbia County's Park & Recreation Advisory Board
 - Key Administrative and Department Staff
 - Local focus/user groups
 - A public input meeting
 - Online questionnaire (SurveyMonkey); and
 - A statistically valid needs analysis survey of Columbia County households
- A Community Profile, including:
 - Demographic analysis
 - Trends analysis
 - Benchmarking
- A Park & Recreation Inventory & Assessment including:
 - On-site inventory and analysis of existing parks & facilities
 - System-wide observations & recommendations
 - Development of Columbia County park models
 - Recommended levels of service; and
 - Geographical analysis through service area mapping
- A Recreation Program Assessment
- A Natural Resource Plan
- Capital Improvements Recommendations
- An Operational & Financial Analysis including:
 - Facility rental rate comparisons
 - Analysis of Potential Athletic Complex
 - Operational & Staffing Overview
 - Department Funding & Revenue Analysis
- A Strategic Implementation Plan

The public outreach and community input sessions each began with planning team introductions followed by an explanation of the planning process. The team then presented and briefly discussed current and future demographic projections and their implications to the plan. Lastly the meeting attendees were asked:

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT STRENGTHS OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT?

WHAT ARE THE DEPARTMENT'S UNMET OPPORTUNITIES?

WHAT IS THE ONE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE AS AN OUTCOME OF THIS PLANNING PROCESS?

Elected officials, focus groups and key County representatives were invited for separate interviews for the purposes of receiving their specific and candid input. A list of participants and a compilation of responses are included in **Appendix A - Public Input - Comprehensive List of Comments.**

1.3 PUBLIC WORKSHOP

On June 17, 2021 a public workshop was held at the Columbia County Library to explain the planning process and gather input from the community at large. At that meeting, participants used their smart phones or web browsers to engage in answering live polling questions regarding demographics. The results were immediately tabulated and then reported back to the group. Participants were then invited to speak about items important to them. This meeting was also recorded and a video record made available through a YouTube link on the project website.

Information gathered from the public workshop, the key leadership and focus group meetings produced thoughtful ideas for consideration in the planning process. The consulting team used this input to create questions for inclusion in the public opinion survey.

1.4 WEBSITE

For the purposes of continuing public input a new multi-lingual, ADA accessible website (www.RecreateColumbiaCounty.com) was established for this plan. The site includes an overview of the project, critical announcements and an online (SurveyMonkey) survey as well as links to other information platforms. Following completion of the master plan, this website can be continued with periodic updates and maintenance by the County.

1.5 STATISTICALLY VALID NEED ANALYSIS SURVEY

As a part of this plan, ETC Institute conducted a Needs Assessment Survey for the Columbia County Parks, Recreation and Events Department during the fall of 2021. The purpose of the survey was to provide guidance to the Department in establishing priorities for the future improvement of parks and recreation facilities, programs and events within the County. The survey was designed to address key topics that were disclosed through leadership and focus group meetings, website input and the public workshop that was conducted. This approach allowed the survey questionnaire to be tailored to issues of strategic importance.

The statistically valid survey was administered by mail and online and issued to a random sample of households with zip codes in Columbia County. A total of 535 households completed the survey. The results for the sample of 535 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision rate of at least +/- 4.2%. This implies that if the survey process were repeated 100 times, there is a high degree of confidence that the results obtained would be repeated 95% of the time. This distinguishes the results from other subjective community input methods.

1.5.1 MAJOR FINDINGS

Given below is a the summary of key findings from the survey results which are detailed in charts provided later in **Section 2.5 Statistically Valid Public Opinion Survey**.

PARKS AND FACILITIES

PARKS AND FACILITY USAGE IN THE PAST TWO YEARS	
93%	"Yes"
7%	"No"

QUALITY OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES (for those who have used them)	
54%	Good
38%	Excellent
8%	Fair

HOW OFTEN RESIDENTS USED COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS / FACILITIES IN THE LAST TWO YEARS? (for those answered "Yes")	
33%	1-3 Times a Month
29%	Less Than Once a Month
19%	2-4 Times a Week
13%	Once a Week
7%	5+ Times a Week

FACILITIES HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A NEED FOR	
59%	Paved Walking, Biking, & Hiking Trails
49%	Nature Center / Nature Trails
47%	Natural Areas / Wildlife Habitats (Greenspace)
46%	Boat Ramps, Kayak, and Canoe Launches
45%	Large Multi-Use Community Parks
44%	Picnic Shelters

MOST IMPORTANT FACILITIES	
30%	Paved Walking, Biking, & Hiking Trails
20%	Boat Ramps, Kayaks and Canoe Launches
20%	Indoor Aquatic / Swimming Facilities
18%	Natural Areas / Wildlife Habitats (Greenspace)

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES ATTENDANCE IN THE PAST TWO YEARS	
53%	"Yes"
47%	"No"

PROGRAMS HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A NEED FOR	
45%	Adult Fitness and Wellness
30%	Adult Arts, Dance, Performing Arts
29%	Senior Recreation
28%	Day Trips / Tours
27%	Adult Continuing Education
26%	Special Events

TOP 5 SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAMS / ACTIVITIES	
59%	Friends & Neighbors
42%	Facebook
38%	County Website
29%	Banners at Parks / Facilities
23%	Email Notifications

MOST IMPORTANT PROGRAMS	
30%	Adult Fitness and Wellness
21%	Senior Recreation
18%	Adult Arts, Dance, Performing Arts
17%	Day Trips / Tours

QUALITY OF PARKS AND RECREATION EVENTS / PROGRAMS (for those who have participated in them)	
55%	Good
39%	Excellent
6%	Fair

FUNDING FOR IMPROVEMENTS

IMPROVEMENTS RESIDENTS ARE MOST WILLING TO FUND	
#1	Developing New Trails & Connecting Existing Trails
#2	Developing Walking / Biking Trails and Parks
#3	Developing a New Swimming Pool / Aquatic Facility
#4	Developing New Indoor Recreation Centers

SUPPORT FOR TAX INCREASE FOR FUNDING IMPROVEMENTS	
55%	"Very Supportive" or "Somewhat Supportive"
20%	"Not at All Supportive"
11%	"Less Supportive"
4%	"Not Sure"

1.6 COMMUNITY PROFILE

A demographic analysis provides an understanding of the population within Columbia County, Georgia. This analysis is reflective of the total population and its key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race and ethnicity.

It is important to note that future populations are all based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the projections could have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections.

1.6.1 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Columbia County has experienced exponential growth in recent years, increasing over 27% since 2010, or 2.44% per year. This is over three times the national annual growth rate of .69%. The total number of households has also increased substantially over the past 12 years.

Currently, the County's population is estimated at 163,618 individuals living within 58,121 households. The County's per capita income (\$44,838) and median household income (\$96,127) are both higher than the state and national averages. The County is beginning to age slowly and that trend is expected to continue with 22% of residents now over the age of 55 years (up from 18% in 2010). This number is expected to grow steadily over the next 15 years. The median age is now 38.4 years old which is in line with the U.S median ages of 38.5 years. By 2037, nearly one out of every three County residents is expected to be 55 or older.

The County's population is becoming more racially diverse. While the numbers are dropping, White Alone (65% in 2022 down from 76% in 2010) remains the largest racial group. Black Alone is the largest minority making up 18% of the population, which is above the national average of 14%, but well below the State average (33% Black Alone).

1.6.2 PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Overall, people are recreating more and the importance of living an active, healthy lifestyle is on the rise. Local recreation trends show above average participation across the board with 39 of 46 tracked activities having scores above the national average. This is indicative of an active population, seeking to participate in a wide range of fitness, sports and outdoor activities.

For detailed information on Demographics and Trends, see Chapter 3.

1.7 PARKS & FACILITIES INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

In the spring of 2021, site visits were completed to inventory and assess all of Columbia County's parks and facilities. The assessment included parks and recreation facilities under the purview of the Park, Recreation and Events Department and included in a park inventory list provided by the Department. Collectively, the team visited three Neighborhood Parks, four Community Parks, six (6) Regional Parks, two Natural Resource Parks, six Special Purpose Areas and two trail heads comprising over 1,626 acres owned or operated by the County. Of those sites, nine were rated as **good**, nine were rated as fair. Of the three remaining sites- the Pollard House, a special purpose facility was deemed unusable and therefore, **poor**. Two sites were undeveloped and therefore were not rated. Overall, parks and facilities appeared to be well maintained and in acceptable condition for public use. The overall maintenance of existing facilities warranted a good rating.

For complete details and findings, see Chapter 4.

1.8 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS & RECOMMENDED LEVELS OF SERVICE

Following completion of park and facility inventory and analysis site visits, a customized series of park models were developed specifically for Columbia County. These models were developed based on observations of existing parks and the types of uses that could be commonly found within them.

1.8.1 PARK MODELS

This park system includes five park types which are Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Regional Park, Natural Resource Park and Special Purpose Facility or Park. Additional information by park types including their optimum size, potential locations and type of facilities most commonly found within them can be found in Chapter 4. Park models should be considered a guideline for future park development.

1.8.2 RECOMMENDED LEVELS OF SERVICE

Levels of Service are guidelines that define geographic service areas based on population that support investment decisions related to parks, facilities and amenities. Level of Service can and will change over time as program lifecycles and demographics of the County change.

Park facility standard were analyzed using a combination of resource. These included; National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines; recreation activity participation rates reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2021 Study of Sports, Fitness and Leisure participation; community and stakeholder input; a statistically valid public survey, findings from the prioritized needs assessment report and general observations.

Based on the recommended Levels of Service and recommended guidelines, the following are the park and facility/amenity types that are currently underserved:

- Community Parks
- Pickleball Courts
- Natural Resource Parks
- Basketball Courts
- Regional Parks
* Need in 10 years
- Skate Parks
- Paved Trails
- Outdoor Pool
- Picnic Shelters
- Splashpads
- Multi-Purpose Rectangular Fields
- Indoor Recreation Space
- Indoor Aquatic Space
- Playground
* (Need in 5 years)

For Level of Service Matrix defining future needs for the County see Chapter 4.

1.8.3 IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

In addition to addressing Level of Service shortfalls, recommendations have been made to improve or add to existing parks and facilities. Priority should be given to those renovating or upgrading parks and facilities receiving a **“poor”** assessment rating during the inventory phase; followed by those receiving a **“fair”** rating. Costs assigned are intended to upgrade the park or facility to **“good”** condition. Other possible improvements have also been assigned to individual parks to help in offsetting facility shortfalls.

1.8.4 SYSTEM-WIDE ADDITIONS

Based on team site visits, a set of common, system-wide observations/recommendations have been included. These recommendations can be applied to each park/facility in varying degrees and are based on team assessment at the time of the site visit. These allowances are associated with enhancements to improve ADA accessibility; improvements to strengthen place-making such as addition of shade elements; enhanced landscaping and irrigation; and signage upgrades.

For additional information on Improvements to existing parks and system wide additions, see **Chapter 4**.

1.8.5 GEOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS THROUGH MAPPING

Service area maps (equity maps) and standard assist decision-makers in assessing where services are offered, how equitable the service distribution and delivery is throughout the County and how effective the service is as it compares to demographic densities. Service area maps were developed for each of the following major assets:

Community Parks	Diamond Fields
Neighborhood Parks	Dog Parks
Regional Parks	Multi-purpose Rectangular Fields
Natural Resource Parks	Pickleball Courts
Paved Trails	Picnic Shelters
Unpaved Trails	Playgrounds
Basketball Courts	Skate Parks
Splash Pads	Tennis Courts

The source for the population used for standard development is the estimated 2022 population reported by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI).

To view the Equity Maps develop, see **Chapter 4**.

1.9 RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

As part of the planning process, the consulting team performed an assessment of the programs and services offered by the Department. The assessment offers perspectives on programs and service offerings and helps identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities regarding programming for residents in parks and recreation facilities. It also assists in identifying what are considered core programs, program gaps and areas for improvement in determining future programs and services for residents. The consulting team based these findings and comments from a review of information provided by the County.

The assessment is summarized in **Chapter 5** of this report.

1.10 NATURAL RESOURCE PLAN

As part of this study, a Natural Resource Management Plan was conducted to establish considerations for managing natural resources through greenspaces, open spaces, trails and parks that occur within the County. As the County and its recreation resources grow, it is important to insure that the natural resources within the purview of the County are managed and protected in consistent ways. Through thoughtful consideration, protection measures and procedures for unique or sensitive areas can be balanced with offering appropriate recreation activities.

See **Chapter 6** for the Natural Resource Plan

1.11 POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF A TOURNAMENT SPORTS COMPLEX

As part of this study the economic viability of a County tournament sports venue was assessed and contributing features explored. A balance of rectangular multi-use fields (soccer, lacrosse, flag football & rugby) with other specialty sports components such as archery, beach/sand volleyball, shooting, skateboarding and BMX is suggested. A Site Feasibility Study/ Business Plan for a sports tourism facility is recommended, evaluating the ideal composition of sports and adventure offerings for optimum economic impact and community use in Columbia County. Comparable sports venues were also explored.

See Chapter 7 for additional information.

1.12 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND FUNDING STRATEGIES

To sustainably manage the Department a series of financial areas of emphasis have been explored and action items suggested for fundraising, partnering, government financing, cost recovery, enterprise management and operational management. In addition, a series of possible funding and revenue strategies have been included for consideration.

For additional information on Financial Sustainability and Funding, see **Chapter 7**.

1.13 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

This capital improvements plan reflects community needs identified through the public input process; stakeholder, staff and Commission member input; demographics; program analysis and physical analysis. The total proposed Level of Service; possible improvements to existing parks/facilities and system-wide improvements are estimated to be approximately **\$143,426,961**. A park-by-park estimate has been provided in **Appendix G, Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates**.

For additional information on capital improvement, see **Chapter 8**.

1.13 STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Strategic Implementation Plan is meant to be a guideline for the following key areas:

- Parks & Trails
- Facilities
- Recreation Programs
- Natural Resource Planning
- Operations & Staffing

For Strategic Implementation Plan, see **Chapter 9**.

02 PUBLIC OUTREACH & COMMUNITY INPUT

2.1 COMMISSION, ADMINISTRATIVE & DEPARTMENT STAFF, KEY LEADERS, & FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The planning and data collection process began with a series of (18) eighteen kickoff meetings held with Commission members, Administrative Staff, key community leaders and focus groups. During these meetings representatives of the planning team discussed data collection, expected project outcomes and the project planning process. Attendees were asked to provide critical input. Invited participants included:

- Commission Members
- County Administration & Key Department Staff
- Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
- Convention & Visitors Bureau
- County School Superintendent
- User Groups representing various sports and activities
- Natural Resource Advocates

Each meeting began with introductions to the planning team members followed by an explanation of the planning process. The team then presented and briefly discussed current and future demographic projections and their

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT STRENGTHS OF COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT?

WHAT ARE THE DEPARTMENT'S UNMET OPPORTUNITIES?

WHAT IS THE ONE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE AS AN OUTCOME OF THIS PLANNING

2.2 PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Using a similar format, a public workshop was held to explain the planning process and gather input from the community at large. At that meeting, participants used their smart phones or web browsers to engage in answering live polling questions. The results were immediately tabulated and then reported back to the group. This meeting was also recorded and a video record made available through a YouTube link on the project website. Information gathered from the public workshop and the key leadership/focus group meetings was used to create questions for inclusion in the public opinion survey.

2.3 SYNOPSIS OF INPUT

The following provides an overview of input received from *all* groups:

STRENGTHS	UNMET OPPORTUNITIES	#1 MOST IMPORTANT THING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Great leadership, they listen to the public and respond. Right staff is in place. o Facilities are well operated and maintained. o The department does a lot with what they have. o Programs are affordable. o There is a good diversity of offerings. o The County has been acquiring land to build future parks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provide what's missing. County recreation shouldn't compete with the private sector. o Continue trail development and add "bike amenities" along the trail. o Large multipurpose tournament facility with some artificial turf; some natural grass. o Plan for growth to the west, such as another "Patriot's Park" type facility on the south side of I-20. o Need additional staff. There is concern about burnout. o Facility requests for: tournament tennis; both tournament and "plug-in" pickleball facilities; gymnasium(s); Senior Center in Evans/Grovetown area; pool; dog park(s); park with zipline/ropes course; e-sports gaming space; remote control airplane facility; kayaking facility. o Public art in parks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Keep people active at all ages. o Provide convenient parks with less travel time to access. o Provide parks where the population is growing. o Define what is really needed and plan for future growth. o Purchase land while it is available. o Evaluate what they have and is it being well-used. o Dream big but be realistic. o Keep the citizens happy.

2.4 WEBSITE

For the purposes of maintaining open communication and additional public input a new multilingual, ADA accessible website (www.RecreateColumbiaCounty.com) was established. The site includes an overview of the project, critical announcements, information on the planning team and links to social media platforms frequently used by the County for promoting programs and events. The website also hosted an online survey using www.surveymonkey.com methodology with 474 participants taking the survey. Following completion of the master plan, this website can be continued with periodic updates and maintenance by the County.

2.5 STATISTICALLY VALID PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

As part of the master plan, ETC Institute conducted a statistically valid Needs Assessment Survey to obtain additional public input during fall of 2021. The purpose of the survey was to gather feedback to guide planning over the next 10 years. The survey was administered by mail and online to a random sample of households in Columbia County. A total of 535 households completed the survey. The results for the sample of 535 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision rate of at least +/-4.2%. The report, *Columbia County Parks, Recreation and Event Needs Assessment Findings Report, Presented to the Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department December 2021* (issued under separate cover) contains charts showing the overall results of the survey; a priority investment rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities & programs; detailed benchmarking analysis comparing Columbia County's results to national results; tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey; and a copy of the survey instrument. A copy of the survey households received in the mail can be found in **Appendix B - Survey Instrument**.

2.5.1 USAGE OF PARKS AND FACILITIES

Most households (93%) indicated they have visited parks or facilities offered by the County during the last two years. When residents were asked how often they used parks/facilities in the last two years, 26% indicated they visited at least two times a week; 13% visited parks/facilities once a week, 33% visited 1 to 3 times a month, and 29% visited County parks/facilities less than once a month during the last two years.

Ninety-two percent (92%) of respondents who visited parks/facilities rated the overall condition as "excellent" or "good". Of the 7% of households that indicated they had not visited County parks/facilities during the last two years, the top reasons given were: lack of interest (38%), being too busy (28%) and lack of awareness of the location of parks or trails (25%).

2.5.2 PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION PROGRAMS/EVENTS

Fifty-one percent (51%) of households surveyed indicated they have participated in recreation programs and/or events offered by the County in the last two years. When residents were asked how many programs/events their household had participated in during the last two years, 38% indicated they had participated in 4 or more; 48% participated in two to three programs/events and 14% participated in one program/event offered by Columbia County in the last two years.

Ninety-four percent (94%) of respondents who participated in programs/events rated the overall quality as "excellent" or "good". Of the 49% of households that indicated they had not participated in programs/events during the last two years, the top reasons given were: lack of awareness of what programs are offered (42%), lack of awareness of what events were offered (35%) and being too busy to participate in programs/events (20%).

2.5.3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTY

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of residents surveyed indicated that information from friends and neighbors is the top source about parks and recreation programs and activities in Columbia County. Other sources include: Facebook (42%), the County website (38%), banners at parks or City facilities (29%), and email notifications from the County (23%).

Based on the sum of their top three choices, the most preferred methods to communicate about parks and recreation programs and activities were; 1) email notifications from the County, 2) the County website, and 3) Facebook.

2.5.4 POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

Residents were asked their level of agreement with various statements about potential benefits of parks and recreational facilities in the County. Ninety-three percent (93%) of respondents either “strongly agree” or “agree” that “making Columbia County a more desirable place to live” is a potential benefit. Other statements in which respondents “strongly agree” or “agree” include: “Helps to attract new residents and businesses” (88%), “positively impacts economic/business development” (88%), “improves my/household’s physical health and fitness” (87%), “preserves open space and protects the environment” (83%) and “improves my/household’s mental health and

2.5.5 SUPPORT FOR ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM

Residents were asked to indicate their support for various actions the County could take to improve the parks and recreation system. Eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents were either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive” of improving existing park buildings/recreation facilities and centers. Other possible actions that residents were “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive” of include: improving existing neighborhood and community parks (85%), developing walking and biking trails and parks (85%), developing new trails and connecting existing trails (84%), improving existing playground areas (83%) and improving connectivity/accessibility of trails (83%).

Based on the sum of their top four choices, the improvements respondents indicated they would be most willing to fund were:

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1 New Trails and Connecting Existing | 2 Walking / Biking Trails and Parks | 3 New Swimming Pool / Aquatic Facility* | 4 New Indoor Recreation Centers |
|---|--|--|--|

Fifty-five percent (55%) of residents indicated they would be “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive” of a property tax increase to fund ongoing maintenance and staffing to operate a new facility; 4% were “not sure”, 11% were “less supportive” and 20% were “not at all supportive” of a property tax increase.

*For recommendations addressing this topic, see Section 8.3 " Of-Note."

2.5.6 FACILITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

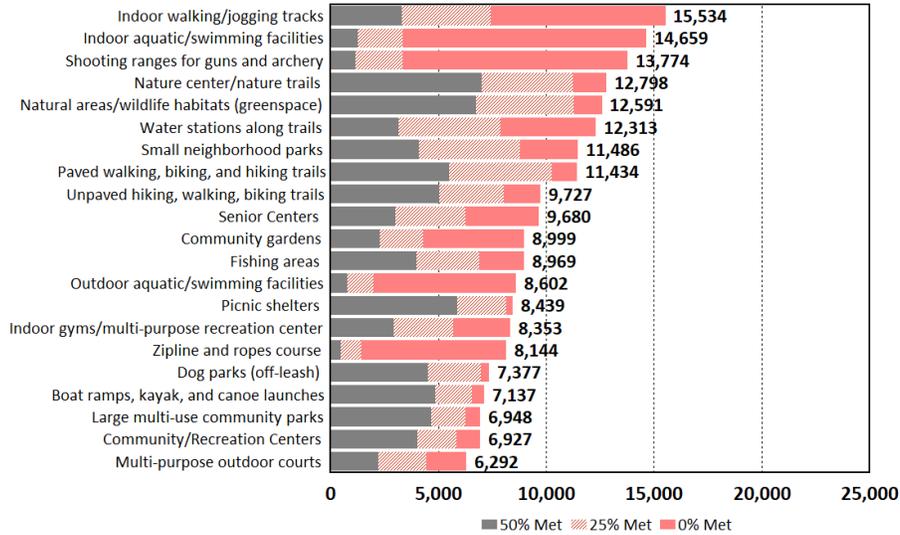
Facility Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 41 types of parks and recreation facilities and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the County that had the greatest “unmet” need for various facilities.

The six parks and recreation facilities with the highest percentage of households that indicated a need for the facility were: paved walking biking and hiking trails (59%), nature center/nature trails (49%), natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace) (47%), boat ramps, kayak and canoe launches (46%), large multi-use community parks (45%), and picnic shelters (44%). When ETC Institute analyzed the needs in the community, these same six facilities had a need that affected more than 20,000 households. ETC Institute estimates a total of 15,534 households in Columbia County that have a need, have unmet needs for indoor walking/jogging tracks. The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 41 types of parks and facilities that were assessed are shown in the the charts on the following page.

2.5.6 FACILITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES (CONTINUED)

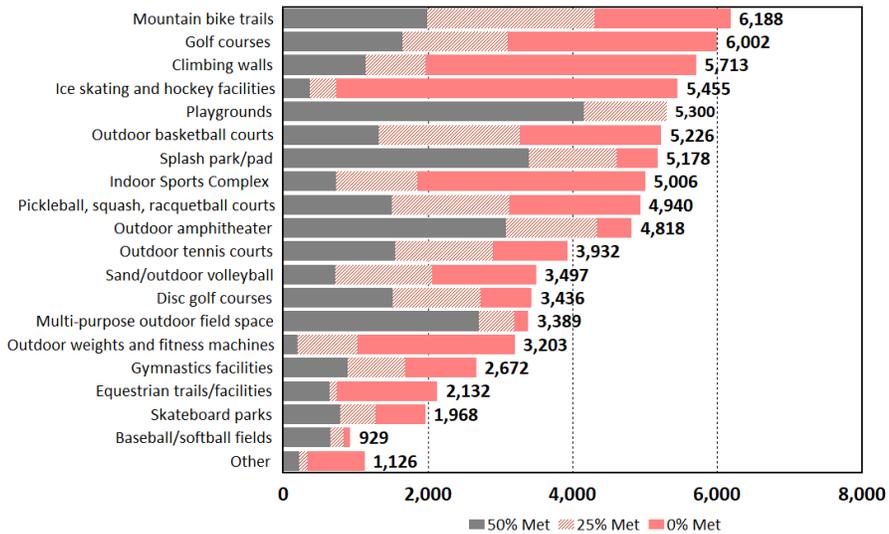
Q7[3]. Estimated Number of Households in Columbia County Whose Needs for Facilities Are Being Partly Met or Not Met

by number of households based on 46,890 households in Columbia County



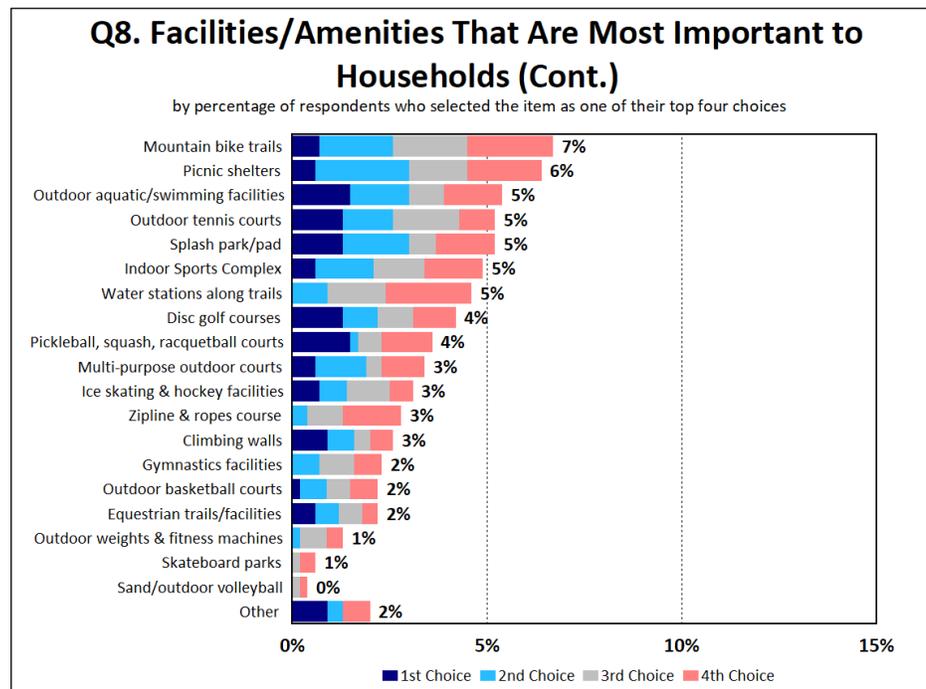
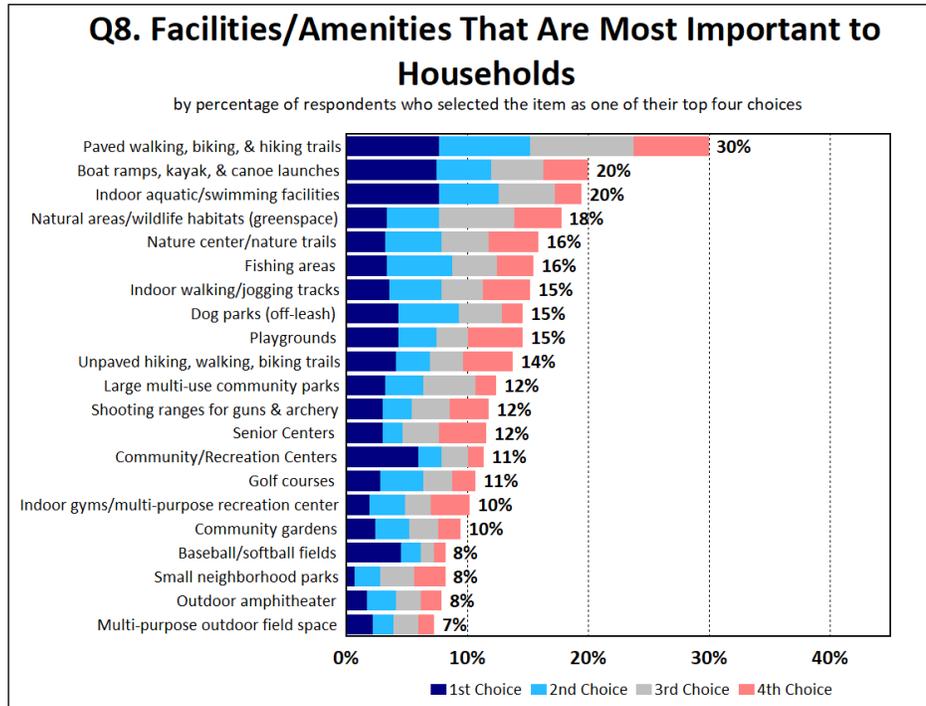
Q7[3]. Estimated Number of Households in Columbia County Whose Needs for Facilities Are Being Partly Met or Not Met (Cont.)

by number of households based on 46,890 households in Columbia County



2.5.7 FACILITY IMPORTANCE

In addition to assessing the needs for each facility, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the most important facilities to residents were: paved walking, biking and hiking trails (30%), boat ramps, kayak and canoe launches (20%), indoor aquatic/swimming facilities (20%), natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace) (18%). The percentage of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in the charts that follow.



2.6 PRIORITY INVESTMENT RATINGS (PIR)

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide decision makers with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The rating system was developed to identify the facilities and programs residents believe should receive the highest priority for investments. Ratings reflect the importance residents place on items (sum of top 4 choices) and the unmet needs (needs that are only being partly met or not met) for each facility/program relative to the facility program that rated the highest overall. Since decisions related to future investments should consider both the level of unmet need and the importance of the facilities and programs, the PIR weights each of these components equally.

The PIR reflects the sum of the Unmet Needs Rating and the Importance Rating as shown in the equation below:

$$\text{PIR} = \text{UNR} + \text{IR}$$

For example, suppose the Unmet Needs Rating for playgrounds is 26.5 (out of 100) and the Importance Rating for playgrounds is 52 (out of 100), the Priority Investment Rating for playgrounds would be 78.5 (out of 200).

The following charts show the Unmet Needs Rating, Importance Rating and Priority Investment Rating for facilities and programs.

2.6.1 HOW TO ANALYZE THE RATINGS

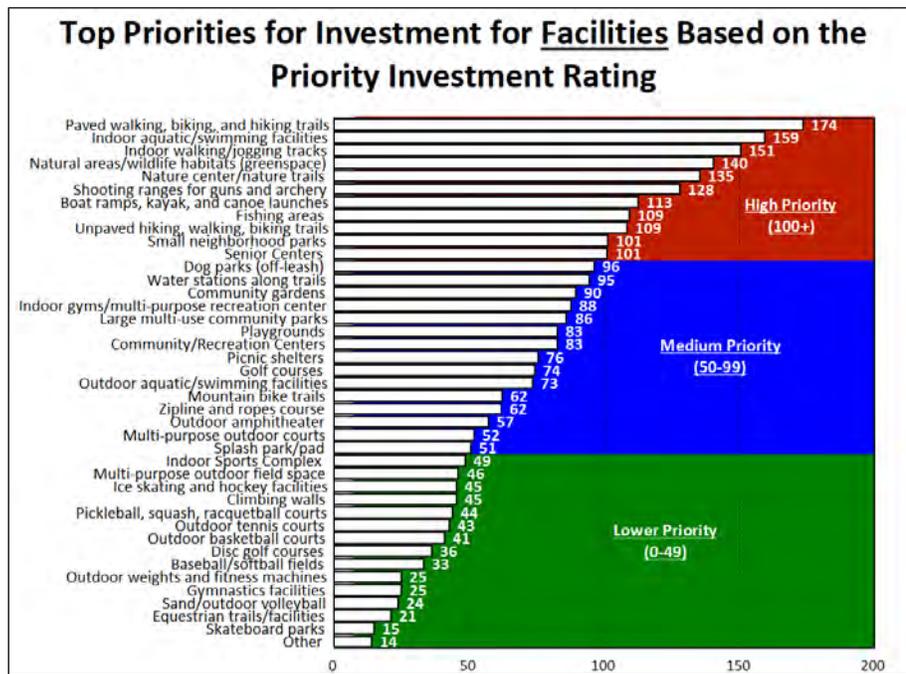
- **High Priority Areas are those with a PIR of at least 100.** A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high level of unmet need and residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements in these areas are likely to have a positive impact on the greatest number of households.
- **Medium Priority Areas are those with a PIR of 50-99.** A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.
- **Low Priority Areas are those with a PIR below 50.** A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and residents do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations are being targeted.

2.6.2 PRIORITIES FOR FACILITY INVESTMENTS

Based on the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following eleven facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Paved walking, biking and hiking trails (PIR=174)
- Indoor aquatic/swimming facilities (PIR=159)
- Indoor walking/jogging tracks (PIR=151)
- Natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace) (PIR=140)
- Nature center/nature trails (PIR=135)
- Shooting ranges for guns and archery (PIR=128)
- Boat ramps, kayak and canoe launches (PIR=113)
- Fishing areas (PIR=109)
- Unpaved hiking, walking, biking trails (PIR=109)
- Small neighborhood parks (PIR=101)
- Senior Centers (PIR=101)

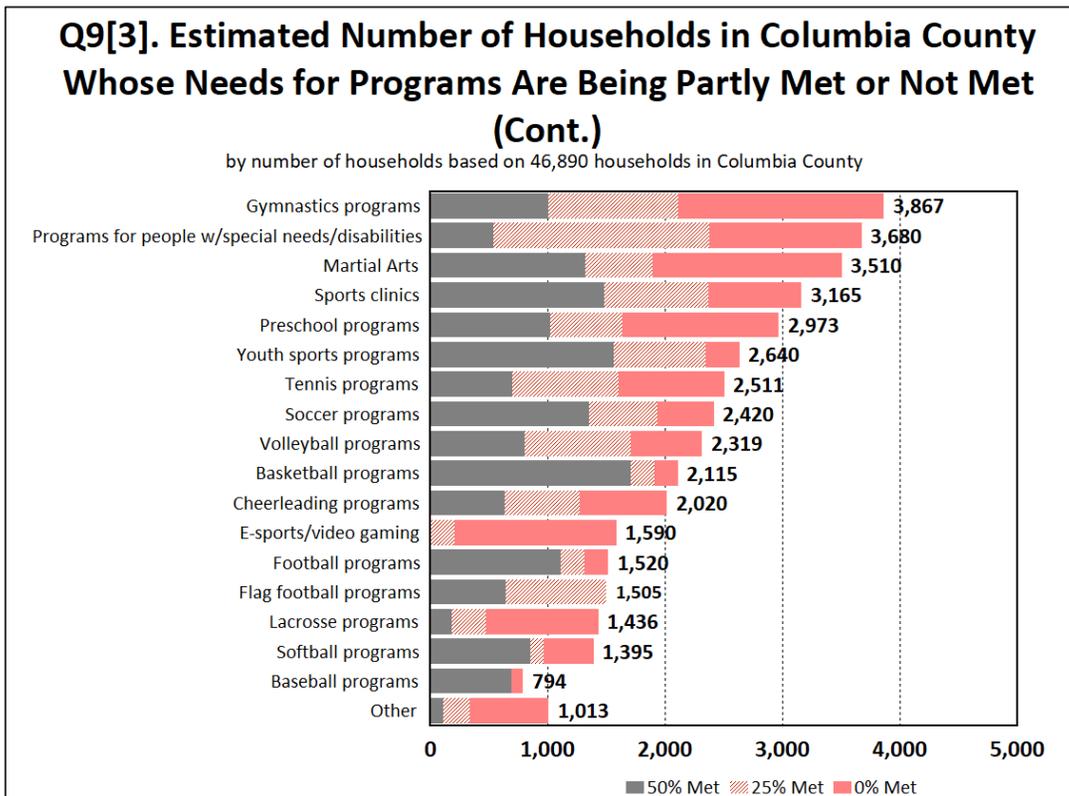
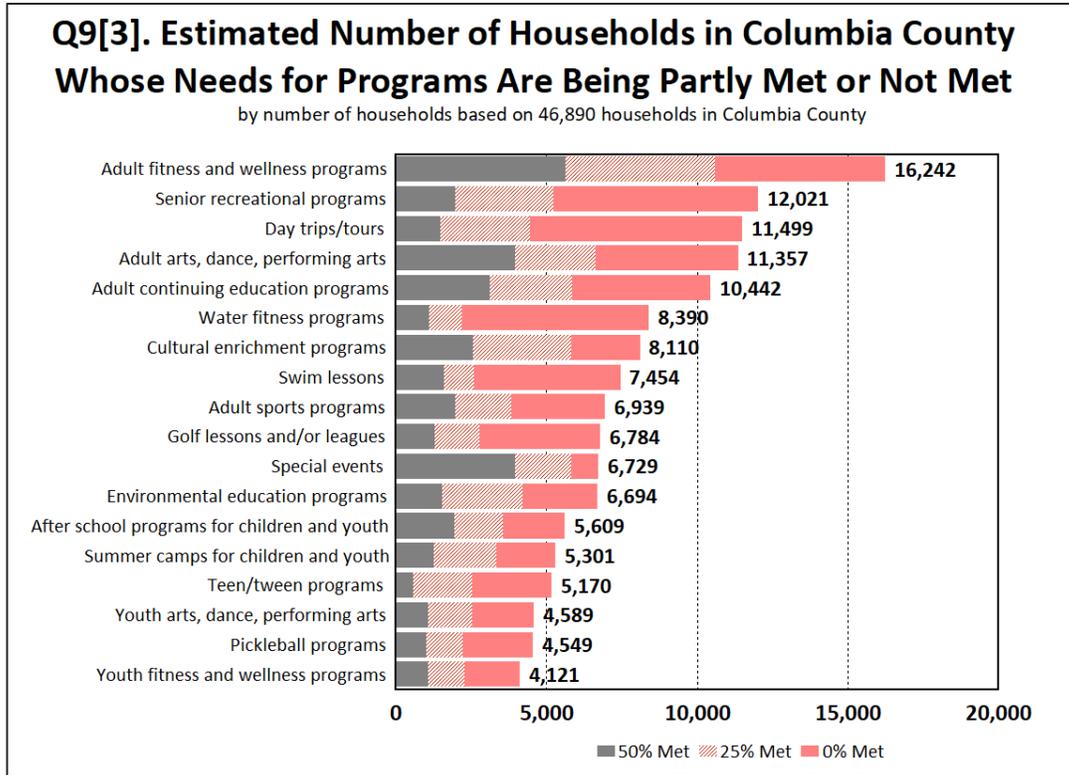
The chart on the following page shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 41 facilities that were addressed in the survey.



2.6.3 PROGRAMMING NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

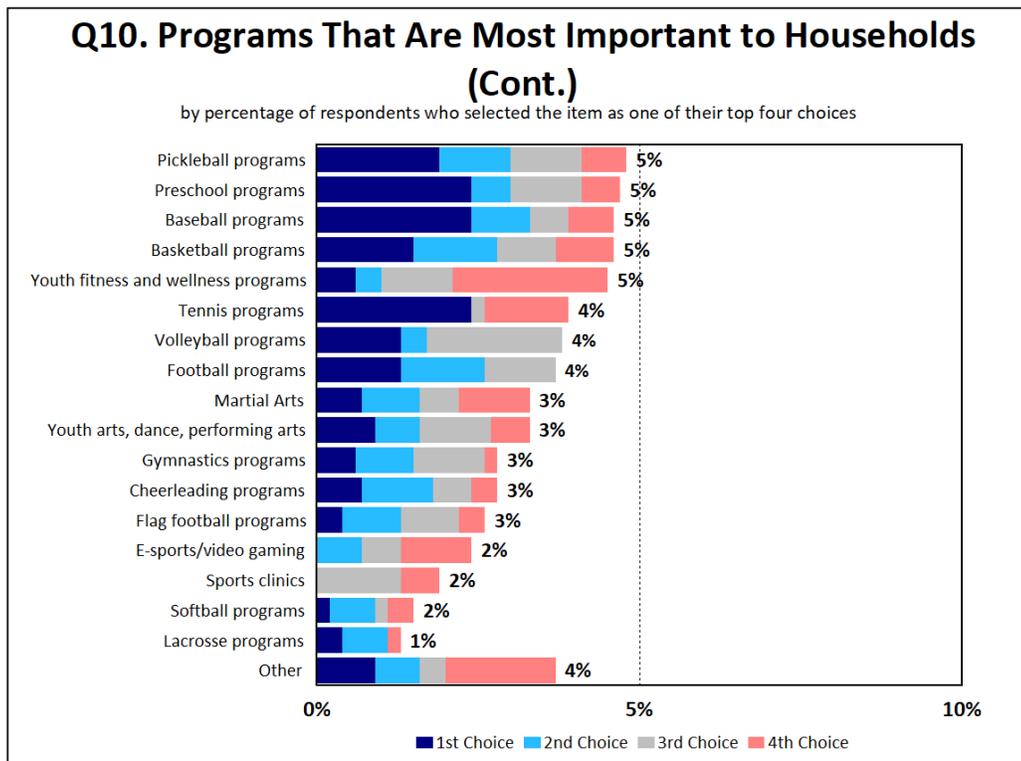
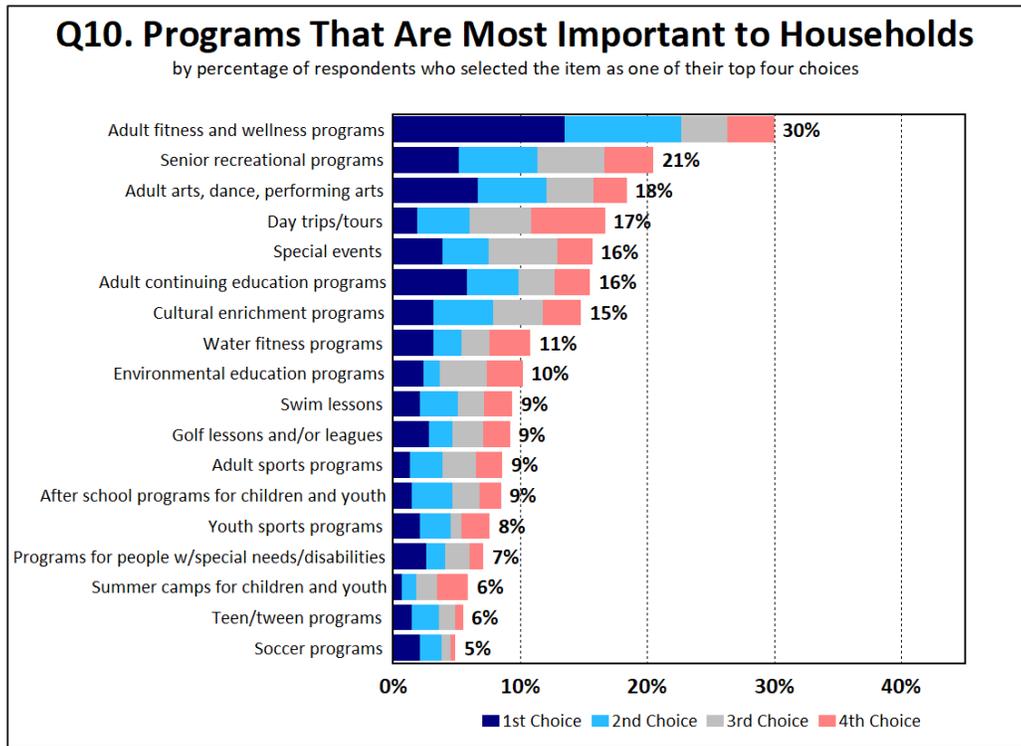
- Respondents were also asked to identify if their household had a need for 36 recreation programs and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the County that had “unmet” needs for each program.
- The six programs with the highest percentage of households that had needs were: adult fitness and wellness programs (45%), adult arts, dance performing arts (30%), senior recreational programs (29%), day trips/tours (28%), adult continuing education programs (27%) and special events (26%). When ETC Institute analyzed the needs in the community, all six of these programs had a need that affected more than 12,000 households. ETC Institute estimates a total of 16,242 households in Columbia County have a need, or had unmet needs for adult fitness and wellness programs. The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 36 programs that were assessed is shown in the charts on the following page.

2.6.3 PROGRAMMING NEEDS AND PRIORITIES (CONTINUED)



2.6.4 PROGRAM IMPORTANCE

In addition to assessing the needs for each program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents place on each. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the most important programs to residents were: adult fitness and wellness programs (30%), senior recreational programs (21%), adult arts, dance, performing arts (18%), and day trips/tours (17%). The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown in the charts below.

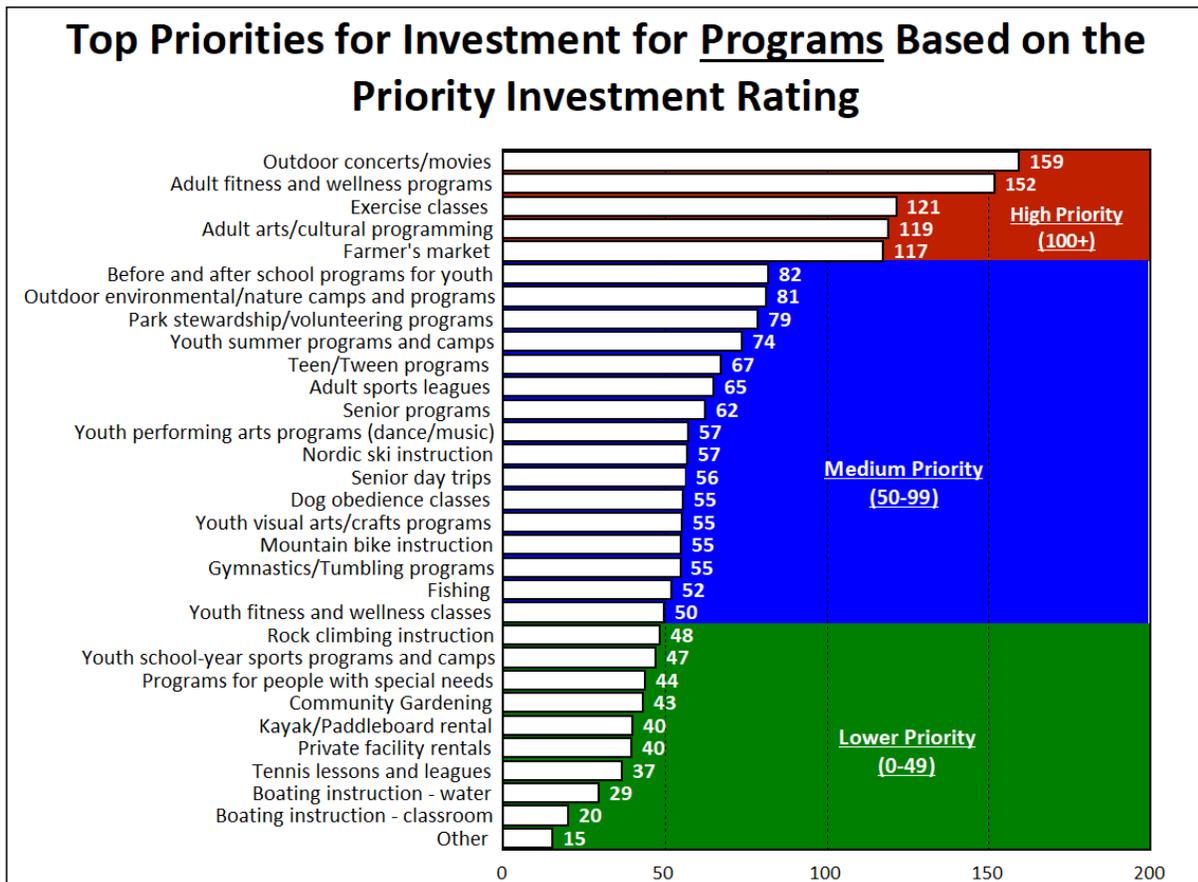


2.6.5 PRIORITIES FOR PROGRAMMING INVESTMENTS

Based on the priority investment rating (PIR), which was described above, the following programs were rated as “high priorities” for investment:

- Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=200)
- Senior recreational programs (PIR=142)
- Adult arts, dance, performing arts (PIR=131)
- Day trips/tours (PIR=127)
- Adult continuing education programs (PIR=116)

The table below shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for each of the 36 programs that were rated.



2.6.6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When analyzing the facilities and programs offered by Columbia County, paved walking, biking and hiking trails, nature center/nature trails, adult fitness and wellness programs and adult arts, dance performing arts were the items for which the highest number of residents had a need. Focusing on these items would provide the greatest benefit for the largest number of residents within the County. Making certain the availability of facilities and programming encompasses the greatest number of households ensures funding is appropriately allocated to give the community the greatest benefit possible.

In order to ensure that Columbia County continues to meet the needs and expectations of the community, ETC Institute recommends sustaining and/or improving the performance in areas that were identified as “high priorities” by the Priority Investment Rating (PIR). The facilities and programs with the highest PIR ratings are listed below.

FACILITIES PRIORITIES

- o Paved walking, biking, and hiking trails (PIR=174)
- o Indoor aquatic/swimming facilities (PIR=159)
- o Indoor walking/jogging tracks (PIR=151)
- o Natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace) (PIR=140)
- o Shooting ranges for guns and archers (PIR=128)
- o Boat ramps, kayak and canoe launches (PIR=113)
- o Fishing areas (PIR=109)
- o Unpaved hiking, walking, biking trails (PIR=109)
- o Small neighborhood parks (PIR=101)

PROGRAMMING PRIORITIES

- o Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=200)
- o Senior recreational programs (PIR=142)
- o Adult arts, dance, performing arts (PIR=131)
- o Day trip/tours (PIR=127)
- o Adult continuing education programs (PIR=116)

2.7 ONLINE SURVEY (SURVEYMONKEY)

2.7.1 METHODOLOGY

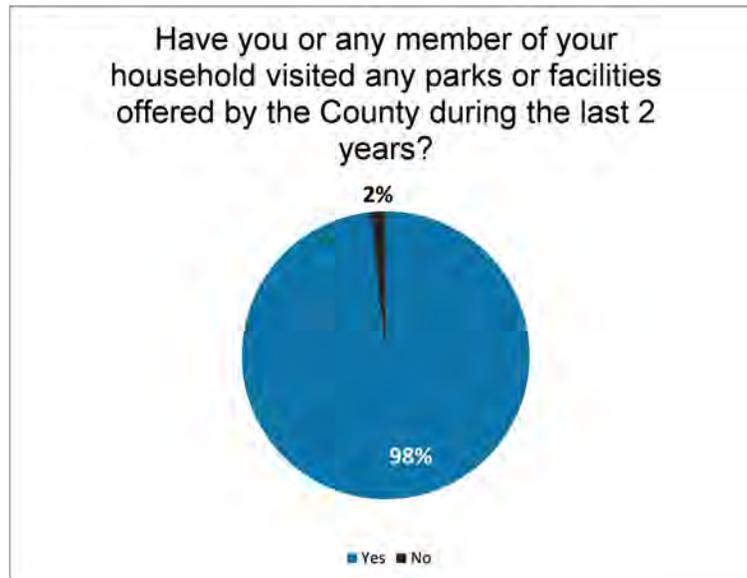
The Consulting Team conducted an online survey (powered by SurveyMonkey) to gain a better understanding of the characteristics, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Columbia County. The survey was conducted for eight weeks from November 2021 to January 2022 and received a total of 474 responses. The survey was available in both English and Spanish.

This online survey mirrored the statistically valid survey conducted by ETC Institute. This allowed residents who may have not been randomly selected to participate in the statistically valid surveys an opportunity to be a part of the community input process.

2.7.2 FINDINGS

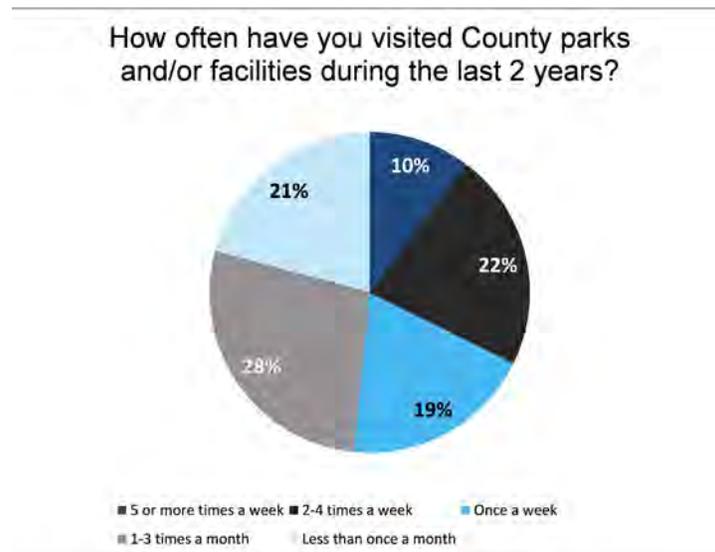
Q1: HAVE YOU OR ANY MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISITED ANY PARKS OR FACILITIES OFFERED BY THE COUNTY DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS (INCLUDING THE TIME BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC)?

Based on the chart, an overwhelming number of people (98%) have used or visited the park before the



Q2: HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU VISITED COUNTY PARKS AND/OR FACILITIES DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS?

The chart shows that the three most popular answers are 1 – 3 times a month (28%), 2 – 4 times a week (22%), and less than once a month (21%).

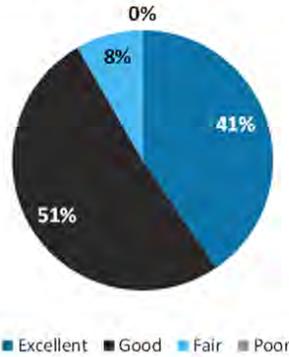


2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q3: OVERALL, HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF ALL COUNTY PARKS AND/OR FACILITIES YOU HAVE VISITED DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS?

92% of respondents rated the conditions of County Parks and/or facilities as “Good” or “Excellent”.

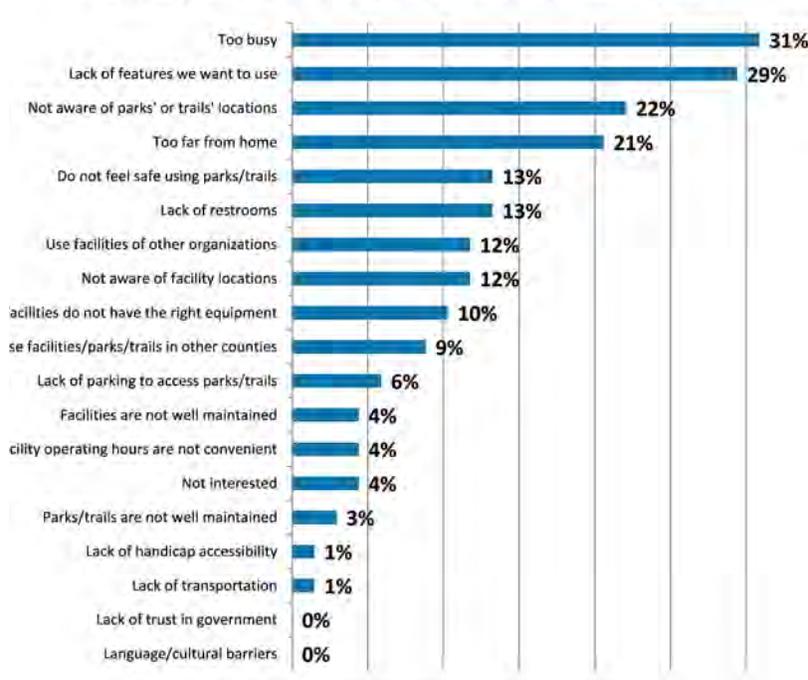
Overall, how would you rate the physical condition of ALL County parks and/or facilities you have visited during the last 2 years?



Q4: IF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS NOT VISITED ANY COUNTY PARKS OR FACILITIES DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS, PLEASE CHECK ALL OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS YOU HAVE NOT VISITED BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

The top three reasons respondents gave for not visiting parks or facilities before the COVID-19 pandemic were, they were Too Busy (31%), Lack of Features they wanted to use (29%), and not aware of Parks or Trails Locations (22%). This mirrors results from the ETC survey and also results that the Consulting team typically sees in online surveys nationally.

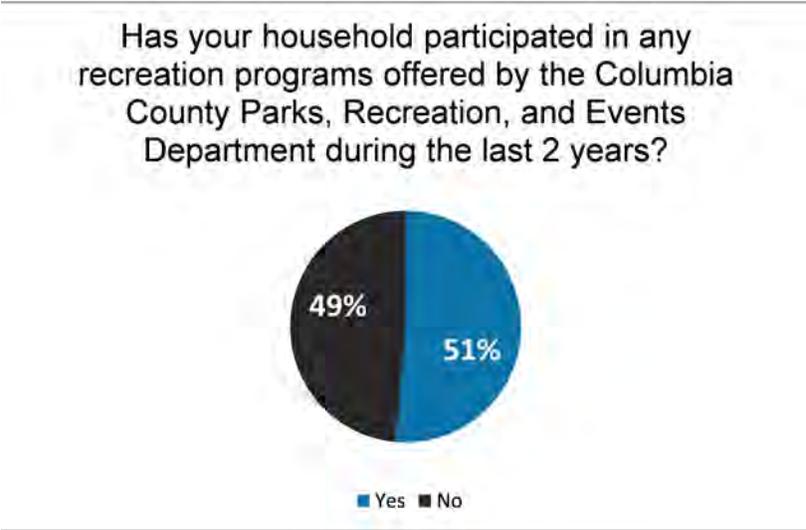
Reasons Preventing Households From Visiting County Parks and Facilities Prior to COVID-19



2.7.2 FINDINGS

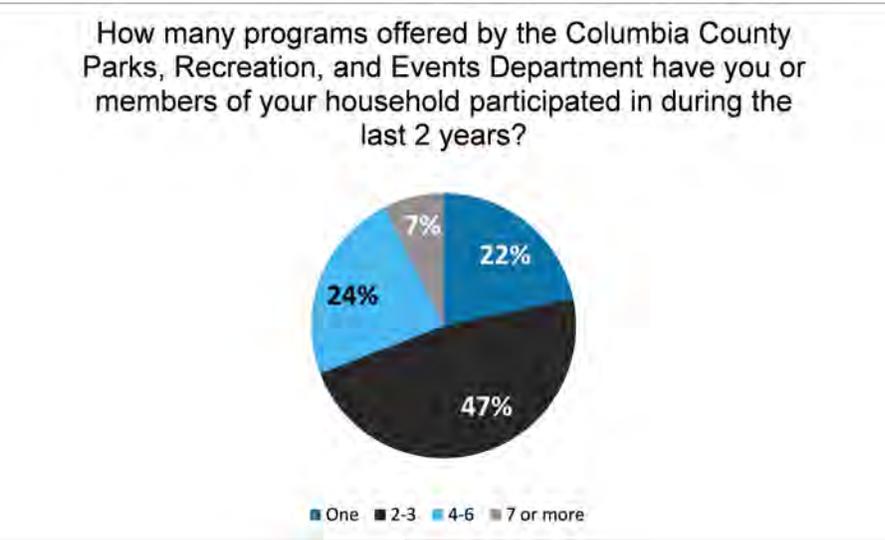
Q5: HAS YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATED IN ANY RECREATION PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS?

More than half the households (51%) have participated in a recreation event or program that was offered by Columbia County, which is a very encouraging sign.



Q6: HOW MANY PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT HAVE YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATED IN DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS?

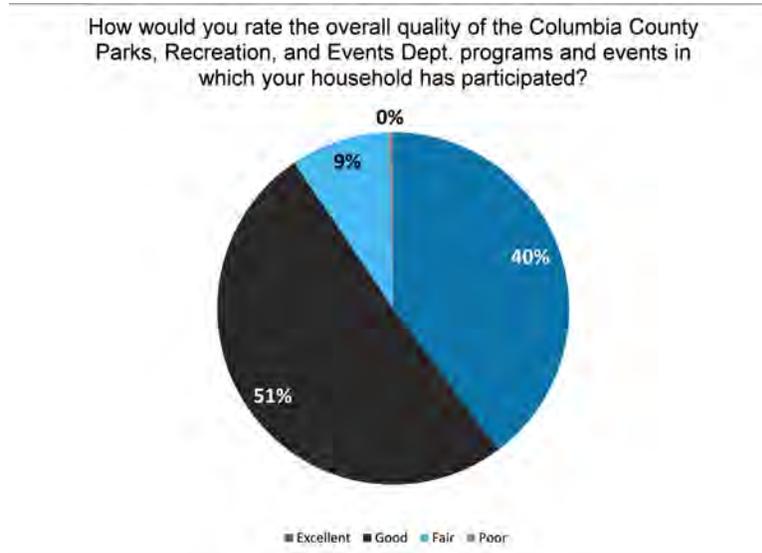
78% of respondents who participated in a Columbia County Recreation Program in the last 2 years did so multiple times.



2.7.2 FINDINGS

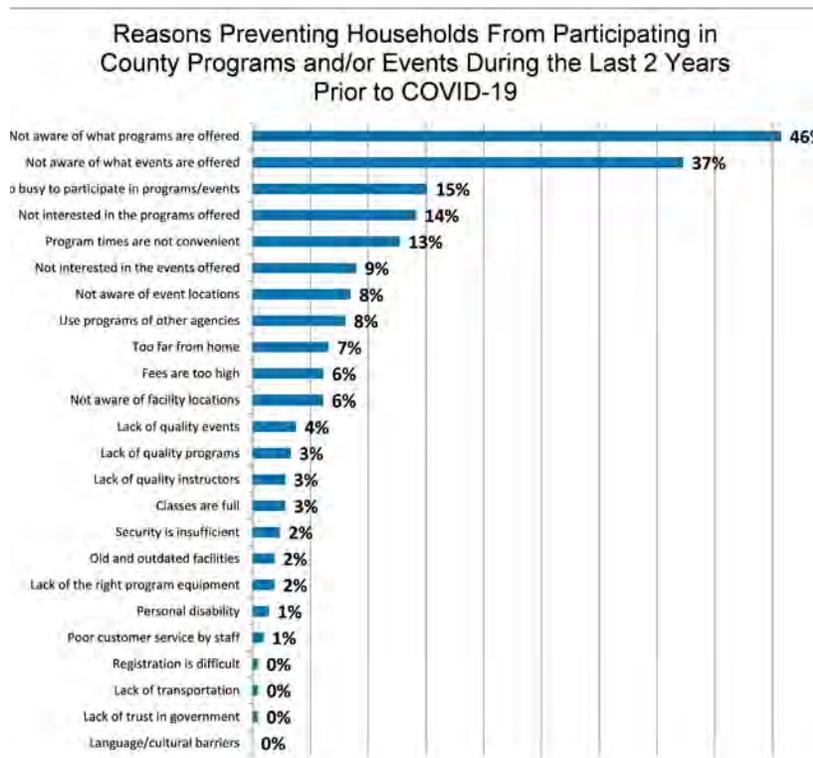
Q7: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE OVERALL QUALITY OF THE COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS IN WHICH YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS PARTICIPATED?

91% of respondents rated the overall quality of Columbia County Programs at a level of “Good” or



Q8: IF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS NOT PARTICIPATED IN ANY COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS, PLEASE CHECK ALL OF THE FOLLOWING REASONS WHY YOU MAY HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED, BEFORE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

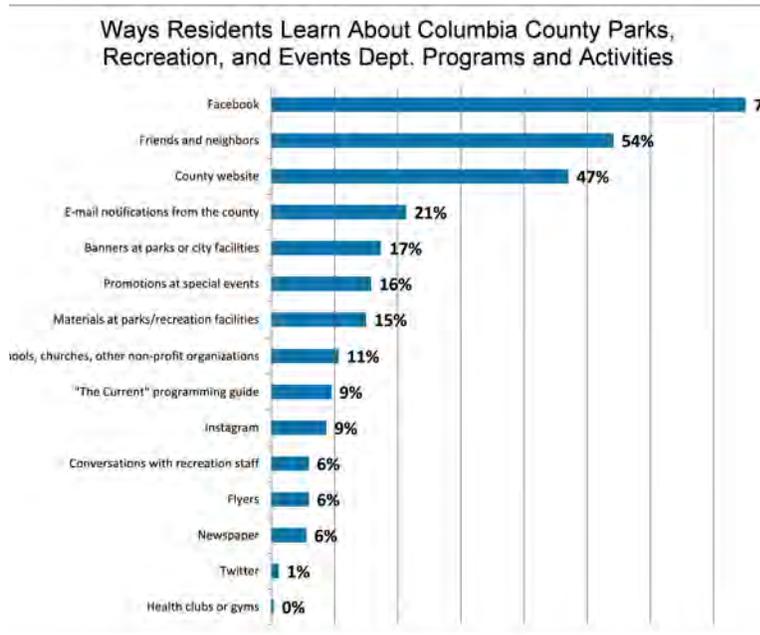
The chart shows that 46% of people didn’t know what programs were offered, followed by 37% of people didn’t know what events were offered. This presents a huge opportunity for the Department to increase its



2.7.2 FINDINGS

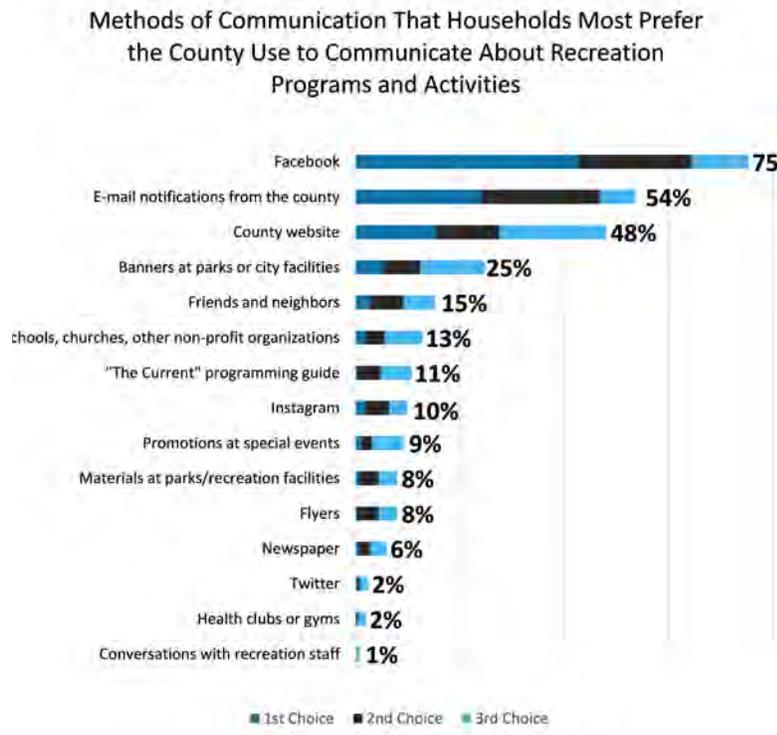
Q9: FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST, PLEASE CHECK ALL OF THE WAYS YOU LEARN ABOUT COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

The top 3 ways people learn about the events are Facebook (75%), Friends and Neighbors (54%), and People using the County website (47%).



Q10: WHICH THREE METHODS OF COMMUNICATION WOULD YOU MOST PREFER THE COUNTY USE TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOU ABOUT RECREATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES?

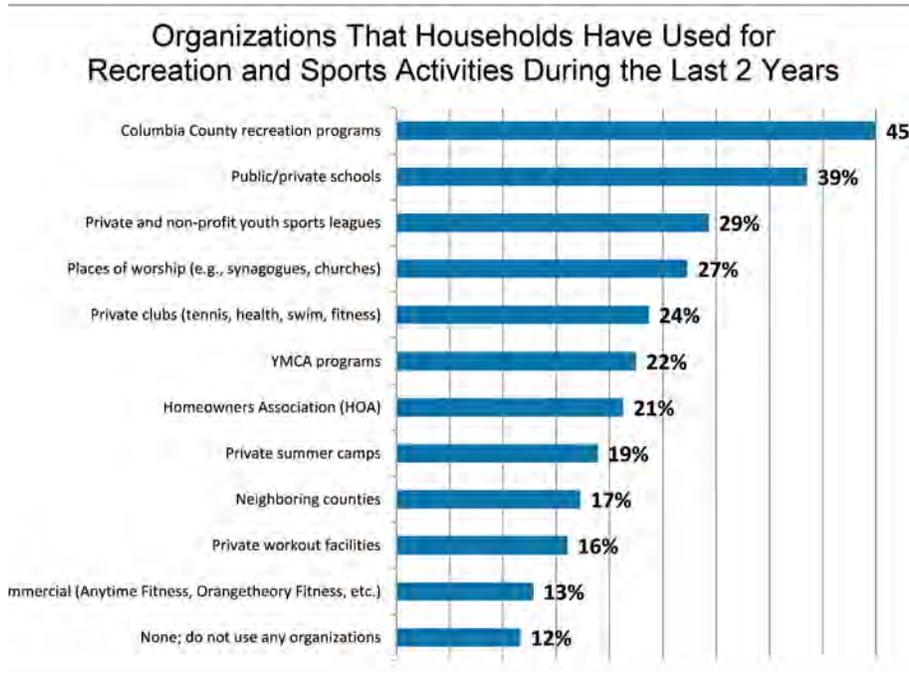
When asked which of the communication methods they would prefer to be contacted by, 75% of respondents would prefer to be contacted by Facebook followed by 54% of people wanting to be contacted through E-mail notifications from the County.



2.7.2 FINDINGS

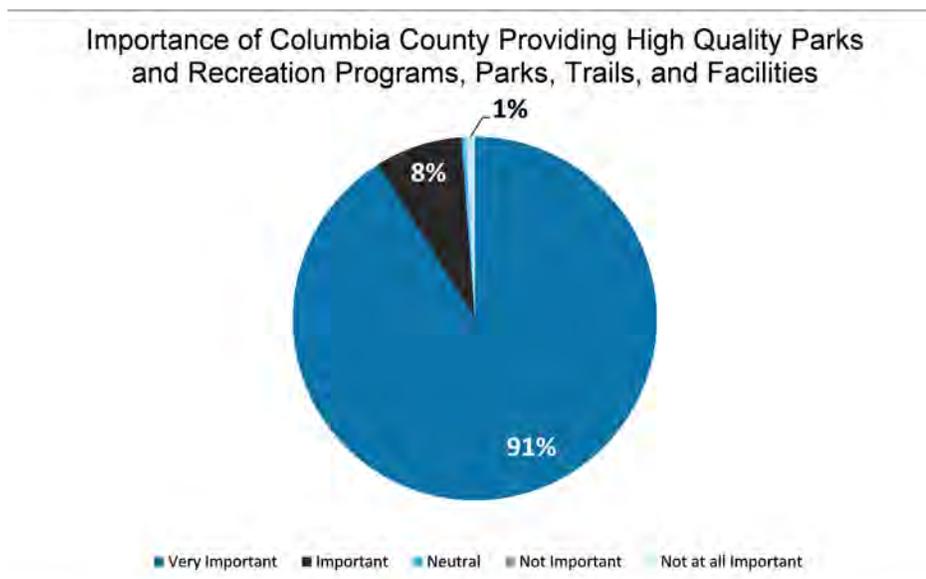
Q11: FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST, PLEASE CHECK ALL OF THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE USED FOR RECREATION AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES DURING THE LAST 2 YEARS.

The chart below shows that 45% of people used Columbia County recreation Programs, followed by Public or Private schools (39%) and Private / Non-profit youth sports leagues (29%).



Q12: HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK IT IS FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS, PARKS, TRAILS, AND FACILITIES?

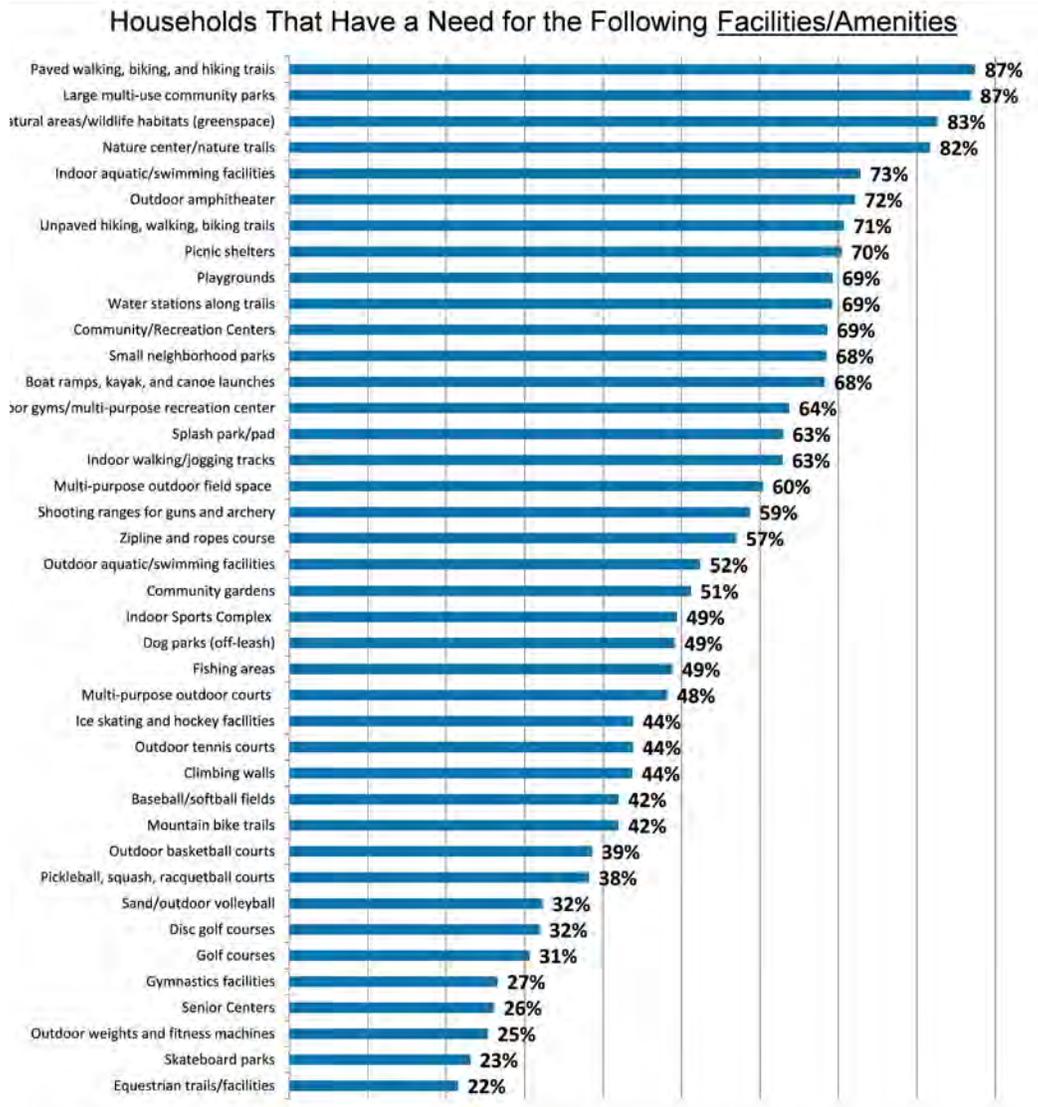
91% of respondents think that that it is very important that Columbia County should provide high quality parks and recreation programs.



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q13: PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU OR ANY MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS A NEED FOR EACH OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES/AMENITIES IN COLUMBIA COUNTY BY SELECTING EITHER “YES” OR “NO.” IF “YES,” PLEASE RATE HOW WELL YOUR NEEDS FOR FACILITIES/AMENITIES OF THIS TYPE ARE BEING MET.

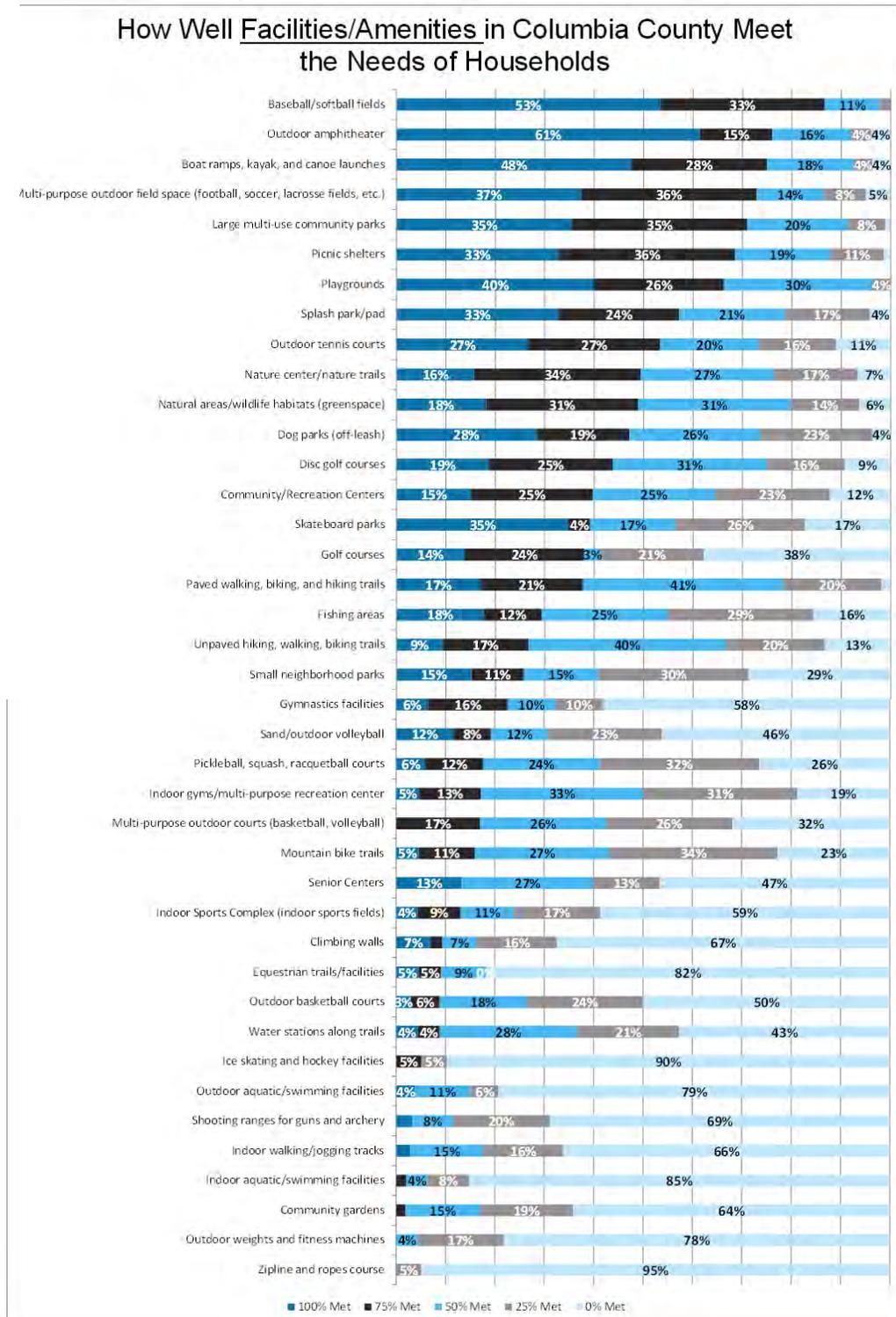
The most popular responses to needs the households are faced with are Paved Walking, Biking, and Hiking trails (87%), Large Multi-use Community Parks (87%) followed by Natural Areas / Wildlife Habitats (greenspace) (83%).



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q14: PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU OR ANY MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS A NEED FOR EACH OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES/AMENITIES IN COLUMBIA COUNTY BY SELECTING EITHER “YES” OR “NO.” IF “YES,” PLEASE RATE HOW WELL YOUR NEEDS FOR FACILITIES/AMENITIES OF THIS TYPE ARE BEING MET. IF “YES,” HOW WELL ARE YOUR NEEDS BEING MET?

Based on the chart below the Baseball and Softball fields and Outdoor Amphitheater have the largest amount of respondents stating their need is met.

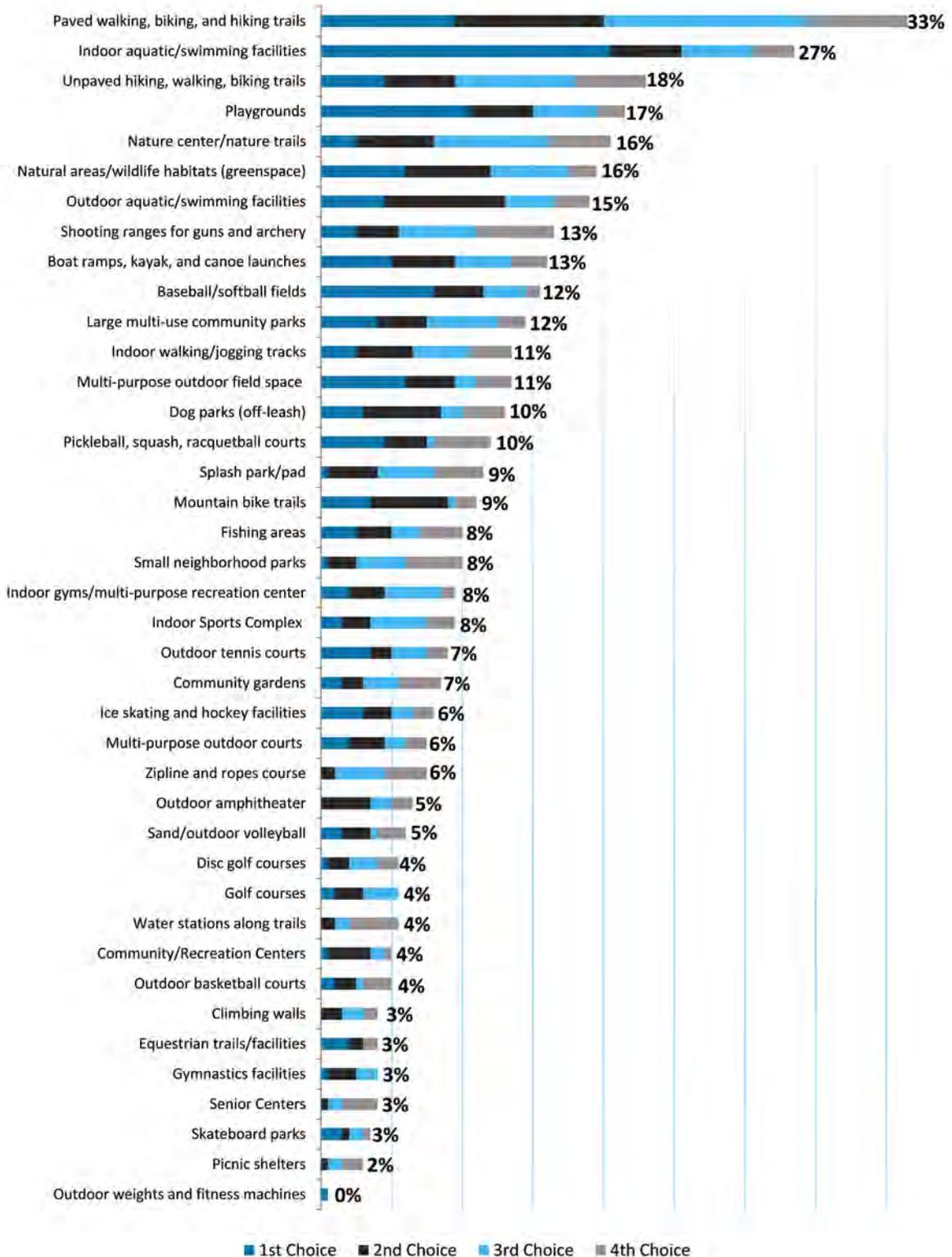


2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q15: WHICH FOUR FACILITIES/AMENITIES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD?'

The most important facilities for the County residents are Paved Walking, Hiking and Biking Trails followed by the Indoor Aquatic/Swimming Facilities and Unpaved hiking, walking, biking trails.

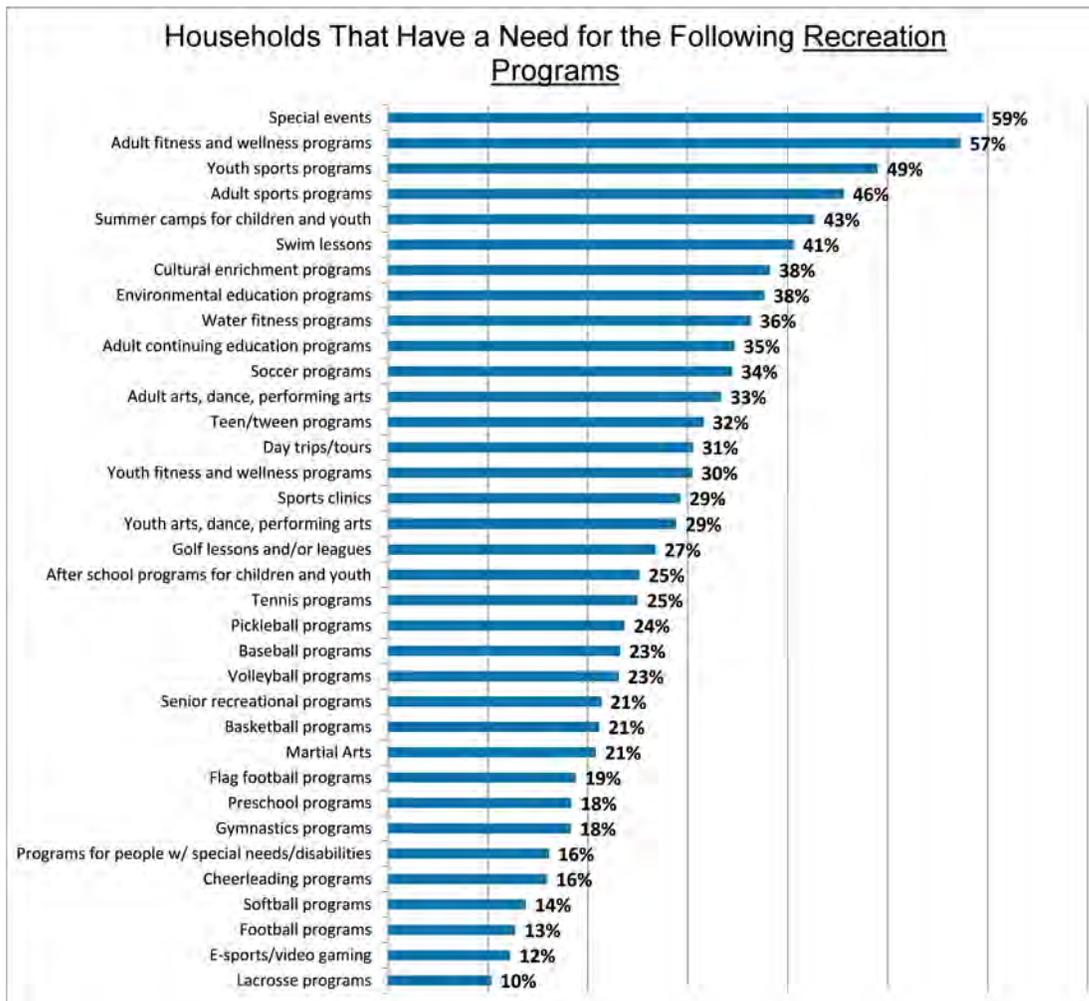
Facilities/Amenities That Are Most Important to Households



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q16: PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU OR ANY MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS A NEED FOR EACH OF THE RECREATION PROGRAMS AN/OR EVENTS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY BY SELECTING EITHER “YES” OR “NO.” IF “YES,” PLEASE RATE HOW WELL YOUR NEEDS FOR PROGRAMS OF THIS TYPE ARE BEING MET. DO YOU HAVE A NEED FOR THIS PROGRAM?

The three programs that have the largest needs are Special Events (59%), Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs (57%), and Youth Sports Programs (49%). While the programs that have the lowest need are Football Programs (13%), E-sports (12%), and Lacrosse Programs (10%).

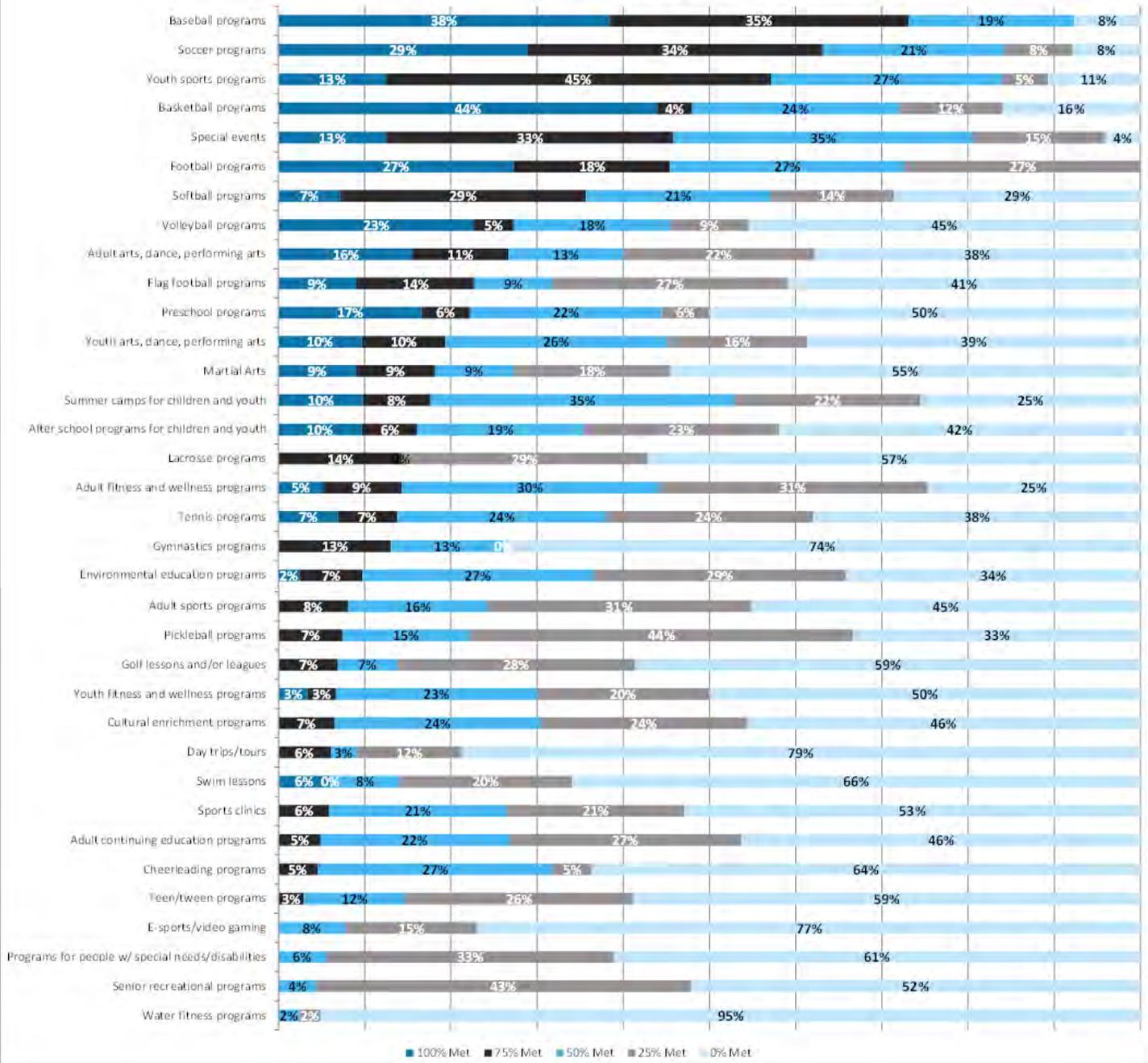


2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q17: PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU OR ANY MEMBER OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS A NEED FOR EACH OF THE RECREATION PROGRAMS AN/OR EVENTS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY BY SELECTING EITHER “YES” OR “NO.” IF “YES,” PLEASE RATE HOW WELL YOUR NEEDS FOR PROGRAMS OF THIS TYPE ARE BEING MET. DO YOU HAVE A NEED FOR THIS PROGRAM? IF “YES,” HOW WELL ARE YOUR NEEDS BEING MET?

The facilities that meet the needs of the community the most are Baseball Programs, Soccer Programs, and Youth Sport Programs.

How Well Programs in Columbia County Meet the Needs of Households

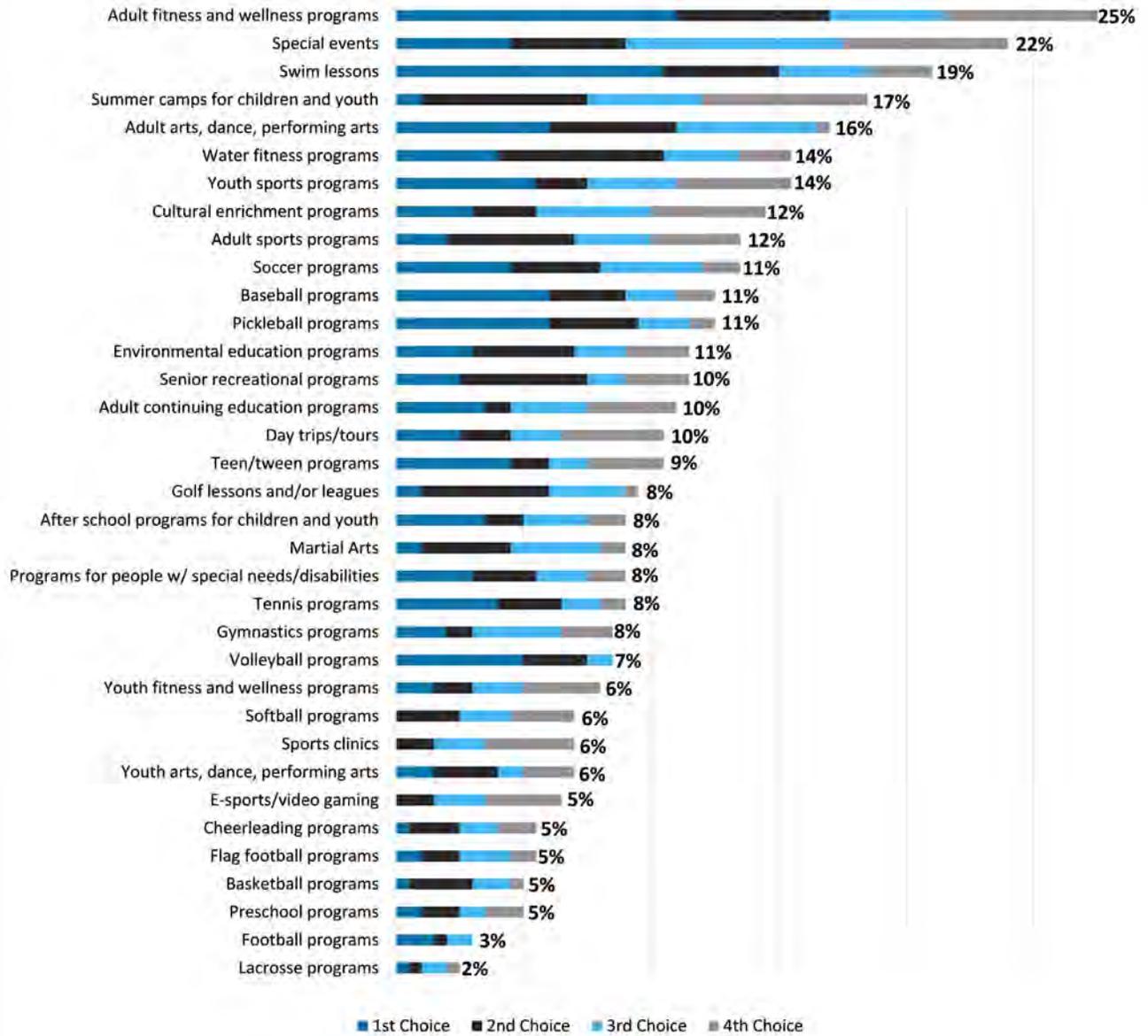


2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q18: WHICH FOUR PROGRAMS ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

The programs that are the most important to the county households are Adult Fitness and Wellness programs (25%), Special Events (22%), and Swim Lessons (19%).

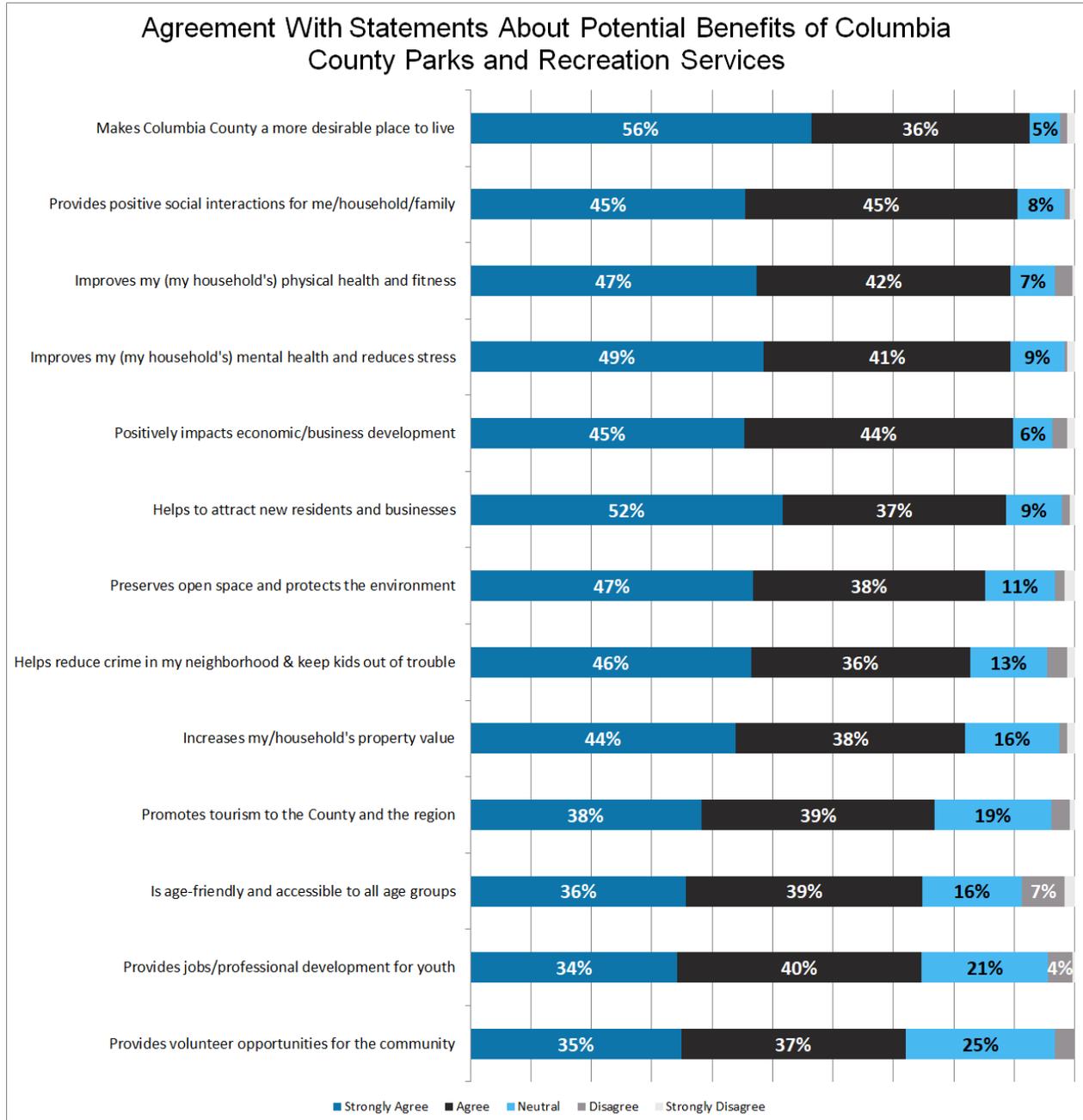
Programs That Are Most Important to Households



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q19: PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT SOME POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

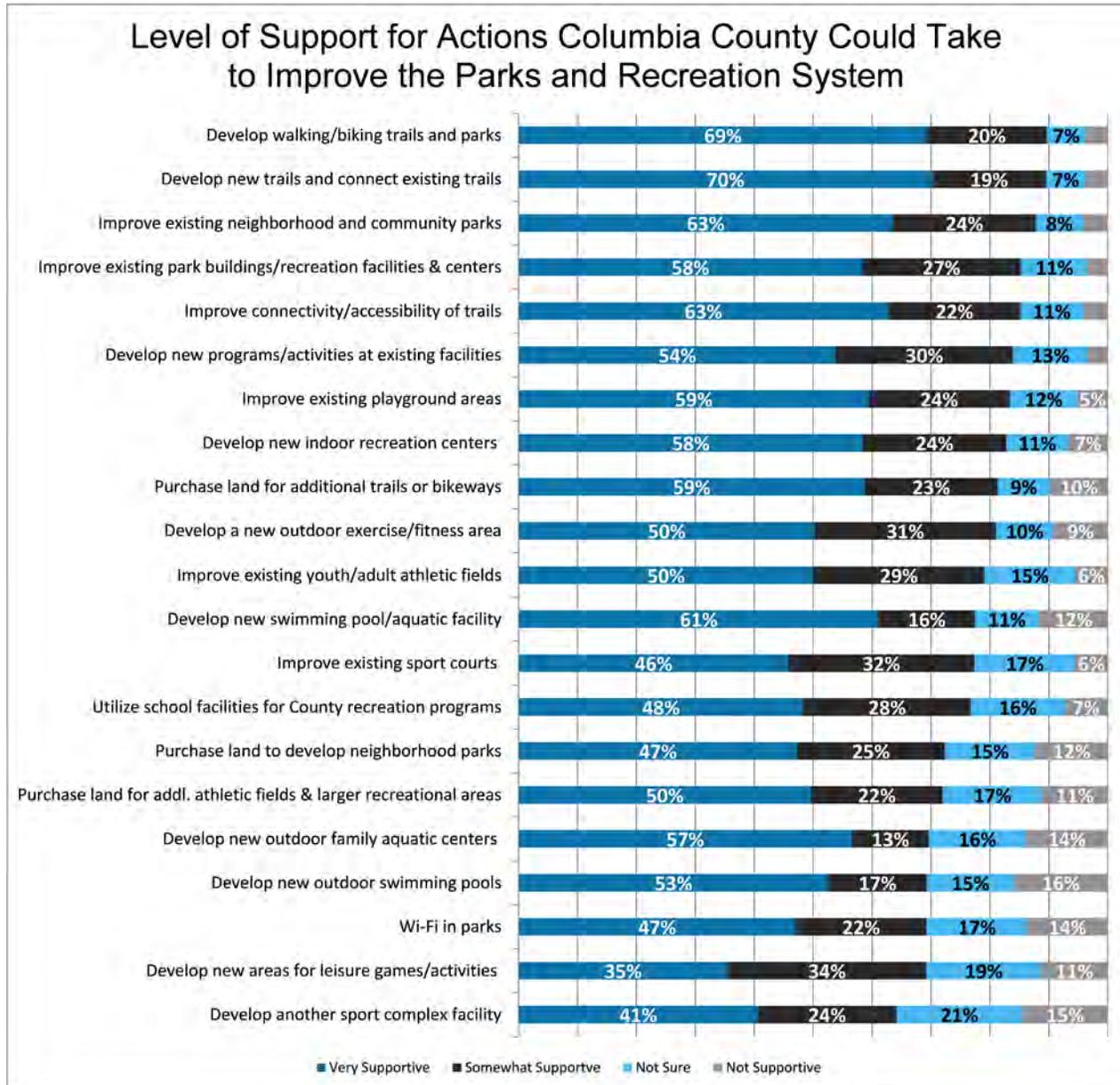
92% of respondents either Agree or Strongly Agree that the Parks, Recreation and Events department Makes Columbia County a more Desirable Place to live.



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q20: PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS COLUMBIA COUNTY COULD TAKE TO IMPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM.

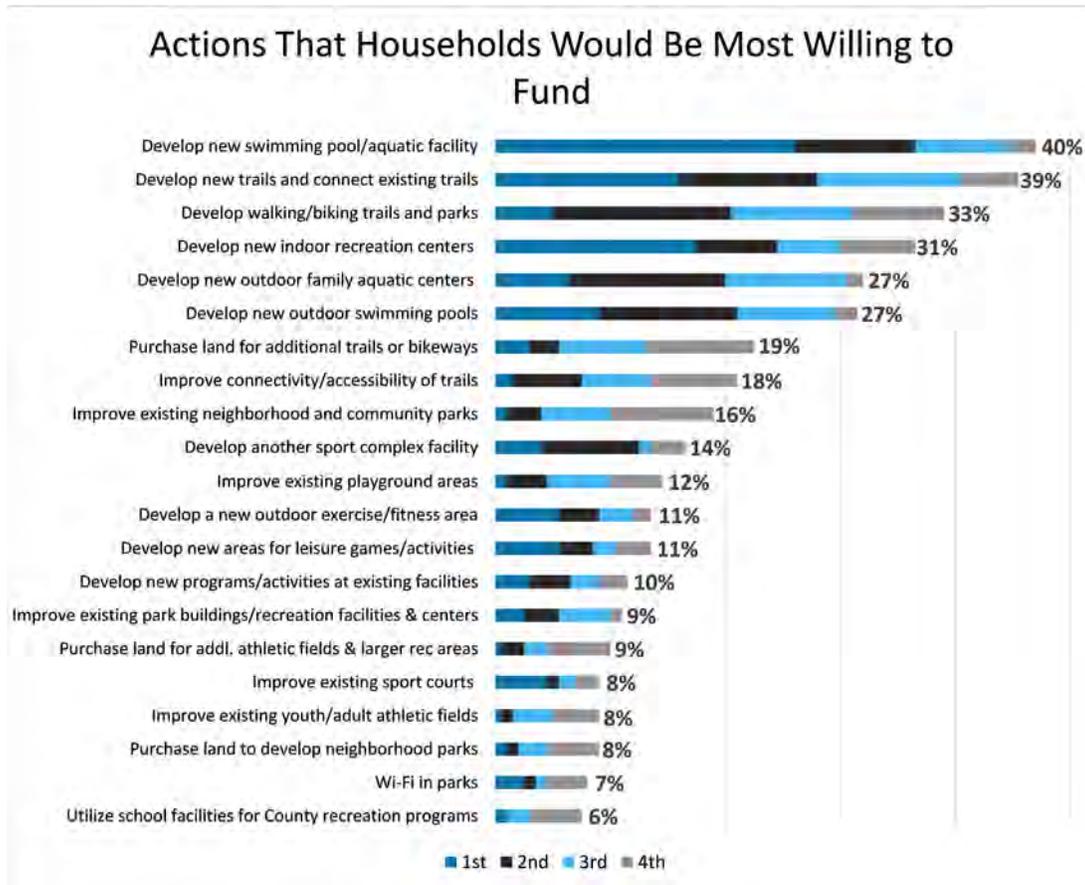
The most supported actions to improve the parks system are Develop Walking/Biking Trails and Parks with 89% of the county supporting this. The other Action with the most support is Develop new Trails and Connect Existing Trails with also 89% support followed by Improve existing neighborhood and community parks at 87%.



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q21: WHICH FOUR ACTIONS WOULD YOU BE MOST WILLING TO FUND?

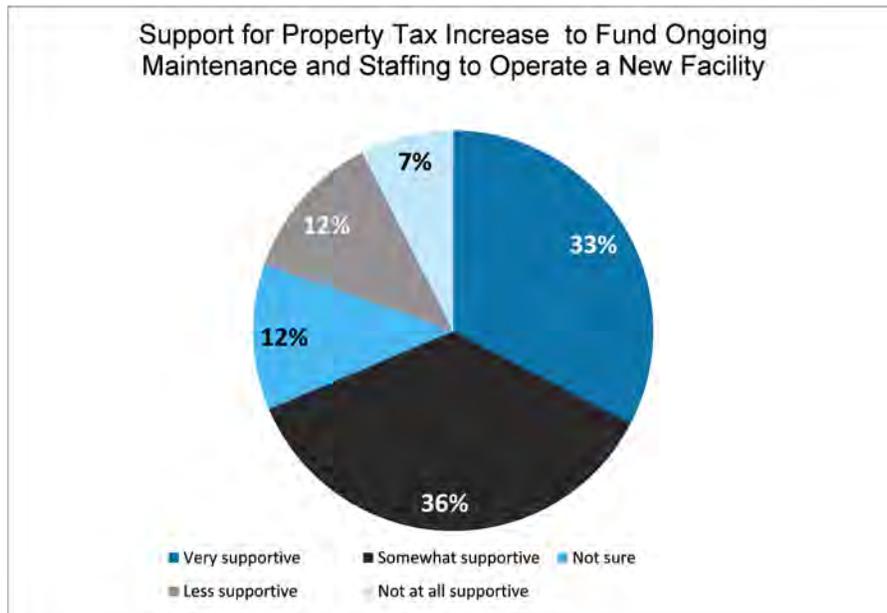
When it Comes to the funding of these projects, the three with the most support is Develop New Swimming Pool/ Aquatic Facility (40%), Develop New Trails and Connect Existing Trails (39%), and Develop walking/ Biking Trails (33%).



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q22: CONSTRUCTION OF CAPITAL PROJECTS ARE FUNDED THROUGH THE SPLOST PROGRAM. HOWEVER, OPERATIONAL COSTS FOR NEW PROJECTS ARE FUNDED THROUGH THE COUNTY’S GENERAL FUND. HOW SUPPORTIVE WOULD YOU BE OF A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE TO FUND THE ONGOING MAINTENANCE AND STAFFING REQUIRED TO OPERATE A NEW FACILITY?

When it comes to raising the property tax, 69% of people were in support of the increase to fund maintenance and operations of a new facility.



Q23: IF YOU HAD AN ADDITIONAL \$100, HOW WOULD YOU ALLOCATE THE FUNDS AMONG THE PARKS AND RECREATION CATEGORIES LISTED BELOW? [PLEASE BE SURE YOUR TOTAL ADDS UP TO \$100.]

If the residents were given \$100, they would spend \$21.11 on Acquisition and development of walking and biking trails, they would spend another \$20.57 on a New Indoor Swimming Pool and \$18.23 on

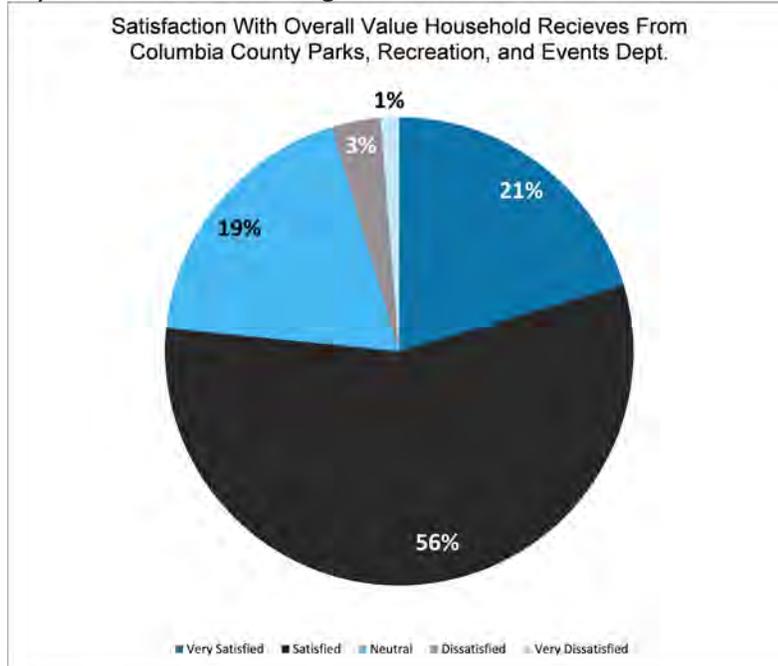
How Residents Would Allocate an Additional \$100 Among the Following Parks and Recreation Categories



2.7.2 FINDINGS

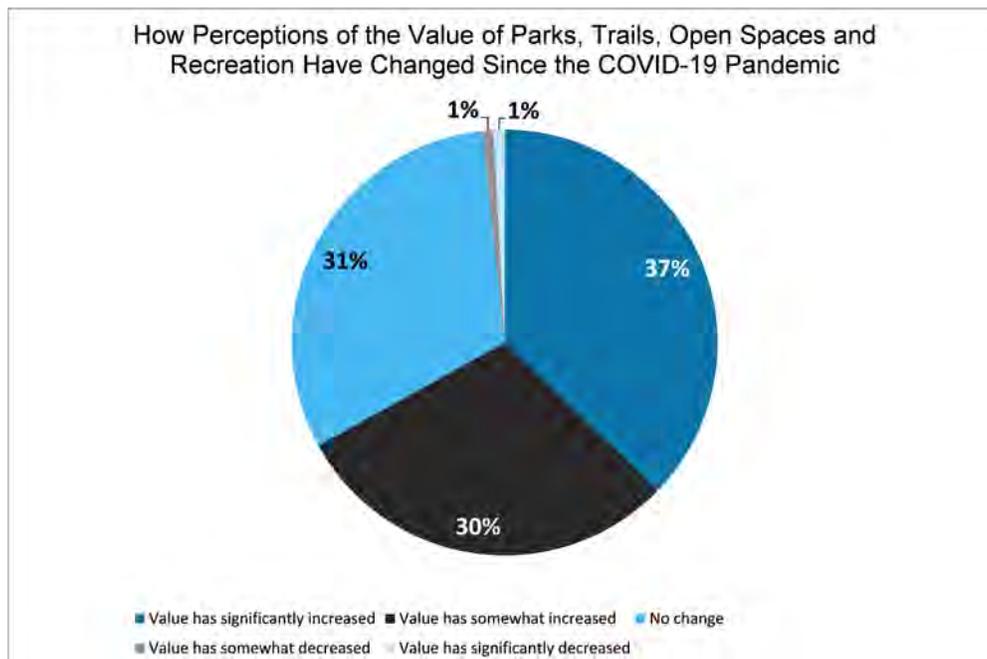
Q24: PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE OVERALL VALUE THAT YOUR HOUSEHOLD RECEIVES FROM THE COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT.

When it comes to the satisfaction level from the Parks, Recreation, and Events Department provides over 75% of the community is satisfied to some degree.



Q25: GIVEN THE RECENT COVID-19 PANDEMIC, HOW HAS YOUR AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD'S PERCEPTION OF THE VALUE OF PARKS, TRAILS, OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION CHANGED?

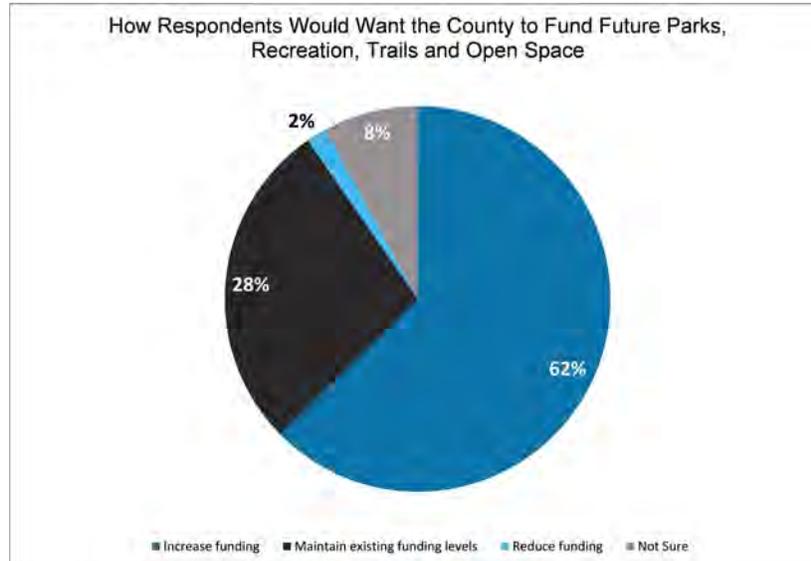
Since the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic, over 67% stated that, for them, the perceived value of the parks, trails and open spaces has increased, while only 2% perceived a decrease in value. This is a very encouraging sign for the County going forward as it looks to grow and invest further in their system.



2.7.2 FINDINGS

Q26: BASED ON YOUR PERCEPTION OF VALUE, HOW WOULD YOU WANT COLUMBIA COUNTY TO FUND FUTURE PARKS, RECREATION, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE NEEDS?

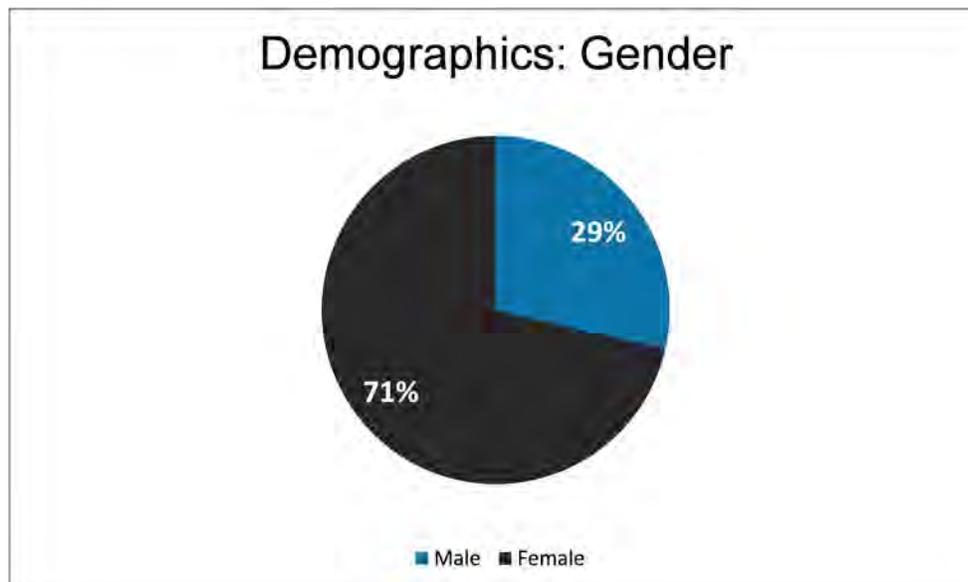
62% of people said they would increase funding when it comes to the Columbia County Parks, Recreation and Events Department which is another encouraging sign building upon the enhanced perception of value.



2.7.3 SURVEY RESPONDENTS DEMOGRAPHICS

Q1: WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

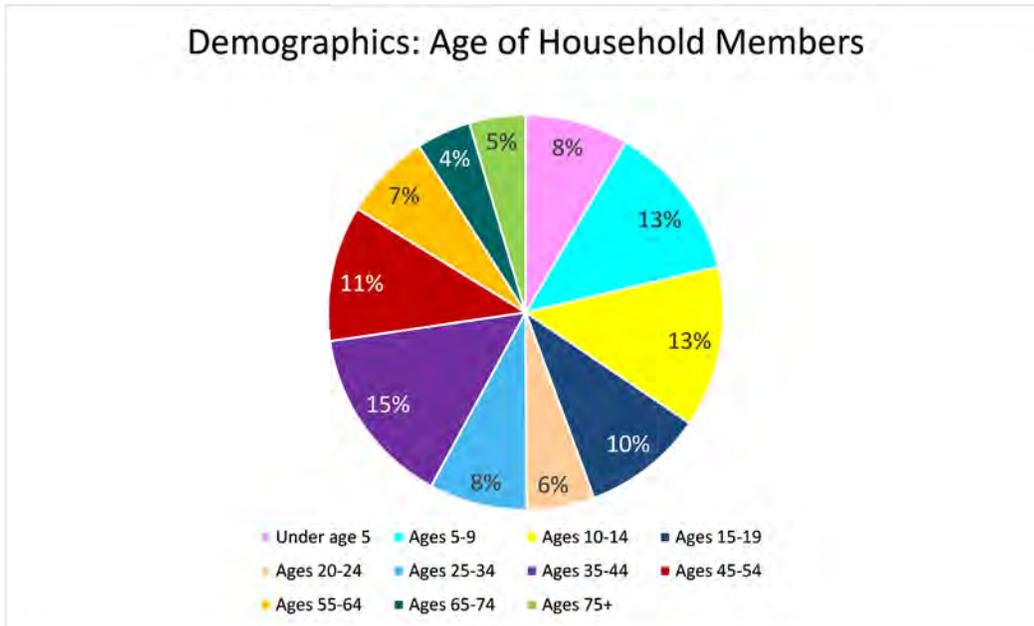
When asked what their gender was 71% of the respondents identified as Female.



2.7.3 SURVEY RESPONDANTS DEMOGRAPHICS

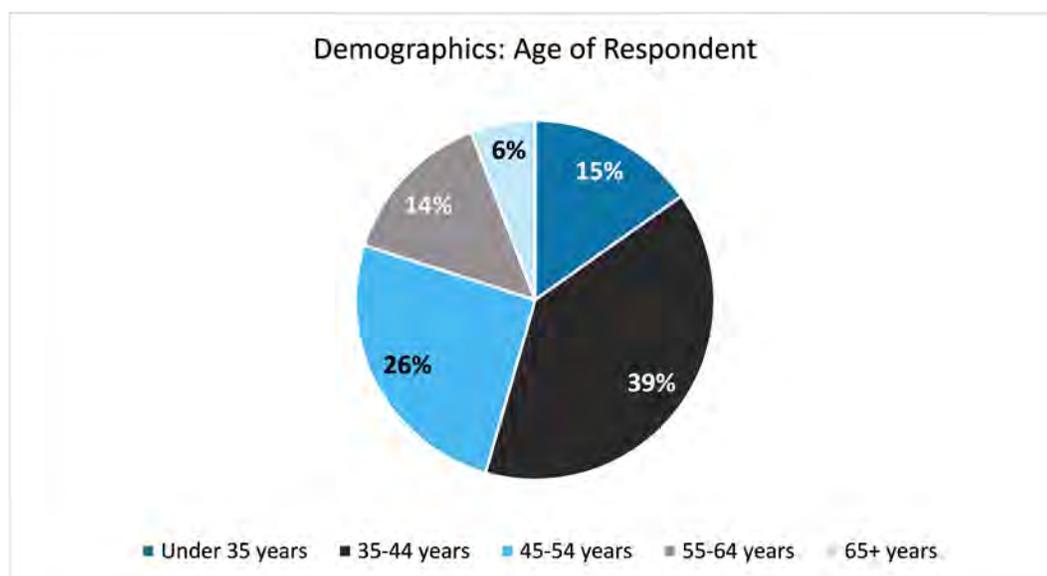
Q2: INCLUDING YOURSELF, HOW MANY PEOPLE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD ARE.

When considering the household members of survey participants, The largest age range was ages 35 – 44 (15%). The next largest groups were ages 10 – 14 (13%) and ages 5 – 9 (13%).



Q3: WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

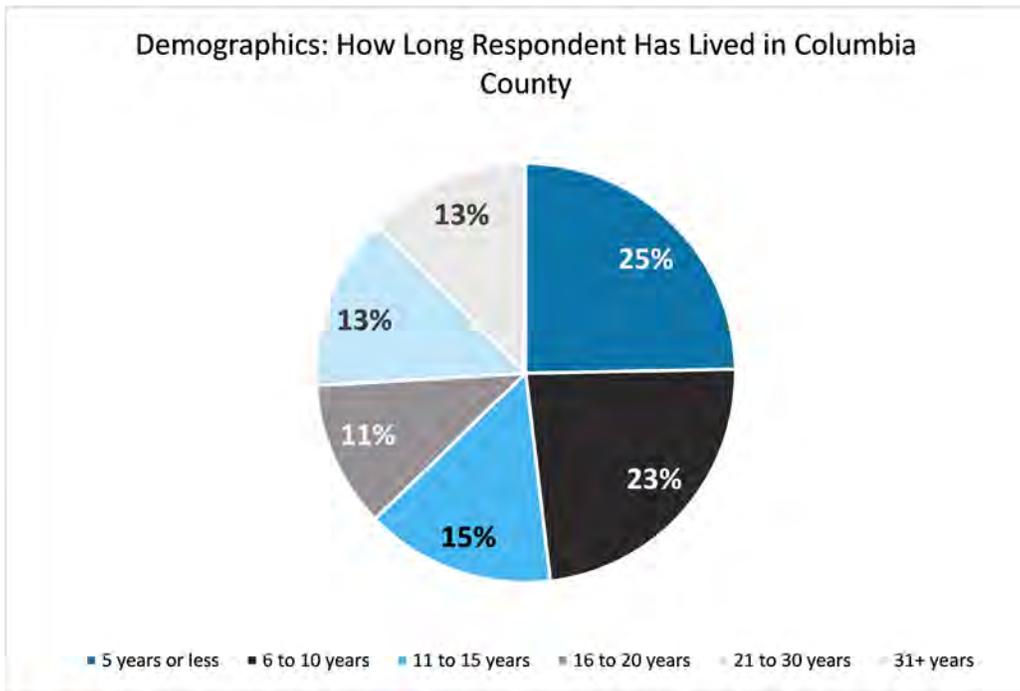
In terms of the age of the survey respondents, 65% were between the ages of 35-54 indicating a high response rates from families possibly with children.



2.7.3 SURVEY RESPONDANTS DEMOGRAPHICS

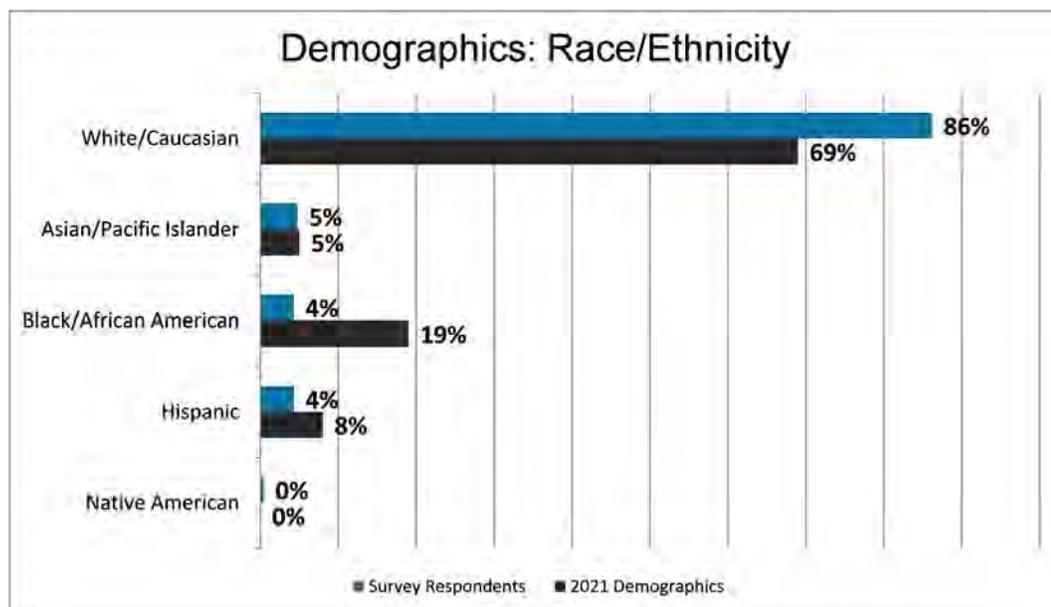
Q4: HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU LIVED IN COLUMBIA COUNTY?

Almost half of respondents are fairly new and have lived in Columbia County for less than 11 years.



Q5: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR RACE/ETHNICITY?

People were asked to identify themselves based on race and 86% of respondents said they were White, followed by Asian/Pacific Islander (5%), Black/African American (4%), and Hispanic (4%).



2.7.3 REVIEW

Based on the survey responses here is a synopsis of key findings:

- Respondents' households had a much higher rate of visiting parks and facilities (98%) compared to national averages that are between 80% - 90%.
- The largest barriers to program participation were people didn't know what programs were offered (46%) and people didn't know what events were offered (36%) indicating an opportunity for increased marketing to improve community awareness.
- 91% of people think that that it is very important that Columbia County should provide high quality parks and recreation programs which shows a community that sees the value in parks, recreation and events.
- The most needed facilities/amenities according to respondents were Paved walking, biking, and hiking trails (87%), large multi-use community parks (87%), Natural areas/wildlife habitats/greenspace (83%), and Nature center/nature trails (82%), showing community needs in multipurpose active and passive outdoor recreation offerings.
- 69% of respondents were supportive of a property tax increase to fund ongoing maintenance and staffing to operate a new facility.
- Online survey respondents skewed heavily female (71%).
- The low representation in both the Black / African American community (4% of survey respondents, 19% of the Columbia County Population) and Hispanic (4% of survey respondents, 8% of the Columbia County population) indicates an opportunity to better reach these demographics.



03 COMMUNITY PROFILE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

A key component of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (“Plan”) is a Demographic & Recreation Trends Analysis. This provides the Department of Parks, Recreation and Events (“Department”) insight into the general makeup of the population served and identifies market trends in recreation. It also helps quantify the market in and around Columbia County (“County”) and understand of the types of parks, facilities, and programs / services that are most appropriate to satisfy the needs of residents.

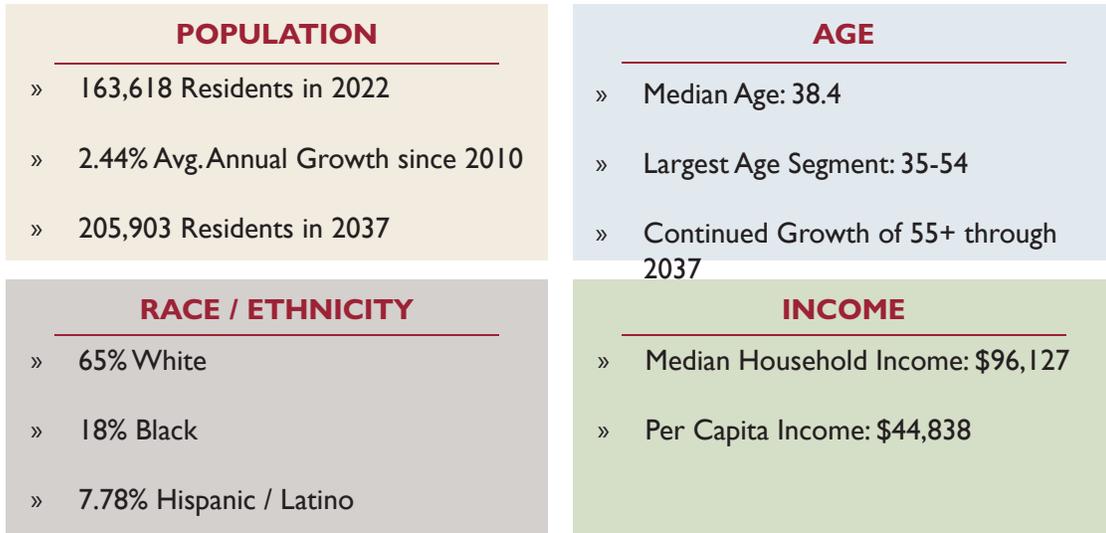
This analysis is two-fold – it aims to answer the **who** and the **what**. First, it assesses the demographic characteristics and population projections of County residents to understand who the Department serves. Secondly, recreational trends are examined on a national, regional, and local level to understand what the population served wants to do. Findings from this analysis establish a fundamental understanding that provide a basis for prioritizing the community need for parks, trails, facilities, and recreation programs.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Demographic Analysis describes the population within the County. This assessment is reflective of the County’s total population and its key characteristics such as age segments, race, ethnicity, and income levels. It is important to note that future projections are based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the analysis could have a significant bearing on the validity of the projected figures.

3.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

The infographic below provides an overview of the Columbia County populace based on population, age, race / ethnicity, and income.

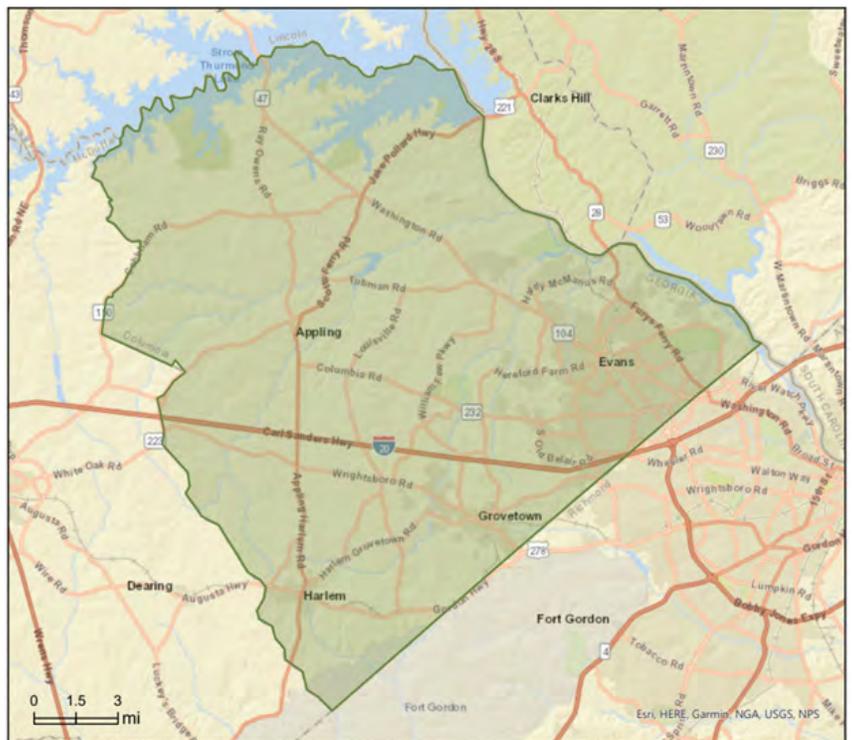


3.2.2 METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in July 2022 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2010 and 2020 Census. ESRI then estimates the current population (2022) as well as a 5-year projection (2027). PROS utilized straight line linear regression to forecast demographic characteristics for 2032 and 2037.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS BOUNDARY

The County boundary shown to the right was utilized for this demographic analysis.

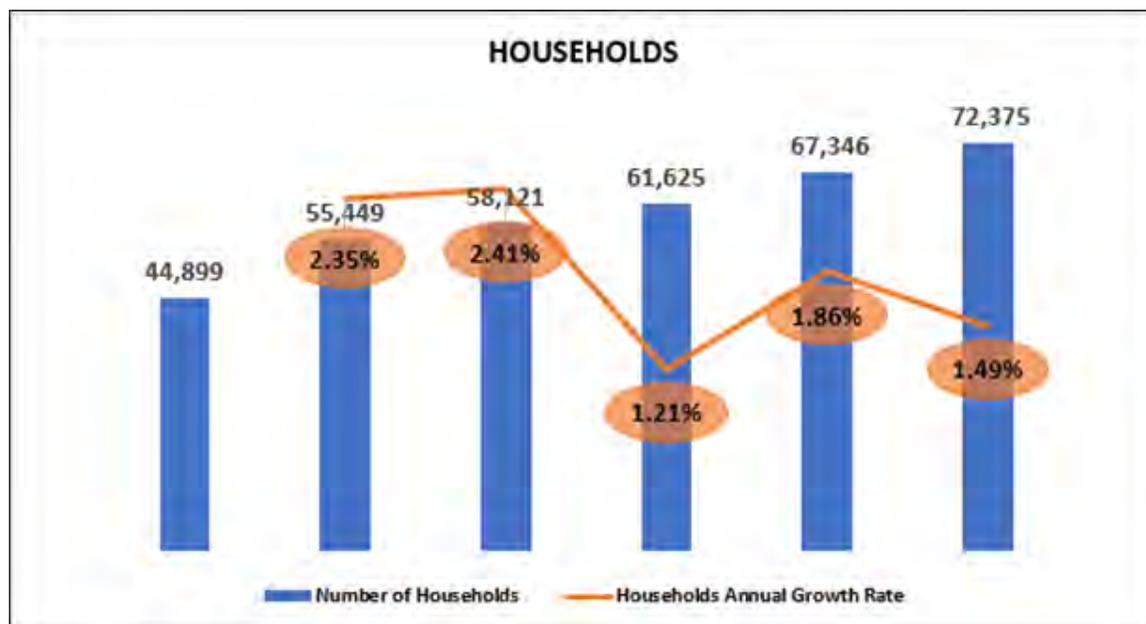
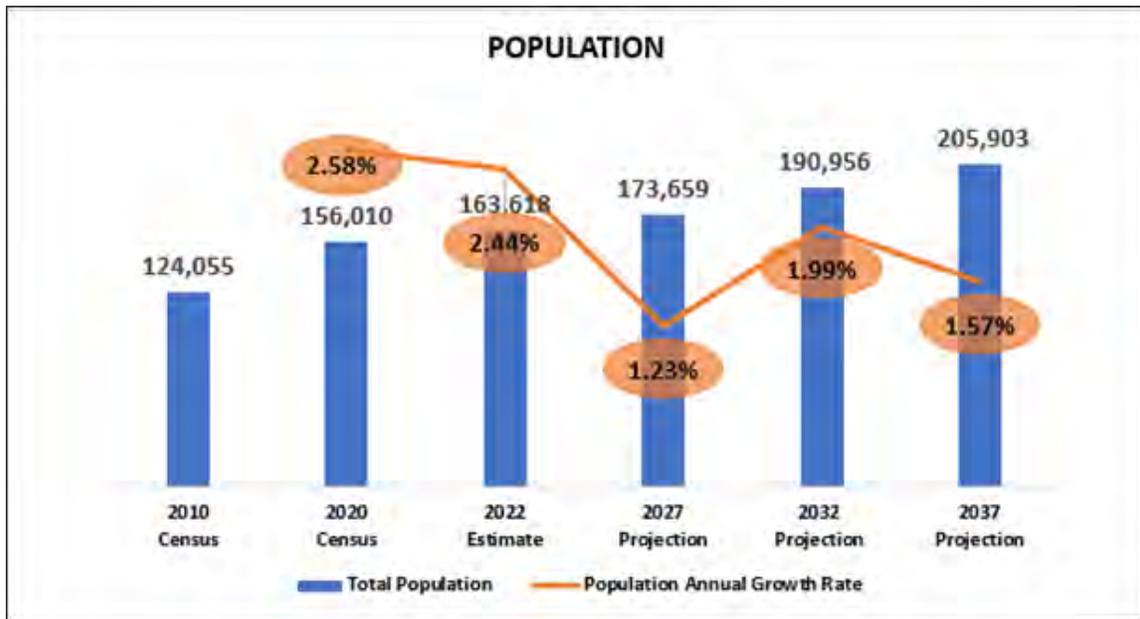


3.2.3 COUNTY POPULACE

POPULATION

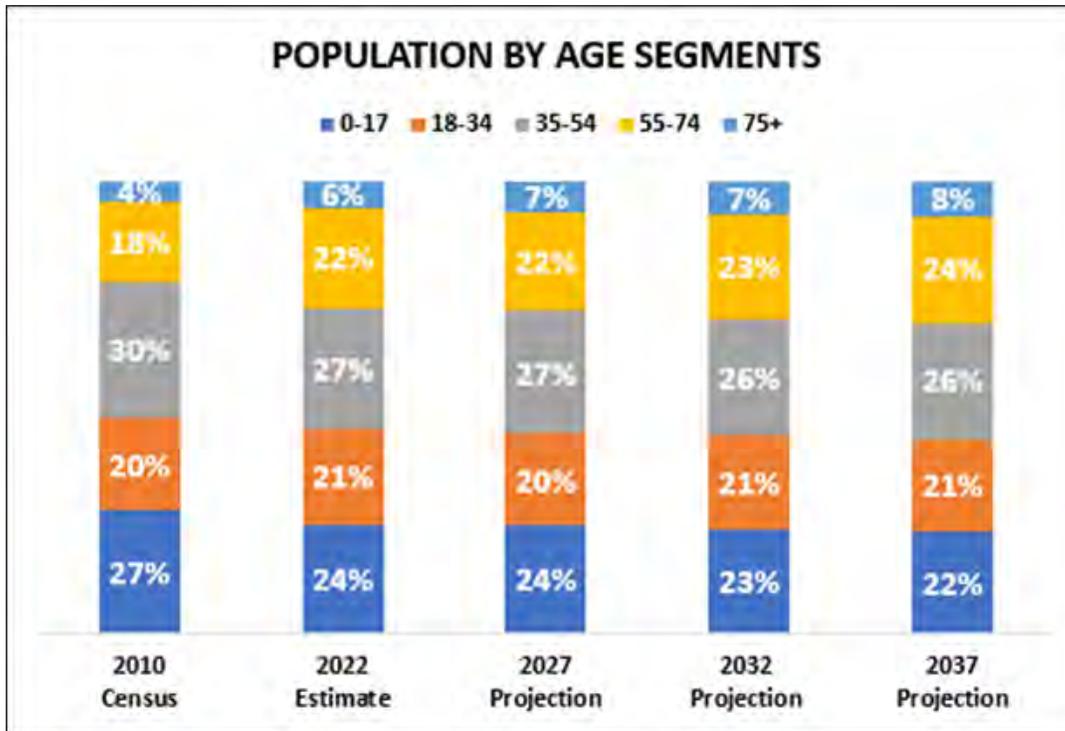
The County’s population has experienced exponential growth in recent years, increasing over 27% from 2010 to 2022, or 2.29% per year. This is over three times the national annual growth rate of .69% (from 2010-2022). The total number of households has also increased substantially over the past 12 years.

Currently, the population is estimated at 163,618 individuals living within 58,121 households. Projecting ahead, the total population growth is expected to slow from its current rate, while still being well above the national average. By 2037, the County’s population is projected at 205,903 residents (1.57% annual growth) living within 72,375 households (1.49% annual growth).



AGE SEGMENT

The County is beginning to age slowly, and that trend is expected to continue. 22% of residents are now over the age of 55-years old (up from 18% in 2010) and that number is expected to grow steadily over the next 15 years. The County median age is now 38.4 years old (36.6 in 2010) which is in line with the U.S. median age of 38.5 years. By 2037, nearly one out of every three County residents is expected to be 55 or older.



RACE AND ETHNICITY DEFINITIONS

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below. The Census 2020 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2010 Census and earlier censuses; therefore, caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time. The latest (Census 2020) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

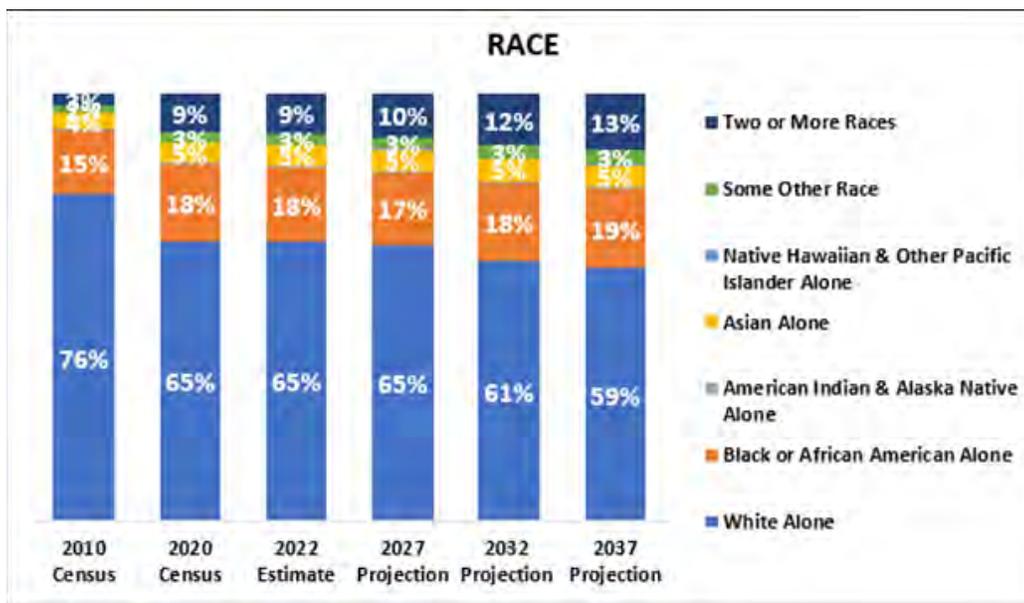
- **American Indian or Alaska Native:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- **Asian:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American:** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic or Latino:** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Census states that the race and ethnicity categories generally reflect social definitions in the U.S. and are not an attempt to define race and ethnicity biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. We recognize that the race and ethnicity categories include racial, ethnic, and national origins and sociocultural groups.”

Please Note: The Census Bureau states that the race and ethnicity categories generally reflect social definitions in the U.S. and are not an attempt to define race and ethnicity biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. We recognize that the race and ethnicity categories include racial, ethnic, and national origins and sociocultural groups. They define Race as a person’s self-identification with one or more of the following social groups: White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, some other race, or a combination of these. Ethnicity is defined as whether a person is of Hispanic / Latino origin or not. For this reason, the Hispanic / Latino ethnicity is viewed separate from race throughout this demographic analysis.

RACE

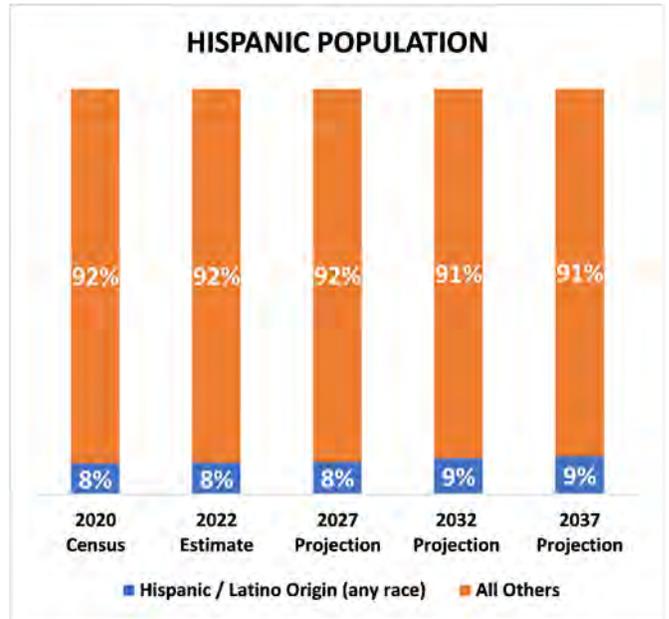
The County’s current population is becoming more racially diverse. While the numbers are dropping, White Alone (65% in 2022 down from 76% in 2010) remains the largest racial group. Black Alone is the largest minority making up 18% of the population, which is above the national average of 14%, but well below the average for the State of Georgia (33% Black Alone). The predictions for 2037 expect the population to continue along these lines as the percentage of the White Alone population decreases, and we see an increase in population for Black Alone, Two or More Races, Some Other Race, and Asian.



ETHNICITY

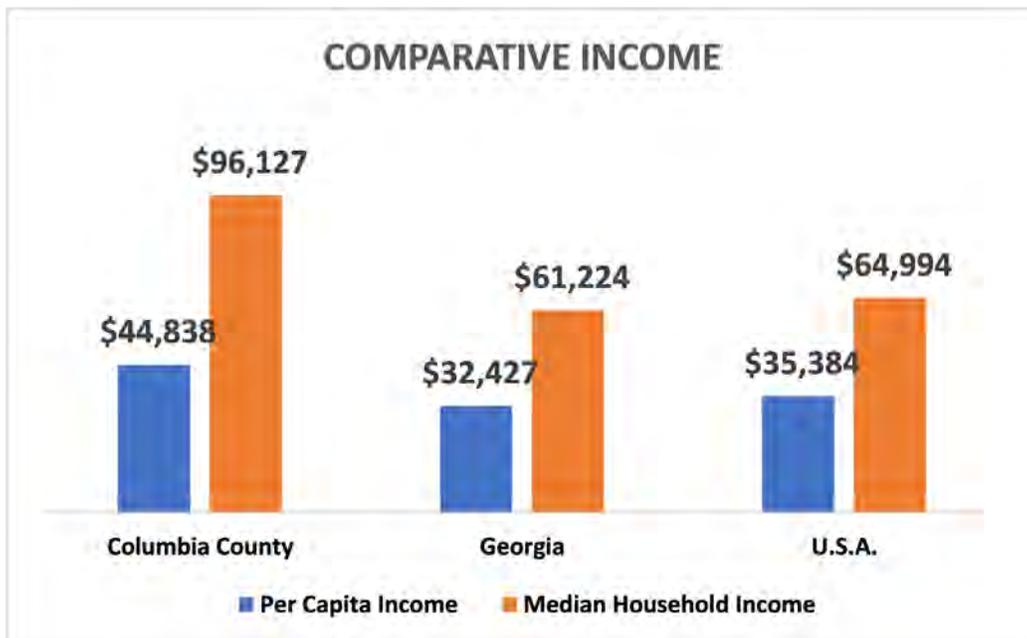
The County’s population was also assessed based on Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, which by the Census Bureau definition is viewed independently from race. It is important to note that individuals who are Hispanic/ Latino in ethnicity can also identify with any racial categories identified above.

We see less growth in diversity here. Based on the current 2022 estimate, people of Hispanic/ Latino origin now represent approximately 8% of the County’s population, up from 5% in 2010. This is still substantially below the national average (18.9% Hispanic/Latino), and projections show this number will only grow to 9% by 2037.



HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The County’s per capita income (\$44,838) and median household income (\$96,127) are both higher than the state and national averages. Per capita income is what is earned by each individual while the median household income is based on the total income of everyone over the age of 16 living under the same roof. This, coupled with the County’s affordable cost of living indicates that the average household could have additional disposable income and be more willing to pay for activities that correlate with quality-of-life indicators if they see the value in them.



3.2.4 DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARATIVE STUDY

Figure 3.7 below is a summary of the County’s demographic figures. These figures are then compared to the state and U.S. populations for perspective on a regional and national scale. The highlighted cells represent key takeaways from the comparison between Columbia County and the national population.

- = Significantly higher than the National Average
- = Significantly lower than the National Average

2022 Demographic Comparison		Columbia County, GA	U.S.A.
Population	Annual Growth Rate (2020-2022)	2.44%	0.74%
	Projected Annual Growth Rate (2022-2037)	1.72%	0.70%
Households	Annual Growth Rate (2020-2022)	2.41%	0.76%
	Average Household Size	2.79	2.58
Age Segment Distribution	Ages 0-17	24%	22%
	Ages 18-34	21%	23%
	Ages 35-54	27%	25%
	Ages 55-74	22%	23%
	Ages 75+	6%	7%
Race Distribution	White Alone	65.4%	69.2%
	Black Alone	17.6%	13.6%
	American Indian	0.4%	1.3%
	Asian	4.7%	6.1%
	Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.3%
	Some other Race	2.6%	7.1%
	Two or More Races	9.2%	2.9%
Hispanic/ Latino Population	Hispanic / Latino Origin (any race)	7.8%	18.9%
	All Others	92.2%	81.1%
Income Characteristics	Per Capita Income	\$44,838	\$35,106
	Median Household Income	\$96,127	\$64,730

3.3 RECREATIONAL TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends as well recreational interest by age segments. Trends data used for this analysis was obtained from Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA), National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), and Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). All trend data is based on current and/or historical participation rates, statistically valid survey results, or NRPA Park Metrics.

3.3.1 NATIONAL TRENDS IN RECREATION



METHODOLOGY

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) *Sports, Fitness & Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report 2022* was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

National Recreation Participatory Trends

Core v. Casual Participation Trends

The study is based on findings from surveys carried out in 2021 by the Physical Activity Council (PAC), resulting in a total of 18,000 online interviews. Surveys were administered to all genders, ages, income levels, regions, and ethnicities to allow for statistical accuracy of the national population. A sample size of 18,000 completed interviews is considered by SFIA to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.32 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level. Using a weighting technique, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 304,745,039 people (ages six and older).

The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the U.S. This study looked at 118 different sports/activities and subdivided them into various categories including: sports, fitness, outdoor activities, aquatics, etc.

CORE V. CASUAL PARTICIPATION

In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA further categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency of participation. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual versus core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness activities more than 50-times per year, while for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13-times per year.

In each activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than casual participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants.

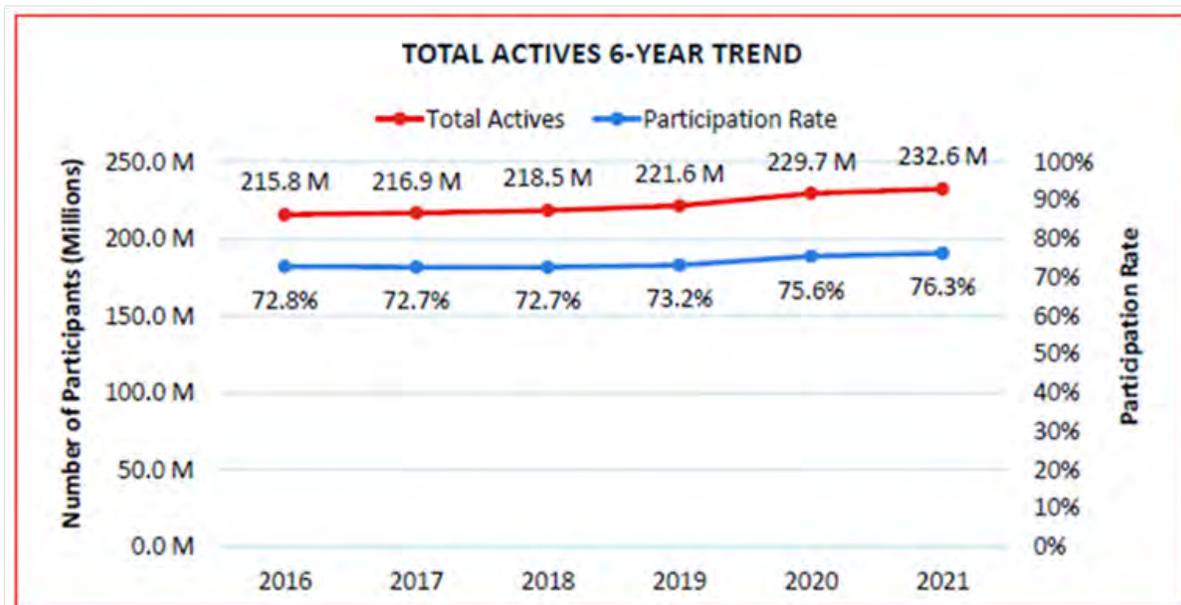
3.3.2 IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Approximately 232.6 million people ages 6 and over reported being active in 2021, which is a 1.3% increase from 2020 and the greatest number of active Americans in the last 5 years. There were more things to do as outdoor activities thrived, fitness at home became more popular, and team sports started back up after the COVID-19 hiatus.

Americans continued to practice yoga, attend Pilates training, and workout with kettlebells. They were drawn to the ease of pickleball and the competitiveness of tennis. Many started at indoor climbing, while others took to the hiking trail. The waterways traffic had an increase of stand-up paddlers, kayaks, and jet skis. Gymnastics, swimming on a team, court volleyball, and fast-pitch softball benefited from the participation boom created from the Olympics.

Water sports had the largest gain in participation rates. Activities such as kayaking, stand-up paddling, and boardsailing/windsurfing all contributed to the 2.0 percent increase. Outdoor sports continued to grow with 53.9 percent of the U.S. population participating. This rate remains higher than pre-pandemic levels, having 6.2 percent gain over 50.7 percent participation rate in 2019. The largest contributor to this gain was trail running having increased 5.6 percent in one year and 13.9 percent from 2019.

Generationally, fitness sports continue to be the go-to means of exercise for Boomers, Gen X, and Millennials. Over half of the Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z generation participated in one type of outdoor activity. Team sports were heavily dominated by generation Gen Z.



3.3.3 NATIONAL SPORT AND FITNESS PARTICIPATORY TRENDS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

The top sports most heavily participated in the United States were Basketball (27.1 million), Golf (25.1 million), and Tennis (22.6 million) which have participation figures more than the other activities within the general sports category. Baseball (15.5 million), and Outdoor Soccer (12.5 million) round out the top five.



1 BASKETBALL
27.1 MILLION



2 GOLF
25.1 MILLION



3 TENNIS
22.6 MILLION



4 BASEBALL
15.5 MILLION



5 SOCCER
12.5 MILLION

The popularity of Basketball, Golf, and Tennis can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants, this coupled with an ability to be played outdoors and/or properly distanced helps explain their popularity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Basketball's overall success can also be attributed to the limited amount of equipment needed to participate and the limited space requirements necessary, which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at most American dwellings as a drive-way pickup game. Golf continues to benefit from its wide age segment appeal and is considered a life-long sport. In addition, target type game venues or Golf Entertainment Venues have increased drastically (72.3%) as a 5-year trend, using Golf Entertainment (e.g., Top Golf) as a new alternative to breathe life back into the game of golf.

FIVE-YEAR TREND

Since 2016, Pickleball (71.2%), Golf- Entertainment Venues (51.3%), and Tennis (25.1%) have shown the largest increase in participation. Similarly, Boxing for Fitness (21.4%) and Boxing for Competition (20.7%) have also experienced significant growth. Based on the five-year trend from 2016-2021, the sports that are most rapidly declining in participation include Ultimate Frisbee (-40.4%), Roller Hockey (-26.1%), Volleyball (Sand/ Beach) (-23.8%), Squash (-23.5%), Slow Pitch Softball (-21.9%), and Gymnastics (-20.7%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

The most recent year shares some similarities with the five-year trends; with Pickleball (14.8%) and Boxing for Competition (7.3%) experiencing some of the greatest increases in participation this past year. The greatest one-year increases also include Fast Pitch Softball (15.3%), Gymnastics (10.9%), and Court Volleyball (8.1%). Basketball (-2.2%), Flag Football (-1.6%), Indoor Soccer (-0.6%) and Baseball (-0.5%) have shown a five-year trend increase, but a one-year trend decrease. This is likely a direct result of coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, other team sports such as Ultimate Frisbee (-5.8%), Slow Pitch Softball (-5.4%), Roller Hockey (-5%), Racquetball (-4.8%) and Beach/Sand Volleyball (-3.1%), also had significant decreases in participation over the last year.

CORE V. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

Highly participated in sports, such as Basketball, Baseball, and Slow Pitch Softball generally have a larger core participant base (participate 13+ times per year) than casual participant base (participate 1-12 times per year). Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, most activities showed a decrease in their percentage of core participants. However, there were significant increases in the percentage of casual participation for Court Volleyball, Pickleball, Fast Pitch Softball, Gymnastics and Lacrosse in the past year. Please see **Appendix C - Core Vs. Casual Participation Trends**.

National Participatory Trends - General Sports					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2016	2020	2021	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Basketball	22,343	27,753	27,135	21.4%	-2.2%
Golf (9 or 18-Hole Course)	23,815	24,804	25,111	5.4%	1.2%
Tennis	18,079	21,642	22,617	25.1%	4.5%
Baseball	14,760	15,731	15,587	5.6%	-0.9%
Soccer (Outdoor)	11,932	12,444	12,556	5.2%	0.9%
Golf (Entertainment Venue)	8,173	12,057	12,362	51.3%	2.5%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,690	6,349	6,008	-21.9%	-5.4%
Football (Flag)	6,173	7,001	6,889	11.6%	-1.6%
Volleyball (Court)	6,216	5,410	5,849	-5.9%	8.1%
Badminton	7,354	5,862	6,061	-17.6%	3.4%
Soccer (Indoor)	5,117	5,440	5,408	5.7%	-0.6%
Football (Touch)	5,686	4,846	4,884	-14.1%	0.8%
Football (Tackle)	5,481	5,054	5,228	-4.6%	3.4%
Gymnastics	5,381	3,848	4,268	-20.7%	10.9%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	5,489	4,320	4,184	-23.8%	-3.1%
Track and Field	4,116	3,636	3,587	-12.9%	-1.3%
Cheerleading	4,029	3,308	3,465	-14.0%	4.7%
Pickleball	2,815	4,199	4,819	71.2%	14.8%
Racquetball	3,579	3,426	3,260	-8.9%	-4.8%
Ice Hockey	2,697	2,270	2,306	-14.5%	1.6%
Ultimate Frisbee	3,673	2,325	2,190	-40.4%	-5.8%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,467	1,811	2,088	-15.4%	15.3%
Lacrosse	2,090	1,884	1,892	-9.5%	0.4%
Wrestling	1,922	1,931	1,937	0.8%	0.3%
Roller Hockey	1,929	1,500	1,425	-26.1%	-5.0%
Boxing for Competition	1,210	1,361	1,460	20.7%	7.3%
Rugby	1,550	1,242	1,238	-20.1%	-0.3%
Squash	1,549	1,163	1,185	-23.5%	1.9%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)

3.3.4 NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Overall, national participatory trends in fitness have experienced strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among Americans to improve their health and enhance quality of life by engaging in an active lifestyle. The most popular general fitness activities in 2021 also were those that could be done at home or in a virtual class environment. The activities with the most participation were Fitness Walking (115.8 million), Treadmill (53.6 million), Free Weights (52.6 million), Running/Jogging (48.9 million), and Yoga (34.3 million).



FIVE-YEAR TREND

Over the last five years (2016-2021), the activities growing at the highest rate are Trail Running (45.9%), Yoga (30.8%), Dance, Step & Choreographed Exercise (13.3%), and Pilates Training (9.6%). Over the same time frame, the activities that have undergone the biggest decline include: Group Stationary Cycling (-33.5%), Traditional Triathlon (26.4%), Cardio Kickboxing (-26.1%), Cross-Training Style Workout (-24.4%) and Non-Traditional Triathlons (-23.5%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

In the last year, activities with the largest gains in participation were those that can be done alone at home or socially distanced outdoors. The top increases were in Treadmill (7.6%), Cross-Training Style Workouts (6.4%) Trail Running (5.6%), Yoga (4.7%), and Stair Climbing (4.7%). In the same span, the activities that had the largest decline in participation were those that would generally take more time and investment. The greatest drops were seen in Traditional Triathlon (-5.3%), Aerobics (-5.1%), Non-Traditional Triathlons (-4.3%), and Cardio Kickboxing (-3.7%).

CORE V. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

The most participated in fitness activities all had increases in their casual users base (participating 1-49 times per year) over the last year. These fitness activities include: Fitness Walking, Free Weights, Running/Jogging, Treadmills, Yoga, and Recumbent/Upright Stationary Cycling. Please see **Appendix C - Core vs. Casual Participation Trends**.

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2016	2020	2021	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Fitness Walking	107,895	114,044	115,814	7.3%	1.6%
Treadmill	51,872	49,832	53,627	3.4%	7.6%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	51,513	53,256	52,636	2.2%	-1.2%
Running/Jogging	47,384	50,652	48,977	3.4%	-3.3%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	36,118	31,287	32,453	-10.1%	3.7%
Weight/Resistant Machines	35,768	30,651	30,577	-14.5%	-0.2%
Elliptical Motion Trainer	32,218	27,920	27,618	-14.3%	-1.1%
Yoga	26,268	32,808	34,347	30.8%	4.7%
Free Weights (Barbells)	26,473	28,790	28,243	6.7%	-1.9%
Dance, Step, & Choreographed Exercise	21,839	25,160	24,752	13.3%	-1.6%
Bodyweight Exercise	25,110	22,845	22,629	-9.9%	-0.9%
Aerobics (High Impact/Intensity Training HIIT)	10,575	10,954	10,400	-1.7%	-5.1%
Stair Climbing Machine	15,079	11,261	11,786	-21.8%	4.7%
Cross-Training Style Workout	12,914	9,179	9,764	-24.4%	6.4%
Trail Running	8,582	11,854	12,520	45.9%	5.6%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,937	6,054	5,939	-33.5%	-1.9%
Pilates Training	8,893	9,905	9,745	9.6%	-1.6%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,899	5,295	5,099	-26.1%	-3.7%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	6,583	4,969	5,169	-21.5%	4.0%
Martial Arts	5,745	6,064	6,186	7.7%	2.0%
Boxing for Fitness	5,175	5,230	5,237	1.2%	0.1%
Tai Chi	3,706	3,300	3,393	-8.4%	2.8%
Barre	3,329	3,579	3,659	9.9%	2.2%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	2,374	1,846	1,748	-26.4%	-5.3%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,705	1,363	1,304	-23.5%	-4.3%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

3.3.5 NATIONAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Results from the SFIA report demonstrate strong growth in participation regarding outdoor/adventure recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or with proper social distancing in a group, and are not as limited by time constraints. In 2021, the most popular activities, in terms of total participants, from the outdoor/adventure recreation category include: Day Hiking (58.6 million), Road Bicycling (42.7 million), Freshwater Fishing (40.8 million), Camping within ¼ mile of Vehicle/Home (35.9 million), and Recreational Vehicle Camping (16.3 million).



HIKING (DAY)
58.6 MILLION



**BICYCLING
(ROAD)**
42.7 MILLION



**FISHING
(FRESHWATER)**
40.8 MILLION



**CAMPING (1/4 MI.
OF CAR / HOME)**
35.9 MILLION



**CAMPING
(RECREATIONAL
VEHICLE)**
16.3 MILLION

FIVE-YEAR TREND

From 2016-2021, Day Hiking (39.3%), Camping within ¼ mile of Vehicle/Home (36.0%), Skateboarding (35.8%), Birdwatching (27.8%), BMX Bicycling (24.4%), and Fly Fishing (15.5%) have undergone the largest increases in participation. The five-year trend also shows activities such as Adventure Racing (-39.1%), Traditional Climbing (-14.9%), In-Line Roller Skating (-8.2%), Archery (-7.1%), and to be the only activities with decreases in participation.

ONE-YEAR TREND

The one-year trend shows almost all activities declining in participation from the previous year. The growing activities being Indoor Climbing (2.7%), Day Hiking (1.5%), Archery (1.3%), In-Line Roller Skating (1.0%), Boulder Climbing (0.5%), and over the last year, the activities that underwent the biggest decreases in participation were Recreational Vehicle Camping (-8.2%) and Adventure Racing (-7.1%).

CORE V. CASUAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

Most outdoor activities have experienced participation growth in the last five- years. Although this a positive trend, it should be noted that all outdoor activities participation, besides adventure racing, consist primarily of casual users. Please see **Appendix C - Core vs. Casual Participation Trends**.

National Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2016	2020	2021	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Hiking (Day)	42,128	57,808	58,697	39.3%	1.5%
Bicycling (Road)	38,365	44,471	42,775	11.5%	-3.8%
Fishing (Freshwater)	38,121	42,556	40,853	7.2%	-4.0%
Camping (< 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	26,467	36,082	35,985	36.0%	-0.3%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,855	17,825	16,371	3.3%	-8.2%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,266	14,527	13,790	12.4%	-5.1%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	11,589	15,228	14,815	27.8%	-2.7%
Backpacking Overnight	10,151	10,746	10,306	1.5%	-4.1%
Bicycling (Mountain)	8,615	8,998	8,693	0.9%	-3.4%
Archery	7,903	7,249	7,342	-7.1%	1.3%
Fishing (Fly)	6,456	7,753	7,458	15.5%	-3.8%
Skateboarding	6,442	8,872	8,747	35.8%	-1.4%
Climbing (Indoor)	-	5,535	5,684	N/A	2.7%
Roller Skating, In-Line	5,381	4,892	4,940	-8.2%	1.0%
Bicycling (BMX)	3,104	3,880	3,861	24.4%	-0.5%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,790	2,456	2,374	-14.9%	-3.3%
Climbing (Sport/Boulder)	-	2,290	2,301	N/A	0.5%
Adventure Racing	2,999	1,966	1,826	-39.1%	-7.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

3.3.6 NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATICS

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

Swimming is deemed as a lifetime activity, which is most likely why it continues to have such strong participation. In 2021, Fitness Swimming remained the overall leader in participation (25.6 million) amongst aquatic activities, even though most, if not all, aquatic facilities were forced to close at some point due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



SWIMMING (FITNESS)
25.6 MILLION



AQUATIC EXERCISE
10.4 MILLION



SWIMMING (COMPETITION)
2.8 MILLION

FIVE-YEAR TREND

Assessing the five-year trend, no activity has experienced an increase from 2016-2021, most likely due to the accessibility of facilities during Covid-19. While Fitness Swimming and Aquatic Exercise underwent a slight decline, dropping -3.7% and -1.7% respectively, Competitive Swimming suffered a -16.2% decline in

ONE-YEAR TREND

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is seen here as most aquatic facilities were forced to shut down for some part of the year. This caused decreases to Aquatic Exercise (-5.1%) having the largest decline, followed by Fitness Swimming (-0.2%). Participation in Competitive swimming increased by 8%.

CORE V. CASUAL TRENDS IN AQUATICS

Most outdoor activities have experienced participation growth in the last five- years. Although this a positive trend, it should be noted that all outdoor activities participation, besides adventure racing, consist primarily of casual users. Please see **Appendix C - Core vs. Casual Participation Trends**.

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2016	2020	2021	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Swimming (Fitness)	26,601	25,666	25,620	-3.7%	-0.2%
Aquatic Exercise	10,575	10,954	10,400	-1.7%	-5.1%
Swimming (Competition)	3,369	2,615	2,824	-16.2%	8.0%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

3.3.7 NATIONAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION LEVELS

The most popular water sports / activities based on total participants in 2020 were Recreational Kayaking (13.3 million), Canoeing (9.2 million), and Snorkeling (7.3 million). It should be noted that water activity participation tends to vary based on regional, seasonal, and environmental factors. A region with more water access and a warmer climate is more likely to have a higher participation rate in water activities than a region that has a long winter season or limited water access. Therefore, when assessing trends in water sports and activities, it is important to understand that fluctuations may be the result of environmental barriers which can greatly influence water activity participation.



KAYAKING
13.3 MILLION



CANOEING
9.2 MILLION



SNORKELING
7.3 MILLION



JET SKIING
5.1 MILLION



SAILING
3.5 MILLION

FIVE-YEAR TREND

Over the last five years, Recreational Kayaking (33.3%), Surfing (24%), and Stand-Up Paddling (16.1%) were the fastest growing water activities. White Water Kayaking (1.4%) was the only other activity with an increase in participation. From 2016-2021, activities declining in participation most rapidly were Boardsailing/Windsurfing (-25.3%), Scuba Diving (-20.4%), Water Skiing (-17.4%), Sea Kayaking (-17.2%) Snorkeling (-16.1%), and Sailing (-15.4%).

ONE-YEAR TREND

Recreational Kayaking (2.7%) and Stand-Up Paddling (1.7%) were the activities to grow both over 5 years and in the last one year. Activities which experienced the largest decreases in participation in the most recent year include Surfing (-8.9%), Snorkeling (-5.3%), Scuba Diving (-4.3%), and Canoeing (-4.1%).

CORE V. CASUAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

As mentioned previously, regional, seasonal, and environmental limiting factors may influence the participation rate of water sport and activities. These factors may also explain why all water-based activities have drastically more casual participants than core participants, since frequencies of activities may be constrained by uncontrollable factors. These high casual user numbers are likely why most water sports/activities have experienced decreases in participation in recent years. Please see **Appendix C - Core vs. Casual Participation Trends**.

National Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2016	2020	2021	5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
Kayaking (Recreational)	10,017	13,002	13,351	33.3%	2.7%
Canoeing	10,046	9,595	9,199	-8.4%	-4.1%
Snorkeling	8,717	7,729	7,316	-16.1%	-5.3%
Jet Skiing	5,783	4,900	5,062	-12.5%	3.3%
Sailing	4,095	3,486	3,463	-15.4%	-0.7%
Stand-Up Paddling	3,220	3,675	3,739	16.1%	1.7%
Rafting	3,428	3,474	3,383	-1.3%	-2.6%
Water Skiing	3,700	3,050	3,058	-17.4%	0.3%
Surfing	2,793	3,800	3,463	24.0%	-8.9%
Wakeboarding	2,912	2,754	2,674	-8.2%	-2.9%
Scuba Diving	3,111	2,588	2,476	-20.4%	-4.3%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	3,124	2,508	2,587	-17.2%	3.1%
Kayaking (White Water)	2,552	2,605	2,587	1.4%	-0.7%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,737	1,268	1,297	-25.3%	2.3%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)
---------	--------------------------------------	----------------------------------	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

3.3.8 LOCAL SPORT AND LEISURE MARKET POTENTIAL

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data for Columbia County residents, as provided by ESRI. Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service within the defined service areas. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident will participate in certain activities when compared to the U.S. national average. The national average is 100; therefore, numbers below 100 would represent lower than average participation rates, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rates. The service area is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports, fitness, outdoor activity, and commercial recreation.

MPI scores are a tool that the Department can use for consideration when starting new programs or developing new facilities and amenities. The market potential gives the Department a starting point for estimating resident attendance and participation for a broad set of recreational activities.

MPIs for Columbia County residents show an active community with interest in a wide range of activities, both as spectators and participant, and who have a willingness to spent money on sports and recreation equipment. The top activities based on MPI were: Participated in roller skating (120), Golf (115), Spent \$250+ on sports/recreation equipment (115), Visited a zoo (113), Weightlifting (111) and Participated in fishing (fresh water), backpacking, and bicycling (mountain) (111) and Attended sport events (110).

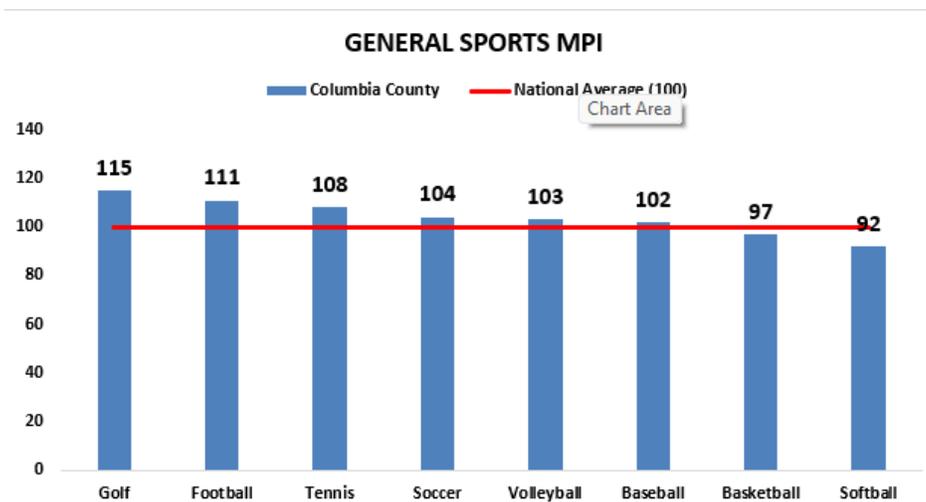
Their willingness to spend money on sports and recreation equipment also shows here with well above average MPI's in all the spending metrics and could be a good sign for sports participation and interest.

The activities are categorized by activity type and listed in descending order, from highest to lowest MPI score. High index numbers (100+) are significant because they demonstrate that there is a greater likelihood that residents within the service areas will actively participate in those offerings provided by the Department.

The following charts compare MPI scores for 46 sport and leisure activities that are prevalent for residents within the County. The County is higher than the national average for 39 of the 46 activities, which is an encouraging sign for a variety of sports, recreation, and leisure activities.

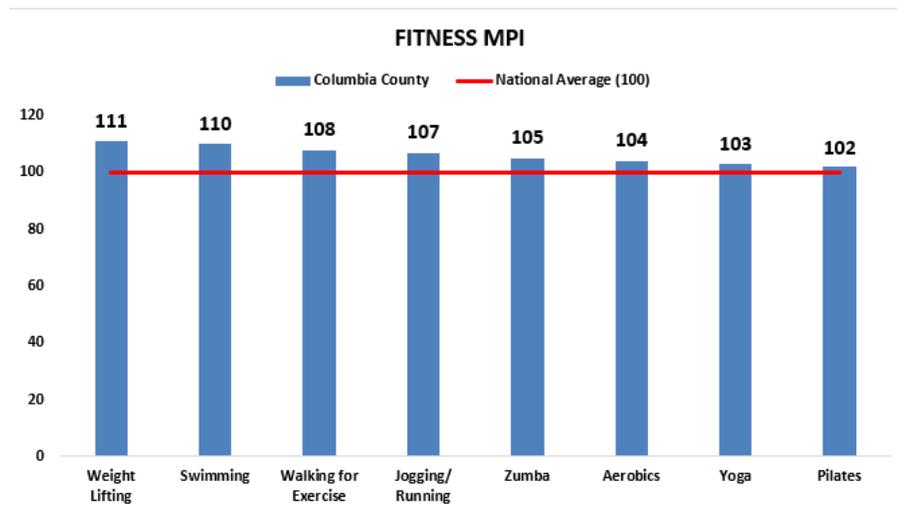
GENERAL SPORTS MARKET POTENTIAL

The General Sports category shows six activities that are at or above the national average. Those activities are Golf (115), Football (111), Tennis (108), Soccer (104), Volleyball (103), and Baseball (102).



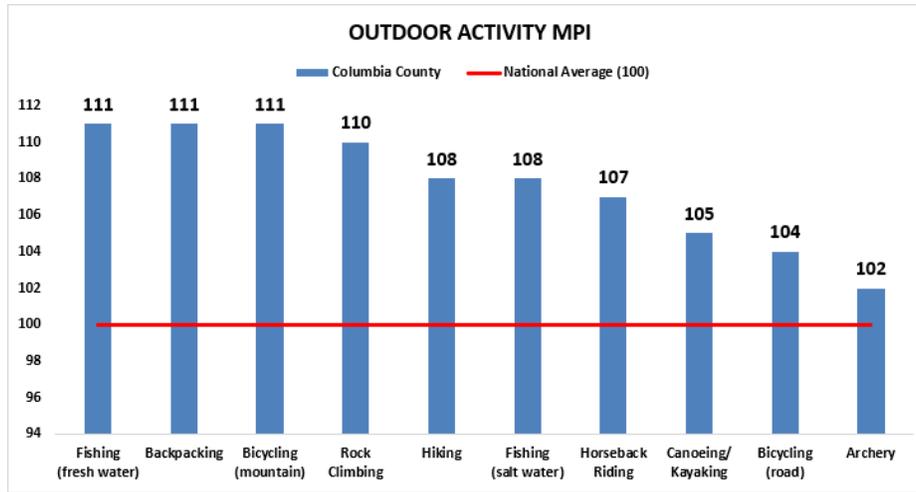
FITNESS MARKET POTENTIAL

Assessing MPI scores for the Fitness Activity category show very positive indicators with eight listed activities being above the National Average. The top activities based on MPI were Weightlifting (111), Swimming (110), Walking for exercise (108) and Jogging/Running (107).



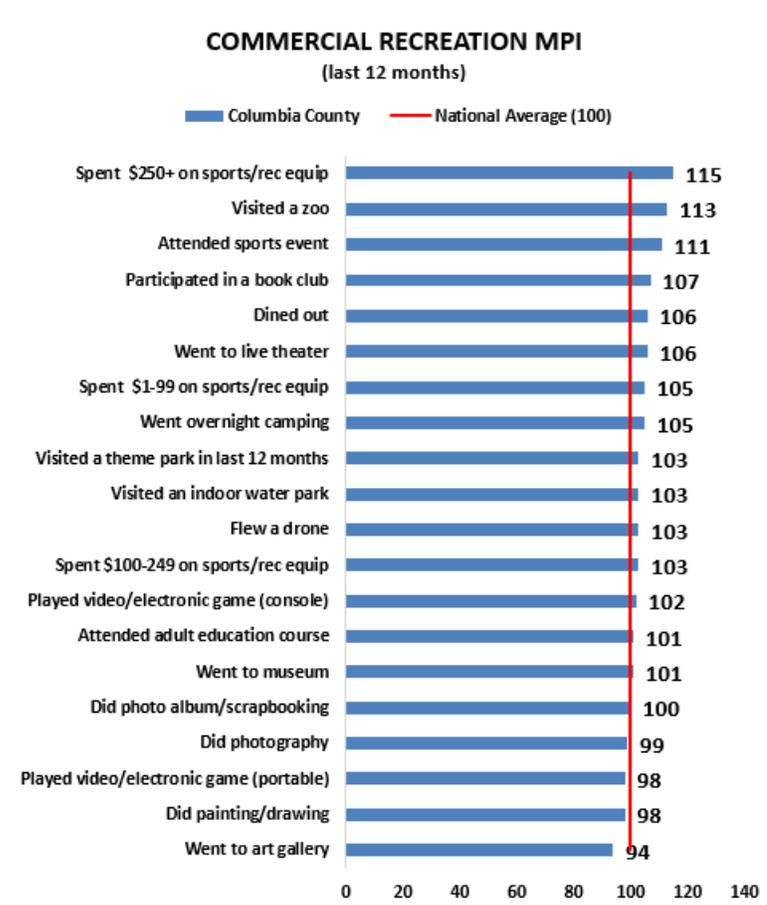
OUTDOOR ACTIVITY MARKET POTENTIAL

The data demonstrates even higher MPI scores for the Outdoor Activity category with all ten activities above the National Average clearly indicating a high preference for outdoor activity among Columbia County residents. The top activities based on MPI were Fishing - fresh water (111), Backpacking (111), and Bicycling - mountain (111).



COMMERCIAL RECREATION MARKET POTENTIAL

The Commercial Recreation category shows a populace that enjoys attending a wide variety of events, and a willingness to spend money on sports/recreation equipment. The top activities were Visited a zoo (113), Attended sports event (111), Participated in a book club (107), and Dined out (106). The data below also points to the above average spending on Sports/Recreation Equipment with the MPI scores of Spent \$250+ on sports/rec equip (115), Spent \$1-\$99 (105) and Spent \$100-249 (103) all being above the National Average.



3.4 KEY FINDINGS

Based on the information presented in the analysis, the following key findings are of particular interest and/or have significant implications for The County:

- POPULATION:** The County's population has grown exponentially over the last 12 years. While the rate of growth may slow slightly, it is projected to continue growing above the National Average rate. As the population increases, the Department must continue focusing on adding additional levels of service to their current parks, programs, and trail offerings to ensure they meet the changing and growing community needs.
- AGE:** County residents are now right in line with the national median age, while there is a growing presence of older adults between the age of 35-54. By 2037, the population will continue to age, as the oldest age segments (55-74 and 75+) are expected to grow, while all other segments are projected to decline slightly except for adults between the age of 18-34 segment which is expected to remain stable. The Department must continue to focus on multigenerational offerings and regularly reevaluate its programming mix to effectively serve this aging, yet active population.
- RACE / ETHNICITY:** The County's populace is predominately categorized as White Alone (65%), however, that percentage has dropped since 2010 (76% White Alone) and is projected to continue shrinking (59% White Alone in 2037). This drop will lead to a more diverse populace with Black or African American Alone (18% in 2022) being the largest minority group, and projections show they will make up nearly a quarter of the County's population by 2037. People of Hispanic / Latino ethnicity represent 7.8% of the total population, which is substantially below the national average (19%), and the Georgia State average (10.2%) This group is expected to reach 9.42% by 2037. The Department should continue to monitor program participation to ensure that offerings are adequately serving residents and are representative of the race / ethnicity distribution of Columbia County residents.
- INCOME LEVELS:** The income characteristics of County residents are higher than the state and national levels for per capita income and median household income. These income levels coupled with above average MPI numbers suggest a willingness of the population to spend money to attend events and/or facilities in which they see value, as well as purchase recreation equipment and travel for events they are interested in.
- NATIONAL PARTICIPATORY TRENDS:** National participatory trends are promising for Columbia County, as many of the activities in sports and fitness aligned with core offerings are trending positively in recent years. Despite the facility closures due to the pandemic, overall, people are recreating more and the importance of living an active, healthy lifestyle is on the rise. The Department must continue to provide active recreation opportunities and seek out new, trending activities that will drive interest and meet the demand for parks, facilities, and recreation programs among Columbia County residents for many years to come.
- LOCAL PARTICIPATORY TRENDS:** Local recreation trends show above average participation across the board with an impressive 39 of the 46 tracked activities having MPI scores above the national average. This is indicative of an active population, seeking to participate in a wide range of fitness, sports and outdoor activities.

3.5 BENCHMARKING

3.5.1 BENCHMARKING

Since 1998, ETC Institute has conducted household surveys for needs assessments, feasibility studies, customer satisfaction, fees and charges comparisons, and other parks and recreation issues in more than 400 communities in 49 states across the country. The results of these surveys have provided an unparalleled database of information to compare responses from household residents in client communities to “National Averages” and therefore provide a unique tool to “assist organizations in better decision making.”

Communities within the database include a full-range of municipal and county governments, with populations ranging from 20,000 to over 1 million residents. They include communities in warm weather and cold weather climates, mature communities and some of the fastest growing cities and counties in the country.

“National Averages” have been developed for numerous strategically important parks and recreation planning and management issues, including: customer satisfaction and usage of parks and programs; methods for receiving marketing information; reasons that prevent members of households from using parks and recreation facilities more often; priority recreation programs, parks, facilities and trails to improve or develop; priority programming spaces to have in planned community centers and aquatic facilities; potential attendance for planned indoor community centers and outdoor aquatic centers, etc.

3.5.2 RESULTS COMPARISON

Results from household responses for Columbia County were compared to National Benchmarks to gain further strategic information. A summary of comparisons are as follows:

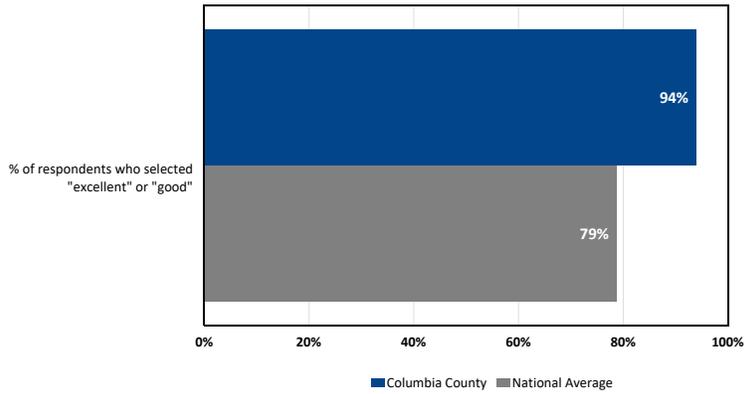
- Ninety-three percent (93%) of households have visited County parks/facilities during the past two years, which is significantly higher than the national average (75%).
- Ninety-two percent (92%) of households rated the physical condition of the County’s parks/facilities they have visited as either “excellent” or “good”, which is significantly higher than the national average of 80%.
- Fifty-one percent (51%) of households have participated in County programs/events during the past two years, which is significantly higher than the nation average of 32%.
- Ninety-four percent (94%) of households rated the County programs/events they’ve participated in during the past two years as either “excellent” or “good” which is significantly higher than the national average of 79%.

In summary, the usage of parks/facilities is much higher in Columbia County than other communities, and those that use parks/facilities give them very high ratings. Participation in County programs/events is also much higher than other communities with those that participate in programs giving them very high ratings.

A summary of all comparisons are shown in the graphs on the following pages.

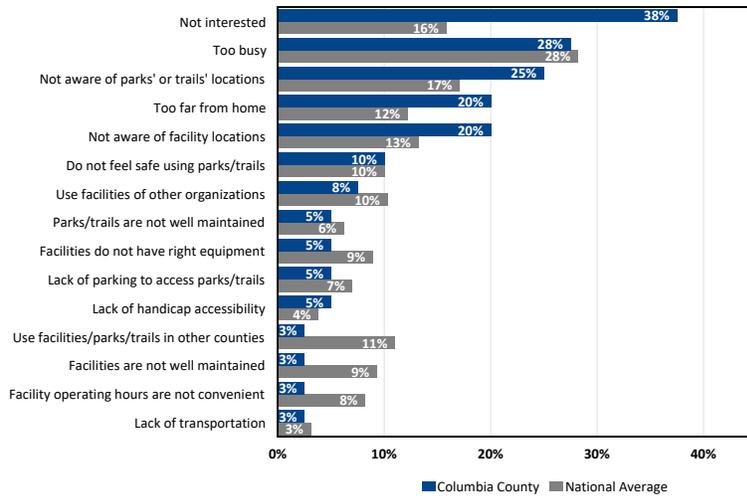
How Respondents Rated the Overall Quality of Programs and Events

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



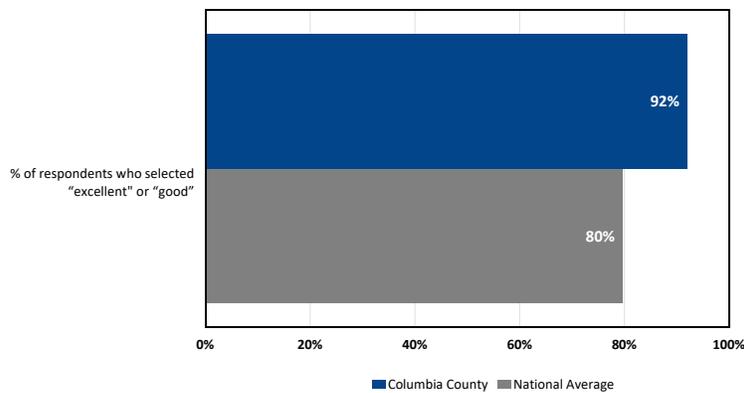
Reasons Preventing Households From Visiting Parks and Facilities

by percentage of respondents



How Respondents Rated the Physical Condition of Parks and/or Facilities Visited During the Last 2 Years

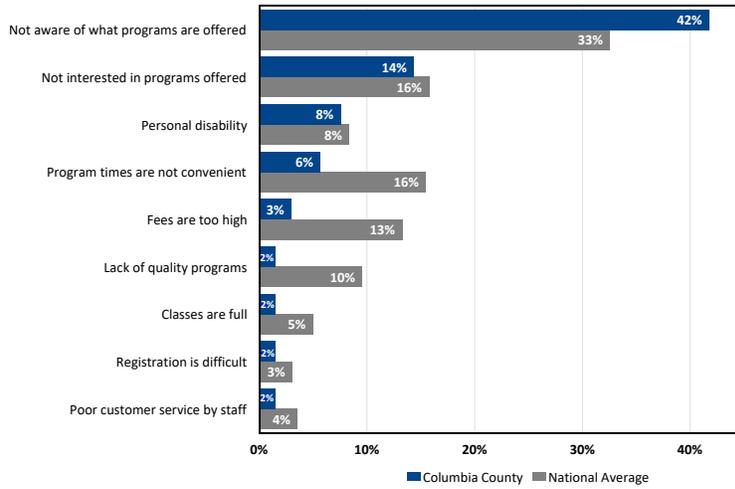
by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Event Needs Assessment: Findings Report

Reasons Preventing Households From Participating in Programs and/or Events

by percentage of respondents



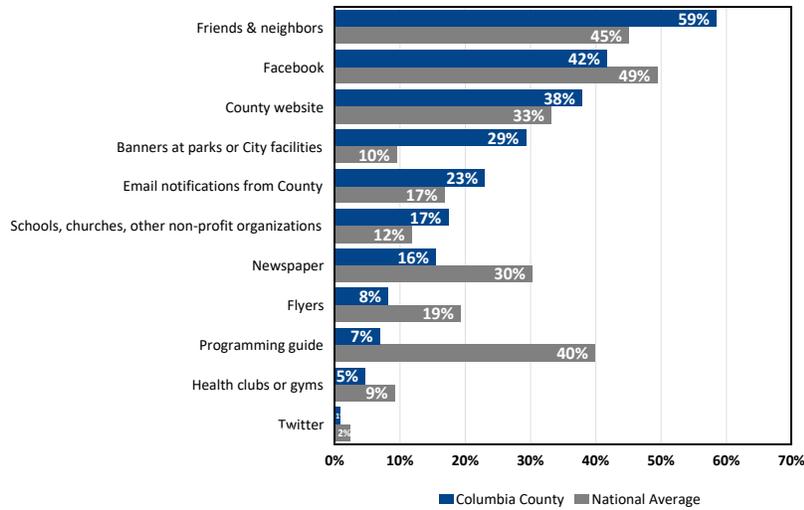
ETC Institute (2021)

Data 60

Source: Survey of Parks, Recreation, and Event Needs Assessment: Findings Report

Ways Residents Learn About Programs and Activities

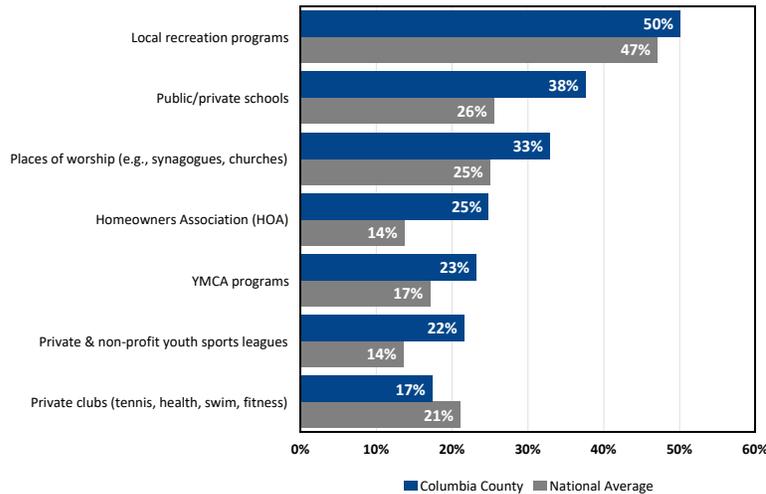
by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Page 61

Recreation and Sports Activities

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



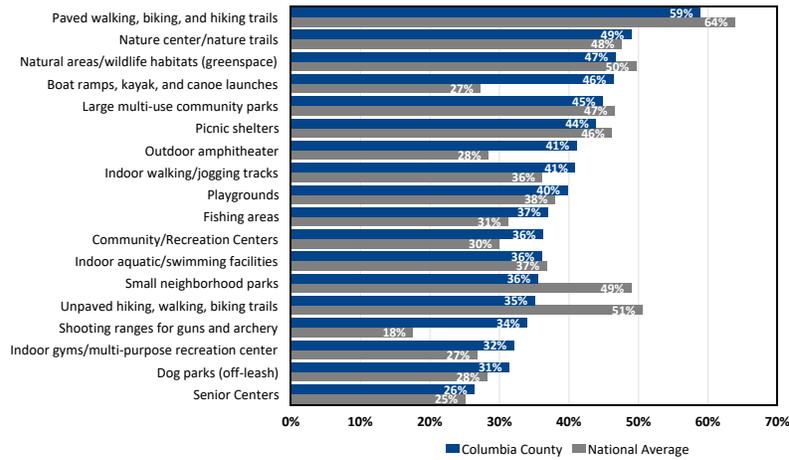
Institute (2021)

Page

Households with Needs for Parks and Recreation Facilities/Amenities

Columbia County vs. National Average

by percentage of respondents with a need for facilities/amenities



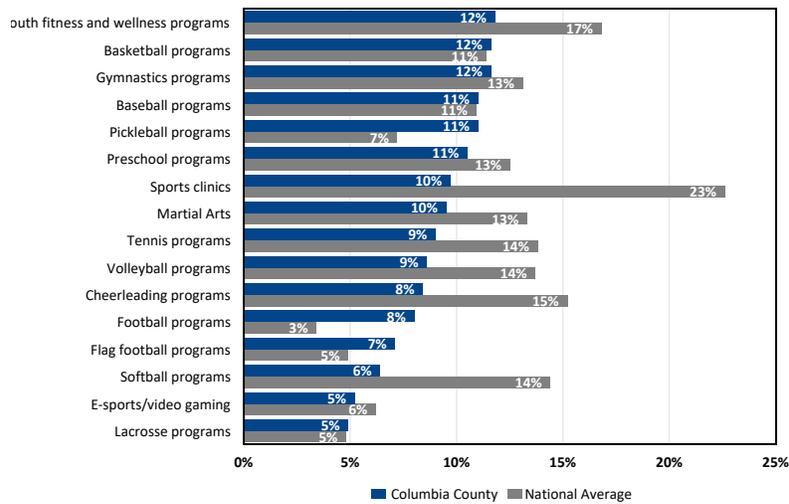
TC Institute (2021)

Page 4

Households with Needs for Recreation Programs (Cont.)

Columbia County vs. National Average

by percentage of respondents with a need for programs



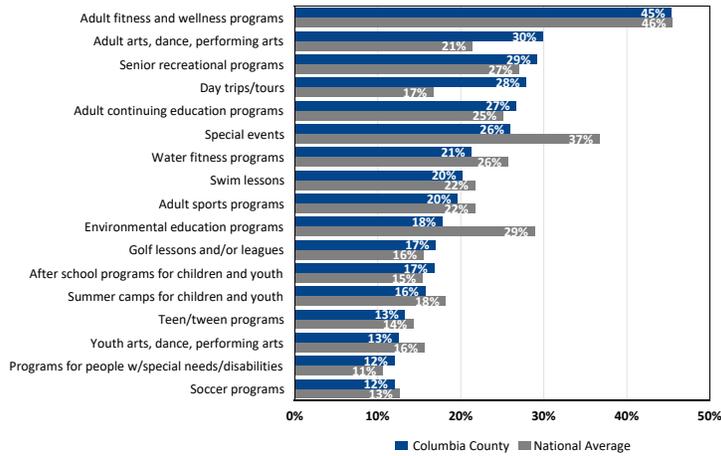
TC Institute (2021)

Page 5

Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Event Needs Assessment: Findings Report

Households with Needs for Recreation Programs Columbia County vs. National Average

by percentage of respondents with a need for programs



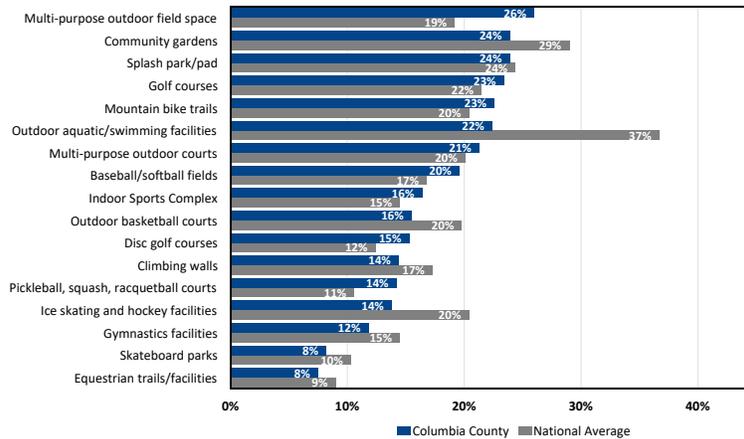
ETC Institute (2021)

Page 61

Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Event Needs Assessment: Findings Report

Households with Needs for Parks and Recreation Facilities/Amenities (Cont.) Columbia County vs. National Average

by percentage of respondents with a need for facilities/amenities



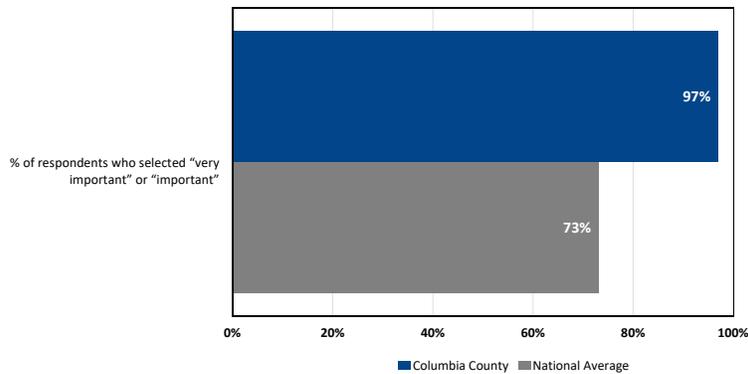
ETC Institute (2021)

Page 61

Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Event Needs Assessment: Findings Report

Importance of Providing High Quality Parks, Recreation Facilities and Programs

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



04 PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY and ASSESSMENT; and RECOMMENDED LEVELS OF SERVICE

4.1 ON-SITE INVENTORY & ASSESSMENT

In the spring of 2021, site visits were completed to inventory and assess all Columbia County's parks and facilities over a two day period. The visits included all parks and facilities under the purview of Columbia County's Parks, Recreation and Events department and included as part of an inventory list completed by the County. Detailed building evaluations of interiors, roofing, mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems were not included in the assessment scope. During these visits conducted with Staff, properties were inventoried, photographed and assessed as good, fair or poor and as light use, medium use or heavy use. These ratings were based on staff input combined with observations of existing conditions and have been defined as follows:

GOOD

the asset presented itself well to the public, was in acceptable condition for public use and was well maintained for its intended use

FAIR

the asset was in acceptable condition for public use and was adequately maintained

POOR

the asset did not visually present well to the public, was not in acceptable condition and/or was not well maintained.

Assessments were conducted for individual elements of each park and an overall rating was assigned to each park. Park use was also assessed and defined as follows:

LIGHT USE

accommodates fewer users than intended as evidenced by Staff input and minimal wear and tear to facilities, buildings and infrastructure

MEDIUM USE

accommodates a moderate number of users as evidenced by Staff input and moderate/expected wear and tear to facilities, buildings and

HEAVY USE

accommodates a large number of users evidenced by Staff input and greater than average/expected wear and tear to facilities, buildings and infrastructure.

In addition to these assessments other general observations and recommendations were documented.

4.1.2 ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Collectively the team visited three (3) Neighborhood Parks, four (4) Community Parks, six (6) Regional Parks, two (2) Natural Resource Parks, six (6) Special Purpose Areas and two (2) trailheads comprising over 1,626 acres owned or operated by the County. Of those sites, one (1) Community Park, one (1) Regional Park and (1) Special Purpose Area- the Pollard House- are undeveloped or unusable; and (1) Special Purpose Area- the Performing Arts Center- was under construction.

Based on park and facility site visits, nine (9) were rated as good including the Performing Arts Center which was under construction. Nine (9) were rated as fair. Of the three (3) remaining sites; - the Pollard House, a Special Purpose Area- was rated as unusable and therefore poor. The (2) undeveloped park sites were not rated. Overall, parks and facilities appeared to be well maintained and in acceptable condition for public use. The overall maintenance of existing facilities warranted a good rating.

Inventory and assessment forms were created for each individual park/facility including a listing of all park assets and their rating, a representative photo of the facility, location, park acreage, park type, facility strengths, facility weaknesses and a listing of possible improvements. See **Appendix D - County Owned Park & Facility Inventory and Analysis** for detailed inventory and assessment information. **Appendix E - Park & Facility (By Others) Inventory and Analysis** features detailed inventory and assessment information on parks / facilities that are located within Columbia County, but are not owned by the County.

4.2 COLUMBIA COUNTY PARK MODELS

Upon completion of park/facility inventory and analysis site visits, a customized series of park models were developed. These models are unique to Columbia County and were developed based on observations of existing parks and the types of facilities and uses that could be commonly found within them.

For the purposes of this plan, park models have been developed reflecting the unique characteristics and user patterns of Columbia County. These park models supplement proposed Levels of Service by describing options for overcoming existing deficits as well as anticipated shortfalls through County population growth. The system includes five (5) park types which are Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Regional Park, Natural Resource Park and Special Purpose Facility or Park. The following provides an overview of these park types and the type of facilities most commonly found within them. It is not uncommon for adjustments to be made to park guidelines based on recommended levels of service. The actual number of park acres recommended for Columbia County in the levels of service section has been adjusted based on a number of factors including, but not limited to Priority Investment Rating (PIR), access to facilities provided by others, available land, geographic conditions, etc. For more detailed information on Park Models see **Appendix F - Columbia County Park Models**.

4.2.1 PARK MODEL DESCRIPTIONS

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Neighborhood Parks provide a combination of passive and active use spaces and recreation activities serving nearby neighborhoods. This park may include practice facilities and some programmed sports activities combined with passive use facilities.

REGIONAL PARK

Regional parks consolidate heavily programmed athletic facilities and other unique outdoor activities at fewer sites strategically located throughout the County. These parks serve local users as well as users who may travel from outside the County. They provide adequate activities to serve as a destination park.

NATURAL RESOURCE PARK

Parks that preserve critical or unique areas for public use and education. Protects sensitive areas from intrusion/development or protects unique aesthetics, natural resources or ecosystems.

COMMUNITY PARK

Community parks are an important unit of the County's park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of nearby neighborhoods. They assist in meeting the passive recreation needs of several neighborhoods or sections of the County and are well centered to serve them. They provide a combination of mostly passive recreational options appealing to all ages with emphasis on youth and family.

SPECIAL PURPOSE FACILITY OR PARK

A special purpose park or facility is often designed as a revenue-generating enterprise created to satisfy demand for a particular sport, recreation activity, special event venue or use. It may be single-focus or can be combined with other enterprise activities that provide the County with additional recreation resources and/or revenue generating capabilities.

4.3 RECOMMENDED LEVELS OF SERVICE

Level of Service (LOS) standards which follows is a matrix displaying the inventory of the County. By totaling the inventory (from the County, School District, and other parks from Grovetown, Harlem, Martinez and Appling) and applying the County's population, we can understand the current level of service of parks, facilities, and amenities to the residents of the County. The LOS can help support investment decisions related to the addition and development of parks, facilities, and amenities. The LOS can and will change over time as the program lifecycles change and the demographics of a community change. The recommended standards were evaluated using a combination of resources.

These resources included: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines; recreation activity participation rates reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2021 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation as it applies to activities that occur in the United States and in the County area; community and stakeholder input; statistically valid survey; and findings from the prioritized needs assessment report and general observations. This combination of information allowed standards to be customized for the County.

The LOS standards should be viewed as a guide for future planning purposes. The standards are to be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgment related to a particular situation and needs of the community. By applying these facility standards to the service area, gaps and surpluses in park and facility/amenity types are identified.

Based on recommended levels of service the following are the park and facility types that are currently under-served based on population numbers and recommended levels of service:

- Community Parks
- Natural Resource Parks
- Regional Parks*
- Paved Trails
- Picnic Shelters
- Multi-Purpose Rectangular Fields
- Pickleball Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Skate Park
- Outdoor Pool
- Splashpads
- Indoor Recreation Space
- Indoor Aquatic Space
- Playgrounds*

*The recommended level of service for regional parks and playgrounds indicates there will be a need for additional ones in the +/- five years.

It is important to note that some of the other amenity types that are currently meeting recommended levels of service may become under-served if older facilities are eliminated or re-purposed.

Note:

1. Other amenities such as disc golf do exist in the system, however there are currently no established national levels of service for them. For that reason they have not been included in the matrix or in the Equity Mapping.
2. The school district inventory is weighed at 30% of the total for indoor gyms and 10% for outdoor amenities based on the available capacity for use by County residents.

Columbia County Parks, Recreation and Events - Level of Service Standards

Inventory - Developed Facilities					2022 Level of Service Standards		2027 Level of Service Standards		2032 Level of Service Standards			
Park Type	Columbia County	Other Parks	Schools	Total Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population	Recommended Service Levels: Revised for Local Service Area	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed
PARK ACREAGES:												
Neighborhood Parks	47	27		74	0.45 acres per	0.25 acres per	Meet Standard	- Acres(s)	Meet Standard	- Acres(s)	Meet Standard	- Acres(s)
Community Parks	163	-		163	1.00 acres per	1.25 acres per	Need Exists	42 Acres(s)	Need Exists	57 Acres(s)	Need Exists	76 Acres(s)
Regional Parks	1,325	2,451		3,776	23.08 acres per	20.00 acres per	Meets Standard	- Acres(s)	Meets Standard	- Acres(s)	Need Exists	43 Acres(s)
Total Developed Park Acres	1,535	2,477		4,013	24.53 acres per	21.50 acres per	Meets Standard	- Acres(s)	Meets Standard	- Acres(s)	Need Exists	93 Acres(s)
Natural Resource Park	47			47	0.29 acres per	0.50 acres per	Need Exists	35 Acres(s)	Need Exists	41 Acres(s)	Need Exists	48 Acres(s)
Special Purpose Park / Facility	44	10		53	0.33 acres per	N/A acres per	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Park Acres	1,626	2,487	-	4,113	25.14 acres per	22.00 acres per	Meets Standard	- Acres(s)	Meets Standard	- Acres(s)	Need Exists	88 Acres(s)
TRAIL MILES:												
Paved Trails	42.02	16	1	59	0.36 miles per	0.40 miles per	Need Exists	6.68 Mile(s)	Need Exists	11.57 Mile(s)	Need Exists	17.61 Mile(s)
Natural (Unpaved) Trails	41.01	-	-	41	0.23 miles per	0.20 miles per	Meets Standard	- Mile(s)	Meets Standard	- Mile(s)	Meets Standard	- Mile(s)
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:												
Picnic Shelters	39	10	0	49	1.00 site per	1.00 site per	Need Exists	5 Sites(s)	Need Exists	10 Sites(s)	Need Exists	15 Sites(s)
Playgrounds	40	10	3	53	1.00 site per	1.00 site per	Need Exists	1 Sites(s)	Need Exists	6 Sites(s)	Need Exists	11 Sites(s)
Diamond Fields	23	18	1	42	1.00 field per	1.00 field per	Meets Standard	- Field(s)	Meets Standard	- Field(s)	Meets Standard	- Field(s)
Multi-Purpose Rectangular Fields	20	1	1	22	1.00 field per	1.00 field per	Need Exists	11 Field(s)	Need Exists	13 Field(s)	Need Exists	16 Field(s)
Tennis Courts	21	3	-	24	1.00 court per	1.00 court per	Meets Standard	- Court(s)	Meets Standard	- Court(s)	Meets Standard	- Court(s)
Pickleball Courts	10	-	-	10	1.00 court per	1.00 court per	Need Exists	8 Court(s)	Need Exists	10 Court(s)	Need Exists	11 Court(s)
Basketball Courts (Full & Half)	2	3	3	8	1.00 court per	1.00 court per	Need Exists	8 Court(s)	Need Exists	10 Court(s)	Need Exists	11 Court(s)
Skate Park	1	-	-	1	1.00 site per	1.00 site per	Need Exists	1 Site(s)	Need Exists	1 Site(s)	Need Exists	1 Site(s)
Dog Parks (Fenced and Unfenced)	3	1	-	4	1.00 site per	1.00 site per	Meets Standard	- Site(s)	Meets Standard	- Site(s)	Need Exists	0.2 Site(s)
Outdoor Pools	-	-	-	-	1.00 site per	1.00 site per	Need Exists	2 Site(s)	Need Exists	2 Site(s)	Need Exists	2 Site(s)
Splashpads	3	-	-	3	1.00 site per	1.00 site per	Need Exists	1 Site(s)	Need Exists	1 Site(s)	Need Exists	2 Site(s)
INDOOR AMENITIES:												
Indoor Recreation Space (Square Feet)	110,475	22,000	29,333	161,808	0.99 SF per person	1.50 SF per person	Need Exists	83,619 Square Feet	Need Exists	101,959 Square Feet	Need Exists	124,626 Square Feet
Indoor Aquatic Space (Square Feet)	-	-	-	-	SF per person	0.50 SF per person	Need Exists	81,809 Square Feet	Need Exists	87,923 Square Feet	Need Exists	95,478 Square Feet
2022 Estimated Population				163,618								
2027 Estimated Population				175,845								
2032 Estimated Population				190,956								

Notes:

Population figures obtained from ESRI.

- School (indoor gyms) Basketball Courts available (current and aspirational) up to 30%; All outdoor amenities e.g. playgrounds, basketball courts, turf fields etc. up to 10% capacity use
- Natural (unpaved) trail miles - School inventory for unpaved trails not counted since it is not accessible to the community

4.4 SYSTEM-WIDE OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on site visits a set of common, system-wide observations/recommendations have been included. These recommendations can be applied to each park/facility in varying degrees and are based on assessment at the time of the project site visit. Capital costs for these elements are included in Park Improvements & Renovations Capital Cost Estimates in **Appendix G - Park Improvements and Renovations Capital Costs Estimates** of this report. Recommendations may include:

4.4.1 ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT

Recommendations include performing a comprehensive accessibility audit for all County parks and facilities to include both indoor and outdoor facilities. The audit should focus on all aspects of the built environment, providing recommendations and estimated costs for improving access for those with disabilities.

4.4.2. PLACEMAKING

Enhance the user experience through the creation of a safe and memorable park experience. Emphasis should be placed on providing improved/replaced walks and gathering spaces; improved landscaping and irrigation; and introduction of additional shade. This is most applicable to playgrounds where additional shade would enhance the user experience and could be achieved through planting of shade trees, introduction of shade canopies or a combination of both. Landscaping should reflect a similar quality of design found throughout the County to include canopy trees for shade in parking areas, and plantings at primary sign locations, along walks at playground areas and in pedestrian gathering areas. Irrigation of all newly planted trees, shrubs, ground covers and turf is necessary to maintain healthy, long lasting and vigorous growth.

4.4.3 BRANDING UPGRADES

Improve the recognition of County parks, recreation and events through consistent signage and branding. Utilize consistent materials and sign design themes including the use of the County logo at all parks, facilities and events. Continue this theming in park rules signs, wayfinding, building identification and other critical signage as may be applicable.

4.5 EQUITY MAPS

Service area maps and standards assist the County in assessing where services are offered, how equitable the service distribution and delivery is across the County's service area and how effective the service is as it compares to the demographic densities. In addition, looking at guidelines with reference to population enables the County to assess gaps or overlaps in its services, where amenities/facilities are needed, or where an area is over saturated.

Based on this, the County can make appropriate capital improvement decisions to meet system-wide needs while assessing the ramifications of the decision on a specific area.

The following list shows the service area maps that were developed for each of the County's major assets:

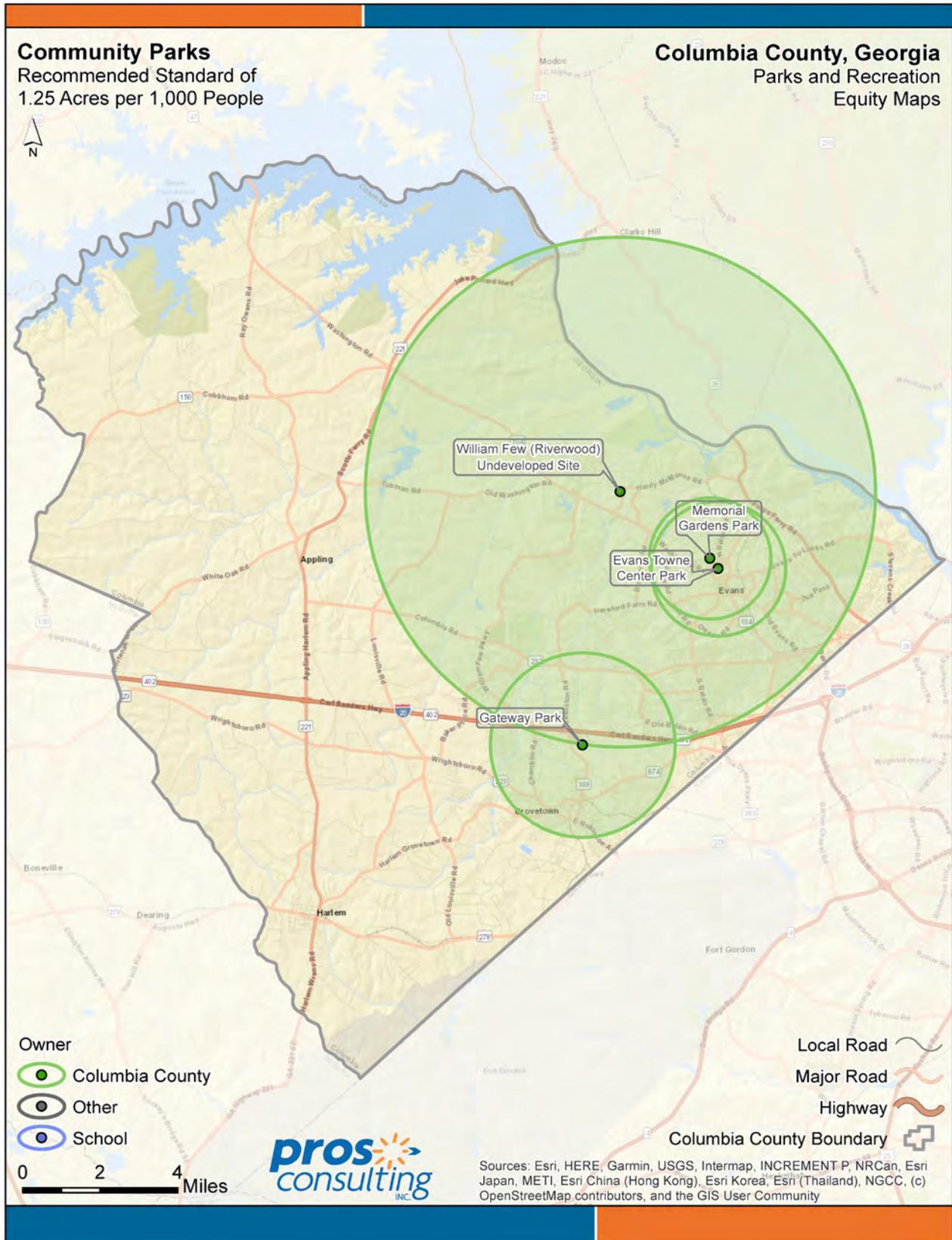
COUNTY GIS MAPPING		
PARKLAND		
• Community Parks	• Regional Parks	
• Neighborhood Parks	• Natural Resource Park	
TRAILS		
• Paved Trails	• Natural (Unpaved Trails)	
OUTDOOR AMENITIES		
• Basketball Courts (Full & Half)	• Outdoor Pools	• Skate Park
• Diamond Fields	• Pickleball Courts	• Splash Pads
• Dog Parks (Fenced & Unfenced)	• Picnic Shelters	• Tennis Courts
• Multi-Purpose Rectangular	• Playgrounds	
INDOOR FACILITIES		
• Indoor Recreation Space		

The source for the population used for standard development is the estimated 2022 population as reported by Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). The shaded areas within the Equity Maps indicate the service level (i.e., the population being served by that park type/amenity) as outlined in the previous section (level of Service).

The circles' sizes vary dependent upon the amount of a given amenity (or acre type) located at one site and the surrounding population density. Lower density causes the circle to be larger, as more geographical area is needed to meet the set level of service. Higher density areas will cause a smaller circle, as there are more people served in a smaller area, meaning less geographical area is needed to meet said standard.

The legend at the bottom left-hand corner of each map depicts the various owners included in the equity mapping process. The areas of overlapping circles represent adequate service, or duplicated service, and the areas with no shading represent the areas not served by a given amenity or park acre type.

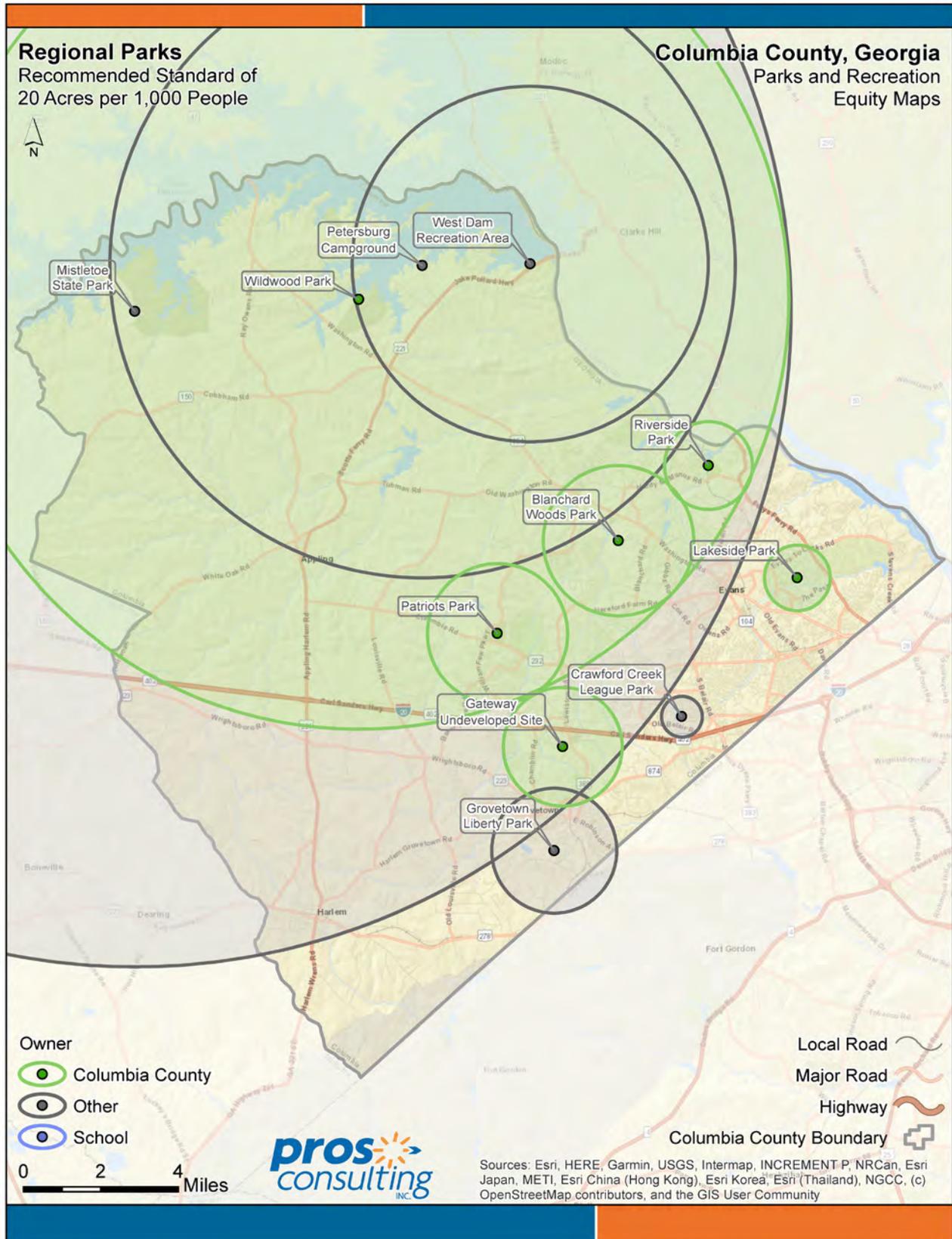
EQUITY MAP - COMMUNITY PARKS



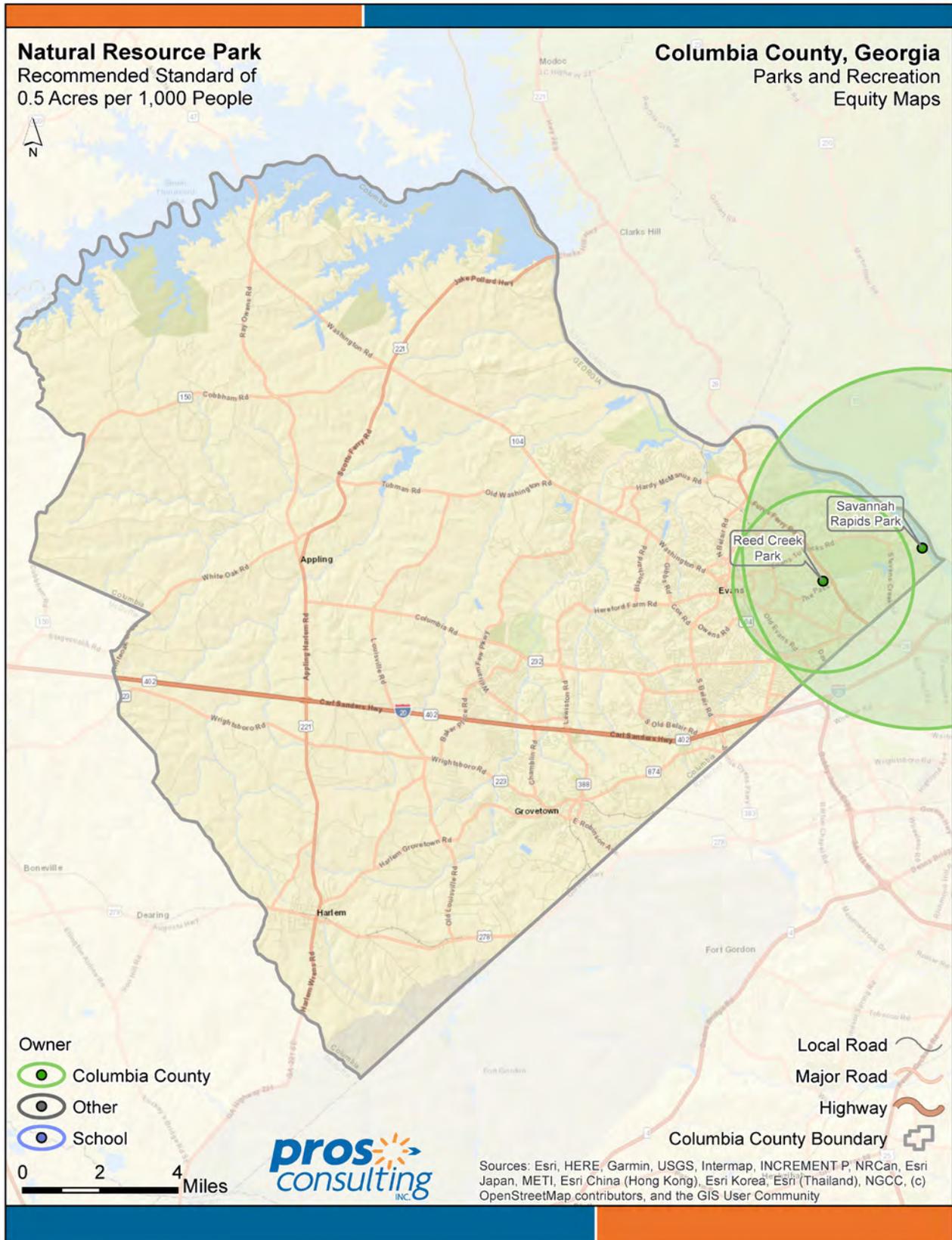
EQUITY MAP - NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS



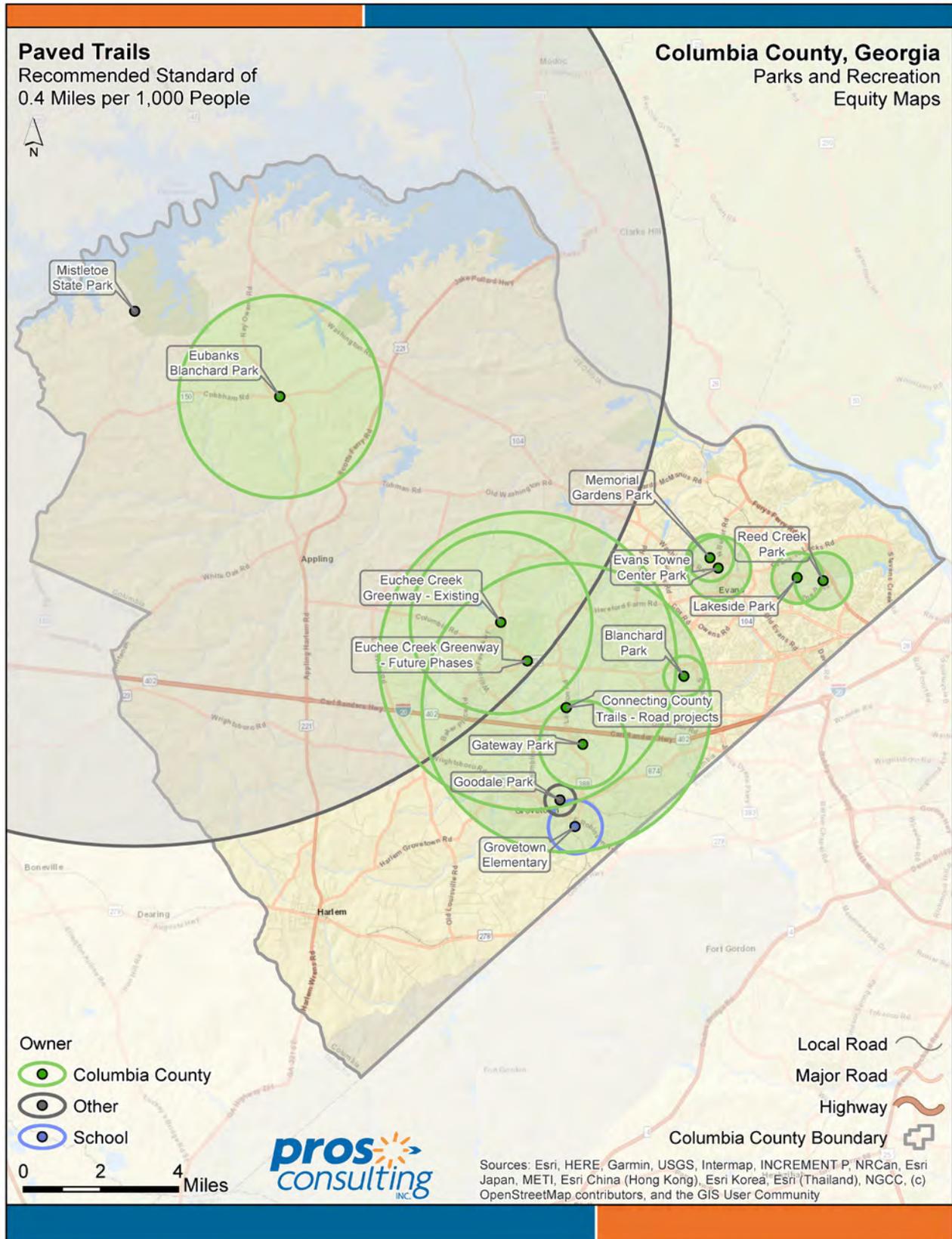
EQUITY MAP - REGIONAL PARKS



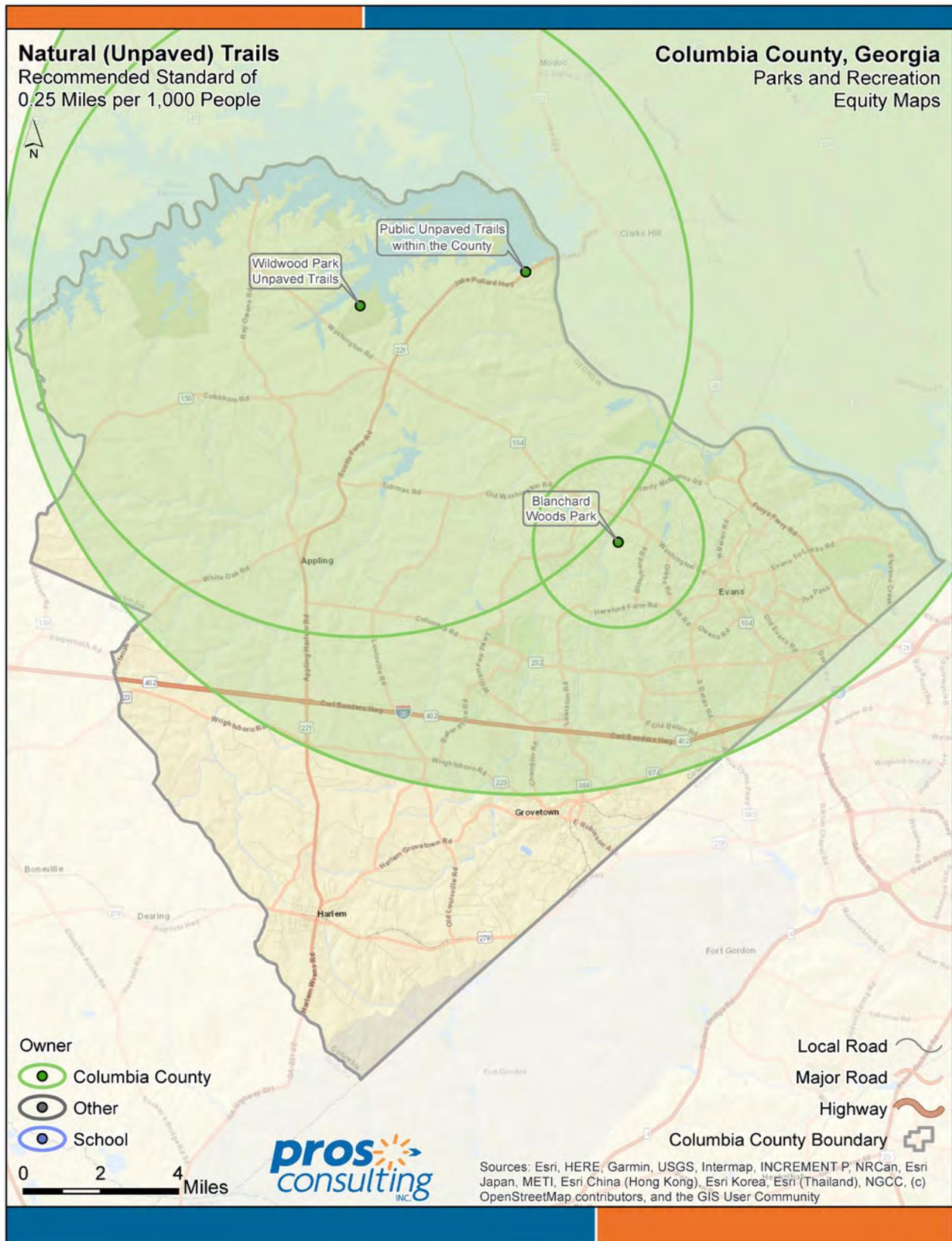
EQUITY MAP - NATURAL RESOURCE PARKS



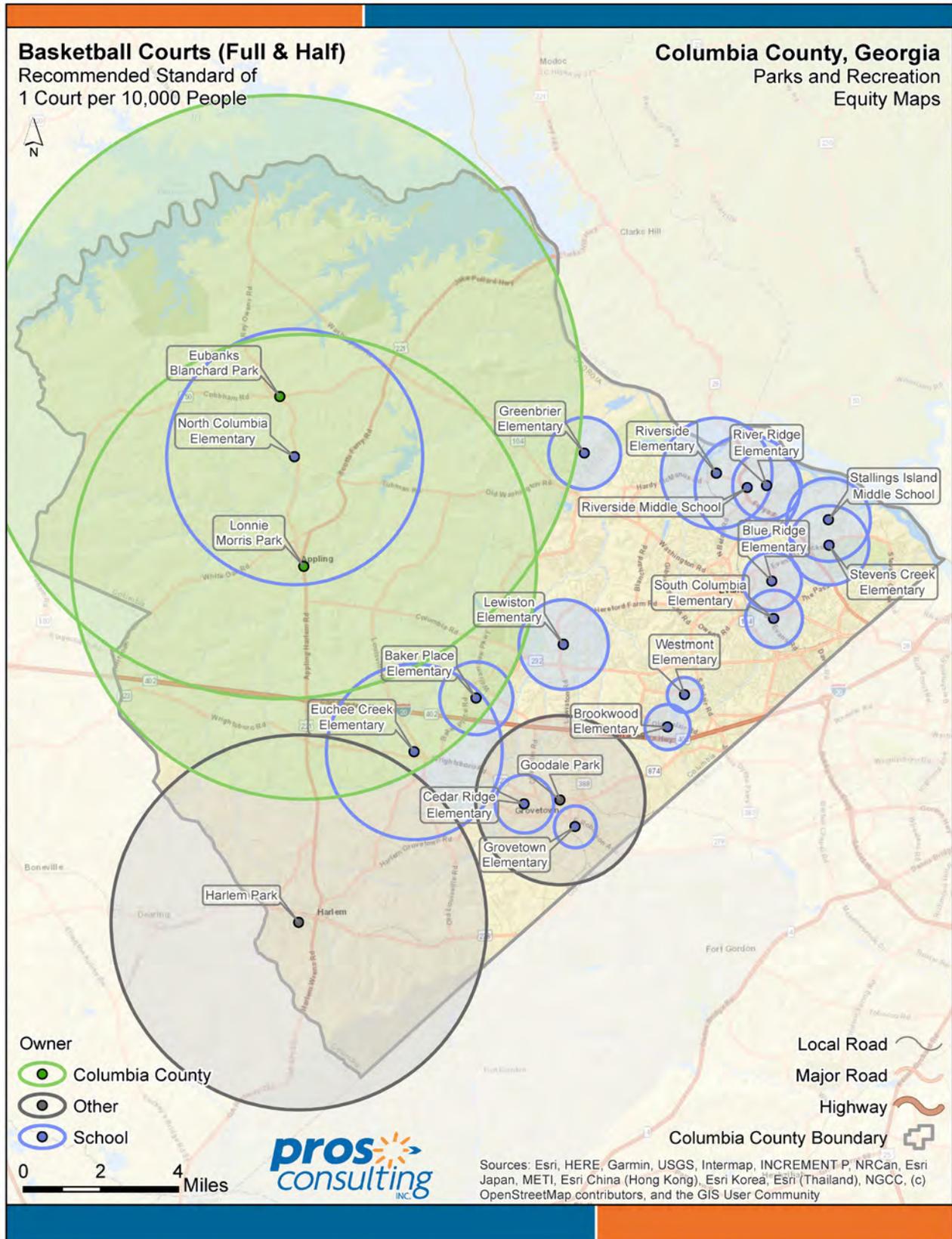
EQUITY MAP - PAVED TRAILS



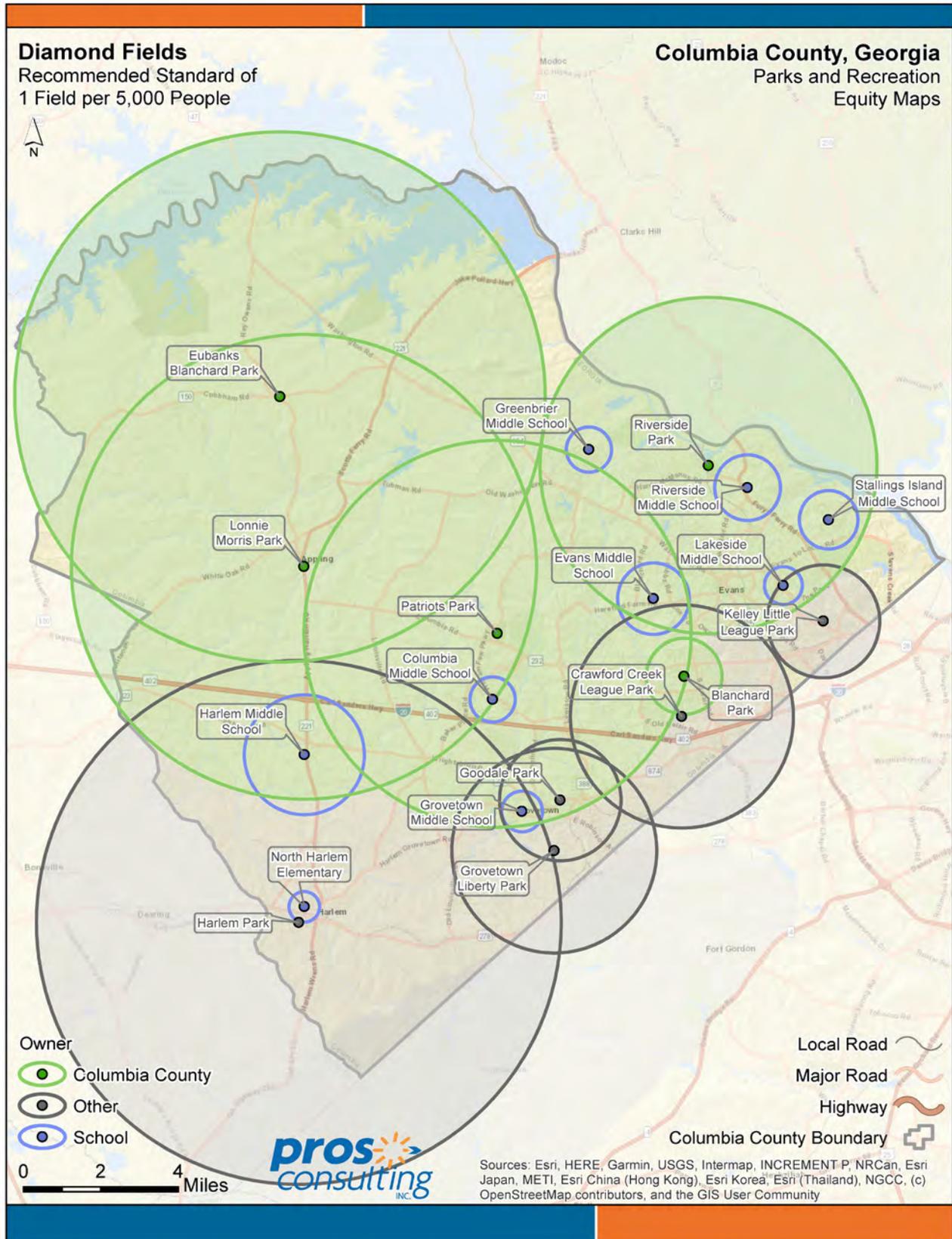
EQUITY MAP - NATURAL (UNPAVED) TRAILS



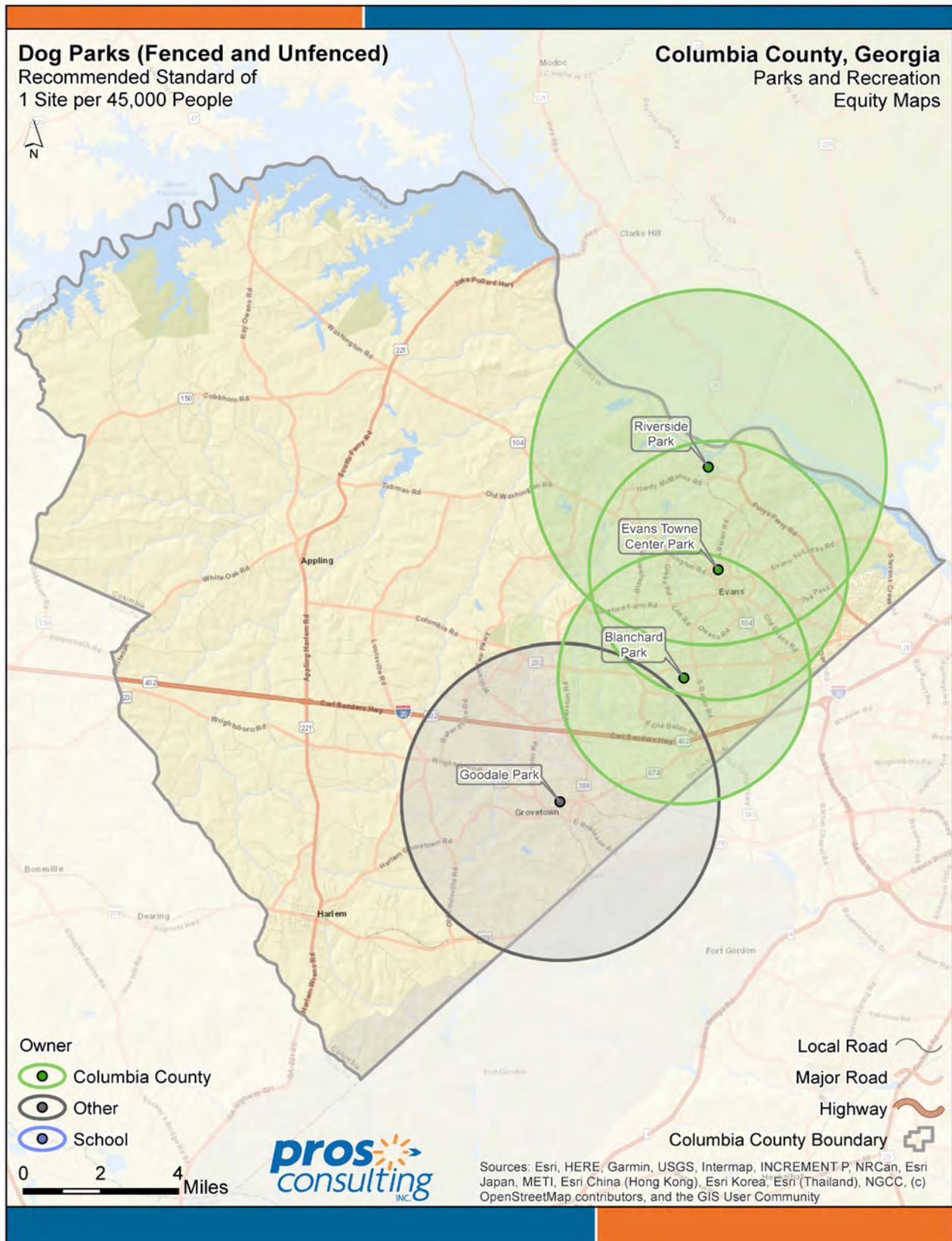
EQUITY MAP - BASKETBALL COURTS (FULL & HALF)



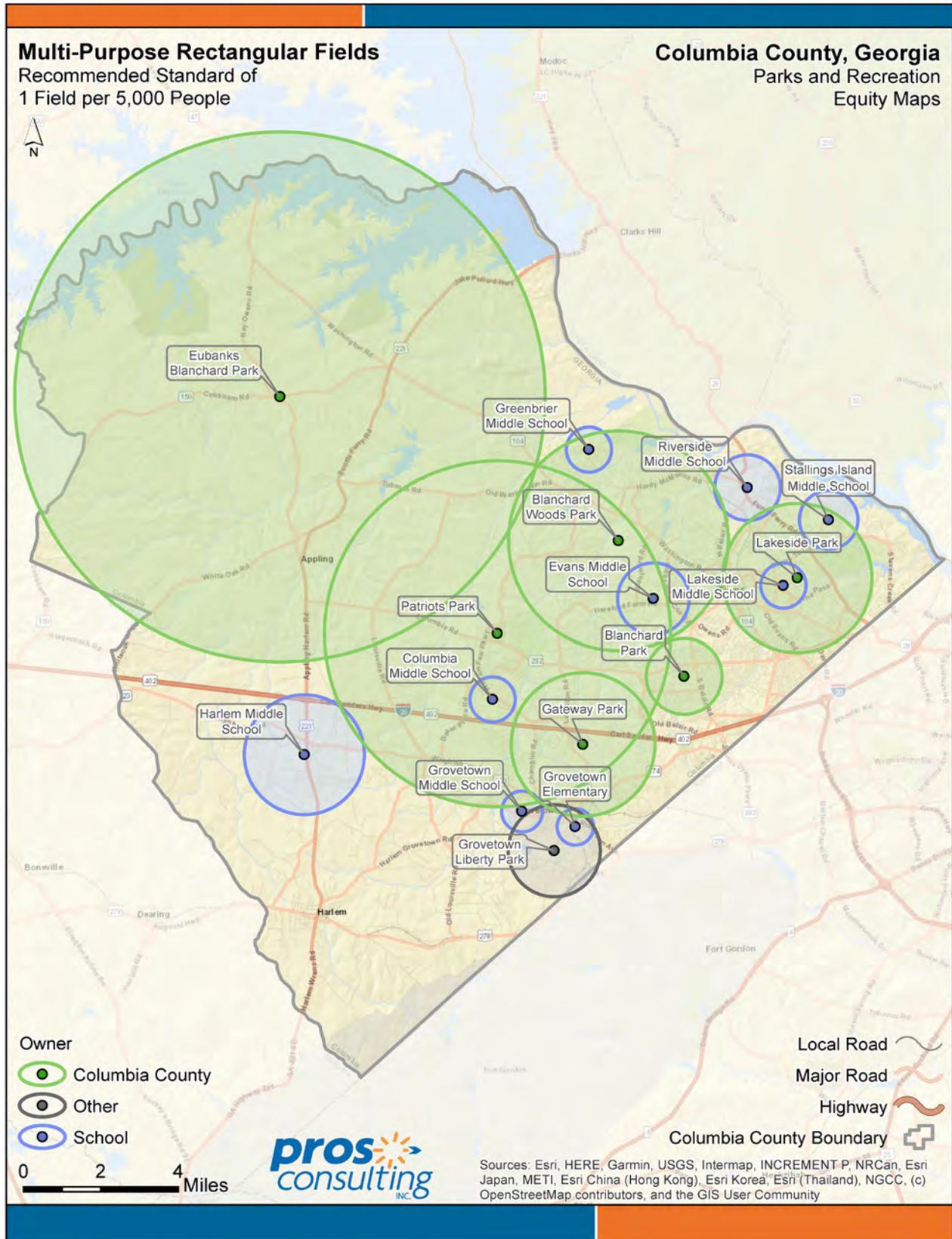
EQUITY MAP - DIAMOND FIELDS



EQUITY MAP - DOG PARKS (FENCED & UNFENCED)



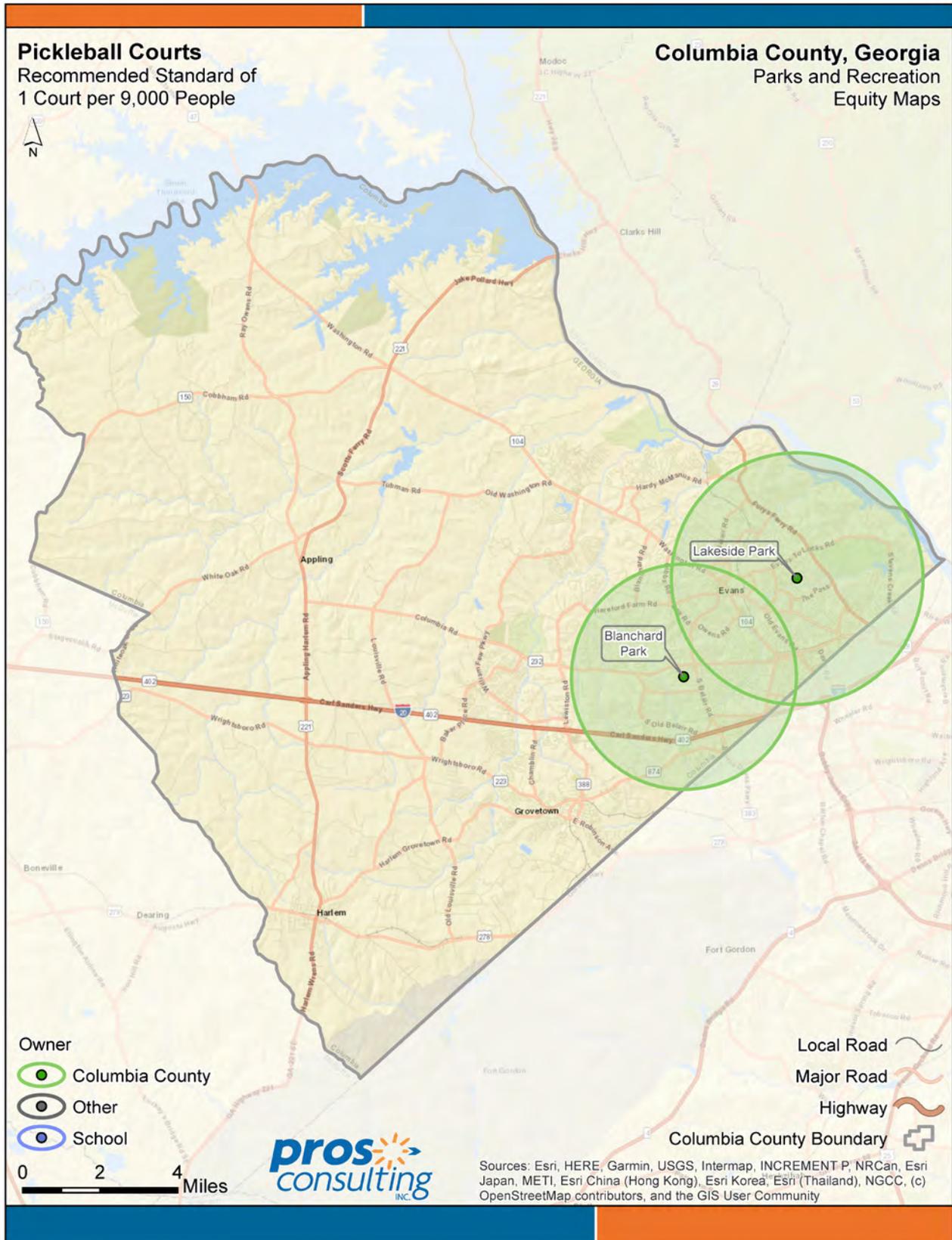
EQUITY MAP - MULTI-PURPOSE RECTANGULAR FIELDS



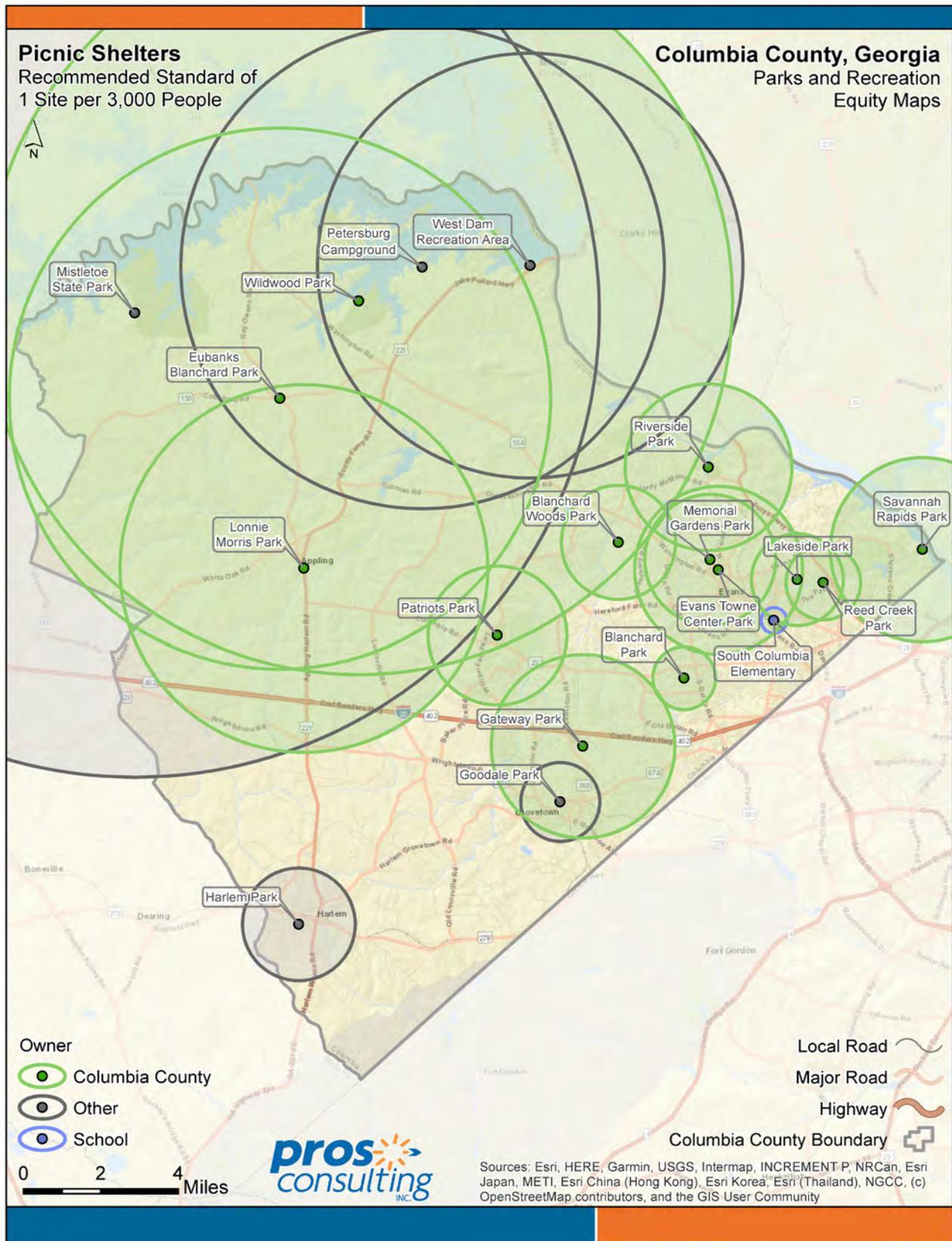
EQUITY MAP - OUTDOOR POOLS



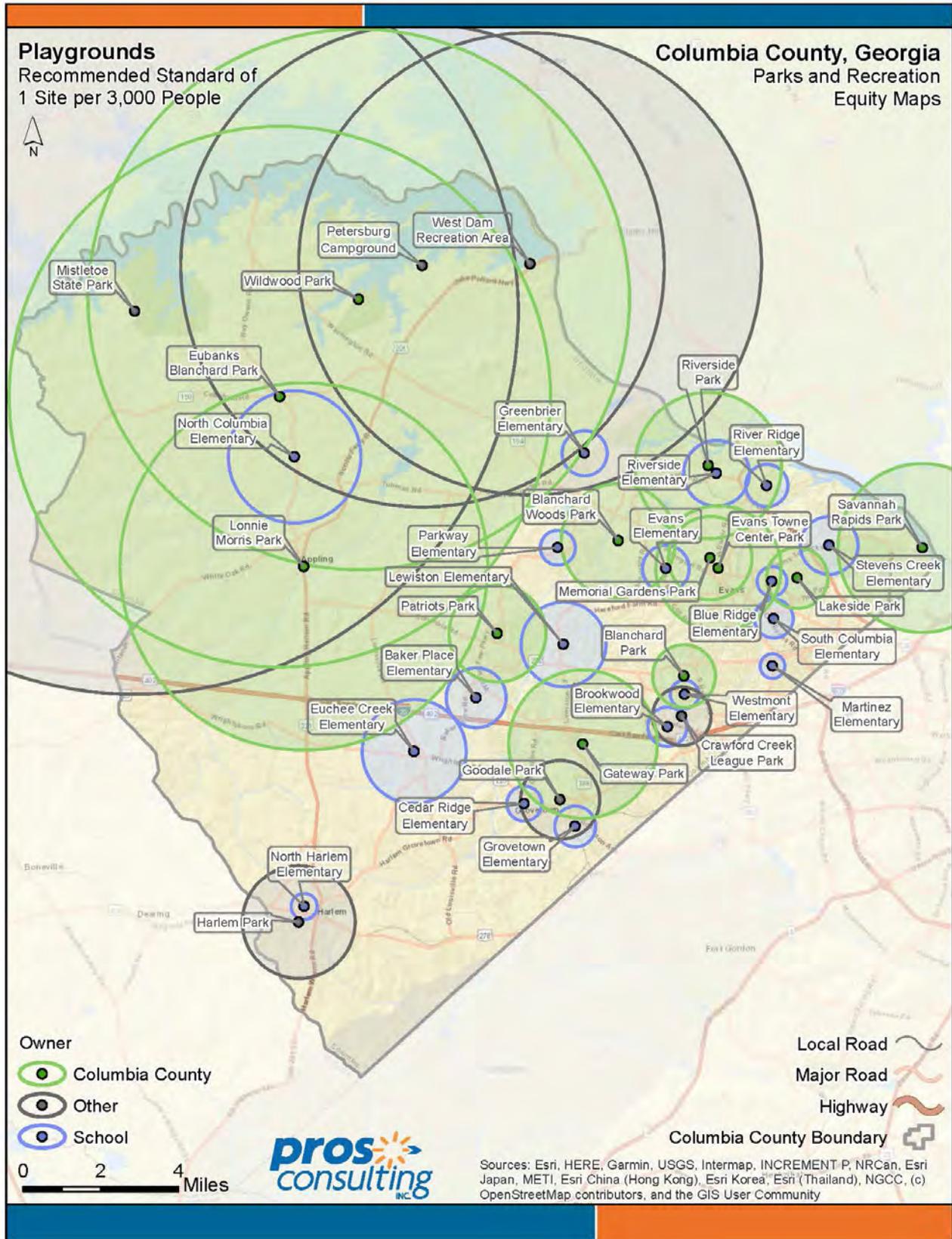
EQUITY MAP - PICKLEBALL COURTS



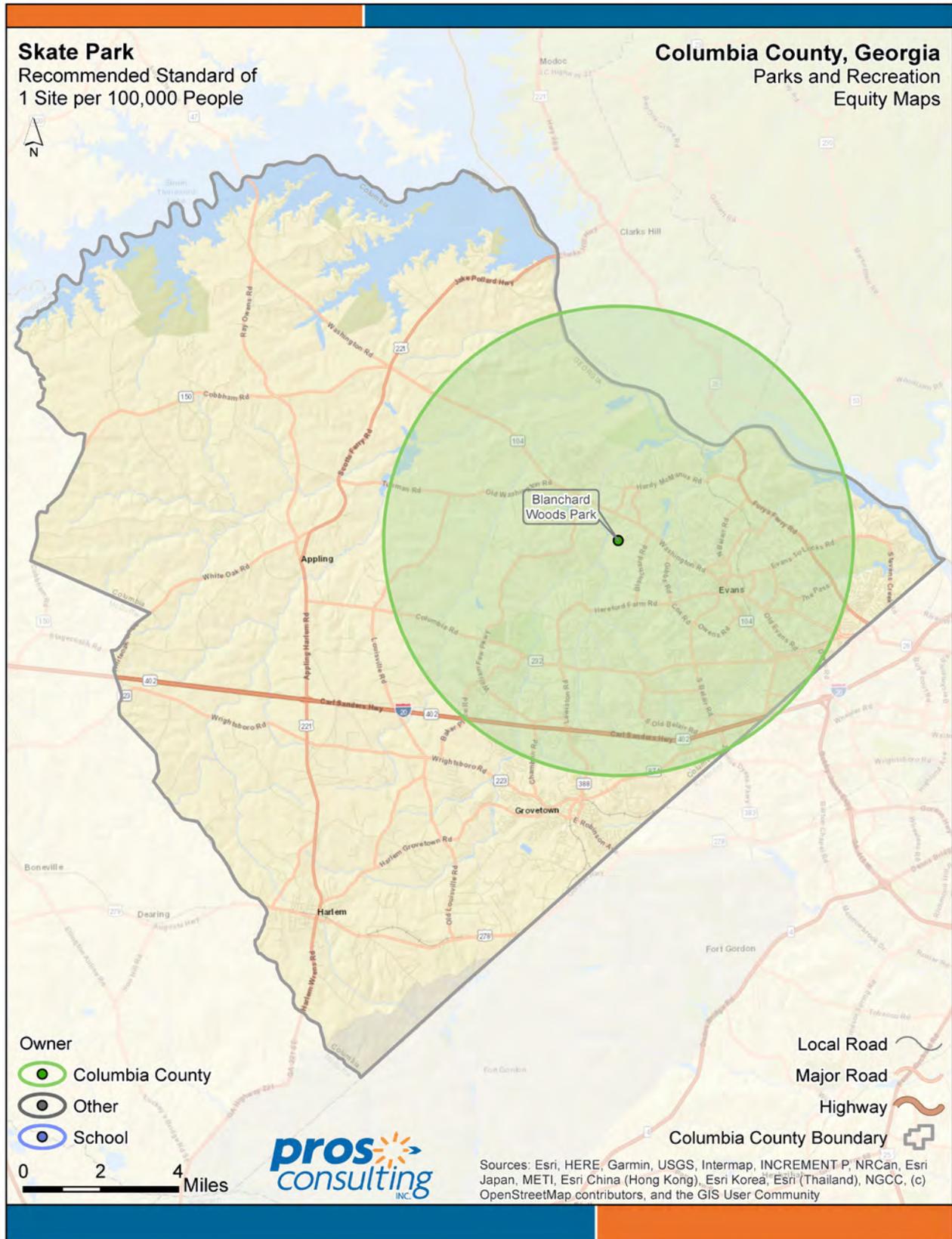
EQUITY MAP - PICNIC SHELTERS



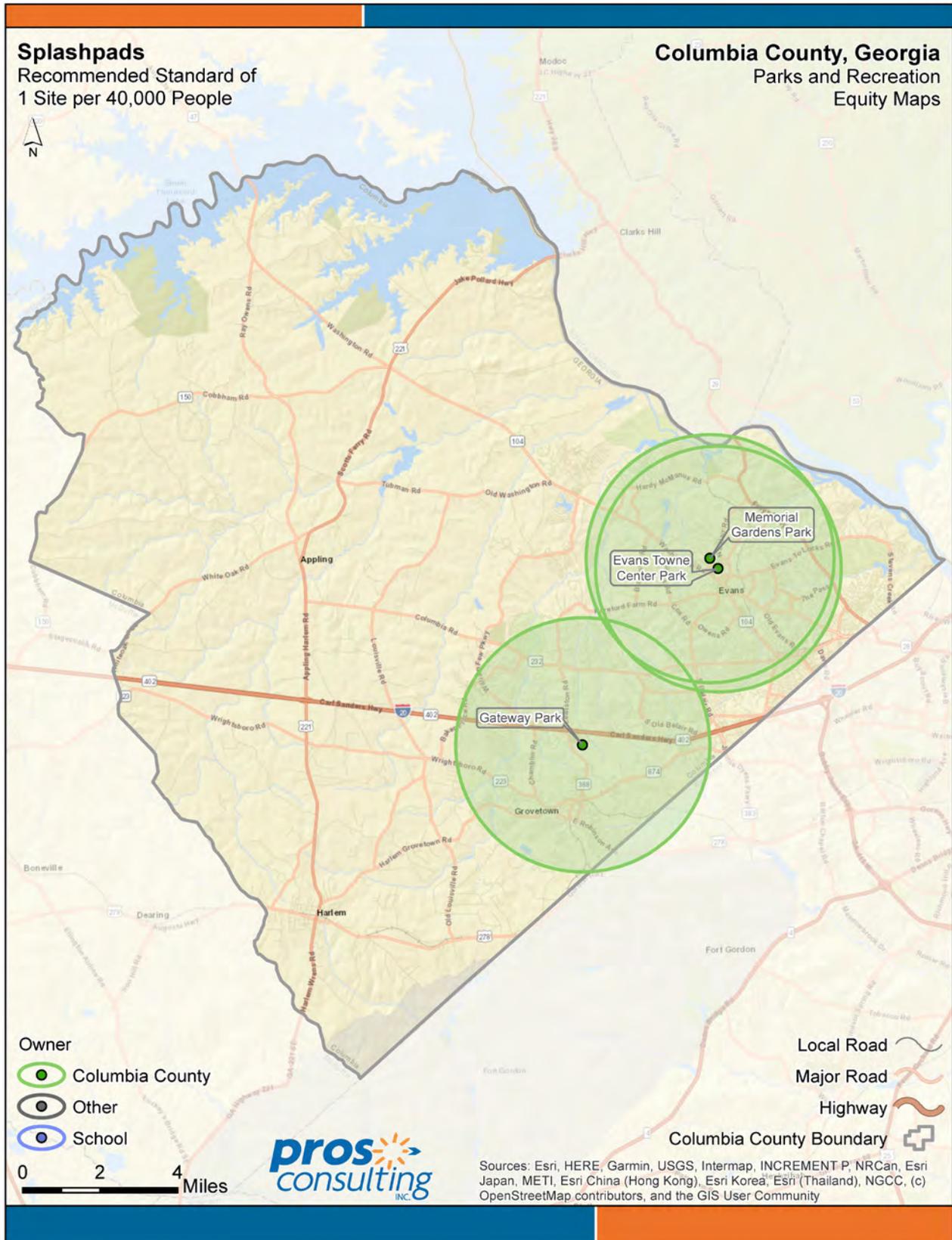
EQUITY MAP - PLAYGROUNDS



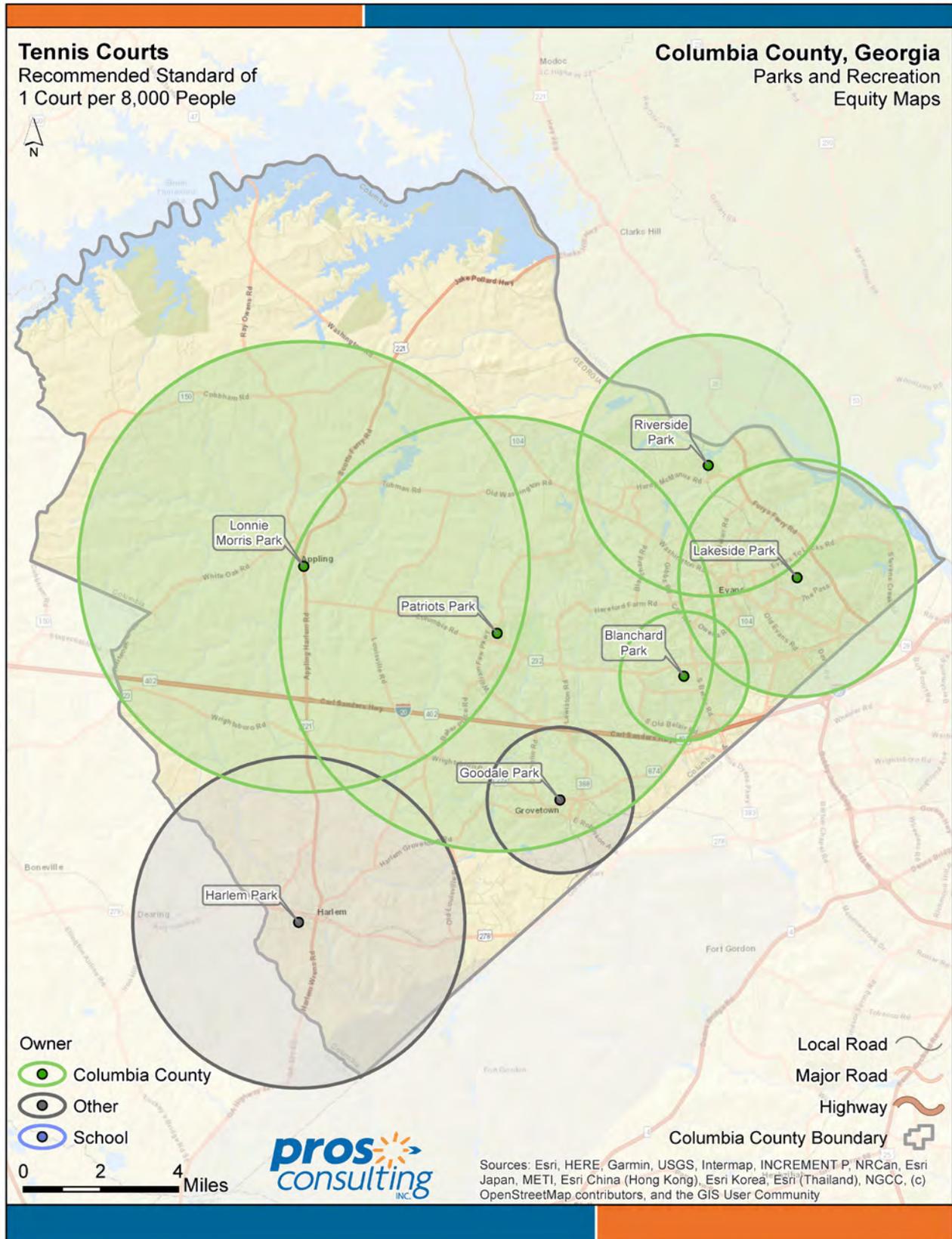
EQUITY MAP - SKATE PARKS



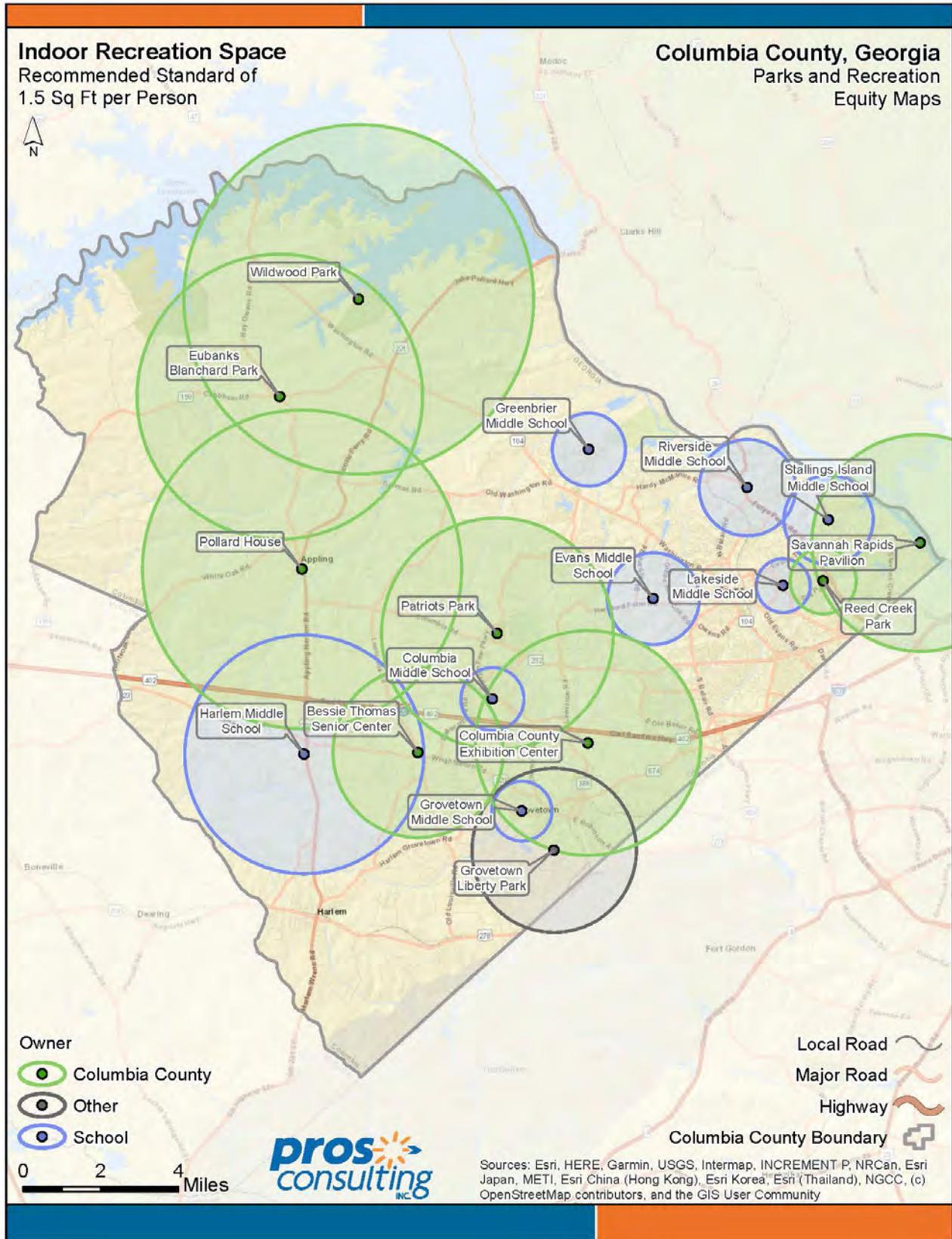
EQUITY MAP - SPLASHPADS



EQUITY MAP - TENNIS COURTS



EQUITY MAP - INDOOR RECREATION SPACE





05 RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

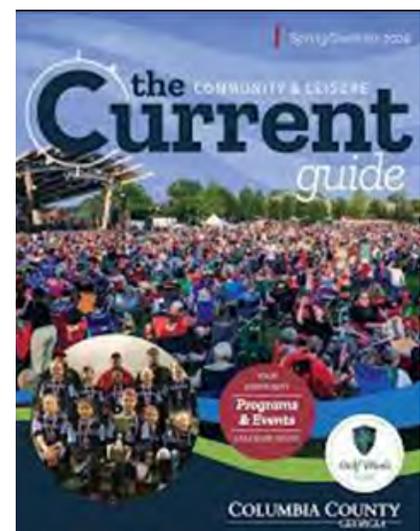
As part of the Columbia County (“County”) Parks and Recreation Master Plan (“Plan”), PROS Consulting performed a Recreation Program Assessment of the services offered by the County’s Parks, Recreation and Events Department (“Department”). The assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents and visitors.

The consulting team based these program findings and comments from a review of information provided by the Department including program descriptions, financial data, website content, and discussions with staff.

5.2 OVERVIEW

5.2.1 FRAMEWORK

The mission of the Department is “to enrich the quality of life of the citizens we serve by providing safe and accessible facilities and a diversified program of activities in an effective, efficient, equitable, and responsive manner.” To help achieve this mission, the Department provides a broad range of recreation and leisure programming for all ages. These program offerings are supported with dedicated spaces which includes: 13 developed parks, 43 athletic fields, 9 boat ramps, 3 splash pads, a skate park, a nature park, and a gymnasium complex.



5.2.2 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Below are some overall observations from the program assessment sheet analysis:

- Overall, the **program descriptions** need to ensure that the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area are effectively communicated to the public.
- **Age segment distribution** is partially aligned with the community's current population. There is a need for more Adult programs, but these needs to be monitored annually to ensure program distribution continues to match Columbia's aging demographics.
- **Program lifecycles:** lifecycle mix is slightly top heavy with 67% of current programs categorized in the beginning stages (Introduction, Take-Off, and Growth). A complete description of Lifecycle Stages can be found in Section 5.4.2.
- The County's **volunteer program** allows residents and organizations to get involved and give back to the community, however, the Department should centralize their own volunteer program through the adoption of a formal volunteer policy. This will give the Department ownership of their own volunteer base, improving communication, tracking, training, and the ability to create system advocates. See section 4.7 of "CAPRA National Accreditation Standards" for Volunteer Policy framework.
- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods, including a very strong social media presence, particularly utilizing Facebook. Other tools used include online program guides, the County's website, flyers/brochures, email blasts, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), marquee signs, radio advertisements, TV advertisements, online newsletters and in-facility signage.
- The Department would benefit from identifying **Return on Investment (ROI)** for all marketing initiatives.
- There is opportunity to rearrange the website to make information more accessible to users. There is also opportunity to grow the County's social media presence further by leveraging each platform to create a consistent story and engage with the community.
- Would recommend the creation of formal **Marketing Plan** (Standard 3.4.3 for CAPRA Accreditation)
- Currently, **customer feedback** methods are limited. It is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating user feedback, on a more consistent basis, as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Specifically, pre-program evaluation, lost customer surveys, and focus groups are strong feedback tools to be used moving forward.
- **Pricing strategies** are more rigid than dynamic. Currently, the most frequently used approaches are by cost recovery goals, group discounts, and family household status. These are useful strategies in increasing participation as well as helping the Department become more self-sufficient however more can be done by introducing new pricing strategies, which can be found in Section 1.2.10, to leverage the potential of each program.
- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals are currently being utilized for most programs. It is recommended that staff factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall goal of greater fiscal sustainability.

5.3 CURRENT OPERATIONS

5.3.1 FRAMEWORK

To help achieve the Department's mission, it is important to identify Core Program Areas based on current and future needs to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. The philosophy of the Core Program Area is to assist staff, policy makers, and the public to focus on what is most important to the community. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet most of the following criteria:

- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency's overall budget.
- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- The program area has wide demographic appeal.
- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the program area's offerings.
- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- The agency controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market



5.3.2 EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREAS

In discussions with the Department staff, the consulting team identified ten Core Program Areas currently being offered. These are shown in the graphic below.



GRAPHIC ADOPTED FROM "COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND EVENTS"; FIGURE 1: EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREAS BY PROS CONSULTING

5.3.3 CORE PROGRAM AREA DESCRIPTIONS, GOALS, & EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

In discussions with the Department staff, the consulting team identified ten Core Program Areas currently being offered.

ACTIVE ADULTS & SENIORS



DESCRIPTION:

Book Clubs, Park Activities, Hobbies, and Games for people who are 50 or older

GOALS:

Provide programs and activities for 50+ to have a positive impact on their mental and physical health

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Experience Club Hobbies
- Experience Book Club

ADULT SPORTS



DESCRIPTION:

Adult athletics offerings continuation of sport and competition for adult participants.

GOALS:

Give adults a physical outlet to improve physical fitness and social wellbeing through competition and sports play

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Adult Softball
- Adult Soccer
- Pickleball
- Adult Kickball

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION



DESCRIPTION:

Knowledge and awareness programs about the natural environment

GOALS:

Advance environmental literacy and impart a passion for environmental stewardship in Columbia County

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Reed Creek
- Wetland Walk
- Saturday Classes
- Afterschool Nature Club
- Educational Animal Outreach

FITNESS & WELLNESS



DESCRIPTION:

Exercise, group classes help improve and maintain physical and emotional fitness for all ages

GOALS:

Provide clean, accessible, welcoming facilities that foster physical fitness opportunities for all ages. Provide open play/workout opportunities that give members a self-directed physical fitness experience

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Move Program
- Weekend Workouts
- Wellness Wednesday
- RFIG Scanner points program
- Quarterly Move Events
- Aerobics
- Yoga
- Jiu Jitsu

5.3.3 CORE PROGRAM AREA DESCRIPTIONS, GOALS, & EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

SENIOR PROGRAMS



DESCRIPTION:

Programs that encourage socializing, keeping the mind sharp, and building up the 60+ community in our county

GOALS:

Provide programs, meals, and facilities for ages 60+ to have a positive impact on physical and mental health

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Senior Center
- Ceramic Classes
- Arts & Crafts
- Bingo
- Guest Speakers
- Holiday Celebrations
- Outings
- Health Screenings

SPECIAL EVENTS



DESCRIPTION:

Civic, cultural, recreational, or social activities events, open for participation by the general public

GOALS:

Provide events for all ages to have a positive impact on physical and mental health of the community

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Food Truck Fridays
- Screen on the Green
- Easter Egg Scramble
- Boom! In the Park
- Trick or Treat
- Evans on Ice

SUMMER CAMPS



DESCRIPTION:

Summer day camps for children ages 5-15 hosted at the wetland nature park

GOALS:

Provide low-cost environmental education and fun during the summer for Columbia County children

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Reed Creek Summer Camps
- Wetland Adventure Camp
- CSRA Adventure Camp

SUMMER SPORTS CAMPS



DESCRIPTION:

Sport specific, instruction-based camps aimed at direct, small group instruction in the basic skills of sport in subject

GOALS:

Provide socialization and social growth opportunities for the youth in our community

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Baseball Camp
- Football Camp
- Softball Camp
- Soccer Camp
- Tennis Camp
- Volleyball Camp
- Basketball Camp

5.3.3 CORE PROGRAM AREA DESCRIPTIONS, GOALS, & EXAMPLE PROGRAMS

THERAPEUTIC RECREATION



DESCRIPTION:

Holistic, adaptive recreation that provides an opportunity for individuals with special needs, of all kinds, to participate in sports or activities

GOALS:

Provide adaptive recreation activities for individuals with disabilities that may not be able to participate in unmodified sports

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Buddy Soccer

YOUTH SPORTS



DESCRIPTION:

Youth Athletics offerings in a myriad of sports aimed at basic and sport specific skill development for athletes of all ages.

GOALS:

Provide entry level, introductory sport experience that is a value to all participants at all skill levels.

EXAMPLE PROGRAMS:

- Tackle Football
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Flag Football

5.3.4 EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

These existing Core Program Areas provide a generally well-rounded and diverse array of programs for the community. Based upon the observations of the consulting team as well as demographic and recreation trends information, Department staff should evaluate Core Program Areas and individual programs, ideally on an annual basis, to ensure offerings are relevant to evolving demographics and trends in the local community. Furthermore, there may be an opportunity to combine or streamline Core Program Areas to better align with community needs.



5.3.5 POTENTIAL NEW CORE PROGRAM AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

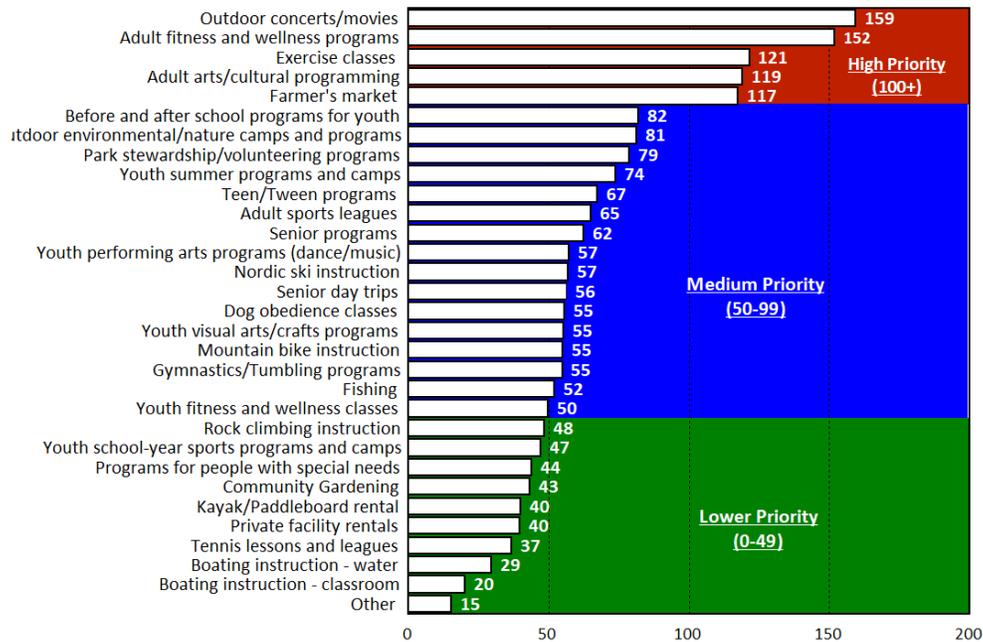
The Department should explore expanding Core Program Areas to assist in fulfilling existing unmet needs. Based on the results from the Community Survey, there is a high priority for investment in Outdoor concerts/movies, Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs, Exercise classes, Adult arts/cultural programming, and Farmer's market according to the Priority Investment Ratings (PIR). (See chart below.)

PIR was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on investments for parks, recreation programs and events. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs:

- (1) the importance that households place on each facility/amenity/program and
- (2) how many households have unmet needs for the facility/amenity/program.

Based on this data, we see a need an expansion of “Fitness and Wellness” (Adult fitness and wellness is 2nd in PIR, Exercise classes is 3rd), “Special Events” (Outdoor concerts/movies 1st in PIR, Farmer’s market was 5th).

Top Priorities for Investment for Programs Based on the Priority Investment Rating



5.4 PROGRAM STRATEGY ANALYSIS

5.4.1 AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS

The table below depicts each Core Program Area and the most prominent age segments they serve. Recognizing that many Core Program Areas serve multiple age segments, Primary (noted with a 'P') and Secondary (noted with an 'S') markets are identified.

Core Program Area	AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS					
	Preschool (5 and Under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Adult (18+)	Senior (55+)	All Ages Programs
Active Adults/Seniors					P	
Adult Sports				P	P	
Environmental Education						P
Fitness and Wellness	S	S	P	P	P	
Senior Programs					P	
Special Events						P
Summer Camps		P	S	S		
Summer Sports Camps	P	P	P			
Therapeutic Recreation						P
Youth Sports	P	P	P			

Age Segment Analysis | Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events

An Age Segment Analysis was completed by Core Program Area, to review the age segments served by different program areas and identify any gaps in segments served. It is recommended that staff perform an Age Segment Analysis by individual programs to further understand and tailor future offerings to community needs. Approximately 48% of Columbia's population is between the ages of 18 and 54, indicating an opportunity for more adult programs to cater to this segment. The table above shows a community desire for fitness, concerts, movies, arts, and cultural programs that would specifically cater to this demographic.

That being said, the Department does well to ensure that the growing population of those 55+ are well served. This demographic is expected to grow from 28% of the population in 2021 to 33% the next 15 years, so we should expect a need to expand upon Senior based fitness, wellness, and trips program offerings in the coming years.

Staff should continue to monitor demographic shifts and program offerings to ensure that the needs of each age group are being met. It is best practice to establish a plan including what age segment to target, establish the message, which marketing method(s) to use, create the social media campaign, and determine what to measure for success before allocating resources towards a particular effort.

5.4.2 PROGRAM LIFE CYCLE

A Program Lifecycle Analysis involves reviewing each program offered by the Department to determine the stage of growth or decline for each. This provides a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall mix of programs managed by the agency to ensure that an appropriate number of programs are "fresh" and that relatively few programs, if any, need to be discontinued. This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data, but rather, is based on staff members' knowledge of their program areas. The following table on the next page shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the County's programs. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff members.

Lifecycle	Description	Actual Program	Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	7%	67%
Take-Off	Rapid participation growth	7%	
Growth	Moderate, but consistent population growth	52%	
Mature	Slow participation growth	26%	26%
Saturation	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	6%	7%
Decline	Decline participation	0%	
No Go	Cancelled	1%	
			50-60% total
			40% total
			0-10% total

The Lifecycle Analysis shows that the programs offered tend to be newer rather than established. Approximately 67% of all programs fall within the beginning stages (Introduction, Take-Off, & Growth) and speaks to the Department's successful focus on introducing new programs and seeing them grow. Eventually, these programs will begin to move into the Mature stage, so an emphasis on continued rejuvenation of existing programs and adding new programs is key for sustained success.

According to staff, 26% of all program offerings fall into the Mature Stage. With 52% of programs being in the Growth Stage (some of which will transition into the Mature stage), we can expect the percentage of mature programs to grow quickly. The Mature Stage anchors a program portfolio, and it is recommended to have roughly 40% of programs within this category in order to achieve a stable foundation.

Additionally, 7% of programs are identified as Saturated or Declining (0-10% Recommended Distribution). It is a natural progression for programs to eventually evolve into saturation and decline stages. However, if programs reach these stages rapidly, it could be an indication that the quality of the programs does not meet expectations, or there is not as much of a demand for the programs. As programs enter the Decline stage, they must be closely reviewed and evaluated for repositioning or elimination. When this occurs, the Department should modify these programs to begin a new lifecycle within the Introductory stage or replace the existing programs with new programs based upon community needs and trends.

Staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis annually and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance. The Department could also include annual performance measures for each Core Program Area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of new programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.

5.4.3 PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION

Conducting a classification of services analysis informs how each program serves the overall organization mission, the goals and objectives of each Core Program Area, and how the program should be funded regarding tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. A program's classification can help determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies.

Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides a public benefit versus a private benefit. Public benefit can be described as everyone receiving the same level of benefit with equal access, whereas private benefit can be described as the user receiving exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.

For this exercise, the Department used a classification method based on three categories: **Essential Services, Important Services, and Value-Added Services**. Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, financial sustainability, personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, and access by participants. The following graphic describes each of the three program classifications.



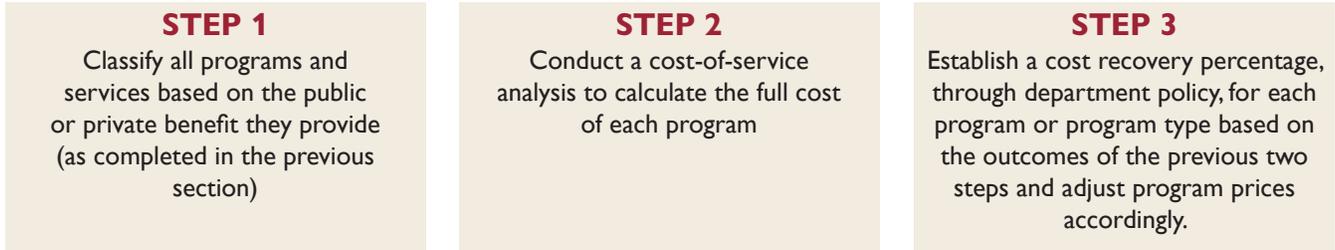
With assistance from staff, all recreation programs offered by the Department were classified into three categories. The results presented in the following table represent the current classification of recreation program services. Programs should be assigned ranges for cost recovery goals within those overall categories. A full program list organized by Core Program Areas can be found in **Appendix H - Program Classifications**.

Program Classification			
Factors	Essential	Important	Value-Added
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	High public expectation	High public expectation	High individual and interest group expectation
Financial Sustainability	Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs, Requires public funding	Fees cover some direct costs, Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target	Fees cover most direct and indirect costs, Some public funding as appropriate
Benefits (health, safety, protection of assets, etc.)	Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)	Public and individual benefit	Primarily individual benefit
Competition in the Market	Limited or no alternative providers	Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need	Alternative providers readily available
Access	Open access by all	Open access Limited access to specific users	Limited access to specific users
Best Practice Cost Recovery Goal*	0 - 50%	50% - 75%	75% - 100%+
Program Distribution	38%	42%	20%

5.4.4 COST - OF - SERVICE AND COST RECOVERY

Cost recovery targets should at least be identified for each Core Program Area, and for specific programs or events when realistic. The previously identified Core Program Areas would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics including administrative costs. Theoretically, staff should review how programs are grouped for similar cost recovery and subsidy goals to determine if current practices still meet management outcomes.

Determining cost recovery performance and using it to make informed pricing decisions involves a three-step process:



5.4.5 UNDERSTANDING THE FULL COST-OF-SERVICE

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting needs to be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and the Department’s program staff should be trained on this process. A Cost-of-Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (i.e., program-specific) and indirect (i.e., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost-of-Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program, but it also provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs. The figure to the right illustrates the common types of costs that must be accounted for in a Cost-of-Service Analysis.

The methodology for determining the total Cost-of-Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants
- Number of tasks performed
- Number of consumable units
- Number of service calls
- Number of events
- Required time for offering program/service



Agencies use Cost-of-Service Analysis to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by the Department between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost-of-Service totals have been calculated. Program staff should be trained on the process of conducting a Cost-of-Service Analysis and the process should be undertaken on a regular basis.

5.4.5 PRICING

Pricing strategies are one mechanism agencies can use to influence cost recovery. Overall, the degree to which the Department uses various pricing strategies is only partially dynamic. Not all pricing tactics are utilized by multiple Core Program Areas. Location, Prime/Non-Prime Time, and Competition are not used by any program and Active Adults & Seniors, Fitness/Wellness, and Senior Programs only using Cost Recovery Goals.

Currently, the Core Program Area that utilizes the largest variety of pricing strategies are the Therapeutic Recreation and Youth Sports which utilize the same 5 of the 10 mentioned tactics. All the Core Program Areas use Cost Recovery Goals as pricing strategies. Group Discounts and Family Household Status are the second and third most popular although only 5 and 4 programs respectively use them.

Moving forward, the Department should consider further implementing some of the less utilized strategies, when deemed appropriate, such as Location, Prime/Non-Prime Time, Competition, Weekday/Weekend, Age Segments, and By Customer's Ability to Pay (scholarship program). These untapped pricing strategies are useful to help stabilize usage patterns and help with cost recovery for higher quality amenities and services.

Staff should continue to monitor the effectiveness of the various pricing strategies they employ and adjust as necessary. It is also important to continue monitoring for yearly competitor and other service providers (i.e., similar providers) as found in **Appendix I - Similar Providers**. The table below details pricing methods currently in place by each Core Program Area and additional areas for strategies to implement over time.

Pricing Strategies										
Core Program Area	Age Segment	Family / Household Status	Residency	Weekday / Weekend	Prime / Non-Prime Time	Group Discounts	By Location	By Competition (Market Rate)	By Cost Recovery Goals	By Customer's Ability to Pay
<i>Active Adults & Seniors</i>									X	
<i>Adult Sports</i>			X			X			X	
<i>Environment Education</i>	X	X				X			X	
<i>Fitness/Wellness</i>									X	
<i>Senior Programs</i>									X	
<i>Special Events</i>	X			X		X			X	
<i>Summer Camps</i>		X							X	
<i>Summer Sports Camps</i>									X	X
<i>Therapeutic Recreation</i>		X	X			X			X	X
<i>Youth Sports</i>		X	X			X			X	X

5.4.6 PROGRAM STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

In general, the Department program staff should continue the cycle of evaluating programs on both individual merit as well as the program mix as a whole. This can be completed at one time on an annual basis, or in batches at key seasonal points of the year, as long as each program is checked once per year. The following tools and strategies can help facilitate this evaluation process:

MINI BUSINESS PLAN

The consulting team recommends that Mini Business Plans (2-3 pages) for each Core Program Area be updated on a yearly basis. These plans should evaluate the Core Program Area based on meeting the outcomes desired for participants, cost recovery, percentage of the market and business controls, Cost-of-Service, pricing strategy for the next year, and marketing strategies that are to be implemented. If developed regularly and consistently, they can be effective tools for budget construction and justification processes in addition to marketing and communication tools. See **Appendix J - Mini Business Plan** for a template.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & DECISION-MAKING MATRIX

When developing program plans and strategies, it is useful to consider all of the Core Program Areas and individual program analysis discussed in this Program Assessment. Lifecycle, Age Segment, Classification, and Cost Recovery Goals should all be tracked, and this information, along with the latest demographic trends and community input, should be factors that lead to program decision-making. Community input can help staff focus in on specific program areas to develop new opportunities in what group of citizens to target including the best marketing methods to use.

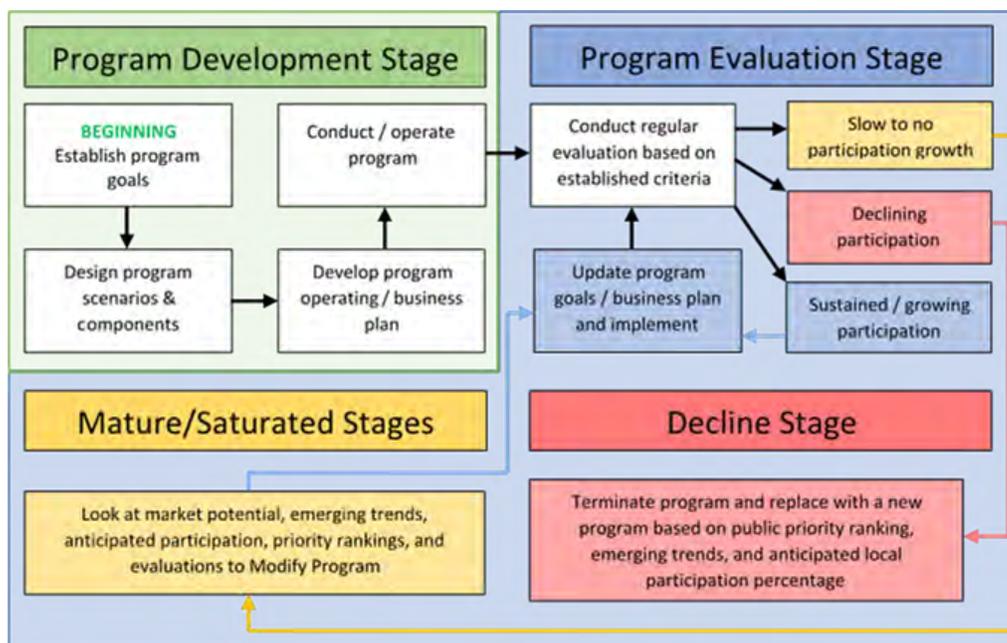
A simple, easy-to-use tool similar to the image below will help compare programs and prioritize resources using multiple data points, rather than relying solely on cost recovery. In addition, this analysis will help staff make an informed, objective case to the public when a program is in decline, but beloved by a few, is retired. If the program/service is determined to have high priority, appropriate cost recovery, good age segment appeal, good partnership potential, and strong market conditions, the next step is to determine the marketing methods by completing a similar exercise as the one seen below.

Marketing & Promotion Methods				
Program Idea (Name or Concept): _____				
Marketing Methods	Content Developed	Contact Information	Start Date	
Activity Guide				
Website				
Newspaper Article				
Radio				
Social Media				
Flyers - Public Places				
Newspaper Ad				
Email Notification				
Event Website				
School Flyer/Newsletter				
Television				
Digital Sign				
Friends & Neighbors Groups				
Staff Promotion @ Events				
Internal Factors				
Priority Ranking: High Medium Low				
Program Area: Core Non-core				
Classification: Essential Important Discretionary				
Cost Recovery Range: 0-40% 60-80% 80+%				
Age Segment: Primary Secondary				
Sponsorship/Partnership				
Potential Partnerships: Monetary Volunteers Partner Skill Location/Space				
Potential Sponsors: Monetary Volunteers Sponsor Skill Location/Space				
Market Competition				
Number of Competitors: _____				
Competitiveness: High Medium Low				
Growth Potential: High Low				

PROGRAM EVALUATION CYCLE (WITH LIFECYCLE STAGES)

Using the Age Segment and Lifecycle analysis and other established criteria, program staff should evaluate programs on an annual basis to determine program mix. This can be incorporated into the Program Operating/Business Plan process. A diagram of the program evaluation cycle and program lifecycle is found in the chart below. During the Introductory Stages, program staff should establish program goals, design program scenarios and components, and develop the program operating/business plan. Regular program evaluations will help determine the future of a program.

If participation levels are still growing, continue to provide the program. When participation growth is slowing (or non-existent) or competition increases, staff should look at modifying the program to re-energize the customers to participate. When program participation is consistently declining, staff should terminate the program and replace it with a new program based on the public's priority ranking and/or in activity areas that are trending nationally/regionally/locally, while taking into consideration the anticipated local participation percentage.



5.5 MARKETING, VOLUNTEERS, AND PARTNERSHIPS

5.5.1 CURRENT RECREATION MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Department’s current marketing plan utilizes several communication methods to connect with residents including online program guides, the County’s website, flyers/brochures, email blasts, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), marquee signs, radio advertisements, TV advertisements, online newsletters in-facility signage, and various social media channels.

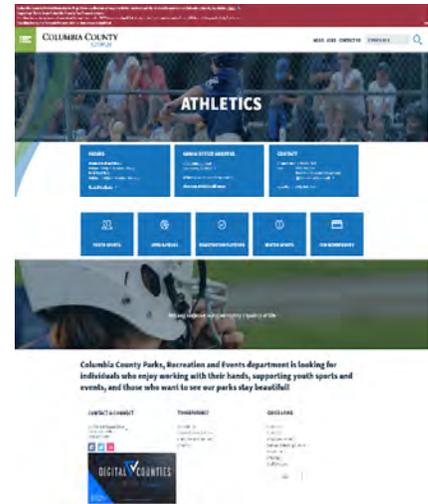
Effective communication strategies require striking an appropriate balance between the content with the volume of messaging while utilizing the “right” methods of delivery. The Department has a broad distribution of delivery methods for promoting programs. It is imperative to continue updating the marketing plan annually to provide information for community needs, demographics, and recreation trends.

An effective marketing plan must build upon and integrate with supporting plans and directly coordinate with organization priorities. The plan should also provide specific guidance as to how the Department’s identity and brand is to be consistently portrayed across the multiple methods and deliverables used for communication.



5.5.2 WEBSITE

The Department website <https://www.columbiacountyga.gov/community/recreation> has several features making it easy to navigate and user friendly. There is a navigation bar located along the top of the homepage with dropdown menus. The top right corner has links to County news, jobs, a “Contact Us” option, a translate box that allows users to translate the site into 12 different languages, and a search function. Hours, office address and contact info are prominently displayed in the middle of the screen. Right below that are links to programs and registration. The registration link takes you directly to the County’s RECI page which easily allows users to create accounts and register for programs. Along the bottom of the page are quick links, including those to the County’s Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages.



A full list of website accessibility basics can be found at <https://www.usability.gov/what-and-why/accessibility.html>.

5.5.3 SOCIAL MEDIA

The Columbia County utilizes Web 2.0 technology through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Here is a quick analysis of the Department by each platform.

FACEBOOK

- 34k Followers
- Multiple posts per day
- Used very well to promote programs and actively engage community
- Best practice recommendations for Facebook content include short videos, blog posts and curated

TWITTER

- 4,099 Followers
- Regular updates on events and programs
- Minimal interaction by public
- Best practice recommendations for Facebook content include short videos, blog posts and curated content.

INSTAGRAM

- 1,609 Followers
- Multiple posts per day
- Consistent feed look and feel
- Best practice recommendations for Instagram include infographics, step-by-step photo guides, and gifs.

YOUTUBE

- 194 Subscribers
- 40,748 total views
- Joined August 20, 2015, multiple posts per day sometimes
- Best practice recommendations for Youtube include videos sharing stories of the park and the good you do in the community

The key to successful implementation of a social network is to move the participants from awareness to action and creating greater user engagement. This could be done by:

- Allow controlled ‘user generated content’ by encouraging users to send in their pictures from the County’s special events or programs.
- Leverage the website to obtain customer feedback for programs, parks and facilities and customer service.
- Maximize the website’s revenue generating capabilities.
- Conduct annual website strategy workshop with the staff to identify ways and means that the website can support the County’s Social Media Trends.
- Utilize TikTok to engage with younger demographics and share your story.
- Diversify content and use cross-platform promotion to grow channels across the board
- Utilize LinkedIn to promote your organizational culture and employment opportunities.
- Utilize a Content Calendar to set posting schedule.

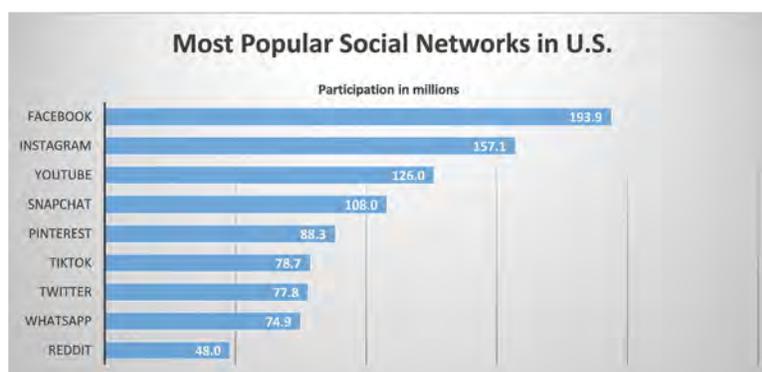
SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

Over the last decade, social media has become one of the Country’s fastest growing trends. With only ten percent of the country using social media in 2008; today, an estimated eighty-two percent of the U.S. population is currently using some form of social media. With such a large percentage of the population using these online media platforms in their daily lives, it becomes essential for the County to take advantage of these marketing opportunities. Social media can be a useful and affordable tool to reach current and potentially new system users. Such platforms as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Twitter, or LinkedIn are extremely popular with not only today’s youth but also young and middle-aged adults.



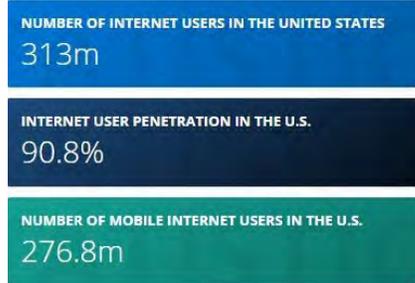
SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Below is a chart that depicts the most frequently used social media sites throughout the world. As of October 2021, Facebook stands out as the most heavily trafficked social media platform, with an estimated 2.9 billion visitors per month. YouTube is second with 2.3 billion visitors per month. TikTok has the highest growth rate at 85.3% in 2021.



MEDIUMS USED TO ACCESS THE INTERNET

The neighboring image is taken directly from Statista.com and depicts the number of Internet users in the United States, Internet penetration in the U.S., and the number of mobile Internet users in the U.S. Less than 10% of surveyed adults state they did not use the Internet in 2021.



5.5.4 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a Department marketing plan including the components and strategies identified in this report with the goal of increasing engagement on each platform.
- Establish priority segments to target in terms of new program/service development and communication tactics.
- Establish and review regularly performance measures for marketing; performance measures can be tracked through customer surveys as well as some web-based metrics.
- Leverage relationships with partners to enhance marketing efforts through cross-promotion that include defined measurable outcomes.

5.5.5 VOLUNTEER AND PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT

Today's realities require most public parks and recreation departments to seek productive and meaningful partnerships with both community organizations and individuals to deliver quality and seamless services to their residents. These relationships should be mutually beneficial to each party to better meet overall community needs and expand the positive impact of the agency's mission. Effective partnerships and meaningful volunteerism are key strategy areas for the County to meet the needs of the community in the years to come.



CURRENT VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

When managed with respect and used strategically, volunteers can serve as the primary advocates for the County and its offerings. Currently, Columbia has no volunteer program or opportunities.

The County does utilize volunteers for Community Events, Youth Sports Coaches and Officials, and at the Reed Creek Nature Park and Interpretive Center. Should the County develop a volunteer program, however, the Department does not currently have a formal/adopted volunteer policy, nor do they track volunteer hours and/or individual volunteers annually. These key performance indicators can be used in budget discussions showing how well the Department is able to leverage limited resources. A complete list of volunteer recommendations and best practices can be found in **Appendix K - Volunteer / Partnership Best Practices and Recommendations**.

5.5.6 RECREATION PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

The Department currently works with several different types of partners throughout the community. These partnerships support facilitation of programs and sponsorships of community events. As with tracking of volunteer hours, tracking partnerships helps show leadership how well staff can leverage resources. In many instances, partnerships are inequitable to the public agency and do not produce reasonable shared benefits between parties. It is not suggested that the Columbia's existing partnerships are inequitable; rather, in general many parks and recreation agencies' partnerships tend to be inequitable.

The following recommended policies will promote fairness and equity within the existing and future partnerships while helping staff to manage against potential internal and external conflicts. Certain partnership principles must be adopted by the Department for existing and future partnerships to work effectively. These partnership principles are as follows:

- All partnerships require a working agreement with measurable outcomes and will be evaluated on a regular basis. This should include reports to the agency on the performance and outcomes of the partnership including an annual review to determine renewal potential.
- All partnerships should track costs associated with the partnership investment to demonstrate the shared level of equity.
- All partnerships should maintain a culture that focuses on collaborative planning on a regular basis, regular communications, and annual reporting on performance and outcomes to determine renewal potential and opportunities to strengthen the partnership.

Additional partnerships can be pursued and developed with other public entities such as neighboring towns/cities, colleges, state or federal agencies, non-for-profit organizations, as well as with private or for-profit organizations. There are recommended standard policies and practices that will apply to any partnership, and those that are unique to relationships with private, for-profit entities.

5.5.7 VOLUNTEER AND PARTNERSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS

The planning team recommends the following regarding volunteers and partnerships:

ESTABLISH FORMAL VOLUNTEER AND PARTNERSHIP POLICIES AND AGREEMENTS

When managed with respect and used strategically, volunteers can serve as the primary advocates for the County and its offerings. Currently, Columbia has no volunteer program or opportunities.

Following the best practice listed in the previous section as well as in **Appendix K - Volunteer / Partnership Best Practices and Recommendations**, continue to monitor and update established volunteer and partner policies and agreements which are tailored to the different types of volunteers and partnerships the Department encounters. Additionally, begin tracking volunteer metrics more consistently, including individual volunteers used annually and volunteer hours donated annually. Lastly, begin identifying measurable outcomes for each partnership and track these metrics annually.



06 NATURAL RESOURCE PLAN

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Columbia County (the County) is situated adjacent to the Savannah River, slightly northwest of Augusta, Georgia, and is approximately 185,922 acres, or approximately 308 square miles, in size, including open water areas. Approximately 16% of the County's land use is dedicated to agriculture, while approximately 76% is forested, with the remaining area being described as developed.

Existing County parks serve many recreational purposes, such as, but not limited to providing event space for activities such as meetings and concerts, senior centers, farmer's markets, organized sports such as soccer, baseball and basketball, playgrounds, disc golf courses, walking and jogging opportunities, scenic greenways, nature and interpretive opportunities, camping, boating, fishing and biking.

There are several parks that occur within Columbia County that are managed by and/or owned by agencies outside of the County, such as Heggie's Rock, which is managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Mistletoe State Park, which is owned by the State of Georgia and managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Division of State Parks & Historic Sites. Although the County does not own or manage these sites, it is important to understand these resources occur within the geographical landscape of Columbia County, and therefore, environmental stewardship and collaborative opportunities should be encouraged.

As part of this study, a Needs Assessment Survey for Columbia County was conducted by the ETC Institute with the purpose of gathering feedback to guide the Department. A total of 535 households completed the survey. As it pertains to facility needs and priorities, participants indicated that paved walking, biking and hiking trails (59%), nature centers/nature trails (49%) and natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace) (45%) were the three highest need facility priorities (ETC Institute, 2021). In addition, paved walking, biking and hiking trails and natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace) were selected as two of the top four most important needs for each facility, at 30% and 18% respectively (ETC Institute, 2021). Based on the results of this assessment survey, the County's residents place a very high value on wanting an increase in natural resource recreational opportunities.

On the County level, Natural Resource Management may want to consider focus on the renewed management and potential recreational access to the natural resources available within the County. This includes providing clean water and air, healthy soils, a diversity of both flora and fauna, while simultaneously accomplishing responsible management of these resources for use by the residents of the County and their future generations. In addition, it is important to educate the public about natural resources, as well as understanding how these resources are affected by humans and how our interactions and decisions affect these resources. Interpretive, outreach and recreational opportunities can be used to educate the public in these measures. Reed Creek Nature Park and Interpretive Center is a great example of how natural resource interpretation can educate the public and build their appreciation of the County's natural resources.

The purpose of this Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) is to establish considerations for managing natural resources through the various greenspace, open space and parks that occur within Columbia County. As the County has a variety of parks with site specific goals, it is important to make sure the natural resources that occur within parks are managed and protected in similar ways, and environmental protection measures and procedures for unique or sensitive areas are consistent throughout the park system. In addition, the NRMP will strive to establish management strategies and considerations for the protection and management of natural resources while simultaneously offering opportunities for the use of these areas for recreation.

As the County moves forward with this NRMP, they may consider a series of implementation strategies accordingly. There are a number of steps that could be pursued when implementing this plan. These include:

- Future Park, Greenspace and Open Space Planning, Acquisition and Collaboration
- Vegetation Management
- Wildlife Management
- Water Quality and Erosion Control
- Human Interactions and Education

The NRMP items represent a foundation upon which to build. Accordingly, a series of recommendations and policies that the County may pursue, will follow.



6.2 PLANNING, ACQUISITION, AND COLLABORATION

Columbia County offers a variety of recreational opportunities and resources, including events and programs, to its residents. To continue to successfully meet the County's land protection and greenspace goals in a rapidly growing county, future planning, including potential amenity acquisition and management, as well as multi-agency management collaboration, may want to be considered.

Columbia County has experienced rapid growth over the past decades with forecasts suggesting this growth will continue at roughly the same pace (Columbia County 2020). As the population of Columbia County increases, the County should anticipate growth and may want to focus efforts on the acquisition of lands situated where development will occur in the future. This strategy would not only protect natural resources that can be enjoyed by future generations for years to come but will also continue to provide access to park and greenway areas for all Columbia County residents. Thankfully, Columbia County's Greenspace Program has a goal to protect more land to achieve the State-mandated minimum of 20% (Columbia County 2020).

To further refine target areas, including anticipating future growth, long term planning with target goals may be considered. The long-term plan should take into account future anticipated growth as well as need and should consider the balance of growth and development coupled with conservation and preservation, as well as active recreational management. This will assist with guiding areas with the greatest need for parkland, as well as identifying underserved areas in need of additional recreational opportunities. As approved by the Columbia County Commissioners in 2016, the County is required to develop growth management plans every five years. The County just finalized a Growth Management Plan, titled Vision 2035. These plans set a vision for where future growth will occur, including recommendations for how communities will be built, and where land uses will be designated. These plans should be used as a reference when planning for future natural resource management, including target areas for open space, green space and park acquisition.

Recommendations for future planning and acquisition include:

STEP ONE: Utilize this plan to identify the locations and amounts of land to be conserved and acquired

STEP TWO: Utilize public and stakeholder input to confirm park and open space areas, as well as the services needed in proposed parks

STEP THREE: Consider strategies for funding mechanisms to assist with park, open space, and conservation area acquisition

STEP FOUR: Create dialogue with other conservation, park, and recreation stakeholders, to assist with identifying greenway and open space collaborative conservation efforts

STEP FIVE: Create relationships and dialogue with other managing partners to assist with

6.2.1 NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORIES AND ASSESSMENTS

Before acquiring new County parks, completing natural and biological resource inventories should be considered. These inventories can be used to identify unique and/or rare resources and may be used to assist with planning and pre-development strategies. If desired, management plans could potentially be prepared for each new park, outlining land management recommendations and goals needed to maintain and enhance these resources. This strategy could prove to be beneficial for parks with rare or sensitive natural resources, and where these resources may become a focus for eco-tourism.

Some common natural resource inventories include, but are not limited to:

- Surveying the following: property boundaries, topography, trees, and wetlands.
- Cultural and Historic Resource Surveys.
- Plant and animal surveys with a focus on threatened and endangered species, both state and federal.
- Environmental Site Assessments (Phase I).
- Property attributes: roads, trails, playgrounds, fields, etc.

6.2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

If newly acquired parks, greenspace, or open areas are being planned for future recreational opportunities, assessing the impacts that may occur through our (human) influence, as well as naturally occurring circumstances, can be considered. Conducting surveys, inventories and assessments on newly acquired parks will first allow each new area to be evaluated so use recommendations can be made. Once planning commences, these analyses can drive planning and development recommendations with a focus on mitigating the potential environmental impacts that may occur. Once parks are open to the public, ongoing monitoring could happen to ensure environmental conditions and natural resources are being maintained and not degraded. Collaborations with volunteers, citizen science groups, and other like-minded groups and

6.3 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

As habitats range from the barren granitic outcrops of Heggie's Rock to climax communities of Savannah River floodplain forests, Columbia County is home to a multitude of diverse plant communities. The County's rich botanical composition can be attributed to the presence and interface of both the Southern Outer Piedmont and Sandhills ecoregions. These ecoregions' gently sloping plains and shallow valleys are suitable for agriculture; however, the County's acreage of harvested cropland and livestock production has been steadily decreasing over the past few decades. As pine, oak and/or hickory forests cover approximately 75% of the County's land area, timber is the highest valued commodity harvested in Columbia County. Despite three quarters of its land area being currently forested, exponentially rising development pressure should make managing for native botanical biodiversity within County parks a priority.

In addition to being of significant importance for property acquisition evaluations, this vegetative baseline information is critical for management plan development, activity implementation and successful monitoring.



Heggie's Rock



Euchee Creek Trail

6.3.1 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Native, or indigenous, plants are those species that are known to be naturally occurring within the County. These species have evolved with their wildlife counterparts to thrive among the natural geologic and climatic conditions present in the County. They serve as important food sources for wildlife, and have complex relationships with other indigenous organisms, many of which we do not fully understand. Due to this, it is important to maintain these relationships and promote the existence and management of native plants.

Where possible, some native plantings should be utilized in planting and landscape plans. Since native plants are adapted to the environmental conditions present in the County, costs associated with care and maintenance are typically lower than planting and maintaining non-native species. Through proper management and site-specific prescriptions, the use and management for native plants will also have positive impacts on the overall biodiversity of parks. The Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council (GA-EPPC) has developed a list of suggested alternatives to non-native invasive plants. Resources such as this should be considered during the park, green space and open space planning and pre-development phase to promote the use of native plants.

Depending on desired future condition of a specific amenity, habitat restoration, enhancement and/or maintenance can be largely achieved through native plant management. For example, a very thick pine dominated forest may look healthy and diverse by the average person, but typically these forests are low in biodiversity and provide little benefit to wildlife due to their high density. By simply managing the vegetation through selective removal, or thinning the timber, native plant community enhancement will result from the reduced canopy density and increased forest floor sunlight penetration, improving biodiversity. Habitat enhancement and/or restoration opportunities, through means of vegetation manipulation and management, should be considered. Through these management implementation processes we can move towards a future desired condition for each park, open space or greenspace. It is through these activities that ecosystem integrity and the health of natural resources improves. Additionally, educational and interpretation opportunities become more available.

6.3.2 PROTECTED SPECIES

A review of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) presented four (4) federally endangered or threatened plant species that occur in Columbia County. An endangered species is a species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a portion of its range, while a threatened species is a species which is likely to become endangered in the near future if no action to improve its viability is taken. These species are protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), with the regulatory body governing the ESA being the Department of Interior, and more specifically the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In addition, the USFWS partners with state agencies to assist with the monitoring and management of listed species on public lands. In Georgia, the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, is responsible for this endeavor. Below is a list of the four listed species that are known to occur in Columbia County, including their federal and state protection designation.

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	FEDERAL STATUS	STATE STATUS
Little Amphianthus	<i>Amphianthus pusillus</i>	Threatened	Threatened
Miccosukee Gooseberry	<i>Ribes echinellum</i>	Threatened	N/A
Relict Trillium	<i>Trillium reliquum</i>	Endangered	Endangered
Mat-Forming Quilwort	<i>Isoetes tegetiformans</i>	Endangered	Endangered

While no critical habitat for the above plant species has been designated by the USFWS to occur in Columbia County, several of the species listed above could potentially inhabit areas in the County, including its current inventory of parks, open space and green space. For example, mat-forming quillwort was previously found to occur at Heggie's Rock Preserve. Inventories should be conducted occasionally on parks lands, especially before certain land management and park development, occurs. If protected plant species are found, coordination with the USFWS and the GADNR should occur. To better understand the habitat requirements for the four protected species, a brief description of each is on the following page.

LITTLE AMPHIANTHUS



Little amphianthus (*Amphianthus pusillus*) is a small, highly specialized annual plant, found only within granitic outcrop habitats. With an entire life cycle of 3-4 weeks, its small (4-5 mm) flowers are typically present from late winter until spring drought kills the plant. Given its evolution requiring extremely specific sunlight intensity, moisture regime and soil depths, little amphianthus has been considered rare since discovery. Despite its persistence within such inhospitable conditions, little amphianthus' continued survival is challenged by the destruction, conversion or otherwise degradation of granitic outcrop habitats (USFWS 2019).

RELICT TRILLIUM



The relict trillium (*Trillium reliquum*) is described as a small flowering plant occurring primarily in undisturbed, mature, moist hardwood forests in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. Relict trillium is found in areas with high organic matter content in the upper soil layers. The most significant threats to relict trillium are loss or alteration of habitat to development, conversion to agriculture or Silviculture, and fire. Also leading to the decline includes the introduction of invasive exotic vines such as Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) and kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*) which can quickly outcompete trillium (USFWS 1990).

MICCOSUKEE GOOSEBERRY



Miccosukee gooseberry is a shrub that can reach up to five feet in height. The leaves are round with three lobes and have whitish or pale-yellow flowers. It is associated with deciduous, mixed hardwood forest, typically composed of species of oak (*Quercus* spp.) and hickory (*Carya* spp.). Threats include habitat destruction and development of habitat, as well as logging. Miccosukee gooseberry is found to occur along lakesides (USFWS 2022).

MAT-FORMING QUILLWORT



Mat-forming quillwort is a low growing aquatic plant with short, chive-like leaves. Plants are connected through an underground rhizome and will form on the surface of the water if allowed. Similar to little amphianthus, mat-forming quillwort is restricted to shallow, flat bottomed depressions on granitic outcrops in the Piedmont region of Georgia. Depressions are entirely rock rimmed and predominately fed by precipitation as opposed to runoff (USFWS 2019).

Managing the variety of habitat types required by Columbia County’s protected species will require development of equally diverse management plans. Although specific activities will be predicated on baseline plant survey results, overall protected botanical species identification and management should focus on:

1. Educating staff members on the identification and habitat requirements of listed plant species
2. Maintaining current data on plant species within County park properties
3. Identifying potential suitable habitat and conduct occasional monitoring events
4. Developing collaborative relationships with the USFWS and the GaDNR
5. Using interpretive and educational opportunities to educate the public
6. Preserving existing populations and suitable habitats
7. Restoring and actively maintaining historically suitable habitats

Despite their differences, the primary focus of these strategies is to increase the overall abundance and quality of habitat capable of supporting Columbia County’s native biodiversity. In addition to precluding direct habitat loss due to development, adequate native vegetation management will mitigate indirect loss associated with habitat degradation.

6.3.3 INVASIVE SPECIES

Minimizing habitat degradation would require eradication and control of non-native species. According to the Georgia Invasive Species Advisory Committee, greater than 80 species of invasive or potentially invasive plant species are known to exist in the state (GaDNR 2009). Due to their effectiveness of displacing native species, approximately 20 are considered a serious threat (Category I) by the GA-EPPC. Active management such as mechanical removal and/or chemical treatment will be necessary for eradication of known infestations. However, the early detection needed to prevent establishment of new populations would require thorough and frequent monitoring. Given the considerable acreage of parks that exist within the County, additional passive management strategies such as public education, awareness and engagement could be incorporated in facility management plans. In addition, stakeholder outreach and volunteer participation may be necessary to effectively implement an invasive species monitoring program. When capable of accurately identifying, recording and reporting them, an educated public will efficiently minimize the County resources required to monitor for invasive species.

In addition to improving early detection within managed parks, increasing public awareness of these species can effectively assist limiting the spread of invasive species elsewhere in Columbia County. For example, the following Category I invasive species were historically, or are currently utilized for landscaping or ornamental



Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*)



Chinese Tallow (*Triadica sebifera*)



Chinese Wisteria (*Wisteria sinensis*)



Japanese Honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*)



English Ivy (*Hedra helix*)



Kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*)

By incorporating passive management strategies such as public education, awareness and engagement within the parks that occur within the County, detection and eradication of the Category I invasive species listed above, as well as all invasive species, will improve. This effort, coupled with additional invasive species control projects, would greatly improve biodiversity and increase the resiliency of the parks, open space and greenspace that occurs within the County.

6.4 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Columbia County is comprised of a variety of ecotypes providing habitat for a diversity of wildlife, including many rare and protected species, as well as state and federal federally threatened and endangered species. The natural resources occurring in Columbia County's parks, open space and greenspace areas could be managed to improve the quality of habitat for not only non-game species, such as various species of herpetofauna, but also for game species, such as white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Wildlife density and specie richness is a testament to the quality of habitat being provided for wildlife. The essential habitat conditions for wildlife may want to be considered when beginning newly acquired park planning so existing habitat conditions can be maintained, created and/or enhanced while future conducting park management operations. When considering improvements during land management operations, it is important to be aware of the habitat requirements needed by wildlife. Wildlife has four basic needs: cover, food, water, and space. The quantity and quality of these components determine the carrying capacity of the land, meaning the number of animals that can be supported in good condition throughout the year.



WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

FOUR BASIC NEEDS OF WILDLIFE

COVER is the protective component of an animal's habitat. An easy way to establish cover is to allow vegetation to grow undisturbed. When land management practices are used which seriously disturb soil and vegetation in areas greater than 20 acres, additional care should be taken to preserve cover areas for wildlife. Cover should be in close proximity to wildlife foraging areas.

The availability of quality **FOOD** is often the habitat factor that limits wildlife populations on a particular property. Enhancement of food resources is probably the most important management practice used by managers. Consideration should be given to producing a diversity of plants that provide both food and cover during all times of the year. **WATER** is a necessary requirement for wildlife survival. Watersheds should be protected by maintaining at least a 50-foot vegetative buffer strip on all sides of ponds, lakes and streams, and forested wetlands. Wetland areas, and natural buffers, provide excellent feeding and resting areas for waterfowl and other wildlife.

Each species of wildlife requires a certain amount of **SPACE** to move about, feed, reproduce and rest. The quantity and quality of food, cover and water found on an area determine the amount of space required. Carrying capacity can often be increased by increasing the quantity and quality of the wildlife habitat components. Various management operations that affect habitats include harvesting, site preparation, forest regeneration practices, and intermediate stand treatments. Each of these forestry practices will affect habitats by altering certain characteristics of the property. Some of the habitat characteristics that influence wildlife are the following:

STAND ARRANGEMENT

Stand arrangement refers to how the forest stands are located in relation to each other. For quality wildlife habitat, forest stands providing habitat components must be available within the home range of the wildlife species that is to be managed. Proper arrangement of food, water and cover can often determine the use and value of these habitat components to wildlife.

DIVERSITY

A variety of plant and animal life should be found within a forest. A forest containing a wide variety of plant-life provides habitats for many kinds of wildlife. The greater the plant diversity in a habitat, the easier it is for wildlife to find the types of cover and food that they require year-round.

SUCCESSION

Plant communities go through a progression of change over time as they develop, mature, and eventually decline. Each of the different successional stages of an area provides different habitats for many species of wildlife. Usually, wildlife species prefer one successional stage over another.

EDGE

This is an area where different plant communities meet, such as where a pine plantation meets a hardwood bottom or where a forest meets a field. These areas have the greatest varieties, numbers and selection of food plants. Edges share characteristics of both plant communities; therefore, wildlife species can find a greater selection of habitat components necessary to meet their requirements. Edges are attractive to a wide variety of wildlife. The amount and condition of edges will have an effect on both quantity and quality of wildlife habitat.

Size and arrangement of forest stands largely determine the quantity of edge and total forest diversity that is created. A mixture of brush land, woodland, and non-forested land creates more diversity and edge than does a large block of one timber type, as characterized in a monoculture (Yarrow, 1989).

6.4.1 NATIVE WILDLIFE

It is important to recognize that the parks that occur throughout Columbia County serve as important habitat and refuge for a variety of wildlife species, including both non-game and game species. Some common examples of species that inhabit Columbia County include: neo-tropical migratory birds such as the Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*) and the Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*), reptiles and amphibians such as the Common Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*), Green Anole (*Anolis carolinensis*), Eastern Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) and Southern Toad (*Anaxyrus terrestris*), and game species such as the white tailed deer. Each park presents a diversity of habitat types that serve a variety of wildlife. Depending on the quality of habitat and the diversity of species that inhabit each park, open space or greenspace, site specific wildlife management goals can vary depending on the overall goals of the property.



Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*)



Indigo Bunting (*Passerina cyanea*)



Common Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*)



Green Anole (*Anolis carolinensis*)



Eastern Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*)



Southern Toad (*Anaxyrus terrestris*)

For example, Wildwood Park is a heavily used regional park approximately 870 acres in size that is located on Clarks Hill Lake. Wildwood Park provides excellent camping, fishing and boating activities, as well as serves as the home to the International Disc Golf Center. In addition, there are a variety of trails that provide opportunity for hiking through the forested areas of the park. Recreational areas (i.e. camping, playgrounds, etc.) are clustered in a way such that large, forested areas of the park remain, providing an abundance of habitat for wildlife. Given the current facilities provided in the park, site specific wildlife management could be more general, and may focus on maintaining current habitat for endemic species with an emphasis on educating the public, minimizing wildlife conflicts, and providing eco-tourism opportunities, such as bird watching and hiking.

For future parks, or parks in more rural settings with more diverse habitat and wildlife present, forest management in the form of forest stand improvement via a selective timber harvest could be implemented if the goal is to conserve wildlife and improve habitat for interpretive and educational purposes. Forest management activities can provide for an excellent opportunity to educate the public on how forests are managed and can also present beneficial partnerships with organizations and agencies, such as TNC and the GaDNR.



Camping at Wildwood Park

6.4.2 PROTECTED SPECIES

By utilizing the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) tool, it was revealed that there are nine (9) federally endangered or threatened species that occur in Columbia County, five (5) of which are animals or insects. Numerous migratory birds, which are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, occur in the County including the bald eagle, which has been successfully removed from the ESA, but remains protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940. Similar to plants, the USFWS partners with state agencies to assist with the monitoring and management of listed species on public lands. In Georgia, the Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division, is responsible for this endeavor. This page shows the five listed species that are known to occur in Columbia County, including their federal and state protection designation.



COMMON NAME: Red-Cockaded Woodpecker
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Picoides borealis*
FEDERAL STATUS: Endangered
STATE STATUS: Endangered



COMMON NAME: Wood Stork
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Mycteria americana*
FEDERAL STATUS: Endangered
STATE STATUS: Endangered



COMMON NAME: Gopher Tortoise
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Gopherus polyphemus*
FEDERAL STATUS: Candidate
STATE STATUS: Threatened



COMMON NAME: Carolina Heelsplitter
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Lasigmona decorata*
FEDERAL STATUS: Endangered
STATE STATUS: N/A



COMMON NAME: Monarch Butterfly
SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Danaus plexippus*
FEDERAL STATUS: Candidate
STATE STATUS: N/A

While no critical habitat has been designated by the USFWS to occur in Columbia County, several of the species listed above could potentially inhabit areas in the County, as well as potentially be found in the current inventory of parks, open space and green space. Inventories may be conducted before park development occurs. If protected species are found, coordination with the USFWS and the GADNR should occur.

Additional key strategies to assist with the identification and management of protected species include, but are not limited to:

1. Educating staff members on the identification and habitat requirements of listed wildlife species
2. Maintaining current data on occurrences throughout the day
3. Identifying potential suitable habitat
4. Developing collaborative relationships with the USFWS and the GaDNR
5. Using interpretive and educational opportunities to educate the public

6.4.3 WILDLIFE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

As Columbia County continues to grow the wildlife urban interface (WUI), which is described as the zone where development meets or becomes interspersed with undeveloped areas, will also grow. This will most certainly lead to the increase in interactions between wildlife and humans. This can also be true in passive park and greenspace situations that have a high number of visitors. As some of these interactions can be positive, such as viewing a new species of bird at a bird feeder, or seeing a fox while hiking through the woods, negative interactions can also occur. Some common species that may be part of these conflicts include, but are not limited to, alligators, Canada geese, coyotes, deer, raccoons and foxes. Most nuisance species are native to the area but are only considered a nuisance due to development pressures created by the WUI, which ultimately put these animals in close contact with human beings. Generally, most wildlife is scared of humans; however, as they become more familiar with humans and changes in environmental conditions their natural fear of humans will slowly diminish. Most wildlife conflicts can be resolved by utilizing certain best management practices to eliminate wildlife attractants.

1. Educating staff on the benefits and potential hazards of wildlife, including the responsibility of visitors having to respect and minimize interaction with wildlife
2. Include signs and kiosks to educate visitors of the potential for conflict, including rules such as, “Do Not Feed Alligators.”
3. Reducing food, water and cover attractants, such as trash
4. Consider the use of exclusion and deterrence methods to reduce conflicts



6.4.4 INVASIVE SPECIES

Invasive species are those wildlife species that have been introduced, either by accident or intentionally, and are not endemic of the County. These species can cause harm to native natural resources, as well as potentially causing harm to human health; even having negative impacts to the State's and County's economies. Considering Georgia's range of diverse landscapes and habitat types, the abundance of invasive species can become quite concentrated if not properly managed.

A few of the most prominent invasive wildlife species that known for causing damage to human and animal health, as well as impacts to the economy, are the feral hog (*Sus scrofa*) and the Asian clam (*Corbicula fluminea*). Feral hogs are large mammals that were originally native to parts of Europe and Asia. They become sexually mature at a relatively early age and have very large clutches of piglets. These animals are known to cause tremendous damage to soils, especially in agricultural landscapes and wetland areas while looking for food items, which is known as "rooting". The Asian clam lives in freshwater lakes, ponds streams and canals, and is native to southeast Asia, Turkey, Japan, Australia and Africa. The most prominent effect Asian clams have had is what is referred to as biofouling, where they can clog and can cause damage to water industry intake pipes (Isom et. al.



Feral Hog (*Sus scrofa*)



Asian Clam (*Corbicula fluminea*)

In response to the challenge, the Georgia Species Advisory Committee, which is coordinated by the GaDNR, developed the Georgia Invasive Species strategy to describe the nature and extent of the state's invasive species problem and propose specific management actions to minimize potential impacts. The goal is prevention and control, as well as the minimization of further spread and impacts to natural resources, including human health and the economy. As part of this initiative tools for responding to invasive species problems have been developed as well as proposed strategies and objectives for action.

Additional key strategies to assist with the identification and management of invasive species include, but are not limited to:

1. Educating staff members on the identification of listed invasive species
2. Utilizing and incorporating Georgia's Invasive Species strategy into park management strategies
3. Maintaining current data on occurrences throughout each park, including areas within the county
4. Conducting occasional site-specific monitoring events
5. Developing a collaborative relationship with GADNR to assist with the sharing of information and management techniques
6. Using interpretive and education opportunities to educate the public
7. Exploring grant and cost sharing opportunities that may assist in the management and control of invasive species
8. Participate in best management practices that may reduce the spread of invasive species

6.5 WILDLIFE QUALITY AND EROSION CONTROL

Columbia County occurs on the Appalachian Mountain fall line, which is a geologic boundary that travels from New York to Alabama. In Georgia, as well as in South Carolina, the fall line separates the Piedmont from the Coastal Plain. Due to this geologic formation, the majority of the County has some topography (slope), ranging from 2% to 10%, with more pronounced slopes occurring along the Savannah River (Columbia County, 2020). This geologic landscape facilitates the majority of the drainage for the County. These drainage features, commonly referred to as wetlands or tributaries, are associated with the Savannah River. As the Savannah River occurs east of Columbia County separating Georgia and South Carolina, its tributaries and wetlands convey water resources generally west to east towards the Savannah River. This geologic and hydrologic area where drainage and discharge is accepted into a common waterway is commonly referred to as a watershed.

A watershed is an area of land, whose topographic features result in discharge to a common waterway, such as a stream, wetland, aquifer or ocean. As a watershed's principal role is hydrologic management, its health and functional integrity is critical to the wellbeing of its plant, animal and human populations. As shown below, Columbia County contains three primary watersheds (8-digit HUC) and can be further subdivided into 4 sub-watersheds (10-digit HUC).

PRIMARY WATERSHED	8-DIGIT HUC	10-DIGIT HUC	SUB-WATERSHED
Middle Savannah	03060106	03060106-01	Kiokee Creek - Savannah River
N/A	N/A	03060106-06	Augusta Canal - Savannah River
Brier Creek	03060108	03060108-02	Brushly Creek - Brier Creek
Little River	03060105	03060105-04	Little River - Clark Hill Reservoir

As the three primary watersheds listed have at least 100 square miles of drainage above their water supply intake, they are classified as large water suppliers and therefore, governed by GaDNR's "large watershed criteria". GaDNR's 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), ranked all four of Columbia County's sub-watersheds as being "High Priority", due to their global ecological significance. As water availability and water quality are considered major issues for the human residents of Columbia County, park management, and future planning and acquisition, should emphasize watershed protection and enhancement.

As Columbia County continues to grow in population, and as more areas continue to become developed, pressure will continue to be placed on its natural resources, especially its water resources. Considering this, there are two main concerns facing water resources:

1. Protecting and ensuring its water quality within and outside of the County's wetlands and tributaries
2. Continuing to provide clean water resources, both for recreational use and consumption, to its residents

Typically, development increases the number of impervious surfaces, such as pavement, concrete and roofs. Furthermore, residential and commercial developments have a tendency to increase nitrogen and phosphorous accumulation from fertilizer overuse. Agricultural run-off and grazing can have similar negative impacts to water resources, with increases in pollution such as an accumulation of nitrogen and fecal coliform in tributaries. Development removes native vegetation and has the potential to have effects associated with erosion and sedimentation. Understanding these potential impacts, and how these potential impacts can be mitigated, is an important step in protecting the County's natural resources and reducing the County's overall environmental impact.

If activities that have negative impacts to wetlands and waterbodies are left to persist without intervention, these waters could become “impaired”, and be placed on the 303(d) list of impaired waters. The County may consider identifying and evaluating those waters that are currently on the list, as well as those waters that are close to meeting the criteria that would place them on the list. With cooperation from the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as other state and local stakeholders, remediation plans can be developed and ultimately implemented to meet water quality standards, with the goal being to improve the water quality in all waters and wetland areas.

Water quality and availability are directly correlated to its human population’s wellbeing. Availability of clean drinking water, as well as water resources that can be used for recreation is a priority within the County. Columbia County contains several groundwater recharge areas that are regulated by both the State of Georgia and the Federal government. It is of the utmost importance that these areas be protected and considered when planning natural resource management strategies for the various parks that may occur near these groundwater recharge areas.

The County has taken several steps to protect its water resources, including developing strategies for protecting water quality, such as adopting a Groundwater Recharge Areas Protection Ordinance to meet Georgia Department of Natural Resource’s (GaDNR) Part 5 Minimum Requirements (Columbia County, 2020). As

1. Develop a greenspace plan that aims to set aside 20% of its land mass in permanent open space. A large percentage of open space will be along floodplains in order to promote higher water quality standards.
2. Implement land use and development strategies that reduce densities along water resources, such as Clark’s Hill Lake Area, and encourages conservation type subdivisions, including a strong flood development ordinance.
3. Consider restrictions and guidelines for septic tank installation and use, especially in sensitive areas, such as near waterbodies and groundwater recharge areas.
4. Consider adopting a River Corridor Protection Plan for the Savannah River Corridor that meets the requirements of the Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act of 1991.
5. Consider protecting groundwater quality by restricting land uses, limiting density of development and protecting groundwater recharge areas with stricter development standards.
6. Adopt a groundwater recharge Areas Protection Ordinance.

In addition to implementing the above, a watershed and water quality evaluation could be developed and incorporated into each newly acquired park site plan. Considerations for each site-specific plan could include, but should not be limited to:

1. Inventory of all drainage, wetlands and waterbodies.
2. Incorporate, utilize and/or enhance vegetative buffers adjacent to wetland areas, or waterbodies.
3. Minimize the use of fertilizer and chemicals in areas adjacent to waterbodies and wetlands for not only future and existing parks, but for all public areas within the County.
4. Adhere to stormwater regulations when conducting development activities.
5. Educate the public on the importance of protecting water resources and water quality.
6. Develop a relationship with GaDNR and explore collaborative efforts to monitor water quality, as well as administer BMPs.

6.5.1 WETLANDS

By definition, wetlands are areas that contain hydric soil, hydrophytic vegetation and the presence of hydrology. More specifically, as defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), wetlands are defined as: “Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.”

The wetlands that occur within Columbia County are considered inland wetlands and are commonly characterized as being floodplains along rivers and streams (riparian zones), open water bodies such as Clarks Hill Lake, as well as more subtle low-lying areas where groundwater occurs at the soil surface. Wetlands serve as important habitat for a variety of flora and fauna, and their health and quality are a testament to the health and viability of the ecosystems they are associated with. In addition, wetlands are very important floodwater storage areas, and facilitate groundwater recharge. Wetlands’ role in the larger global water and nutrient cycles further illustrate their importance.



Central Savannah River Land Trust

The United States Congress passed the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA) in 1972. In 1982 a number of rules and changes to the FWPCA were issued including a change in the name to the Clean Water Act (CWA). The CWA deals with a multitude of regulations designed to protect the nation’s waters. These include cleaning of rivers, ensuring clean drinking water, estuarine protection and ways to prevent the loss of freshwater wetlands. Each one of the areas is addressed in the CWA document under a heading designated as a “section”. These sections are numbered and usually referred to by that numerical designation.

Section 404 of the CWA is the section that requires a fill permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) for the discharge of fill material into “waters of the United States, including wetlands.” Activities in wetlands for which permits may be required include:

- Placement of fill material
- Ditching activities when the excavated material is side casted
- Levee and dike construction
- Mechanized land clearing
- Land leveling
- Most road construction
- Dam construction
- Boardwalks

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) evaluates three characteristics of the area when making wetland determinations: vegetation, soils and hydrology. Unless the area has been altered or is a rare natural situation, wetland indicators of all three characteristics must be present during some portion of the growing season for an area to be classified as a wetland.

Nearly 5,000 plant types may occur in wetlands in the United States. These plants are known as hydrophytic vegetation. Some common examples are cattails, bulrushes, cordgrass, sphagnum moss, bald cypress, willows, mangroves, sedges, rushes and arrowheads. Other vegetative indicators of wetland include shallow root systems, swollen trunks or roots growing from the stem or trunk above the soil surface.



Native Grasses on Savannah River Bank (Central Savannah River Land Trust)

The second consideration in determining wetlands is the investigation of the soils. Soils with characteristics that indicate they developed in conditions where soil oxygen was limited due to saturation for long periods during the growing season are called hydric soils. There are over 2,000 hydric soils in the United States.

The US Soil Conservation Service, now the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) maintains a list of hydric soils. This list can be used to indicate whether wetlands may be present or not. If the soil type is not known there are a number of indicators that can be utilized:

- Soil consists of predominately decomposed plant material.
- Soil has bluish or gray color below the surface, or the major color of the soil is dark and dull.
- Soil has the odor of rotten eggs.
- Soil is sandy and has dark stains of organic material in the upper layer of the soil. These streaks are decomposed plant material attached to soil particles. When soil from these streaks is rubbed between the fingers, a dark stain is left on the fingers.

Wetland hydrology refers to the presence of water at or above the soil surface for a sufficient period of the year to significantly influence the plant types and soils. The following indicators provide evidence that flooding, or soil saturation is occurring:

- Standing or flowing water is observed during growing season.
- Soil is waterlogged during the growing season.
- Watermarks are present on trees.
- Drift lines, which are small piles of debris oriented in the direction of water movement, are present.
- Thin layers of sediments are deposited on leaves or other objects.

The location of wetland boundaries is a very important natural resource inventory that may be considered in all the parks in the County. Knowing the location of wetlands will facilitate the implementation of management strategies aimed to protect not only wetland resources, but the benefits derived from wetlands, such as ecosystem integrity, habitat for both flora and fauna, and clean water that can be utilized for recreation and for consumption.

6.5.2 RIPARIAN BUFFERS

Many of the wetlands found in Columbia County's parks are associated with the Savannah River, or its tributaries. Considering the terrain found in Columbia County, a large portion of the wetlands are associated with slope and can be considered streams and/or creeks. An important aspect of these wetlands systems are their riparian areas, commonly referred to as streamside management zones (SMZ).

SMZs are vegetative buffers that occur adjacent to wetlands. It has been shown that forested buffers, such as SMZs, provide better ecosystem services than grass buffers (Burgess, 2004). Examples of important ecosystem services include, but are not limited to, preventing erosion, improving water quality, filtering pollution and providing habitat for both flora and fauna.

As it pertains specifically to erosion and sedimentation, SMZs play a very important role in mitigating erosion. The vegetation that occurs in SMZs provides critical soil stability and assist with strengthening the stream bank. In existing or future County parks that exhibit issues and/or concerns with erosion and sedimentation, vegetative enhancement strategies could be explored, developed and implemented to ensure wetland resources are being protected. In existing or future County parks that occur in urban areas that have immediate access to waterbodies where SMZs may not be applicable, additional erosion control measures such as bulkheads, earthen walls and turbidity curtains, could be utilized.

SMZ width can vary depending on the amount of slope present; however, Georgia Best Management Practices suggest a width of 35' to 100', depending on the severity of slope and the type of stream or wetland being buffered (Georgia Forestry Commission, 2019). An additional benefit that SMZs provide is serving as wildlife corridors and facilitating migration and cover for a variety of wildlife species.

In future County parks, existing riparian zones should be identified, as well as areas where riparian zones should be developed. At a minimum, buffer widths should be implemented to follow Georgia BMPs to protect water quality and prevent erosion and sedimentation.

An example of an amenity where a SMZ strategy incorporates a multitude of prevention measures is the Savannah Rapids Pavilion/Park. This park occurs adjacent to the Savannah River locks and was built in 1992. This park holds approximately 900 events a year, and has a variety of facilities that include pavilions, playgrounds and a boat dock. Considering the importance this park has to the community, as well as its location immediately adjacent to the Savannah River, erosion prevention is extremely important to not only protect the viability of the park, but to also protect the Savannah River. A combination of natural and man-made prevention would most likely be appropriate for this site.



Savannah Rapids Park

6.6 HUMAN INTERACTIONS AND EDUCATION

Columbia County has been growing rapidly over the past decades. As demonstrated in the ETC Institute’s Columbia County Parks, Recreation and Event Needs Assessment Findings Report (2021), the residents of Columbia County have placed a very high value for wanting an increase in natural resource recreational opportunities; therefore, the future of park, open space, and greenspace opportunities looks very promising for the County. However, with an increase in growth comes the greater potential for negative impacts to natural resources through overuse. As the County continues to grow in population and park land, programs such as “Leave no trace”, which emphasizes minimizing your impact on the environment, will be important to educate the public and staff on, and to utilize, in each amenity area.

Some parks may have sensitive resources that could necessitate special management and use attention, such as wetlands and streams, or protected species. While these opportunities present important and beneficial educational and interpretive opportunities, unrestricted overuse can have detrimental negative environmental impacts. Best Management Practices should be implemented to reduce the negative impact to these sensitive areas. This may include avoidance all the way to creating trail systems that mitigate the potential for erosion.

Each park that occurs within Columbia County provides its own unique set of opportunities to educate the public about the natural resources that occur not only within each property, but within the County. Facilitating this starts at the staff level. Before park visitors can be educated the staff need to fully understand the natural resources present at each property, as well as how these resources should be managed and cared for. Natural resource inventories and assessments, as outlined above, become a crucial and important part of this process – as information gained from these studies will ultimately be used to create educational and interpretive material for the public’s use and benefit. Signs and kiosks are a relatively easy means to get educational material into each park without the need to hire additional interpretive staff. Signage and kiosks are an effective method to spotlight sensitive areas, such as wetlands, or even areas containing culturally significant resources.



Savannah Rapid's Park



Educational Course at Reed Creek Nature Park & Interpretive Center

Thankfully, Columbia County has a park that can be used to model future educational and interpretive endeavors. The Reed Creek Nature Park & Interpretive Center is an interpretive center offering outdoor educational opportunities and experiences for all visitors, regardless of their age. The center currently offers interpretive walks, field trips, which include animal presentations and nature hikes, among other activities, outreach for schools, churches and other organizations, and year-round classes. In addition, Reed Creek provides a wetland park, raised boardwalk, gardens and trails. The staff is knowledgeable and trained to educate the public, providing excellent interpretation of how to identify, care for and properly manage the natural resources present at this location in Columbia County. Depending on the park and natural resources available, educational and interpretive opportunities should be utilized to further educate the public, especially school-aged children on how best to care for the natural resources that occur within the County.

6.6.1 SOUND AND LIGHT MANAGEMENT

As the County continues to grow impacts to natural resources and humans from sound and light has the potential to increase. Depending on the location and usage of the park, noise and light levels will vary – from the more populated parks that occur in urban settings, such as the Savannah Rapids Pavilion/Park; to Wildwood Park, which occurs in a more rural setting adjacent to Clarks Hill Lake. When conducting planning and pre-development strategies, consideration should be given to the amount of noise and light population that will be produced. Active use facilities may want to consider the effects noise and light have on adjacent properties, especially where developed areas and residential neighborhoods exist immediately adjacent to the park. Many of the active recreation parks have sport complexes and fields. The use of these facilities late at night could be considered a nuisance by some of the surrounding residents. In addition, some species of wildlife are very sensitive to light, as cues from stars and other celestial markers are used for nocturnal migration. In addition, patrons typically utilize parks, open space and greenspace in an attempt to escape urban settings, including the light and noise pollution that occurs in these areas. Maintaining opportunities for escape are a valuable amenity, especially when considering the hectic pace of modern life. Some considerations to noise and light management should include:

1. Cluster high volume areas during the planning stage in order to retain opportunities for escape and tranquility.
2. Consider the utilization of noise and light reducing technology, such as barriers, low energy lights and fixtures.
3. Consider the acquisition of rural parks to provide escape from noise and light that occurs in developed areas.

6.7 CONCLUSION

Columbia County has a variety of wonderful park, open space and green space amenities available for its residents. As the County continues to grow in population, it will be very important to meet and maintain the recreational needs and desires of its residents while balancing the effects of growth. This report presented several management strategies and considerations for the protection and management of natural resources for both existing and future parks, as well as presenting strategies and considerations when acquiring new parks. By utilizing these strategies, the County can continue to provide recreational opportunities while simultaneously managing the natural resources that occur within the parks in an environmentally friendly and positive manner.



Wildwood Park

6.8 WORKS CITED

- Burgess, C., (Ed.), 2004. *Buffers for Clean Water*. North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Water Quality, Raleigh, NC. Retrieved 7/23/13 from <http://www.ncstormwater.org/pdfs/FINAL-Buffers%20for%20Clean%20Water%20Brochure.pdf>.
- Columbia County, Georgia. 2020. Forward 2020: Columbia County Growth Management Plan.
- ETC Institute. 2021. Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Needs Assessment: Findings Report.
- Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division. 2009. Georgia Invasive Species Strategy. 129 pp.
- Georgia Forestry Commission. 2019. Georgia's Best management Practices for Forestry. 84 pp.
- Isom, B.G., C.F. Bowman, J.T. Johnson, and E.B. Rodgers. 1986. Controlling *Corbicula* (Asiatic clams) in complex power plant and industrial water systems. *American Malacological Bulletin*, Special Edition 2:95-98.
- United States Census Bureau, "Quick Facts, Columbia County, Georgia." July 1, 2021. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/columbiacountygeorgia/PST045221>
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1990. Relict Trillium Recovery plan. Atlanta, Georgia. 28 pp.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2019. Three Granite Outcrop Plants: Black-spored quillwort (*Isoetes melanospora*), Mat-forming quillwort (*Isoetes tegetiformas*), little amphianthus (*Amphianthus pusillus*) 5-year review: Summary and evaluation 2019. 29 pp.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2022. Miccosukee gooseberry (*Ribes echinellum*) 5-year review: Summary and evaluation 2022. 19pp.
- Yarrow, G.K. 1989. Wildlife Management. Farms and Woodlands. Cooperative Extension Service. Clemson University. Clemson, S.C.



07 OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Sports are a powerful force for economic, personal, and social development, creating opportunity for dynamic social cohesion, healthy communities, and desirable employment. With increasing frequency, progressive communities throughout the country, and particularly in the Southeast, use sports as a means of interaction and community engagement. When sports are mainstreamed into a comprehensive development program, the impact can be substantial and long-lasting.

Columbia County is at a strategic point in time in the creation of a systematic strategy that evaluates rental rates; optimizes sports and recreation; considers sports tourism; assesses operations; and considers funding and revenue strategies. All facets can contribute to future economic success and community pride.

7.2 FACILITY RENTAL RATE COMPARISONS

7.2.1 FACILITY RENTAL FEE BENCHMARK

The consultant team looked at the different rental rates set by the following agencies to provide a benchmark overview and comparison tool for Columbia County. This included looking at agencies that are comparable in nature as well as within proximity to the County. Those agencies are:

- Columbia County, GA (primary)
- Athens-Clark County, GA
- City of Augusta, GA
- City of North Augusta, SC
- Gwinnett County, GA

To benchmark rental rates in these agencies, the team collected data on the different facility rentals available in each location. Due to the nature of the rentals, not all facilities could be directly compared to the available rentals in Columbia County. This is due to differences in sizes, and types of spaces within a singular facility as well as differences in offerings and availability of data on rentals. Fees that were comparable include sports facilities such as soccer/baseball/softball/football fields and tennis courts, pavilions, and meeting rooms. Other facilities that couldn't be compared were prices for different offerings at recreation centers because of the settings (branding and designs), capacities, and services provided at those facilities.



All agencies had a standardized fee chart that can be seen following. Customizable prices were also included in non-comparable fees for special spaces such as themed meeting/club rooms and park-specific activity centers. This chart looks at directly comparable fees to Columbia County along with some specific fees being utilized in other agencies that could be implemented by the County.

7.2.2 STANDARDIZED FEE CHART

Facilities	Columbia County	Athens-Clark County	Gwinnett	Augusta	North Augusta
Soccer fields (Full size)	\$40/hour	Half Day: \$25/hour Full Day: \$19/hour	\$40(Resident)/\$60 (Non-Resident)/\$30 (Nonprofit)	-	-
Baseball/Softball Fields	200': \$20/hour 250': \$20/hour 300' +: \$25/hour	Half Day: \$25/hour Full Day: \$19/hour	\$40(Resident)/\$60 (Non-Resident)/\$30 (Nonprofit)	-	-
Football/Lacrosse Fields	60-80 yards: \$25/hour 100 yards: \$40/hour	Multi-Purpose Fields \$50.00 / 4 Hour Block Multi-Purpose Fields \$100.00 / 8 Hour Bloc	Natural Turf: \$40(Resident)/\$60 (Non-Resident)/\$30 (Nonprofit) Artificial Turf: \$50(Resident)/\$75 (Non-Resident)/\$40 (Nonprofit) Cooling system: \$15 (Resident)/\$15 (Non-Resident)/\$15 (Nonprofit)	-	-
Field Lights (all fields)	\$20/hour (in addition to rental fees)	-	\$15 (Resident)/\$15 (Non-Resident)/\$15 (Nonprofit)	-	-
Tennis Courts	General Public: \$10/hour Sanctioned Leagues: \$6/hour Regional/State Tourneys: \$3/hour Private Lessons / Camps: 80/20 revenue split	Bank of 3 Tennis Courts: \$24/Per Hour Tennis Courts: \$8 / Per Hour Tennis Center Whole Complex: \$200 /Day	Singles (1h): \$5 (Resident)/\$10 (Non-Resident) Singles (2h): \$10 (Resident)/\$20 (Non-Resident) Doubles (2h): \$14 (Resident)/\$28 (Non-Resident) Active Adults (2h): \$5 (Resident)/\$10 (Non-Resident)	-	-
Blanchard Woods Cross Co	\$150/day, \$20/hour staffing fee	-	Trails: \$18 (Resident)/\$18 (Non-Resident)/\$12 (Nonprofit)	-	-
Disc Golf	\$50/day	Disc Golf Play: \$1.00 per person Disc Golf Punch Card: \$10 for 12 punches	\$20(Resident)/\$35 (Non-Resident)/\$15 (Nonprofit)	-	-
Pavilions	Excluding Wildwood: \$75/day	Pavilion/Community Building: \$28/Hour	Small: \$35 (Resident)/\$45 (Non-Resident)/\$30 (Nonprofit) Large: \$60 (Resident)/\$90 (Non-Resident)/\$45 (Nonprofit)	\$75/day	MON-THU: \$13.5/hour (half day), \$24/hour (full day) FRI-SUN: \$13.5/hour (full day)
Gymnasium	\$35/hour/side or \$200/day/side	\$50.00 / Per Hour - Athletic Use \$75.00 / Per Hour - Non-Athletic	General use: \$40(Resident)/\$60 (Non-Resident)/\$30 (Nonprofit) Fundraiser or tournament: \$60(Resident)/\$90 (Non-Resident)/\$45 (Nonprofit)		
Meeting Room	\$30/hour or \$200/day	Large Multi-Purpose Room: \$50/ Hour - 2 hr. min Multi-Purpose Room \$90/Hour - 2 hr. min, \$20 each additional hr. Conference Room \$30 /Hour, Per Day with Event Rental	Small - MON-THU: \$45(Resident)/\$63 (Non-Resident)/\$45 (Nonprofit) FRI-SUN: \$50(Resident)/\$70 (Non-Resident)/\$45 (Nonprofit) Large - MON-THU: \$55(Resident)/\$76 (Non-Resident)/\$55 (Nonprofit) FRI-SUN: \$65(Resident)/\$90 (Non-Resident)/\$55 (Nonprofit) Dining - MON-THU: \$55(Resident)/\$76 (Non-Resident)/\$55 (Nonprofit) *FRI-SUN: \$65(Resident)/\$90 (Non-Resident)/\$55 (Nonprofit)	Rental Fee: \$125 Rental Fee: \$250	Luxury Suites: Weekday: \$125/hour Weekend: \$1,000/day

7.2.3 FACILITY RENTAL FEE BENCHMARK

The consultant team identified 13 pricing strategies that could be utilized by the benchmarked agencies for their rental pricing. Columbia County is currently taking advantage of five of these strategies (Hourly, Daily, By Activity, By Size of Facility or amenity, and additional pricing for field lights).

There are opportunities for additional price strategy utilization, most notably in implementing fees for Resident / Non-Resident, Non-Profits, Primetime / Non-Primetime, By Age (i.e., different fees for youth activities versus adults), and fees for additional services such as field prep, gym/field hosts, or the option to charge admission.

The County should look to utilize some of these additional pricing options to maximize the revenue potential of their facility rentals, which helps lessen the financial burden of more essential recreational programming. The chart below makes the comparison between the pricing strategies utilized by Columbia County and the other comparable agencies.

PRICING STRATEGIES													
Agency	Hourly	Daily	Half Day	Resident / Non-Resident	Non-Profit	Primetime / Non-Primetime	Member Pricing	By Age	By Activity	By size	By type of field (Turf/grass)	Field Lights	Additional Services
Columbia County	X	X							X	X		X	
Athens-Clark County	X	X	X				X		X				
Augusta		X											
Gwinnett County	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
North Augusta	X	X	X			X							

7.2.4 FINDINGS

- Of the fees that could be compared, **Athens-Clarke County** and **Gwinnett County** had the most similarities in offerings to Columbia County.
- All benchmarked agencies provided a more differentiated price breakdown compared to the county.
 - » Athens-Clarke makes the distinction around half vs. full days of the rental as well as capacity and purpose of usage.
 - » Gwinnett County also had these distinctions in addition to resident vs. nonresident, profit vs. nonprofit, and Monday to Thursday vs. Friday to Sunday.
 - » Augusta and North Augusta mostly made distinctions around capacity, days of the week, and a half vs. full days not only in comparable fees but also with their other facilities.
 - » Augusta was the only agency that provided a single rental fee for most of their facilities.
- Columbia County prices its facilities generally cheaper than the benchmarked agencies of Augusta, North Augusta, Gwinnett County, and Athens-Clark County.
- The other agencies tend to provide more price distinctions based on the **capacity or size of the facility**, particularly with event spaces and meeting rooms, **days of the week** (Monday to Thursday vs. Friday to Sunday), **combination prices** for renting multiple spaces, and **Half days** (4-5 hours) vs. **Full days** (8-12 hours).
- Gwinnett also makes the distinction between **residency status**, resident or non-resident, and **nonprofit status** to adjust their prices.
- Columbia County tends to under-price its facilities. The difference in prices can range from \$1-\$5 to \$10-\$25. This can be due to factors such as capacity, the state of the facility, or a lack of variance in price offerings.
- Most sports facilities had similar price points, however, pavilions and other meeting rooms and spaces differed the most, particularly in the price breakdown.

7.3 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND FUNDING STRATEGIES

This is a series of best practice suggestions and recommendations for the Columbia County Parks, Recreation and Events Department. No two park and recreation agencies are alike. Their differences stem from how they are governed to how they are funded and operated. The purpose is to assist Department staff to identify the things that they will need to address to ensure financial sustainability for the County.

To sustainably manage the department, there are areas of emphasis which can support financial viability. These include:

- Fundraising
- Partnering
- Government Finance
- Cost Recovery
- Enterprise Management
- Operational Management

7.3.1 FUNDRAISING

Establish a Friends Group and / or a Foundation (501c3) for a specific park and a system-wide entity e.g. Columbia County Parks Foundation, to help raise money for the system and for specific parks. E.g. Blanchard Woods BMX Parent Rider Inc. (aka BWBMX) is a registered 501c3 Non-profit organization. **See Appendix N - Establishing the Columbia County Parks Foundation** for details on how Columbia County can create their own.

One of the most important components of a Park System's funding portfolio is often found in the development of a Park Foundation, an independent non-profit advocacy and fundraising arm that can harness community, business and political good will toward the partnered building of a first-class park system. The beauty of a park foundation or "friends of" group is that it is an independent body -- flexible, creative, and able to adapt to and initiate change quickly. Such groups are connected to the business community to meet their corporate citizen objectives and raise funds for important and impactful park and recreation projects and programs.

With few exceptions, there are no park bond issues or dedicated funding referenda around the US that did not have at its core an engaged and healthy "friends of" or Park Foundation driving the effort. According to the NRPA, "the majority of the nation's more than 10,000 park and recreation agencies rely on taxpayer support and generated revenue as their primary funding sources. Unfortunately, the typical agency does not receive sufficient funding to fully deliver on its mission. As a result, many park and recreation agencies partner with nonprofit park foundations or "friends groups" to ensure every community member has access to high-quality park and recreation programming and facilities." NRPA's Park and Recreation Agency-Foundation Relationships: Partnering for the Future report lists the top five benefits that park and recreation leaders seek from foundations as:

- Extra fundraising capacity
- Ability to serve beyond the scope of a traditional park and recreation agency
- Advocacy for parks and recreation
- Expertise and skills that complement agency staff
- Flexibility as foundations are not government agencies

A fully mature and seasoned park foundation can also serve as a "fiscal agent," a type of community foundation of sorts for its own system's smaller nonprofits who are able to secure grant and corporate funding that will be spent enhancing park amenities and programs.

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PARK FOUNDATIONS

A logical starting point for Department initiating a friends of group would be to engage the National Association of Park Foundations (NAPF), dedicated exclusively to building the capacity of park foundations and friends' groups around the country. The NAPF provides information, education, advocacy and networking opportunities including the Park Foundation School at Oglebay.

The Park Foundation School is a unique professional management school geared toward improving attendees' understanding of how to start, build, and strengthen park foundations, friends of groups, and other nonprofit organizations that support parks and recreation agencies, while enhancing their professional networks. It is offered in cooperation with the National Association of Park Foundations and North Carolina State University. The Park Foundation School offered annually at the Oglebay National Training Center in Wheeling, WV, is the recommended starting point for acquiring the knowledge, skills and resources to START, BUILD and GROW a park foundation or conservancy for the Department. The NAPF website provides all of the necessary information at <https://www.the-napf.org>.

Continue to establish and partner with Friends Groups and create Conservancies to act as your advocates. Placement of the right types of people on these boards is a very important process that needs to be taught and put into practice. These types of boards can meet the level of fundraising desired by the agency if the right people are on the board. Management agreements between each fundraising group need to be completed each year with goals, dollars to be raised for what purpose and benefit to the agency.

7.3.2 PARTNERING

- Ensure any private or a not-for-profit group making money from your facilities share a portion of the gross revenue with you. Make sure your split covers your true costs and then the revenue desired based on the operating pro-forma from the event they are creating in your park or recreation facility.
- Privatize services where you do not have the capital dollars to operate and maintain the facility, park or service that you own to a competitive level.
- Have working, signed agreements with all types of partners to include (public/private, public/not for profit and public/public partners). This requires separate operational policies on each type of partnership that is established.
- Do not partner with any single group unless you have your own direct and indirect costs determined. Understand the equitable investment the partner or partners are putting into the relationship.
- All partnerships must have working agreements with measurable outcomes. They are to be reviewed at least every two years to ensure accountability.
- Ask the private sector to develop team building days in your parks and facilities by creating cleanup and fix up days. This builds community support and it will overnight enhance your park or facility to a much higher level and it gives the corporate partner a selling point to their value in the community.
- Determine sponsorship opportunities and levels of sponsorships for your parks system every five years. Use a private sponsorship contractor who knows the value of sponsorships for a percentage of the total amount raised instead of doing it yourself. A group that could help Columbia County is Navigate Sponsorship Valuation and Consulting (www.nvgt.com)

GOVERNMENT FINANCE

- Know the value of your park system less land value for what your assets are worth and where those assets are in their life cycle. This will allow you to determine where capital improvements need to be made and the cost benefit of those improvements to the system.
- Continue to leverage the SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) as a dedicated funding source to garner public support for funding capital improvements when asset lifecycle of your system falls below 50% of useful life.
- Develop a Business Development division within the department or agency to pursue grants and sponsorships, establish effective partnerships, create earned income, and develop business plans with staff managing revenue producing facilities to maximize your earned income capability.
- Develop a cost benefit analysis on all capital improvement projects prior to developing these parks or facility sites to determine if they are financially feasible.
- Develop an annual revenue plan for your agency with a goal to recovery at least 40% of the overall operating budget through revenue generation tactics.
-
- Reviewing your current financing options sometimes create big savings. Agencies need to have access to cheap capital and refinance if necessary to free up needed debt service capabilities.
- Understand the real details of “Capital.” What are the carrying costs of land, facilities, and equipment? Do not burden an agency with capital projects that cost the agency more to own than the land is worth. This philosophy could also apply to smaller park land or spaces that are unused or significantly underutilized in Columbia County.

COST RECOVERY

- Budget 3-5% of your annual total operating budget to support and maintain existing capital improvements and assets.
- Replace revenue-producing equipment every 5-7 years to keep the user experience relevant and competitive.
- Include your senior management staff on all design decisions. Ensure that design professionals such as landscape designers and facility architects outline the maintenance costs on all parks and facilities they design to ensure their design is aligned with your maintenance operating budget.
- Acquire additional land along trails to setup land leases for concession operations for a land lease to help support operational costs of the trail.
- Know your true costs (direct, indirect and overhead costs) to deliver program services, maintain parks, trails and facilities, both direct and indirect costs, so that you can determine your true costs of services on a unit cost basis.

- Develop business plans on any program service or facility that you operate that costs more to operate than \$100,000 a year with a goal to deliver a cost recovery goal. E.g. Patriots Park & Bobby Waters Gymnasium, or Lakeside Park. With indoor gym / recreation space and multiple outdoor fields, Patriots Park would benefit greatly from a standalone Business Plan. Given Lakeside Park's fairly recent opening (August 2020), it is an ideal site to develop Business Plans for in order to maximize use and revenue generation from the fields, pavilions, concessions etc.
- Continue to update the service classifications developed as a part of the Master Plan to ensure accurate classification of all services based on (a) core essential, (b) important and (c) value added classifications, and then price services based on those cost recovery ranges.



ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

- Explore business enterprise systems for revenue producing facilities and programs. These could be established for signature facilities such as Patriots Park, Lakeside Park, Blanchard Woods Park etc. As recommended in the previous section, developing business plans for these facilities would be critical to meeting this enterprise goal.
- Design parks and recreation facilities for efficiency, productivity and to produce revenue that will offset operational costs at a predetermined cost recovery goal.
- Develop a financial policy that allows the agency to keep all earned income revenue in your operating budget without lowering tax dollars received. The agency should not be penalized for generating revenue to keep the department well positioned for the future.
- Every three years bid out services where your costs are higher than the private sector to keep your costs competitive in the marketplace.
- When you build a park or trail system, require an agreement from your public officials that you will receive the appropriate amount of operational funding to ensure that you can maintain these facilities once developed, so you do not put undue pressure on the agency budget. This requires that the staff develop an operational impact cost for each capital improvement developed for the system
- Budget for marketing and branding of revenue producing facilities at 3-5% of total costs.
- Price your services to 80% of users who can pay, versus the 20% who are unable to pay.
- Study and understand market strategies that will make a measurable difference and improve the economic positioning of the program or facility you are targeting.

- Inform users and partners of what your costs are, so they appreciate the value you place into the facility or service. This strategy will help to reduce entitlement.
- Continue to track user visitation and participation data to understand who and how often the system is being used by patrons.
- Understand concession management, what it takes to make it worth the time and investment for you to provide the service versus an outside contractor. Do not allow special interest groups to have exclusive rights to concession operations without paying the agency some level of gross revenue.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Inform users and partners of what your costs are, so they appreciate the value you place into the facility or service. This strategy will help to reduce entitlement.
- Continue to track user visitation and participation data to understand who and how often the system is being used by patrons.
- Understand concession management, what it takes to make it worth the time and investment for you to provide the service versus an outside contractor. Do not allow special interest groups to have exclusive rights to concession operations without paying the agency some level of gross revenue.
- Based on all facets of community input, including the statistically-valid survey, the key focus in Columbia County is to maintain what exists at a high level while adding new offerings to keep up with the fast growing population. In order to allocate resources appropriately, it is important to prioritize maintenance based on use and avoid maintaining amenities that no one uses.
- Manage by facility and park maintenance standards and track costs to implement each type of standard.
- Train staff regularly on business principles, cost recovery, cost of service and customer service training given the wide variety of user base that make up Columbia County.
- Continue to use the Market Potential Index information from Columbia County to determine recreation preferences and thus, future needs that will require funding for capital and operations.
- Track employee costs of similar sized park systems using benchmark analysis every year or two years using the benchmark information provided in the statistically-valid survey in this report or through NRPA Field Report provided by the National Recreation and Park Association. The goal should be no more than 60-65% of total operational costs tied to employee costs including both direct and indirect costs.
- Reward employees for efficiency and productivity and develop annual revenue and efficiency work sessions with staff.
- Hold employees accountable to productivity standards and cost recovery levels and give them measurable outcomes to manage to and report out quarterly or every six months.
- Develop a cost benefit analysis on all capital improvement prior to development to determine if it is worth the financial and operational commitment to the agency.

7.3.3 FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

Park and Recreation systems across the United States today have learned to develop a clear understanding of how to manage revenue options to support parks and recreation services in a municipality based system on the limited availability of tax dollars. Park and Recreation systems no longer rely on taxes as their sole revenue option but have developed new sources of revenue options to help support capital and operational needs.

A growing number of municipalities have developed policies on pricing of services, cost recovery rates and partnership agreements for programs and facilities provided to the community. They also have developed strong partnerships that are fair and equitable in the delivery of services based on whom receives the service, for what purpose, for what benefit and for what costs. In addition, agencies have learned to use parks and recreation facilities, amenities, programs and events to create economic development as it applies to keeping property values high around parks and along trails through increased maintenance, adding sports facilities and events to drive tournaments into the region that create hotel room nights and increase expenditures in restaurants and retail areas. They have learned to recognize that people will drive into their community for good recreation facilities such as sports complexes, pools, and for special events, if presented correctly and are well managed.

Some of these policies and management practices are not in place in some systems, and should be considered for the future as well as new revenue sources. The Consulting Team has outlined several to support the capital and operational needs of as outlined in the Master Plan.

7.3.3.1 FUNDING SOURCES FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DOLLARS AND OPERATING COSTS

The following financial options outline opportunities for Columbia County to consider in funding the recommended system upgrades and the capital improvements outlined in the Master Plan, as well as operational costs associated with managing the system for the future. Many of these funding sources may not have been used but should be pursued if staff see the value in them in addition to the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) currently being used for capital improvements and is on the ballot for November 2022 for \$95.5 million.

GOVERNMENTAL FUNDING PROGRAMS: A variety of funding sources are available from federal and state government for park-related projects.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF) GRANTS: This Federal funding source was established in 1965 to provide “close-to-home” park and recreation opportunities to residents throughout the United States. Money for the fund comes from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources, primarily federal offshore oil and gas leases and surplus federal land sales. LWCF grants can be used by communities to build a variety of parks and & recreation facilities, including trails and greenways.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP) GRANTS: The RTP provides federal funds to the States to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both nonmotorized and motorized recreational trail uses. The RTP is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Federal transportation funds benefit recreation including hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, equestrian use, off-road motorcycling, all-terrain vehicle riding, four-wheel driving, or other off-road motorized vehicles.

The RTP funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund, and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use: fuel used for off-highway recreation by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, and off-highway light trucks. In Georgia, the funds/grants are administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

SAFE-ROUTES TO SCHOOLS PROGRAM: The federal government provides safe-routes to school funding for greenways to promote youth walking to school. Grants are 100% federally funded. The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) created the program which is the basis for the primary source of federal funding for greenways and pedestrian improvements associated with school connectivity. There are many sections of the Act that support the development of bicycle and pedestrian transportation corridors.

WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM: The U.S. Department of **Agriculture** 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 within riparian corridors.

WATERSHED PROTECTION AND FLOOD PREVENTION (SMALL WATERSHEDS) GRANTS: The 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, and fish and wildlife projects.

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 streets and for 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 department, and an urban forestry-management plan.

SMALL BUSINESS TREE-PLANTING PROGRAM: The Small Business Administration provides small grants of up to \$10,000 to purchase trees for planting along streets and within parks or greenways. Grants are used to develop contracts with local businesses for the plantings.

NATIONAL RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM: These grants are available to government and nonprofit agencies, for amounts ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000, for the building of a trail or piece of a trail. It is a reimbursement grant program (sponsor must fund 100% of the project up front) and requires a 20% local match. This is an annual program with an application deadline at the end of January. The available funds are split such that 30% goes toward motorized trails, 30% to non-motorized trails, and 40% is discretionary for trail construction.

INTERNAL PARK IMPROVEMENT FUND: This funding source is created from a percentage of the overall park admissions to attractions such as sport complexes, BMX courses, or special events in a park and would allow a percentage usually in the 3-5% of gross revenues to be dedicated to the park or recreation facility for existing and future capital improvements. This funding source is used for sports complexes, aquatic parks, regional parks, and fee-based parks. This type of user fee does not require voter approval but is set up in a dedicated fund to support the existing park for future capital, maintenance and improvements.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT – (CID): Special districts created to finance, construct, operate, and maintain capital infrastructure, facilities, and services. The districts do not necessarily follow municipal boundaries and may cover only a portion of the County. These districts often generate their own revenue to pay for projected growth (such as providing additional services, facilities, and infrastructure) without requiring all other taxpayers – who do not benefit from the special district’s services – to pay; in other words, only those who benefit from the special district’s services actually pay. The Georgia Constitution allows CIDs to be created in both incorporated (municipal) and unincorporated (county) territory. A CID can be established when a majority of property owners (>50%) representing at least 75 percent of the property value, petition for County Commission approval. This funding method collects fees (usually between 3 to 5 mils) with regular property tax payments and exempts single-family and multifamily residential properties.

DEVELOPER CASH-IN-LIEU OF MEETING THE OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENT: Ordinances requiring the dedication of open space within developments to meet the park and recreation needs of the new residents often have provisions allowing cash contribution to substitute for the land requirement.

FACILITY AUTHORITY: A Facility Authority is sometimes used by park and recreation agencies to improve a specific park or develop a specific improvement such as a stadium, large recreation center, large aquatic center, or sports venue for competitive events. Repayment of bonds to fund the project usually comes from a sales tax in the form of food and beverage. A Facility Authority could oversee improvements for the large facilities; such as a tournament field complex as envisioned in this Master Plan. Columbia County could seek out a private developer to design and build a field house facility for the Department with the County paying back these costs over a 20 year period.

The Facility Authority could include representation from the schools, the cities within the County, the County itself and private developers. This was very successful for a similar project in Roanoke County, Virginia with the County Parks and Recreation Department.

UTILITY LEASE FEE / FRANCHISE FEE: Utility lease fees and/or franchise fees have been used to support parks in the form of utility companies supporting a park from utility easements, storm water runoff and paying for development rights below the ground. This funding source is derived from fees on property owned by the County based on measures such as the amount of impervious surfacing as well as fees from utility companies having access through the park. It is used by many counties to acquire and develop greenways and other open space resources that provide improvements in the park or development of trails. Improvements can include trails, drainage areas, and retention ponds that serve multiple purposes such as recreation, environmental protection, and storm water management. This could be a source for the utilities to make a contribution to support the parks and trails in the future. This has been very successful in Houston along their bayous and in King County Washington.

TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX: This funding source is used by many counties to fund improvements to parks from hotels that benefit from the parks in the form of sporting events where participants stay in hotels when they use sports complexes or competitive facilities. The Transient Occupancy Taxes are typically set at 3-5% on the value of a hotel room, a 1% sales tax that can be dedicated for park and recreation improvement purposes as well. Because of the value that parks could provide in the way of events, sports, entertainment and cultural events hotels in the area that benefit could be set up with a portion of their occupancy funds going to support park and recreation-related improvements. This funding source should be implemented progressively by other communities as the Department increases the number of events it sponsors or develops. Tracking the economic value back to the hotels is important to build trust with the hotel business community.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FEE: A capital improvement fee can be added to an admission fee to a recreation facility or park attraction to help pay back the cost of developing the facility or attraction. This fee is usually applied to golf courses, recreation centers, stadiums, amphitheatres, and special use facilities such as sports complexes. The funds generated can be used either to pay back the cost of the capital improvement on a revenue bond that was used to develop the facility. Capital improvement fees normally are \$5 per person for playing on the improved site or can be collected as a parking fee or admission fee.

LEASE BACK: Lease backs are a source of capital funding in which a private sector entity such as a development company buys the park land site or leases the park land and develops a facility such as a park, recreation center, or sports complex; and leases the facility back to the municipality to pay off the capital costs over a 20-to-30-year period. This approach takes advantage of the efficiencies of private sector development while relieving the burden on the municipality to raise upfront capital funds.

PARTNERSHIPS: Establishing policies for public/public partnerships, public/not-for-private partnerships and public private partnerships needs to be established with measurable outcomes for each partner involved. Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events can gain a lot of operational monies back to the department if they can manage their partnerships in an equitable manner.

7.3.3.2 FUNDING SOURCES FOR OPERATIONAL DOLLARS

LAND LEASES/CONCESSIONS: Land leases and concessions are public/private partnerships in which the municipality provides land or space for private commercial operations that will enhance the park and recreational experience in exchange for payments to help reduce operating costs. They can range from food service restaurant operations, Cell Towers, to full management of recreation attractions. Leases usually pay back to the County a percentage of the value of the land each year in the 15% category and a percentage of gross from the restaurant or attractions. They also pay sales tax and employee income taxes to the County which supports the overall government system.

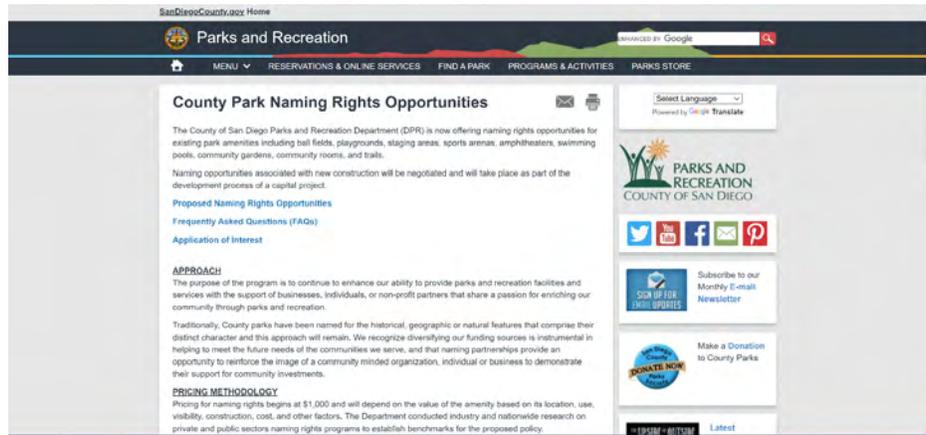
ADMISSION TO THE PARK: Many park and recreation systems in the United States have admission fees for on a per car, per bike and per person basis to access a park that can be used to help support operational costs. Car costs range from \$3 to \$5 a car and \$2 dollars a bicycle or \$2 dollars a person. This would apply to regional parks or sports complexes and may be useful for large events and festivals that have the capability to be set up as a fee based park at least on weekends. This is not unusual for Departments to have fees to access regional parks to support the operations.

PARKING FEE: Many parks that do not charge an admission fee will charge a parking fee. Parking rates range from \$3 to \$4 dollars a day. This funding source could work for helping to support special events, festivals and tournaments. Park systems in Florida charge parking fees for beaches, sports complexes and special event sites. They also have parking meters in parks to support the system or individual park. The use of parking fees also reduces liability associated with park accidents/incidents.

USER FEES: User fees are fees paid by a user of recreational facilities or programs to offset the costs of services provided by the Department in operating a park, a recreation facility or in delivering programs and services. As the Department continues to develop new programs, all future fees should be charged based on cost recovery goals developed in a future Pricing Policy. The fees for the parks and/or core recreation services are based on the level of exclusivity the user receives compared to the general taxpayer. It is recommended that user fees for programs be charged at market rate for services to create value and operational revenue for the Department.

CORPORATE NAMING RIGHTS: In this arrangement, corporations invest in the right to name an event, facility, or product within a park in exchange for an annual fee, typically over a ten-year period. The cost of the naming right is based on the impression points the facility or event will receive from the newspapers, TV, websites, and visitors or users to the park. Naming rights for park and recreation facilities are typically attached to sports complexes, amphitheaters, recreation centers, aquatic facilities, stadiums, and events. Naming rights are a good use of outside revenue for parks, recreation facilities or special attractions in Columbia County.

Naming Rights is a very common practice in the private sector but is also getting more prevalent in the public sector as well. A great example of this was in Lewisville, Texas where the city had signed a 10 year naming rights deal with a local Toyota dealership for their signature community park and includes multiple sports fields, a dog park, skate park, walking and jogging trails, three lakes for irrigation etc.



San Diego County offers opportunities for Naming Rights to its various offerings ranging from \$1000 and upwards. <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/parks/NamingRights/NamingRights.html>

A particularly interesting one for the County as it looks at growing its sports tourism footprint, is the Naming Rights partnership with Kaiser Permanente and the City of Bakersfield, CA for its sports complex titled Kaiser Permanente Sports Village which is a 170 acre regional sports complex with a variety of sports events amenities complemented by community use features. This could be a replicable model for Columbia County's tournament complex. (<https://www.visitbakersfield.com/directory/kaiser-permanente-sports-village/>).



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS: Corporations can also underwrite a portion or all of the cost of an event, program, or activity based on their name being associated with the service. Sponsorships typically are title sponsors, presenting sponsors, associate sponsors, product sponsors, or in-kind sponsors. Many agencies seek corporate support for these types of activities.

There are some other agencies locally and nationwide that have done an excellent job in securing corporate sponsorships and assigning dedicated staff resources to it – Charleston County Parks and Recreation <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/1752/Sponsorship-Opportunities> as well as establishing frameworks for sustained sponsorship opportunities by providing packaged choices of offerings.

Cleveland Metroparks <https://www.clevelandmetroparks.com/sandbox/cleveland-metroparks-corporate-partnerships> has a variety of partners for their system.

Advertising sales on sports complexes, scoreboards, gym floors, trash cans, playgrounds, in locker rooms, at dog parks, along trails, flower pots, and as part of special events held in the County to help support operational costs have been an acceptable practice in parks and recreation systems for a long time and should be considered by the County to support operational costs.

CROWD-FUNDING: This source is the collection of funds to sustain an initiative from a large pool of backers—the "crowd"—usually made online by means of a web platform. The initiative could be a nonprofit campaign (e.g. to raise funds for a school or social service organization), a philanthropic campaign (e.g. for emergency funds for an ill person or to produce an emerging artist), a commercial campaign (e.g. to create and sell a new product) or a financing campaign for a public agency (capital projects or program / operations related e.g. printing costs for all marketing materials).

Crowdfunding models involve a variety of participants. They include the people or organizations that propose the ideas and/or projects to be funded, and the crowd of people who support the proposals. Crowdfunding is then supported by an organization (the "platform") which brings together the project initiator and the crowd. Given below are examples of the most popular platforms that are currently out there.

KICKSTARTER

KICKSTARTER

- Keymaster Games launched the Parks Expansion to celebrate the U.S. National Parks and raised **\$578,955** through it (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/keymastergames/parks-expansion-nightfall-parks-memories/posts>)
- The Mountair Park Community Farm to build urban farms in the unused City Park (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1255067972/growing-in-the-city-the-mountair-park-community-fa?ref=live>)
- Marketing Support for creating Outdoor Recreation Map (<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/403262169/outdoor-recreation-map-of-the-bob-marshall-wildern?ref=live>)

BACKERKIT

BACKERKIT

- Raised \$15,000 for a Dog Park in Detroit (<https://www.backerkit.com/projects/detroitdogpark/detroit-dog-park>)



Image taken from Mountair Park Community Farm Kickstarter web page.

MAINTENANCE ENDOWMENT FUND: This is a fund dedicated exclusively for a park's maintenance, funded by a percentage of user fees from programs, events, and rentals and is dedicated to protect the asset where the activity is occurring.

LAND LEASES: Many communities across the United States have allowed land leases for commercial retail operations along trails as a source of funding. The communities that have used land leases look for retail operations that support the needs of recreation users of the trails. This includes coffee shops, grill and food concessions, small restaurants, ice cream shops, bicycle shops, farmers markets and small local business. The land leases provide revenue to maintain the trails and/or to be used for in-kind matching e.g. canoe, bike, rentals, etc.

SALE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS BELOW THE GROUND: Some public agencies have sold their development rights next to greenways below the ground for fiber optic lines and utility lines for gas and electric on a lineal foot basis. This has occurred in King County, Washington.

7.3.3.3 PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

BUSINESS/CITIZEN DONATIONS: Individual donations from corporations and citizens can be sought to support specific improvements and amenities.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: Nonprofit organizations can provide support for green space and parks in various ways. Examples include.

- **Conservancy:** This type of nonprofit is devoted to supporting a specific park like a regional or special use park. These Park Conservancy's are a major funding source for parks in the United States and should be considered for Columbia County.
- **Greenway Foundations:** Greenway Foundations, such as the PATH Foundation, have been developing across the United States over the last 15 years to support greenway matching monies for cities and counties. Greenway Foundations raise money for capital monies and operational money.
 
- **Special Recognition License Tag:** In Indianapolis, IN, the Greenways Foundation has a special Greenways designation car tag that provides income to the Greenways Foundation to provide matching grant monies for the City of Indianapolis greenways program. The tag provides \$45 per tag sold back to the foundation.
 
- **Greenway Fundraising Programs:** Agencies across the United States have used greenways for not-for-profit fundraisers in the form of walks, runs, bicycle races, and special events. The local managing agency usually gets \$2-\$5 per participants in the events to go back to support the operations and maintenance costs.
- **Local Private-Sector Funding:** Local industries and private businesses may agree to provide support for greenway development through one or more of the following methods:
 - » Donations of cash to a specific greenway segment.
 - » Donations of services by large corporations to reduce the cost of greenway implementation, including equipment and labor to construct and install elements of a specific greenway.
 - » Reductions in the cost of materials purchased from local businesses that support greenway implementation and can supply essential products for facility development.
- **Adopt-A-Foot Program:** These are typically small grant programs that fund new construction, repair/renovation, maps, trail brochures, facilities (bike racks, picnic areas, birding equipment) as well as provide maintenance support. The Adopt-A-Foot program is similar to adopt a mile of highway program. Community members are encouraged to purchase an engraved foot plaque that is displayed along the trail system. The Adopt-A-Foot program is in the form of cash contributions that range from \$2,640 to \$26,400 over a five-year period.
- **Estate Donations:** Wills, estates, and trusts may be also dedicated to the appropriate agency for use in developing and/or operating the greenway system.

7.3.3.4 VOLUNTEER SOURCES

ADOPT-A-AREA OF A PARK: In this approach local neighborhood groups or businesses make a volunteer commitment to maintaining a specific area of a park. Adopt-a-Area of a Park arrangements are particularly well-suited for the Department.

ADOPT-A-TRAIL: This is similar to Adopt-a-Park but involves sponsorship of a segment of a trail (e.g., one mile) for maintenance purposes.

COMMUNITY SERVICE WORKERS: Community service workers are assigned by the court to pay off some of their sentence through maintenance activities in parks, such as picking up litter, removing graffiti, and assisting in painting or fix up activities. Most workers are assigned 30 to 60 hours of work. This would seem to be a good opportunity for the parks to work with the sheriff's department on using community service workers and prison labor.

VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE AND SMALL-SCALE DONATION PROGRAMS

- **Greenway Sponsors:** A sponsorship program for greenway amenities allows for smaller donations to be received both from individuals and businesses. The program must be well planned and organized, with design standards and associated costs established for each amenity. Project elements that may be funded can include mile markers, call boxes, benches, trash receptacles, entry signage and bollards, and picnic areas.
- **Volunteer Work:** Volunteerism is an indirect revenue source that would help the Department offset its operational cost as well as build greater advocacy for the system. A source to consider would be utilizing www.volunteermatch.org that allows agencies to list their volunteer offerings and for interested individuals to be matched to that source.

There are potential opportunities to utilize volunteers as a part of a knowledge workforce as well. The City of San José Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services has leveraged a very unique volunteer relationship by utilizing graduates from The Harvard Business School to identify potential sponsorship value of its inventory and craft a compelling message for potential sponsors – all on a pro-bono basis.

Community volunteers may help with greenway construction, as well as conduct fundraisers. Organizations that might be mobilized for volunteer work include the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, and Fort Gordon.

7.3.3.5 GRANTS THROUGH PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS

Many communities have solicited greenway funding from a variety of private foundations and other conservation-minded benefactors. Some of these grants include:

REI ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTS: Recreational Equipment Incorporated awards grants to nonprofit organizations interested in protecting and enhancing natural resources for outdoor recreation. The company calls on its employees to nominate organizations for these grants, ranging from \$500 to \$8,000, which can be used for the following:

- Protect lands and waterways and make these resources accessible to more people.
- Better utilize or preserve natural resources for recreation.
- Increase access to outdoor activities.
- Encourage involvement in muscle-powered recreation.
- Promote safe participation in outdoor muscle-powered recreation, and proper care for outdoor resources.



COORS PURE WATER 2000 GRANTS: Coors Brewing Company and its affiliated distributors provide funding and in-kind services to grassroots organizations that are working to solve local, regional and national water-related problems. Coors provides grants, ranging from a few hundred dollars to \$50,000, for projects such as river cleanups, aquatic habitat improvements, water quality monitoring, wetlands protection, pollution prevention, water education efforts, groundwater protection, water conservation and fisheries.



WORLD WILDLIFE FUND INNOVATIVE GRANTS PROGRAM: This organization awards small grants to local, regional and statewide nonprofit organizations to help implement innovative strategies for the conservation of natural resources. Grants are offered to support projects that accomplish one or more of the following:



Innovative grants can help pay for the administrative costs for projects including planning, technical assistance, legal and other costs to facilitate the acquisition of critical lands; retaining consultants and other experts; and preparing visual presentations and brochures or other conservation activities. The maximum award for a single grant is \$10,000.

BIKES BELONG: Bikes Belong coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. The grant program is a national discretionary program with a small budget, to help communities build TEA-21-funded projects. They like to fund high-profile projects and like regional coalitions. An application must be supported by the local bicycle dealers (letters of support should be attached). Bikes Belong also offers advice and information on how to get more people on bikes. Government and nonprofit agencies are eligible and no match is required. The maximum amount for a grant proposal is \$10,000. Applications may be submitted at any time and are reviewed as they are received.

WAL-MART FOUNDATION: This foundation supports local community and environmental activities and educational programs for children (among other things). An organization needs to work with the local store manager to discuss application. Wal-Mart Foundation only funds 501© 3 non-profit organizations.

7.3.3.6 OPERATIONAL FUNDING COSTS OPPORTUNITIES

The Department has numerous revenue sources to draw from to support operational and management costs that include long term capital replacement costs. The following are funding options to consider in operations of the system.

CONCESSIONS: Concessions can be leased out to a private operator for a percentage of gross profits. Typically, 15%-18% of gross profits for concessions from a for profit operator, or a managing agency over a park site could manage concessions.

FOOD AND EQUIPMENT SPONSORS: Official drink and food sponsors can be utilized for the Department. Each official drink and food sponsor pays back to the Department a set percentage of gross. Typically, this is 15%-20% of costs for being the official product and receiving exclusive pouring and food rights to the complex. Likewise official equipment sponsors work well for trucks, mowers, and tractors.

WI-FI REVENUE: The Department can set up a Wi-Fi area whereby a Wi-Fi vendor is able to sell the advertising on the Wi-Fi access banner to local businesses targeting the users of the site. This revenue has amounted to \$20,000-\$50,000 in revenue for similar systems. Applicable areas could be parks in the County including Patriot's Park, Lakeside Park, Evans Towne Center Park etc.

CATERING: Caterers usually provide the parks with a fixed gross rate on food and beverage at 12%-15% of the cost of food and 18% of drink back to the Department.



08 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

The capital improvements plan reflects community needs identified through the public input process, staff input, demographics, prioritized facility and program needs analysis and physical analysis. It focuses on two distinct types of capital costs: those associated with new construction to satisfy recommended Levels of Service shortfalls; and those associated with improvements or additions to existing parks and facilities. Costs reflected in the plan are based on itemized costs contained in **Appendix L, Park Prototype Costs and Appendix M, Facility Prototype Costs**. The itemized costs provided allow any given portion of a park or facility to be analyzed. Through a quick review of the estimate, individual line-item costs can be identified, evaluated and modified or removed as needed. All costs identified herein and in Appendices that follow are based on 2022 costs and reflect the cost of new construction. It should be noted that some park prototype costs have been supplemented with additional facilities to meet facility shortfalls.

8.2 PROPOSED PARK LEVEL OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed level of service for Neighborhood Parks is shown in the matrix below as meeting the level of service standard. For that reason, Neighborhood Parks have not been estimated. However, Community Parks and Natural Resource Parks indicate shortfalls, both currently, in 2027 and in 2032 projections. Regional Parks indicate a shortfall within the 2032 timeframe and have been estimated accordingly. Estimated costs listed below are for construction of new parks to overcome existing and anticipated shortfalls. A detailed breakdown of each proposed park is provided in **Appendix G, Park Improvement & Renovation Capital Cost Estimates**.

The level of service costs for Community Parks reflects the prototypical cost of a new Community Park and completion of Riverwood Park as a Community Park at a combined cost of **\$7,167,890**. In **Appendix G, Park Improvement & Renovation Capital Cost Estimates**, **\$35,159,075** in additional facilities at the new Community Park includes an 80,000 sf Recreation Center with parking and a splashpad. At Riverwood Park, **\$2,357,095** in additional facilities include a mountain bike trail and skills development facility; a ropes course/zip line facility and a splash pad.

The Regional Park total reflects the completion of Gateway - Undeveloped Site at a cost of **\$19,838,830**. This is reflected in **Appendix G, Park Improvement & Renovation Capital Cost Estimates** along with the total cost of a new Regional Park/Tournament Site (to meet LOS shortfall and provide a new tournament facility). Costing for the new Regional Park is **\$18,671,840** which includes **\$5,008,363** in additional facilities beyond the Regional Park prototype, including: (5) natural turf multi-purpose fields; (4) sand volleyball courts; a picnic area with shelter; a skate park; a splash pad and an archery/shooting range as recommended in the feasibility study.

The costs for a Natural Resource Park reflect the development of one (1) prototypical park.

8.3 PROPOSED OUTDOOR & INDOOR FACILITIES LEVEL OF SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

The total proposed level of service costs for indoor and outdoor facilities are shown in the table below. Capital improvements costs are based on prototypical costs for individual elements and are incremental as represented*.

*Of note:

- Indoor Aquatic Space and Outdoor Pools: While there is currently a level of service need and a high (PIR) Priority Investment Rating (159) for indoor aquatic space and outdoor pool facilities, additional study is recommended. Due to capital, staffing, operational and maintenance costs associated with such a facility, a feasibility study is recommended prior to pursuance. This approach would allow for adjustment of facilities and design to insure the optimum return on investment. The facility may also be combined with other needed indoor recreation spaces to offer a multi-generational center.

PARK LEVEL OF SERVICE COSTS

PARK TYPE	Level of Service (LOS) Standard	Current LOS or Quantity Recommendation	2027 LOS or Quantity Recommendation	2032 LOS or Quantity Recommendation	Total Cost by Park Type
Neighborhood Park	0.25 Acres per 1,000 People	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	N/A
Community Park ⁽²⁾	1.25 Acres per 1,000 People	42 Acres Needed	57 Acres Needed (15 Additional)	76 Acres Needed (19 Additional)	\$7,167,890
Regional Park ⁽³⁾	20.00 Acres per 1,000 People	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	43 Acres Needed	\$33,502,307
Natural Resource Park ⁽⁴⁾	0.50 Acres per 1,000 People	35 Acres Needed	41 Acres Needed (6 Additional)	48 Acres Needed (7 Additional)	\$2,237,907
Special Purpose Park/Facility	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Cumulative Costs:					\$42,908,104

Table Footnotes:

(1) Acreages as indicated are cumulative. For example, Community Park needs for 2027 are 15 acres more than needed in 2022.

(2) Community Park total cost represents prototypical costs for the development of (2) Community Parks. (1) new Community Park and the development of Riverwood Park.

(3) Regional Park total cost represents prototypical costs for the development of (1) new Regional Park, as well as, the completion of the Gateway - Undeveloped Site. Estimated cost to complete Gateway - Undeveloped Site is \$19,838,830.

(4) Natural Resource Park costs reflect the development of (1) prototypical park.

(5) Special Use Facilities will be determined as the County identifies these facilities.

8.4 PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS / FACILITIES

A list of capital improvements costs associated with recommended improvements to existing parks and facilities is provided in **Appendix G, Park Improvement & Renovation Capital Cost Estimates**. Recommendations are based on inventory and analysis data included in the Parks and Facilities Inventory and Assessment section of the plan. Estimates are broad in nature and intended to provide overall order of magnitude costs to improvements and recommended levels of service. Costs focus on three areas of capital renovations or improvements: buildings, athletic fields and other facilities/amenities.

8.5 RENOVATIONS TO UPGRADE EXISTING PARKS / AMENITIES

A list of capital improvements costs associated with recommended improvements to existing parks and facilities is provided in **Appendix G, Park Improvement & Renovation Capital Cost Estimates**. Recommendations are based on inventory and analysis data included in the Parks and Facilities Inventory and Assessment section of the plan. Estimates are broad in nature and intended to provide overall order of magnitude costs to improvements and recommended levels of service. Costs focus on three areas of capital renovations or improvements: buildings, athletic fields and other facilities/amenities.

Based on input received from the public input survey, (86%) of respondents were either somewhat supportive or very supportive of improving existing park buildings/recreation facilities and centers. This portion of the study focuses on upgrades to those existing resources. Recommendations for improvements are based on the park and facility inventory conducted, and their rating of “Good”, “Fair” or “Poor”. Recommendations were considered for all existing parks and facilities that were rated “Fair” or “Poor”. The estimated cost provided is intended to upgrade those parks or facilities to a “Good” condition. Those facilities receiving a “Good” rating were not recommended for improvement. Renovation costs are based on the cost of new construction times an improvement multiplier shown below for each category:

BUILDINGS

45% to improve “Fair” rated buildings to “Good”

65% to improve “Poor” rated buildings to “Good”

ATHLETIC FIELDS

15% to improve “Fair” rated athletic fields to “Good”

65% to improve “Poor” rated athletic fields to “Good”

OTHER FACILITIES

30% to improve all other facilities with “Fair” ratings to “Good”

60% to improve all other facilities “Poor” ratings to “Good”

Estimated costs to upgrade existing parks/amenities are included in individual park costs in **Appendix G, Park Improvement & Renovation Capital Cost Estimates**. Renovation priorities should focus on addressing the parks or facilities receiving the lowest ratings first.

8.6 OTHER POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS TO PARK/ FACILITIES

These estimated costs address possible improvements/additions to existing parks/facilities as identified in the inventory and assessment phase. Items for possible improvement are listed in **Current Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates found in Appendix G**, and are denoted as “Other Possible Improvements” for each individual park or facility.

8.7 SYSTEM-WIDE ADDITIONS

These allowances are associated with enhancements to improve ADA accessibility; placemaking and aesthetics; and branding/recognition of the park or facility. They are explained in more detail in System-Wide Observations and Recommendations, Section 4.4 of this report. Items are limited to improved walks and ADA accessibility; additional landscaping and irrigation; addition of shade for playgrounds and other gathering areas; and signage. The capital costs to address these items have been accounted for under “System-wide Additions” in the capital cost estimates for each park or facility.

8.8 COMBINED CAPITAL COSTS

The total proposed Level of Service; possible improvements; and system-wide additions to parks are estimated to be approximately **\$143,426,961** over the next 10 years. Of that total, approximately **\$95,500,000** in park and facility improvements have been earmarked within the proposed 2022 SPLOST referendum (see 8.9 below for additional information).

- Capital Cost Footnotes:** The capital cost plan does not address specific site selection for proposed level of service improvements. The estimates for such improvements, therefore, are exclusive of any land acquisition costs as well as cost to provide any necessary extension of infrastructure to the site. They also exclude soft costs such as accessibility (ADA) or safety audits, detailed building audits/assessments, testing, surveying, permitting or legal and design fees, etc. Once specific locations are determined, the proposed figures should be refined to reflect the specifics of the project. Planning should also consider variations in development costs which may occur due to market fluctuations, or unusual natural or man-made conditions. The capital improvement costs are prepared in 2022 dollars and are based on general bid costs. If in-house labor and resources are used, costs could potentially be reduced.

8.9 SPLOST REFERENDUM 2022

In fall of 2021, a prioritized capital funding strategy was developed by the County Board of Commissioners. This strategy includes addressing improvements to existing parks and facilities as part of a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). Columbia County currently levies a 1% sales tax which is scheduled to expire in 2022. If approved by voters, the overall tax rate will remain unchanged through 2028 and will provide funding through that timeframe. As proposed, the project list is broken into seven categories of funding: Public Safety and Emergency Services; Transportation; Information Technology and Broadband; County Facilities; Economic Development; Stormwater and Community Services. The Community Services category is dedicated to Parks, Recreation and Events projects and equates to approximately \$95.5 million dollars. These costs have been recognized in **Current Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates, found in Appendix G**.



09 STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

9.1 OVERVIEW, ACCREDITATION AND CORE VALUES

The Strategic Implementation Plan represents the combined conclusions of this study. It should serve as a guide for future decisions and actions including the planning, development and funding of current and future recreation improvements.

The master plan and recommendations are not an end unto themselves, but the point of beginning in providing enhanced recreation services and planning for the future. The process is ongoing and requires continual re-examination and reassessment to reflect shifts in recreation trends, user patterns, demographics and availability of land and financial resources.

Throughout this master planning process, the Parks, Recreation and Events Department staff have been actively involved. They are committed to serving their community in a comprehensive and fiscally sound way. As such, they aspire to obtaining the National Recreation and Park Association's agency accreditation. The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies- also referred to as CAPRA- establishes standards for evaluating park and recreation agencies, nationwide. Through a peer evaluation of compliance the Commission "assures policymakers, department staff and the general public that an accredited park and recreation agency has the operational capacity to deliver programs, facilities and services at a high level of quality". This document will help fulfill a number of nationally required guidelines.

By continuing to provide exceptional customer service and building a culture of innovation and continuous improvement, the Department will fulfill its desire of being a nationally recognized leader in parks, recreation and events experiences and will serve the Columbia County community in a financially sustainable way. This strategic implementation plan has been developed keeping in mind the County's core values referred to as **PRIDE**. These core values should permeate and guide all critical decisions related to parks, recreation and events planning and are as follows:

P**ROFESSIONALISM:** “To be professional I must conform to the technical and ethical standards set for me by doing my job to the absolute of my ability. Constantly holding myself and other accountable to never settle for anything less. Always possessing an attitude and willingness to give 100%”.

R**ESPECT:** “I will show a genuine respect for myself, my co-workers and the community I serve. Holding everyone I come into contact with in the highest regard by displaying kindness, justice and equality without purpose of evasion. I will be humble when I perform well and acknowledge when I could have done better. Facing adversity head on, while persevering and learning from the challenges I may encounter.”

I**NTEGRITY:** “Honesty, consistency and trustworthiness are my watch words. I will display a strong adherence to only the highest moral and ethical values in an attempt to make myself incorruptible. I pledge to do the right thing all the time; even when I think no one is watching. I will endeavor to never bring shame upon myself or my community.”

D**EDICATION:** “I am committed, loyal and faithful to myself, our organization and the community. I have a genuine desire to accomplish personal and organizational goals and will display a wholehearted devotion to our core values at all times.”

E**XCELLENCE:** “I am committed to giving my utmost effort in all of my endeavors. I refuse to settle for second best and understand the need for quality and efficiency. You will never hear me say “that’s not my job”. I am committed to the success of the organization and the service of our community above all else.”

9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This strategic implementation plan is meant to be a guideline for the core areas of:



9.2.1 PARKS AND TRAILS

CURRENT & ONGOING ITEMS:

FOCUS ON EXISTING PARK AND TRAIL UPGRADES / IMPROVEMENTS

- Refresh and update parks to provide optimum service and efficiency. Address parks with **“Poor”** overall assessment ratings, through implementation of listed improvements, enhancements and “Other possible improvements” (See ***Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates, in Appendix G***).
- Address parks with **“Fair”** overall assessment ratings, through implementation of listed improvements, enhancements and “Other possible improvements” (See ***Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates, in Appendix G***).

CREATE A VISUALLY APPEALING PARKS SYSTEM THROUGH SYSTEM-WIDE ADDITIONS THAT ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL PUBLIC USE

- Improve place-making through supplemental landscaping, irrigation and signage improvements.
- Expand branding and public awareness of County facilities through use of the County logo on primary signage.
- Supplement public spaces with additional shade through introduction of tree planting and shade canopies.

ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY AND ADA ACCESSIBILITY IN THE SYSTEM

- Increase park connectivity through continued investment in the Euclaw Creek Greenway network.
- Plan for connectivity of new park initiatives.
- Conduct an accessibility audit for all parks and facilities, addressing recommended improvements.

ADDRESS CURRENT (2022) PARKS AND TRAILS LEVEL OF SERVICE SHORTFALLS

42 ACRES

OF COMMUNITY PARKS

are needed. Focus on acquiring developable land in the Southwest portion of the County/ Commission District 4.

35 ACRES

OF NATURAL RESOURCE PARKS

are needed. Focus on unique natural components. Location should be resource driven.

While there is no Level of Service need indicated for a Special Purpose Facility, the Pollard House property could provide a unique County-wide special event venue, serving as a revenue generator. Estimated improvements costs have been allocated in Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates for improvement of this venue.

Continue pursuance of capital improvements monies including but not limited to the proposed 2022 SPLOST.

MID-LONG TERM ITEMS (5-10 YEAR NEEDS):

- Planning for up to 34 acres of additional parkland for Community Park development through 2032.
- Planning for up to 43 acres of parkland for Regional Park development through 2032.
- Planning for up to 13 acres of additional parkland for Natural Resource Park development through 2032.

9.2.2 FACILITIES

CURRENT & ONGOING ITEMS:

FOCUS ON EXISTING FACILITY UPGRADES / IMPROVEMENTS

- Refresh and update facilities to provide optimum service and efficiency. Address facilities with **“Poor”** assessment ratings, through implementation of listed improvements, enhancements and **“Other possible improvements”** (See ***Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates, in Appendix G***).
- Address facilities with **“Fair”** overall assessment ratings, through implementation of listed improvements, enhancements and **“Other possible improvements”** (See ***Park Improvement and Renovation Capital Cost Estimates, in Appendix G***).

CURRENT FACILITY SHORTFALLS

5 PICNIC SHELTERS	1 SKATEPARK
1 PLAYGROUND	2 OUTDOOR POOLS (1)
11 MULTI-PURPOSE RECTANGULAR FIELDS	1 SPLASHPAD
8 PICKLEBALL COURTS	83,619 SF INDOOR RECREATION SPACE (2)
8 BASKETBALL COURTS (Full and Half)	81,809 SF INDOOR AQUATIC SPACE (1)

1. While the level of Service need exists for both Outdoor Pools and Indoor Aquatic Space, additional study is recommended prior to pursuance of either facility. This study should assess both the feasibility of the facility as well as its expected operating costs, staffing requirements and potential revenue. This approach would allow for adjustment of facilities and design to insure the optimum return on investment. Level of Service costing reflects this adaptation.
2. If deemed feasible, this facility may be combined with an Indoor Aquatic facility to create a multi-generational recreation center. At a minimum, the recreation space should include meeting rooms & offices, weight room, exercise/fitness rooms, a senior component, gymnasium space for basketball/volleyball/etc., and an indoor walking track.

MID LONG TERM ITEMS (5-10 YEAR NEEDS):

Level of Service needs exist for facilities through 2032 as follows:

up to 10 ADDITIONAL PICNIC SHELTERS	up to 10 ADDITIONAL PLAYGROUNDS	up to 1 ADDITIONAL SPLASHPAD	up to 1 ADDITIONAL DOG PARK
up to 5 ADDITIONAL MULTI-PURPOSE RECTANGULAR FIELDS		up to 3 ADDITIONAL BASKETBALL COURTS (Full & Half Courts)	
up to 13,6639 SF ADDITIONAL INDOOR AQUATIC SPACE	up to 3 ADDITIONAL PICKLEBALL COURTS	up to 41,007 SF ADDITIONAL INDOOR RECREATION	

Conduct a Site Feasibility Study/ Business Plan for a sports tourism facility to evaluate the ideal composition of sports and adventure offerings for economic impact and community use in Columbia County.

9.2.3 RECREATION PROGRAMS**CONTINUE TO ENSURE PROGRAMS ARE ALIGNED WITH EVOLVING COMMUNITY NEEDS**

- Annually update the recreation program trends through Sports and Facility Industry Association Data (SFIA) to identify new and emerging ideas for Columbia County
- Conduct ongoing surveys online to identify customer needs
- Administer a statistically valid survey every 5 years to obtain reliable and representative data for community needs

ENSURE PROGRAM LIFECYCLES ARE BALANCED BETWEEN DIFFERENT STAGES

- Current lifecycle (see program assessment section) is very heavy on growth stage but limited on introduction stage (new programs); ensure a program innovation pipeline to allow for a consistent stream of new programs
- Track and update program lifecycle annually
- Ensure programs in Saturated / Decline / No Go stage continue to stay under 10% (currently 7% - only 1% in decline stage)

PROVIDE PROGRAM AND EVENTS OFFERINGS TO SERVE THE OVERALL DEMOGRAPHIC

- Ensure program offerings are multi-generational and intergenerational to allow for greater community interactions
- Conduct annual age segment analysis (as shown in program assessment section) to align audience served with Columbia County's existing demographics
- Develop programs targeted towards families and older adults 75+ in addition to youth and active adult programs

EXPAND DIFFERENTIAL PRICING STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE VALUE AND REVENUE GENERATION

- Ensure consistency in pricing strategies across all offerings (currently only Special Events are priced based on weekend / weekends and only Environmental Education and Special Events are priced based on Age Segments)
- Implement resident discount / nonresident fees for all program areas
- Evaluate adding prime time / non-prime rates for program offerings that align fees with the times when program are offered (peak / non peak)

INVEST IN MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS TO REDUCE LACK OF AWARENESS AND INCREASE PARTICIPATION

- Based on the statistically-valid survey results, 42% respondents do not participate in a County program of events and 25% don't visit a park or a trail due to lack of awareness ("I don't know what is being offered")
- Invest 3% - 4% of the annual operating budget towards dedicated marketing including staffing (outlined in Operations and Staffing recommendations in the next section), which is on par with high performing agencies nationally
- Develop a marketing and communications plan updated annually to continue addressing this area
 - » Target audiences/markets identification
 - » Key messages for each target market
 - » Communication channels/media for each target market
 - » Graphic identity and use protocols
 - » Style handbook for all marketing material
 - » Social media strategies and tactics
 - » Communication schedule (content calendar)
 - » Marketing roles and responsibilities
 - » Staffing requirements
- Track source of information during registration, special events, and at facilities:
 - » Ensure every program registration format obtains the source of information that drove the participant to sign up for the program. During special events, utilize the volunteer base to conduct intercept surveys using iPads or tablets and identify participant data. Data could include 'how they heard about the program or event', 'where they were coming from', 'length of stay', 'anticipated spending' etc.

WEB ANALYTICS (e.g. GOOGLE ANALYTICS)

- Google Analytics can continue to help identify the most popular pages, and sections or sub-sections that users view. Additionally, information regarding key words entered into search engines to locate web sites driving the most traffic to the Columbia County website (the Parks, Recreation and Events page) should be tracked.

INTRODUCE THE NEWLY ARRIVING POPULATION IN COLUMBIA COUNTY TO ITS PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- Establish priority segments to target for new program/service development ideas, unmet needs and communication strategies

BUILD DATABASE IDENTIFYING SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS AND CORRESPONDING REVENUE GENERATED

- By developing the database that documents the sources of information used by respondents and the corresponding fee / dollar spending for those programs, staff can determine future programming and marketing methods, and the corresponding revenue generated through the participants.

9.2.4 NATURAL RESOURCE PLANNING

RECOGNIZE THE VALUE THAT COUNTY RESIDENTS PLACE ON EXPERIENCING COLUMBIA COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES

- Pursue partnerships with conservation-minded stakeholders to assist in identifying future Natural Resource Park lands.
- Acquire Natural Resource Park lands in “path of progress” areas where development will occur in the future.
- Prioritize acquisition of Natural Resource Park properties with access to water, increasing opportunities for fishing canoeing, kayaking and boating.
- In Natural Resource Parks, balance active and passive recreation uses with preservation.
- Provide best management practices (BMPs) and utilize development strategies outlined in **Forward 2020: Columbia County Growth Management Plan (2020)** in future park and facility development. Also consider sound and light impacts from proposed activities.

9.2.5 OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

BUILD AN EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABILITY-BASED STRATEGY TO MANAGE PROGRAMS AND OFFERINGS

- Develop mini-business plans (2-3 pages) for each core program area annually
- Conduct ongoing cost of service and pricing strategy assessments based on program classifications

DEVELOP A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO MAXIMIZE VOLUNTEER SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

- Currently, Columbia County has no formal volunteer policy or tracking of hours though the County does utilize volunteers for Community Events, Youth Sports Coaches and Officials, and at the Reed Creek Nature Park and Interpretive Center.
- The Parks, Recreation and Events Department should develop and adopt a formal volunteer policy
- Provide ongoing listing of volunteer opportunities
- Track volunteer hours and communicate the overall operational cost savings from volunteer hours (Value of Volunteer Time report, Independent Sector, with the Do Good Institute, announced in April 2022 that the latest value of a volunteer hour is estimated to be \$29.95, which is a 4.9% increase from 2020 to 2021.)
- Develop a key performance indicator that outlines the percentage of volunteer time the Department will incorporate volunteer support for its staffing operations
- See Appendix for additional information on setting up a formal volunteer offering

EVALUATE ADDITIONAL STAFFING POSITIONS THAT SUPPORT THE OVERALL COLUMBIA COUNTY / DEPARTMENT GOALS FOR GROWTH, FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SPORTS / ADVENTURE TOURISM

SPORTS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Evaluate adding a dedicated business development staff to grow and expand revenue streams including sponsorships, naming rights and creative partnerships with the sports / outdoor adventure industry

BUSINESS ANALYTICS

- Business Analyst tracking data ranging from participation to return on investment for spending, performance metrics, marketing, etc.

MARKETING & SOCIAL MEDIA

- Dedicated marketing and development manager responsible to support this plan's success implementation
- Part-time / intern support dedicated to keeping up with technology trends, mining the internet for crowdsourced data to gauge public opinion about Department's offerings and growing social media presence on emerging mediums e.g Tik Tok to maximize youth outreach

INVEST IN STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT TO MAXIMIZE MORALE AND RETENTION

- Develop annual staff training plans for the entire Department and individual training plans for in-person, web based training for all
- Explore training avenues beyond the traditional parks and recreation sources such as NRPA or GRPA
 - » e.g. Sports ETA – the trade association for the Sports Tourism Industry’s annual Sports ETA Symposium
 - » America Outdoors Conference
 - » The Adventure Travel Trade Association Conference
 - » Annual Outdoor Economy Conference
 - » TED and TEDx talks



- Develop a staff onboarding program focused on Department values and strategic direction
 - » Build an onboarding program that helps a new employee understand the impact of their work
 - » Focus on the Columbia County Way of doing things, the organization’s core values and vision for the future
- Document and communicate true costs of services provided
 - » Communicate the true cost of providing offerings including marketing for a specific activity or program, event, or facility. The true cost would include all direct costs associated with the activity and indirect / overhead costs such as staff time allocated.
- Invest in technology to continue maximizing staffing efficiencies and enhance the user experience
 - » Explore introducing an ongoing customer feedback tool e.g. HAPPiFEET (www.KeepHappyFeet.com) to allow for direct user feedback from any location in the County
 - » Continue to incorporate ‘smart’ features in the parks from sensors to track visitation to solar powered benches
 - » Explore opportunities to automate processes that may be staff time intensive and repetitive
 - » Evaluate opportunities for AI (Artificial Intelligence) to create marketing copy, visuals and even make recommendations for offerings to users (similar to Amazon’s Product Recommender tool on their website)

9.3 CONCLUSION

- This master plan is a community-values based document that serves as a roadmap for the Parks, Recreation and Events Department's future. It is reflective of the demographics of Columbia County, local and national trends and demands, and the vision and unmet needs of the community.
- The plan is meant to be a dynamic document that can and will change over time based on changes in community values, market conditions and financial realities. In addition, as the Department strives to become a nationally accredited agency through the Council for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), this document will help fulfill a number of nationally required mileposts. By continuing to focus on exceptional customer service, fiscal responsibility and building a culture of continuous improvement and innovation the Department will sustain its vision of being a leader in Parks, Recreation and Events experiences.



10 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A - Public Input - Comprehensive List of Comments

APPENDIX B - Survey Instrument

APPENDIX C - Core vs. Casual Participation Trends

APPENDIX D - County Owned Park & Facility Inventory and Analysis

APPENDIX E - Park & Facility (By Others) Inventory and Analysis

APPENDIX F - Columbia County Park Models

APPENDIX G - Park Improvement and Renovation Capitol Cost Estimates

APPENDIX H - Program Classifications

APPENDIX I - Similar Providers

APPENDIX J - Mini Business Plan

APPENDIX K - Volunteer / Partnership Best Practices and Recommendations

APPENDIX L - Park Prototype Cost Analysis

APPENDIX M - Facility Prototype Cost Analysis

APPENDIX N - Establishing a Parks Foundation

APPENDIX A - PUBLIC INPUT - COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF COMMENTS

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS, KEY LEADERSHIP MEETINGS, & PUBLIC WORKSHOP COMMENTS

Consolidated notes from meetings with:

County Board of Commissioners:

- Doug Duncan, Chairman
- Connie Melear, District 1
- Don Skinner, District 2
- Gary Richardson, District 3
- Dewey Galeas, District 4

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board:

- Rick Crawford, Chairman
- Heath Fisher

Columbia County Administration & Staff

- Scott Johnson, County Manager
- Glenn Kennedy, Deputy County Manager
- Matt Schlachter, Deputy County Manager
- Planning Department: Will Butler & Scott Sterling
- Facilities Department: Chip Mobley & Steven Prather
- Parks, Recreation & Events Department Staff

Columbia County Schools:

- Dr. Steven Flynt, Superintendent

Key Leadership & Focus Groups Representing:

- Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Swimming
- Natural Resources
- Tennis
- Pickleball
- Soccer

The following is a compilation of responses received from the previously mentioned contributors:

WHAT ARE THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND EVENTS DEPARTMENT'S STRENGTHS?

- Great leadership
- Plenty of resources
- Do not hear of needs
- Heard about community pool (swimming pool for practice)
- County has purchased land to build parks
- Greenway on the way
- Important that County is to continue to provide parks and recreation
- Dedicated talent
- Facilities are Top Notch
- Destination for sporting events
- Hold events like the NAIA Soccer Tournament which was hugely successful
- Mix of modern capability & extraordinary Charm, such as Savannah Rapids property
- Lots of open space, old properties

- 204 Historical Properties – Will Butler at Planning Dept can send us more information
- There is a slave cemetery in Blanchard Woods near the Cross Country Course
- County constituents have a mix of gravel drives and paved drives
- Downtown needs revitalization
- Pollard House is a focus, near the old Courthouse. The oldest operating county courthouse in GA
- Pollard House could be used as Event space/ kiosk capable/ Union County GA Community Center is a good case study
- There is another historic property just up the road. Would like to have a walk-friendly space/trail from church to the old general store & intersection
- First Black School (1928?) in Columbia County is located just across the road from Pollard House
- White Oak Methodist Church up for sale
- Watering stations along the trails as they are developed
- County is good about addressing what they need in terms of facilities
- Holding the budget/ manage projects well.
- Events and League play are done well
- Maintenance and operations is done very well
- They listen to other departments
- Manage and bring events in really well
- Maintenance is spectacular and leadership is awesome
- Lots of opportunities
- Brings in a lot of events
- Lady A family events at Evans Town Center Park
- Fields get abuse from community because parks are not truly public and not allow pick up sports
- John has built a great team, especially in the parks and recreation side
- Dennis and Wes have done a great job
- Programs are very good as well; these include the soccer tournaments that have recently been completed.
- Youth sports are exploding and this is a testament to good programming
- Resources – this is a very fiscally responsible County, and they are lean employee-wise. There are 160,000 people in the County with 1500 employees compared to 200,000 people in the neighboring County with 6000 employees. Covid is not hurting Columbia County.
- Have newer facilities, use SPLOST monies well, closing out a general obligation bond and have triple bond ratings from all three creditors
- Growing population
- Great turnaround of employees; creating and getting events planned and coordinated
- Maintenance of the parks
- Programming is great
- They have hired the right people
- First class facilities – upgrading of the facilities
- Bringing in national events
- Utilizing their facilities for these large events
- Quality of the events are good
- Getting the word out on all events to the community
- Diverse offerings and facilities
- Expanding facilities- playgrounds, lighting, tennis;
- Offerings; well organized spaces
- Event- planning diversity
- Like family feel of Community events like at Lady A , movies, farmer’s market
- As parent of sports programs – affordable; great coaching; referees; organized
- Patriots Park fields turf is great
- Pristine fields, clean facilities, feel safe, good vibe
- Blanchard Park is the only park needing upgrades (it was the original park)
- Recreation Department formulated under County
- Great job changing with influx /growth in population

- Shared use with School district
- Whole Rec Department is doing well
- Growing County and the department is doing a good job meeting the needs of this population
- Glad we're hiring experts to help plan for growth
- Thinks there's an adequate amount of sports fields
- Greenway is well done and has been very successful. With phase one complete, now what? Gap between completed phase and next phase needs to be addressed.
- Supposed to be 70-80 miles in the end.
- Department does a fantastic job; they are wearing many hats well
- Events are great, free to the community, well organized. Even do a good job with cleanup
- Kids and wife are involved in the parks
- Diverse offerings
- Team sports are strong, other areas are less served
- Strong relationship with the County is desired
- Need to grow young kid's sports programs- it is important
- Good job with the events such as Armed Forces Day which included participation from local businesses
- Quality job on built works; seems to last a long time
- Handling growth well
- Savannah Rapids Park is great
- Wildwood is gorgeous
- Kayak place at Riverside Park
- Free access to all the parks
- Running and bike path at Euchee Creek, Savannah Rapids, Wildwood Park
- Have come far in the last 5 years including adding programs and parks. They have "turned up the fire"
- Responsive to needs of the community
- Doing a good job listening to the public and responding
- Ball fields
- Performing arts
- Facilities are beautiful and well kept
- Customer service – listen to the community and in tune with resident's needs
- Adaptable – continue to provide a level of service that meets the needs of the growth
- Collaborate well together– Staff Crosses over/ multi tasks due to lower employee numbers
- Love a challenge and willing to take on, or at least try
- Go wherever Staff are needed
- Come together as community
- Great atmosphere created from the top on down
- Getting the word out is being done very well
- Training opportunities are available to all staff. County is good about sending employees to training, conferences, etc.
- Great job staffing events
- Parks are clean; feel safe;
- Love the new parks
- Trails and bike paths
- Good facilities for recreation events
- Events are well attended in the parks
- Parks keeping looking modern and well maintained
- Dog parks are loved- both of them
- Rec programs are affordable and well organized
- Parks don't look run-down even when aged
- Doing a great job accommodating the growth rate of the County
- Handling Covid issues
- Parks & Rec understands the value of Tourism and works well with them. They are advocates

- Wildwood Park – potential tourism attraction. No sewer out there, tough to build large projects due to sanitary sewer limitations. Glamping proponents
- What projects can they spearhead to grow?
- Serene 18 – promotion to kayak on local waterways (18 mile tour map)
- Spreading out parks where needed or growth is happening
- Eye on where growth is happening
- Saving greenspace where needed/warranted
- Good place financially
- Doing what's best for the County
- Top down management drives culture and implementation
- Doing what's best for the County
- Top down management drives culture and implementation
- Limited staff that is dedicated; fairly treated – recent pay increases

WHAT IS THE ONE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE AS AN OUTCOME OF THIS PLANNING PROCESS?

- Do not see any
- Won't you be addressing those unmet opportunities?
- Vision to control taxes and growth; want folks to enjoy the outside.
- Shocked that the dog parks were as popular as they are
- All about quality of life/ want do the people want that the County is to provide?
- The County should not compete with the private sector. Instead, they should provide what the private sector doesn't
- Sponsored NAIA soccer championships
- Pollard House is unlike anything else in their inventory. Could house historical displays
- People have to drive to get to a recreation spot in his area
- Equally spaced recreation areas are needed
- Connections – should trails be connected. People love the trails; excellent system
- The Hospital on Gateway Blvd. is definitely coming, now. The Fort is growing, there is hospital growth, the Cyber Hub is growing.....
- YMCA bought the property behind the Exhibition Center
- Realistic cost numbers that account for inflation/ escalation
- Deal with population growth – middle to higher income are coming for schooling and then staying
- If there is a new pool, it needs to be a revenue generator
- Riverside Park gets a lot of use and needs master planning. Could focus on kayak tourism and use
- Facilities – Savannah Rapids (parking lot expansion about to start). It is a huge recreation area that needs attention
- Euchee Creek Greenway –get plans to see how it's planned in future phases
- Fields get abuse from community because parks are not truly public and not allow pick up sports
- A quality tournament facility that has a way to close down/lock up a facility to keep it nice
- Example: Wilson Soccer Complex – CVB and City built a “field of dreams” type facility, although wish it wasn't soccer specific. Should have been multi-purpose for Lacrosse and other events/ sports programs
- What is your ideal Sports Complex? “Build the Disney complex” with 12 to 20 fields, a building and stadium field. Some turf some grass; multi-purpose fields with adjustable fencing, building with storage, concessions and conference space in a centralized facility.
- Visited a Myrtle Beach facility that has permanent fencing and it doesn't work very well (baseball and shared soccer, etc.).
- Used to take (2) polo fields in Aiken, set it all up themselves and convert to 20+/- fields. The draw was- everything was together.
- Brought the Aiken Cup here –now Columbia County Cup. They had 130 teams in Covid year, but will shoot for 175 teams. Want to attract more out of town teams; but there isn't a marquee/ signature hotel to house everyone.
- A large tournament facility would work here and they have now proved themselves with JuCo

- Some people believe soccer fields should be turf fields, but who would get access to them?
- School needs turf fields and the new Superintendent may support this.
- Outside of athletics, Lady A is a good facility and there is going to be more parking with the new parking garage. There will also be the new performing arts center.
- Need a “downtown” center with live/ work; retail; restaurants; a central city community
- Ultimate dream and goal – build his own soccer complex; with stadium field; 3 turf and 3 grass; indoor fields, etc.
- The Department brings to the table what’s happening around the Country.
- Don’t want to be like other Counties and not sustain existing parks and/or new parks.
- Need to transition unused fields to used fields, plan multi-purpose fields, and keep sustainable development.
- Not a lot of Commission support and demand for an aquatics center. Bad experience with pools while running in the past.
- Definition of Aquatics Center = more than one pool (lap pool, learning pool, splash pad)
- County currently does actively pursue splash pads.
- Are there thing that the community doesn’t know they need?
- Hear from smaller groups – Not designated field, but multi-purpose fields: lacrosse, rugby, football, etc.
- Better advertising of the passive facilities. Are people aware of – Cross country trail; dog parks; hidden gems?
- Are there other means of communication/outreach that can educate the public? Billboard displays, information signs/LED all over the county in their facilities.
- They do have a County app. Maybe it should be expanded....
- Heard public interest in Natatorium – but doesn’t feel viable. It was previously voted down
- Shouldn’t be building for the Board of Education
- During comprehensive plan development, heard about desire for parks closer to home
- Distance to travel to parks, events and programs
- Harlem folks do not like having to travel so far
- Greenway Extension and laterals continuing to extend into neighborhoods as much as possible. This is challenging in the eastern part of the County.
- As new roads are developed, adding trails
- Parking/ Trailheads for the Greenway, as there is not enough along the trail. Trailheads needed at Hardie Mack-Euchee Creek to Blanchard Woods.
- Park and Ride opportunities
- Biking Trails development
- Another Patriots Park type facility on south side of I-20
- More subdivision parks are being built inside residential developments (pool, programmed park spaces, internal trail systems, connect to greenway, playgrounds)
- There are expectations for connecting Gateway Park area to the trail network. It is a “loner site” requiring driving and there is more density in that area.
- Pickleball promotes unity, social engagement, family-oriented sports play. The county is behind here.
- Need to plug pickleball into what’s already there
- The ideal pickleball facility has
 - * Parking adjacent to the courts - see it right away
 - * A single entrance to the facility similar to Lakeside Park - as a control point
 - * Fencing and separation between courts (individually fenced)
 - * Case studies - Opelika, Griffin (18 Courts), Macon
 - * Something for everyone to there like a Lakeside, but have room for growth (of pickleball)
 - * Tournament play for pickleball - need concessions. pro shops, bathrooms and showers; also important to have other activities for kids / other family members
 - * Best facilities are 2.5 hours away
 - * Playground and open space
 - * For league play and club play
 - * Facility for teaching lessons for pickleball only
 - * Education program to introduce the sport to youth

- Bring pickleball into existing parks, but have 18-20 courts consolidated on one piece of property
- Patriots Park is the “middle of the County” site
- Smaller facilities can be spread out
- Blanchard Woods Park is a good case study for diversity of sports program, courts there are shared with tennis
- Has there been any discussion about the need for Gyms? There are currently only (2) existing Bobby Waters gym at Patriots Park
- Another gym needed – middle schools being used for games and that isn’t ideal
- Football and Basketball not getting the facilities they once did, like baseball and soccer
- 5-10 year offerings – Additional Gym(s). Don’t locate all in one spot. Need to service other parts of the County- maybe Grovetown, maybe Lakeside.
- Population is moving West – need facilities west (running out of dirt)
- Continue program that purchases property for future park development
- Hippodrome?
- Aquatics Center requested but not 100% behind it; was a wish list item 10 years ago
- Another Senior Center needed in Evans, near retirement communities
- Lacrosse field shortage- has this been resolved?
- Which direction do we need to grow?
- Everyone in his area wants a park in their area/ close proximity
- Walking trails/ Leisure items are important
- Keep up with emerging trends and levels of service
- Want bicyclers to get off the road; what do we need to do to make that happen?
- Personally, parks and rec is not his vision- He’s into the public works side more so: roads, storm and utilities
- Pedestrian connectivity is high on his list
- Different groups have been in touch based on their own frame of reference
- Youth/kids take priority, but adults are also important
- What is the participation rate by the community?
- The growth in Gwinnett was so large that it drove the facilities development
- He sees opportunities for schools and the County to work together
- In Gwinnett: they partnered with local community groups to operate facilities after they were built and maintained by the County.
- For those facilities, the County still maintains the facilities
- Quality facilities and programs are needed to provide the sports programs.
- Folks are traveling outside the County to obtain access to facilities
- Turf is getting worn, may need to explore artificial turf to provide the quality of facilities and opportunities needed in the community.
- The School District needs to prioritize facilities
- Senior focused facilities
- ESports “gaming” is growing and has been recently recognized by the State of GA. Do you really need a specific facility for this or can existing spaces be used?
- Gwinnett County hired a person specifically to manage use of their facilities
- Critical that it is maintainable and can be operated. Don’t just focus on building.
- Need more courts and a tennis court facility like – Rome, GA which has 55 courts. Macon is another good example. Now relying on adjacent providers to host league play and tournaments such as Richmond County.
- League play being hamstrung by lack of facilities in the County. Could host state, junior tournaments, etc. if had the facilities. GA USTA wants to bring back mixed doubles, here.
- Destination Facility is needed for tennis players and tournaments
- New facilities should buffer tennis from soccer
- Fencing should have multiple side exits (vs. one entry to the court) for emergency exit
- Most league play needs (5) courts
- Lakeside Park needs more courts now
- No public clay courts for senior use

- Lack of restrooms near the tennis courts at Patriots Park
- Opportunities for biking trails and links to the Bartram Trail/ Keg Creek/ Mistletoe State Park
- Quality of life is critical, as people can now choose where they live and have the best quality of life
- Riverside Park boat ramp widening and lengthening. Three boat axles broken recently. Water level also fluctuates, so he puts up signs at the boat ramp.
- Dedicated boat and kayak ramps/ docks separated
- Restroom exists at the top of the parking lot; water line is under repair
- Case Study - Mountain Bike Mecca located in Bentonville, Arkansas- Razorback Greenway linking four smaller cities with added amenities along the greenway designed for various skill levels of biking, pump track, etc.
- Need added bike amenities along the Greenway. Take advantage of the existing topography
- Smyrna, GA – 60 acre skills facility that is very engaging for building Children’s interest in biking. Should include “learner trails”
- Decrease carbon footprint; reduce vehicle use
- Habitat and wildlife protection vs degradation of habitat
- Wildlife corridors
- Need a clear definition of “green space”- it shouldn’t mean big open spaces that are “hot spots”
- Re-landscaping plan/ Tree mitigation/ Updates to tree protection ordinances/ must include native plants. Use parks as a location for living infrastructure.
- Lots of development creates a lot of erosion that is under planned.
- Ordinances need to re-focus on the natural resources
- Lack of bicycle racks
- Need sidewalks for the elderly to get somewhere when too old to drive
- Parking can be reduced with biking opportunities
- Hard to find swim lessons for her kids
- Private communities have pools, but one side of town like Grovetown does not access.
- There are neighborhoods with pools that some kids have access to for swimming
- Need to join other pools to join a swim team. Cheapest pool is \$150/person for a membership. Family membership is \$450 for the summer.
- Important to future generations
- High School swim teams have to go outside the County to Richmond County for practice and events. Kids are driving there and paying them for use of their facilities.
- Money is being spent outside the County vs inside
- This County is surrounded by water and has drownings, regularly. It is irresponsible not to address this need.
- Waterpark (Splash in the ‘Boro) is a success and generates revenue in Statesboro
- Of the top counties in GA by income level, only two lack community pools (Columbia County is one of them) and the other has a population of 2,000 people. Populations like this Community have pools.
- School District is spending a million dollars/school for turf field(s). Why can’t they spend some money on a pool?
- Adding facilities to counter added growth & participation. Don’t want to have to turn people away
- Training the public to grow with us – education of the public; be willing to pay more to get what they want
- Facility upgrades needed like at senior center; bathrooms at Wildwood, etc.
- Currently have one senior center for a growing County – maybe need two that are geographically separated and serving the growing west side
- Seeing movement away from segregated Senior Center. Instead, Multi-generational / multi-purpose / multi-cultural community center(s) would be good idea
- Aquatic Center (indoor swimming center with lap lanes; lessons; swim meets; meets;) – Columbia County parents have to go to Richmond County
- Need to reinvest in what they have, which is aging
- Need to fill open staff positions. Can’t let the openings remain unfilled
- As facilities grow, staff should also grow so there isn’t burnout

- Field maintenance guys need help: staff and equipment. Don't want quality to drop
- Senior Center – home delivered meals to 150 max served, but there is a high demand and a wait list. There are 4 drivers now. Need another driver to deliver more meals as population grows.
- Good at getting the word out
- Grovetown Dog Park needed
- More development around the lake so the public can better enjoy it.
- Activate the lake (Clarks Hill) with more water based activities/restaurants/hotels. This would require investing in infrastructure.
- More launch points along the Savannah River as Riverside Park is overrun on the weekends. Kayak/ canoeing is popular.
- Zip Lines, Adventure and Hi Ropes Courses in a natural resource park
- Kayaking destination facility
- Trails expansion and more trailheads where you can park and jump on the trails (Appling Bartram Trail)
- ATV parks and trails is this a trend? (Possibly as part of a larger outdoor experience). Example: Queenstown, New Zealand
- Development along the trails for commercial/ retail (i.e. Swamp Rabbit Trail in Greenville, SC)
- Event space for larger groups (Savannah Rapids is not large enough)
- Meeting facility/ retail/ events all in one space – walkability
- Public art in parks
- How much are people going out of the County to use other parks and facilities?
- Traffic is a problem and census shows growth
- Everything the County does is deliberate; come up with the strategies to alleviate parking and traffic
- Locate parks closer to home; spread out facilities to where the people are located
- Excellence- example is animal control. Eliminated euthanizing and introduced summer program where kids read to the dogs
- Identify the problem and look at several solutions. Try to fix several problems with one solution
- Do not cater to special interest groups
- Solve multiple problems
- Assist with location of amenities

WHAT ARE THE PARKS, RECREATION & EVENTS DEPARTMENT'S UNMET OPPORTUNITIES?

- A package that delivers the purpose of the study
- Parks that are convenient for people's use.
- Reduce transit time and traffic by putting parks where the population is growing
- Connecting people – this is their County and their parks.
- Lacrosse is not yet popular in his area but will be. Design fields/facilities as multi-purpose as possible for flexibility and long range planning.
- New development: WiFi Pavilions are being built for Columbia County Community Broadband Utility. Building 20' x 20' pavilions for rural access to WiFi. First is being completed near Wingfield Community Center/Next to the Fire Station. May build up to 10 or 15 of these.
- The County is working on updating parks with WiFi
- Area 1 of Wildwood Park– do not have sewer, would like to do more glamping there.
- They could also use another restroom near playground; in area 2- bath facility to be renovated next
- Evaluation of how we are maintaining what we have and a recommendation for shortfalls
- Growth - where it is expanding and what type of park will be needed to keep up with that growth?
- Trends – Multi-purpose fields vs. Sports-specific niche
- William Few Parkway undeveloped parcel: small playground and splash pad; bike track/trails using the terrain that's there. Topo does not lend itself to sports field
- Want plan to look at inventory, how are they doing and are they using it well?
- A happy public – want action and things that can be implemented
- Dream big, but realistic
- Achievable recommendations

- Roadmap for the next 5-20 years for County parks department and pursuit of needs / wants with sustainability.
- Must be an executable plan
- This plan will help the Planning Dept. know how to talk to developers.
- Recommendations that are economically viable are needed by their Board
- Plan for the future including addressing growth to the West.
- Purchase land while it's available
- Not sure about aquatics center, it would be a liability and costly to operate
- Examine existing parks and determine where new parks need to go
- Assess what's missing, such as, pickleball that we need to stay ahead of
- How do we expand in the future
- Success is making the citizens of Columbia County happy. Want to make sure that the County covers all the recreation facilities that they want and that the County is providing that.
- True needs and cross sections for the County to accomplish moving forward
- Drill down on what, where and how big is needed.
- If the County doesn't own the land where does it go?
- As many people as possible keeping active in parks and recreation, staying active, making connections with the middle and high school leagues
- A lot of participation at all ages
- Middle school is typically first exposure to various sports (i.e. volleyball). Would like to see exposure at an earlier age. It will help in having kids stay active in sports longer.
- The ideal tennis complex:
 - * Would be comparable to the Petersburg Racquet Club as a prototype
 - * Hard court and clay mix
 - * Expandable over time
 - * Observation areas
 - * At least 28 courts
 - * Building with manned pro shop, restrooms, clubhouse space for gathering, locker rooms with showers, shade for players and visitors/observers
 - * Sun orientation is important
 - * Play is year round (for league play)
- Can a regional facility be built that partners with adjacent Counties/providers?
- They are building tennis from the bottom up through the "Tennis Apprentice" program
- Could work with the pickleball enthusiasts to share common infrastructure like the building, parking, and other support facilities. It would make sense.
- More partnerships with the School District would also be helpful.
- Build smart parks that are healthy for all
- Importance of interconnectivity and bicycle racks
- Denver trails go throughout the city and Euchee Creek greenway could be similar. Trails are networked and specific for biking, walking, etc. Inclusion of sidewalks should be a priority.
- Living infrastructure
- Successional planting
- Human resources – not enough coaches now/ volunteers. Provide incentives to the volunteers in order to cultivate more
- Need education about wildlife resources that exist
- Ichetucknee Springs, FL is a great family canoe/floating site with spring fed creek.
- A large indoor pool with 8-10 lap lanes, Olympic size
- Indoor or domed/garage doors
- Eliminate that the "haves, have pools and the do nots, don't"
- Operational opportunities: Off-time activities currently being performed by Staff after normal work hours. Trained, dedicated, part-time staff (not from a temp agency) would be helpful to work evening events
- Holistically bring the County together. It spans 35 miles and big areas of the community are not participating. Need to bring them in. Why aren't they participating? How can this be improved?

- Wildwood Park – automated gate so people can come/go all hours. Minimal problems now, but would help with security, etc.
- Gym upgrades – roof/ floor/ remove racquetball for Cardio fitness.
- Concessions – outdated existing facilities (except the new parks); staff help – dependent on kids, now
- Maintenance – Don't have enough help; spread too thin.
- Staffing needs: Athletics and maintenance work together but need some helping hands. It would make room for growth and keep people happy.
- Build a Gym on the other side of town; basketball program needs to grow as well as volleyball program is growing. Adult classes
- Find ad pre-existing building to serve the senior citizens in the newer parts of the County. 20% of population of 160,000 residents are over the age of 60.
- Community Center /Senior Center is needed in Evans/Grovetown area.
- Need to focus on events in other parts of the County. Expand into Appling, Harlem, Martinez
- Transit division is needed for Seniors
- Add events/ event facilities in the west side or in older parks areas with a new, larger events facility
- Continued support from administration to get things done. This is absolutely imperative
- Community wins by having winning championship teams.
- A product that helps elevate the County as a visitor's destination and makes them want to stay
- Activities that allow families to recreate together – especially for older folks and teens
- Continue to emphasize quality of life
- Balance between all ages
- Keep going on the right track
- Be able to accommodate the growth of the County
- A Conference Center/meeting facility where you can go, park your car, participate and not get back in your car until the event has ended and you're leaving.
- Aquatic facility
- Biking brand developed
- Attract the right people – meaning those that appreciate the community; take care of their property; caretakers of their community/County
- Programs and offerings need to attract them
- Fort Gordon growth coming – who do we want to attract
- It's not volume, it's what we put where, that can attract
- Intentional, thoughtful growth
- Take care of the existing constituents.
- What is being heard: Swimming facility is not a priority – huge investment to serve too few people
- Turf fields are also mentioned, but not a priority – likes the idea of the schools providing
- Gateway beautification and wayfinding signage, as it relates to ecotourism and sports tourism or from out of town teams using tournament facilities.
- Solve multiple problems
- Assist with location of amenities
- Determine how many facilities do we really need
- What are the trends and what are we missing to satisfy the community's unmet needs?
- Is lacrosse really that big of a need? (where multi-sport field could satisfy lacrosse, and other sports as well)
- Having the data to back up our recommendations

ADDITIONAL INPUT ON NEWLY ACQUIRED / UNDEVELOPED PROPERTIES:

- Gateway undeveloped property is about 70 acres. Designated for regional draw for baseball & softball tournaments (can it be used for other sports?/ Panama City/Destin facility as a case study)
- William Few/Washington Road – 120 acres – passive park like Gateway; mountain biking; splash pad; playground, walking trails
- Pollard House – Not staffed, Community Center as rental space for outdoor & indoor events, museum displays, creek access with lots of yard space, craft shows, community venue
- Gateway Undeveloped site– 70 acres –destination park; similar to Patriots
- William Few/Washington Road (Eucler Creek Greenway) – 120 acres; Trail connection; mountain biking; passive park; trail users;
- Pollard House – 5.32 acres; historical site, tell the story of Columbia County, museum.

PUBLIC INPUT WORKSHOP | COLUMBIA COUNTY LIBRARY | THURS. JUNE 17, 2021 | 6PM

Questions / Comments Made Following Presentation of Planning Process

- No Remote control airplane facility available
- Competitive swimming
- Runs swimming organization
- Pool for the aging or mental health issues
- Pool is important to health of the community
- Drowning issues for minorities
- CSRA (Central Savannah River Area) is top ranked as pertains to the number of participants
- Need for two pools – competitive vs recreation 80 degrees compared to 85 degrees
- 50 meter competitive pool to host events and meets
- Pickleball is needed: 4.2 million players in US. Easy to learn and cost to start to play is low. No public courts to play
- There are currently 32 public tennis courts
- Pickleball is a great sport to get up, get out and move
- Pickleball League play -started 83 teams
- Now, less than 10% of pickleball games are played on public courts
- Want larger pickleball facility for events
- Parks are needed closer to where people live
- We need smaller sizes of parks, such as neighborhood parks
- Want to be able to walk to parks
- Swimming pool needed
- Should provide affordable swim lessons
- Formal (public) swim lessons are needed
- Need an aquatics facility for all ages and abilities
- He is representing the AMA (Academy of Model Aeronautics)recreation flying organization
- If the County will help provide a site (for model aeronautics), the organization will provide the

APPENDIX B - SURVEY INSTRUMENT



October 2021

Dear Columbia County Resident,

The Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department is currently in the process of developing a new 5-10 year Comprehensive Master Plan. This plan will be a living and working document that will create a clear set of short-term, mid-term, and long-range goals and objectives for parks and recreation services in Columbia County, serving as a roadmap to help guide decisions and strategies on future the development of parks, facilities, and programs.

A crucial part of this process includes a **statistically-valid community needs assessment survey**, sent to a specific number of randomly selected households in Columbia County. **Your household has been selected to participate.**

The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and all responses remain confidential. ETC Institute, an independent consulting company will administer the survey and compile the results. Please return your completed survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope **within the next two weeks**. If you prefer to take the survey online, please visit ColumbiaCountySurvey.org.

Your participation is critical to the success of this project. We greatly appreciate your time and attention invested to ensuring the data collected is an accurate representation of the needs and desires of Columbia County residents.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Dennis Hodges, Deputy Director of Community Services, at (706) 868-3484 or dhodges@columbiacountyga.gov.

Thank you again for your willingness to help us improve your parks and recreation services in Columbia County!

Sincerely,

John Luton
Division Director,
Community Services

A Community of Pride • A County of Vision • Endless Opportunities

P.O. Box 498 • 630 Ronald Regan Drive • Evans, Georgia 30809 • phone: 706-868-3484 • fax: 706-312-7132

www.columbiacountyga.gov



Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Event Needs Assessment

Let your voice be heard today!

The Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department would like your input to help determine parks, greenways, open space, and recreation priorities for our community. Since this survey will inform a long-term plan, please answer the questions in pre-COVID conditions. This survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete. When you are finished, please return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid, return-reply envelope. If you prefer, you can complete the survey online at ColumbiaCountySurvey.org. We greatly appreciate and value your time!

1. Have you or any member of your household visited any parks or facilities offered by the County during the last 2 years (including the time before the COVID-19 Pandemic)?

___(1) Yes [Answer Q1a-b.] ___(2) No [Answer Q1c.]

1a. How often have you visited County parks and/or facilities during the last 2 years?

___(1) 5 or more times a week ___(3) Once a week ___(5) Less than once a month
___(2) 2-4 times a week ___(4) 1-3 times a month ___(9) Don't know

1b. Overall, how would you rate the physical condition of ALL County parks and/or facilities you have visited during the last 2 years?

___(1) Excellent ___(2) Good ___(3) Fair ___(4) Poor

1c. If your household has NOT visited any County parks or facilities during the last 2 years, please CHECK ALL of the following reasons you have NOT visited, before the COVID-19 Pandemic.

___(01) Use facilities/parks/trails in other counties	___(11) Lack of parking to access parks/trails
___(02) Too far from home	___(12) Do not feel safe using parks/trails
___(03) Parks/trails are not well maintained	___(13) Lack of handicap accessibility
___(04) Facilities are not well maintained	___(14) Not aware of facility locations
___(05) Facilities do not have the right equipment	___(15) Not aware of parks' or trails' locations
___(06) Facility operating hours are not convenient	___(16) Lack of transportation
___(07) Not interested	___(17) Lack of restrooms
___(08) Too busy	___(18) Lack of trust in government
___(09) Use facilities of other organizations	___(19) Language/cultural barriers
___(10) Lack of features we want to use	___(20) Other: _____

2. Has your household participated in any recreation programs and/or events offered by the Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department during the last 2 years?

___(1) Yes [Answer Q2a-b.] ___(2) No [Answer Q2c.]

2a. How many programs and events offered by the Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department have you or members of your household participated in during the last 2 years?

___(1) One ___(2) 2-3 ___(3) 4-6 ___(4) 7 or more

2b. How would you rate the overall quality of the Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department programs and events in which your household has participated?

___(1) Excellent ___(2) Good ___(3) Fair ___(4) Poor

2c. If your household has NOT participated in any Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department programs and/or events during the last 2 years, please CHECK ALL of the following reasons why you may have NOT participated, before the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (01) Lack of quality programs | <input type="checkbox"/> (14) Registration is difficult |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (02) Lack of quality instructors | <input type="checkbox"/> (15) Poor customer service by staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (03) Lack of quality events | <input type="checkbox"/> (16) Lack of transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (04) Old and outdated facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> (17) Lack of the right program equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (05) Use programs of other agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> (18) Too busy to participate in programs/events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Not aware of what programs are offered | <input type="checkbox"/> (19) Lack of trust in government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Not aware of what events are offered | <input type="checkbox"/> (20) Language/cultural barriers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (08) Fees are too high | <input type="checkbox"/> (21) Not aware of facility locations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (09) Too far from home | <input type="checkbox"/> (22) Not aware of event locations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Program times are not convenient | <input type="checkbox"/> (23) Security is insufficient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Classes are full | <input type="checkbox"/> (24) Personal disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (12) Not interested in the programs offered | <input type="checkbox"/> (25) Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (13) Not interested in the events offered | |

3. From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department programs and activities.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (01) "The Current" programming guide | <input type="checkbox"/> (09) E-mail notifications from the county |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (02) County website | <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Facebook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (03) Materials at parks/recreation facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Twitter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (04) Conversations with recreation staff | <input type="checkbox"/> (12) Instagram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (05) Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> (13) Flyers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Friends and neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> (14) Schools, churches, other non-profit organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Promotions at special events | <input type="checkbox"/> (15) Health clubs or gyms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (08) Banners at parks or city facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> (16) Other: _____ |

4. From the list in Question 3, which THREE methods of communication would you MOST PREFER the County use to communicate with you about recreation programs and activities? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 3, or circle "NONE."]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ NONE

5. From the following list, please CHECK ALL of the organizations that you or members of your household have used for recreation and sports activities during the last 2 years.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (01) Columbia County recreation programs | <input type="checkbox"/> (08) Private clubs (tennis, health, swim, fitness) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (02) Neighboring counties | <input type="checkbox"/> (09) Commercial (Anytime Fitness, Orangetheory Fitness, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (03) Public/private schools | <input type="checkbox"/> (10) YMCA programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (04) Places of worship (e.g., synagogues, churches) | <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Homeowners Association (HOA) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (05) Private and non-profit youth sports leagues | <input type="checkbox"/> (12) Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Private summer camps | <input type="checkbox"/> (13) None; do not use any organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Private workout facilities | |

6. How important do you think it is for Columbia County to provide high quality parks and recreation programs, parks, trails, and facilities?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Very important | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Neutral | <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Not at all important |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Important | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Not important | |

7. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has a need for each of the parks and recreation facilities/amenities in Columbia County listed below by circling either "Yes" or "No." If "Yes," please rate how well your needs for facilities/amenities of this type are being met using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means they are "100% Met" and 1 means "0% Met."

Type of Facility/Amenity (Listed Alphabetically)	Do you have a need for this facility/amenity?		If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?				
	Yes	No	100% Met	75% Met	50% Met	25% Met	0% Met
01. Baseball/softball fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
02. Boat ramps, kayak, and canoe launches	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
03. Climbing walls	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
04. Community gardens	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
05. Community/Recreation Centers	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
06. Disc golf courses	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
07. Dog parks (off-leash)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
08. Equestrian trails/facilities	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
09. Fishing areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
10. Golf courses	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
11. Gymnastics facilities	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
12. Ice skating and hockey facilities	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
13. Indoor aquatic/swimming facilities	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
14. Indoor gyms/multi-purpose recreation center	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
15. Indoor Sports Complex (indoor sports fields)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
16. Indoor walking/jogging tracks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
17. Large multi-use community parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
18. Mountain bike trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
19. Multi-purpose outdoor courts (basketball, volleyball)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
20. Multi-purpose outdoor field space (football, soccer, lacrosse fields, etc.)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
21. Natural areas/wildlife habitats (greenspace)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
22. Nature center/nature trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
23. Outdoor amphitheater	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
24. Outdoor aquatic/swimming facilities	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
25. Outdoor basketball courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
26. Outdoor tennis courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
27. Outdoor weights and fitness machines	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
28. Paved walking, biking, and hiking trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
29. Pickleball, squash, racquetball courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
30. Picnic shelters	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
31. Playgrounds	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
32. Sand/outdoor volleyball	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
33. Senior Centers	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
34. Shooting ranges for guns and archery	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
35. Skateboard parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
36. Small neighborhood parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
37. Splash park/pad	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
38. Unpaved hiking, walking, biking trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
39. Water stations along trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
40. Zipline and ropes course	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
41. Other:	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1

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

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

9. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has a need for each of the recreation programs and/or events in Columbia County listed below by circling either "Yes" or "No." If "Yes," please rate how well your needs for programs of this type are being met using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means they are "100% Met" and 1 means "0% Met."

Type of Program/Event (Listed Alphabetically)	Do you have a need for this program?		If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?				
	Yes	No	100% Met	75% Met	50% Met	25% Met	0% Met
01. Adult arts, dance, performing arts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
02. Adult continuing education programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
03. Adult fitness and wellness programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
04. Adult sports programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
05. After school programs for children and youth	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
06. Baseball programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
07. Basketball programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
08. Cheerleading programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
09. Cultural enrichment programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
10. Day trips/tours	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
11. Environmental education programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
12. E-sports/video gaming	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
13. Flag football programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
14. Football programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
15. Golf lessons and/or leagues	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
16. Gymnastics programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
17. Lacrosse programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
18. Martial Arts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
19. Pickleball programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
20. Preschool programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
21. Programs for people with special needs or disabilities	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
22. Senior recreational programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
23. Soccer programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
24. Softball programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
25. Special events	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
26. Sports clinics	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
27. Summer camps for children and youth	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
28. Swim lessons	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
29. Teen/tween programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
30. Tennis programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
31. Volleyball programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
32. Water fitness programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
33. Youth arts, dance, performing arts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
34. Youth fitness and wellness programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
35. Youth sports programs	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
36. Other: _____	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1

10. Which FOUR programs from the list in Question 9 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 9, or circle "NONE."]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

11. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements about some potential benefits of Columbia County parks and recreation services by circling the corresponding number.

Parks and recreation services in Columbia County...		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
01.	Helps to attract new residents and businesses	5	4	3	2	1	9
02.	Helps to reduce crime in my neighborhood and keep kids out of trouble	5	4	3	2	1	9
03.	Improves my (my household's) mental health and reduces stress	5	4	3	2	1	9
04.	Improves my (my household's) physical health and fitness	5	4	3	2	1	9
05.	Increases my (my household's) property value	5	4	3	2	1	9
06.	Is age-friendly and accessible to all age groups	5	4	3	2	1	9
07.	Makes Columbia County a more desirable place to live	5	4	3	2	1	9
08.	Positively impacts economic/business development	5	4	3	2	1	9
09.	Preserves open space and protects the environment	5	4	3	2	1	9
10.	Promotes tourism to the County and the region	5	4	3	2	1	9
11.	Provides jobs/professional development for youth	5	4	3	2	1	9
12.	Provides positive social interactions for me (my household/family)	5	4	3	2	1	9
13.	Provides volunteer opportunities for the community	5	4	3	2	1	9

12. Please rate your level of support for each of the following actions Columbia County could take to improve the parks and recreation system.

Types of Improvements		Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Sure	Not Supportive
01.	Develop a new outdoor exercise/fitness area	4	3	2	1
02.	Develop new areas for leisure games/activities (e.g., disc golf, horseshoes, table tennis)	4	3	2	1
03.	Develop new indoor recreation centers with gymnasiums, fitness facilities, indoor walking/running tracks, etc. and replace smaller outdated recreation centers with newer, larger ones	4	3	2	1
04.	Develop another sport complex facility	4	3	2	1
05.	Develop new outdoor family aquatic centers with slides, sprays, etc.	4	3	2	1
06.	Develop new outdoor swimming pools	4	3	2	1
07.	Develop new swimming pool/aquatic facility	4	3	2	1
08.	Develop new programs/activities at existing facilities	4	3	2	1
09.	Develop new trails and connect existing trails	4	3	2	1
10.	Develop walking/biking trails and parks	4	3	2	1
11.	Improve existing neighborhood and community parks	4	3	2	1
12.	Improve existing park buildings/recreation facilities and centers	4	3	2	1
13.	Improve existing playground areas	4	3	2	1
14.	Improve existing sport courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, multi-sport)	4	3	2	1
15.	Improve existing youth/adult athletic fields	4	3	2	1
16.	Improve connectivity/accessibility of trails	4	3	2	1
17.	Purchase land for additional athletic fields and larger recreational areas	4	3	2	1
18.	Purchase land for additional trails or bikeways	4	3	2	1
19.	Purchase land to develop neighborhood parks	4	3	2	1
20.	Utilize school facilities for County recreation programs	4	3	2	1
21.	Wi-Fi in parks	4	3	2	1
22.	Other: _____	4	3	2	1

13. Which FOUR actions from the list in Question 12 would you be MOST WILLING to fund? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 12, or circle "NONE."]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

14. Construction of capital projects are funded through the SPLOST program. However, operational costs for new projects are funded through the county's general fund. How supportive would you be of a property tax increase to fund the ongoing maintenance and staffing required to operate a new facility?

- (1) Very supportive (3) Not sure (5) Not at all supportive
 (2) Somewhat supportive (4) Less supportive

15. If you had an additional \$100, how would you allocate the funds among the parks and recreation categories listed below? [Please be sure your total adds up to \$100.]

- \$ _____ Improvements/maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities
 \$ _____ Acquisition of new park land and open space
 \$ _____ Construction of new sports fields (softball, soccer, baseball, etc.)
 \$ _____ Acquisition and development of walking and biking trails
 \$ _____ Development of a new indoor recreation facility (indoor walking track, fitness centers, gyms, sport courts, etc.)
 \$ _____ Development of a new indoor pool
 \$ _____ Development of outdoor swimming pools
 \$ _____ Other: _____

\$100 total

16. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the overall value that your household receives from the Columbia County Parks, Recreation, and Events Department.

- (1) Very satisfied (3) Neutral (5) Very dissatisfied
 (2) Satisfied (4) Dissatisfied (9) Don't know

17. Given the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, how has your and your household's perception of the value of parks, trails, open spaces and recreation changed?

- (1) Value has significantly increased (4) Value has somewhat decreased
 (2) Value has somewhat increased (5) Value has significantly decreased
 (3) No change

18. Based on your perception of value, how would you want Columbia County to fund future parks, recreation, trails, and open space needs?

- (1) Increase funding (2) Maintain existing funding levels (3) Reduce funding (4) Not sure

Demographics

19. Your gender:

- (1) Male (3) Non-binary (5) Prefer to self-describe: _____
 (2) Female (4) Prefer not to answer

20. Including yourself, how many people in your household are...

- Under age 5: _____ Ages 15-19: _____ Ages 35-44: _____ Ages 65-74: _____
 Ages 5-9: _____ Ages 20-24: _____ Ages 45-54: _____ Ages 75-84: _____
 Ages 10-14: _____ Ages 25-34: _____ Ages 55-64: _____ Ages 85+: _____

21. Your age: _____ years
22. How many years have you lived in Columbia County? _____ years
23. Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?
- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| ____(1) Asian/Pacific Islander | ____(3) Native American | ____(5) Hispanic |
| ____(2) Black/African American | ____(4) White/Caucasian | ____(6) Other: _____ |

This concludes the survey. Thank you for your time!
Please return your completed survey in the enclosed return-reply envelope addressed to:
ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061

Your responses will remain completely confidential. The information to the right will ONLY be used to help identify the level of need in your area. Thank you!

©2021 ETC Institute

Page 7

APPENDIX C - CORE VS. CASUAL PARTICIPATION TRENDS

GENERAL SPORTS

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Sports								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
#	%	#	%	#	%			
Basketball	22,343	100%	27,753	100%	27,135	100%	21.4%	-2.2%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	7,486	34%	11,962	43%	11,019	41%	47.2%	-7.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	14,857	66%	15,791	57%	16,019	59%	7.8%	1.4%
Golf (9 or 18-Hole Course)	23,815	100%	24,804	100%	25,111	100%	5.4%	1.2%
Tennis	18,079	100%	21,642	100%	22,617	100%	25.1%	4.5%
Baseball	14,760	100%	15,731	100%	15,587	100%	5.6%	-0.9%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	5,673	38%	8,089	51%	7,392	47%	30.3%	-8.6%
<i>Core (13+ times)</i>	9,087	62%	7,643	49%	8,195	53%	-9.8%	7.2%
Soccer (Outdoor)	11,932	100%	12,444	100%	12,556	100%	5.2%	0.9%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	6,342	53%	8,360	67%	7,586	60%	19.6%	-9.3%
<i>Core (26+ times)</i>	5,590	47%	4,084	33%	4,970	40%	-11.1%	21.7%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,690	100%	6,349	100%	6,008	100%	-21.9%	-5.4%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,377	44%	2,753	43%	2,729	45%	-19.2%	-0.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	4,314	56%	3,596	57%	3,279	55%	-24.0%	-8.8%
Football (Flag)	6,173	123%	7,001	121%	6,889	123%	11.6%	-1.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,249	53%	4,287	61%	4,137	60%	27.3%	-3.5%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,924	47%	2,714	39%	2,752	40%	-5.9%	1.4%
<i>Core Age 6 to 17 (13+ times)</i>	1,401	23%	1,446	21%	1,574	23%	12.3%	8.9%
Volleyball (Court)	6,216	100%	5,410	100%	5,849	100%	-5.9%	8.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,852	46%	2,204	41%	2,465	42%	-13.6%	11.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,364	54%	3,206	59%	3,384	58%	0.6%	5.6%
Badminton	7,354	100%	5,862	100%	6,061	100%	-17.6%	3.4%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	5,285	72%	4,129	70%	4,251	70%	-19.6%	3.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,069	28%	1,733	30%	1,810	30%	-12.5%	4.4%
Football (Touch)	5,686	100%	4,846	100%	4,884	100%	-14.1%	0.8%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,304	58%	2,990	62%	3,171	65%	-4.0%	6.1%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,383	42%	1,856	38%	1,713	35%	-28.1%	-7.7%
Soccer (Indoor)	5,117	100%	5,440	100%	5,408	100%	5.7%	-0.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,347	46%	3,377	62%	3,054	56%	30.1%	-9.6%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,770	54%	2,063	38%	2,354	44%	-15.0%	14.1%
Football (Tackle)	5,481	146%	5,054	144%	5,228	140%	-4.6%	3.4%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	2,242	41%	2,390	47%	2,642	51%	17.8%	10.5%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	3,240	59%	2,665	53%	2,586	49%	-20.2%	-3.0%
<i>Core Age 6 to 17 (26+ times)</i>	2,543	46%	2,226	44%	2,110	40%	-17.0%	-5.2%
Gymnastics	5,381	100%	3,848	100%	4,268	100%	-20.7%	10.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	3,580	67%	2,438	63%	2,787	65%	-22.2%	14.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,800	33%	1,410	37%	1,482	35%	-17.7%	5.1%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	5,489	100%	4,320	100%	4,184	100%	-23.8%	-3.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,989	73%	3,105	72%	2,918	70%	-26.8%	-6.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,500	27%	1,215	28%	1,265	30%	-15.7%	4.1%
Track and Field	4,116	100%	3,636	100%	3,587	100%	-12.9%	-1.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,961	48%	1,589	44%	1,712	48%	-12.7%	7.7%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,155	52%	2,046	56%	1,875	52%	-13.0%	-8.4%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

GENERAL SPORTS CONTINUED

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Sports								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
#	%	#	%	#	%			
Cheerleading	4,029	100%	3,308	100%	3,465	100%	-14.0%	4.7%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	2,365	59%	1,931	58%	2,030	59%	-14.2%	5.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,664	41%	1,377	42%	1,435	41%	-13.8%	4.2%
Pickleball	2,815	100%	4,199	100%	4,819	100%	71.2%	14.8%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,710	61%	2,835	68%	3,454	72%	102.0%	21.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,106	39%	1,364	32%	1,365	28%	23.4%	0.1%
Racquetball	3,579	100%	3,426	100%	3,260	100%	-8.9%	-4.8%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,488	70%	2,476	72%	2,270	70%	-8.8%	-8.3%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,092	31%	950	28%	990	30%	-9.3%	4.2%
Ice Hockey	2,697	100%	2,270	100%	2,306	100%	-14.5%	1.6%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,353	50%	1,165	51%	1,206	52%	-10.9%	3.5%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,344	50%	1,105	49%	1,101	48%	-18.1%	-0.4%
Ultimate Frisbee	3,673	100%	2,325	100%	2,190	100%	-40.4%	-5.8%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,746	75%	1,476	63%	1,441	66%	-47.5%	-2.4%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	927	25%	849	37%	749	34%	-19.2%	-11.8%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,467	100%	1,811	100%	2,088	100%	-15.4%	15.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,198	49%	650	36%	934	45%	-22.0%	43.7%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,269	51%	1,162	64%	1,154	55%	-9.1%	-0.7%
Lacrosse	2,090	100%	1,884	100%	1,892	100%	-9.5%	0.4%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,153	55%	902	48%	1,009	53%	-12.5%	11.9%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	938	45%	982	52%	883	47%	-5.9%	-10.1%
Wrestling	1,922	100%	1,931	100%	1,937	100%	0.8%	0.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	1,139	59%	1,239	64%	1,290	67%	13.3%	4.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	782	41%	692	36%	647	33%	-17.3%	-6.5%
Roller Hockey	1,929	100%	1,500	100%	1,425	100%	-26.1%	-5.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,438	75%	1,129	75%	1,088	76%	-24.3%	-3.6%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	491	25%	371	25%	337	24%	-31.4%	-9.2%
Boxing for Competition	1,210	100%	1,361	100%	1,460	100%	20.7%	7.3%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,035	86%	1,214	89%	1,262	86%	21.9%	4.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	176	15%	147	11%	199	14%	13.1%	35.4%
Rugby	1,550	100%	1,242	100%	1,238	100%	-20.1%	-0.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,090	70%	807	65%	778	63%	-28.6%	-3.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	460	30%	435	35%	460	37%	0.0%	5.7%
Squash	1,549	100%	1,163	100%	1,185	100%	-23.5%	1.9%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,111	72%	669	58%	720	61%	-35.2%	7.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	437	28%	495	43%	466	39%	6.6%	-5.9%
Golf (Entertainment Venue)	8,173	100%	12,057	100%	12,362	100%	51.3%	2.5%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

GENERAL FITNESS

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Fitness								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Fitness Walking	107,895	100%	114,044	100%	115,814	100%	7.3%	1.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	34,535	32%	34,742	30%	39,036	34%	13.0%	12.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	73,359	68%	79,302	70%	76,778	66%	4.7%	-3.2%
Treadmill	51,872	100%	49,832	100%	53,627	100%	3.4%	7.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	23,490	45%	19,549	39%	25,353	47%	7.9%	29.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	28,381	55%	30,283	61%	28,276	53%	-0.4%	-6.6%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	51,513	100%	53,256	100%	52,636	100%	2.2%	-1.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	18,245	35%	20,070	38%	21,560	41%	18.2%	7.4%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	33,268	65%	33,186	62%	31,076	59%	-6.6%	-6.4%
Running/Jogging	47,384	100%	50,652	100%	48,977	100%	3.4%	-3.3%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	21,764	46%	24,438	48%	23,441	48%	7.7%	-4.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	25,621	54%	26,214	52%	25,537	52%	-0.3%	-2.6%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	36,118	100%	31,287	100%	32,453	100%	-10.1%	3.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	18,240	51%	13,249	42%	15,124	47%	-17.1%	14.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	17,878	49%	18,038	58%	17,330	53%	-3.1%	-3.9%
Weight/Resistant Machines	35,768	100%	30,651	100%	30,577	100%	-14.5%	-0.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	14,346	40%	10,940	36%	11,954	39%	-16.7%	9.3%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	21,422	60%	19,711	64%	18,624	61%	-13.1%	-5.5%
Elliptical Motion/Cross Trainer	32,218	100%	27,920	100%	27,618	100%	-14.3%	-1.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	15,687	49%	14,403	52%	14,156	51%	-9.8%	-1.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	16,532	51%	13,517	48%	13,461	49%	-18.6%	-0.4%
Yoga	26,268	100%	32,808	102%	34,347	100%	30.8%	4.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	15,486	59%	19,953	61%	20,110	59%	29.9%	0.8%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	10,782	41%	13,471	41%	14,237	41%	32.0%	5.7%
Free Weights (Barbells)	26,473	100%	28,790	100%	28,243	100%	6.7%	-1.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	10,344	39%	13,428	47%	12,649	45%	22.3%	-5.8%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	16,129	61%	15,363	53%	15,595	55%	-3.3%	1.5%
Dance, Step, Choreographed Exercise	21,839	100%	25,160	100%	24,752	100%	13.3%	-1.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	14,158	65%	16,652	66%	16,622	67%	17.4%	-0.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	7,681	35%	8,507	34%	8,130	33%	5.8%	-4.4%
Bodyweight Exercise	25,110	100%	22,845	100%	22,629	100%	-9.9%	-0.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	9,763	39%	9,581	42%	9,915	44%	1.6%	3.5%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	15,347	61%	13,264	58%	12,714	56%	-17.2%	-4.1%
Aerobics (High Impact/ Intensity Training)	10,575	100%	10,954	100%	10,400	100%	-1.7%	-5.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	7,135	67%	8,331	76%	8,347	80%	17.0%	0.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,440	33%	2,623	24%	2,053	20%	-40.3%	-21.7%
Stair Climbing Machine	15,079	100%	11,261	100%	11,786	100%	-21.8%	4.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	9,332	62%	6,339	56%	7,332	62%	-21.4%	15.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	5,747	38%	4,922	44%	4,453	38%	-22.5%	-9.5%
Cross-Training Style Workout	12,914	100%	9,179	100%	9,764	100%	-24.4%	6.4%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	6,430	50%	3,476	38%	4,179	43%	-35.0%	20.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	6,483	50%	5,704	62%	5,585	57%	-13.9%	-2.1%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

GENERAL FITNESS CONTINUED

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - General Fitness								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Trail Running	8,582	100%	11,854	100%	12,520	100%	45.9%	5.6%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,937	100%	6,054	100%	5,939	100%	-33.5%	-1.9%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	5,751	64%	3,134	52%	3,134	53%	-45.5%	0.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,186	36%	2,920	48%	2,805	47%	-12.0%	-3.9%
Pilates Training	8,893	100%	9,905	100%	9,745	100%	9.6%	-1.6%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	5,525	62%	6,668	67%	6,611	68%	19.7%	-0.9%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,367	38%	3,237	33%	3,133	32%	-6.9%	-3.2%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,899	100%	5,295	100%	5,099	100%	-26.1%	-3.7%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	4,760	69%	3,438	65%	3,328	65%	-30.1%	-3.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	2,139	31%	1,857	35%	1,771	35%	-17.2%	-4.6%
Boot Camp Style Training	6,583	100%	4,969	100%	5,169	100%	-21.5%	4.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	4,484	68%	3,204	64%	3,461	67%	-22.8%	8.0%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	2,099	32%	1,765	36%	1,709	33%	-18.6%	-3.2%
Martial Arts	5,745	100%	6,064	100%	6,186	100%	7.7%	2.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,964	34%	2,679	44%	2,728	44%	38.9%	1.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	3,780	66%	3,385	56%	3,458	56%	-8.5%	2.2%
Boxing for Fitness	5,175	100%	5,230	100%	5,237	100%	1.2%	0.1%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	2,678	52%	2,962	57%	2,985	57%	11.5%	0.8%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	2,496	48%	2,268	43%	2,252	43%	-9.8%	-0.7%
Tai Chi	3,706	100%	3,300	100%	3,393	100%	-8.4%	2.8%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	2,245	61%	1,858	56%	2,001	59%	-10.9%	7.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,461	39%	1,442	44%	1,393	41%	-4.7%	-3.4%
Barre	3,329	100%	3,579	100%	3,659	100%	9.9%	2.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	2,636	79%	2,721	76%	2,822	77%	7.1%	3.7%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	693	21%	858	24%	837	23%	20.8%	-2.4%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	2,374	100%	1,846	100%	1,748	100%	-26.4%	-5.3%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,705	100%	1,363	100%	1,304	100%	-23.5%	-4.3%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

OUTDOOR / ADVENTURE RECREATION

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Hiking (Day)	42,128	100%	57,808	100%	58,697	100%	39.3%	1.5%
Bicycling (Road)	38,365	100%	44,471	100%	42,775	100%	11.5%	-3.8%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	19,244	50%	23,720	53%	22,280	52%	15.8%	-6.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	19,121	50%	20,751	47%	20,495	48%	7.2%	-1.2%
Fishing (Freshwater)	38,121	100%	42,556	100%	40,853	100%	7.2%	-4.0%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	20,308	53%	24,309	57%	22,451	55%	10.6%	-7.6%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	17,813	47%	18,247	43%	18,403	45%	3.3%	0.9%
Camping (< 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	26,467	100%	36,082	100%	35,985	100%	36.0%	-0.3%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,855	100%	17,825	100%	16,371	100%	3.3%	-8.2%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	8,719	55%	11,281	63%	9,688	59%	11.1%	-14.1%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	7,136	45%	6,544	37%	6,683	41%	-6.3%	2.1%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,266	100%	14,527	100%	13,790	100%	12.4%	-5.1%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	7,198	59%	9,109	63%	8,543	62%	18.7%	-6.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	5,068	41%	5,418	37%	5,246	38%	3.5%	-3.2%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	11,589	100%	15,228	100%	14,815	100%	27.8%	-2.7%
Backpacking Overnight	10,151	100%	10,746	100%	10,306	100%	1.5%	-4.1%
Bicycling (Mountain)	8,615	100%	8,998	100%	8,693	100%	0.9%	-3.4%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	4,273	50%	4,803	53%	4,517	52%	5.7%	-6.0%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	4,342	50%	4,194	47%	4,176	48%	-3.8%	-0.4%
Archery	7,903	100%	7,249	100%	7,342	100%	-7.1%	1.3%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	6,650	84%	6,102	84%	6,054	82%	-9.0%	-0.8%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	1,253	16%	1,147	16%	1,288	18%	2.8%	12.3%
Fishing (Fly)	6,456	100%	7,753	100%	7,458	100%	15.5%	-3.8%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	4,183	65%	5,020	65%	4,762	64%	13.8%	-5.1%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	2,273	35%	2,733	35%	2,696	36%	18.6%	-1.4%
Skateboarding	6,442	100%	8,872	100%	8,747	100%	35.8%	-1.4%
<i>Casual (1-25 times)</i>	3,955	61%	6,315	71%	6,181	71%	56.3%	-2.1%
<i>Core(26+ times)</i>	2,487	39%	2,557	29%	2,566	29%	3.2%	0.4%
Climbing (Indoor)	-	n/a	5,535	100%	5,684	100%	n/a	2.7%
Roller Skating (In-Line)	5,381	100%	4,892	100%	4,940	100%	-8.2%	1.0%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	3,861	72%	3,466	71%	3,525	71%	-8.7%	1.7%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,520	28%	1,425	29%	1,415	29%	-6.9%	-0.7%
Bicycling (BMX)	3,104	100%	3,880	100%	3,861	100%	24.4%	-0.5%
<i>Casual (1-12 times)</i>	1,760	57%	2,532	65%	2,466	64%	40.1%	-2.6%
<i>Core(13+ times)</i>	1,344	43%	1,348	35%	1,396	36%	3.9%	3.6%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,790	100%	2,456	100%	2,374	100%	-14.9%	-3.3%
Climbing (Sport/Boulder)	-	n/a	2,290	100%	2,301	100%	n/a	0.5%
Adventure Racing	2,999	100%	1,966	100%	1,826	100%	-39.1%	-7.1%
<i>Casual (1 times)</i>	1,081	36%	328	17%	312	17%	-71.1%	-4.9%
<i>Core(2+ times)</i>	1,918	64%	1,638	83%	1,514	83%	-21.1%	-7.6%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

AQUATICS

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - Aquatics								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Swimming (Fitness)	26,601	100%	25,666	100%	25,620	100%	-3.7%	-0.2%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	17,781	67%	17,987	70%	17,598	69%	-1.0%	-2.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	8,820	33%	7,680	30%	8,022	31%	-9.0%	4.5%
Aquatic Exercise	10,575	100%	10,954	100%	10,400	100%	-1.7%	-5.1%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	7,135	67%	8,331	76%	8,347	80%	17.0%	0.2%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	3,440	33%	2,623	24%	2,053	20%	-40.3%	-21.7%
Swimming (Competition)	3,369	100%	2,615	100%	2,824	100%	-16.2%	8.0%
<i>Casual (1-49 times)</i>	1,881	56%	1,524	58%	1,708	60%	-9.2%	12.1%
<i>Core(50+ times)</i>	1,488	44%	1,091	42%	1,116	40%	-25.0%	2.3%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over								
Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)		More Core Participants (56-74%)		Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)		More Casual Participants (56-74%)	
							Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)	

WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

National Core vs Casual Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities								
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change	
	2016		2020		2021		5-Year Trend	1-Year Trend
	#	%	#	%	#	%		
Kayaking (Recreational)	10,017	100%	13,002	100%	13,351	100%	33.3%	2.7%
Canoeing	10,046	100%	9,595	100%	9,199	100%	-8.4%	-4.1%
Snorkeling	8,717	100%	7,729	100%	7,316	100%	-16.1%	-5.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	6,945	80%	6,374	82%	5,989	82%	-13.8%	-6.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,773	20%	1,355	18%	1,326	18%	-25.2%	-2.1%
Jet Skiing	5,783	100%	4,900	100%	5,062	100%	-12.5%	3.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	4,143	72%	3,783	77%	3,780	75%	-8.8%	-0.1%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,640	28%	1,116	23%	1,281	25%	-21.9%	14.8%
Sailing	4,095	100%	3,486	100%	3,463	100%	-15.4%	-0.7%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,833	69%	2,395	69%	2,418	70%	-14.6%	1.0%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,262	31%	1,091	31%	1,045	30%	-17.2%	-4.2%
Stand-Up Paddling	3,220	100%	3,675	100%	3,739	100%	16.1%	1.7%
Rafting	3,428	100%	3,474	100%	3,383	100%	-1.3%	-2.6%
Water Skiing	3,700	100%	3,050	100%	3,058	100%	-17.4%	0.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,667	72%	2,189	72%	2,209	72%	-17.2%	0.9%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,033	28%	861	28%	849	28%	-17.8%	-1.4%
Surfing	2,793	100%	3,800	100%	3,463	100%	24.0%	-8.9%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,768	63%	2,507	66%	2,158	62%	22.1%	-13.9%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	1,024	37%	1,293	34%	1,305	38%	27.4%	0.9%
Wakeboarding	2,912	100%	2,754	100%	2,674	100%	-8.2%	-2.9%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,017	69%	2,007	73%	1,902	71%	-5.7%	-5.2%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	895	31%	747	27%	772	29%	-13.7%	3.3%
Scuba Diving	3,111	100%	2,588	100%	2,476	100%	-20.4%	-4.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	2,292	74%	1,880	73%	1,795	72%	-21.7%	-4.5%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	819	26%	708	27%	680	27%	-17.0%	-4.0%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	3,124	100%	2,508	100%	2,587	100%	-17.2%	3.1%
Kayaking (White Water)	2,552	100%	2,605	100%	2,587	100%	1.4%	-0.7%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,737	100%	1,268	100%	1,297	100%	-25.3%	2.3%
<i>Casual (1-7 times)</i>	1,449	83%	1,015	80%	1,002	77%	-30.8%	-1.3%
<i>Core(8+ times)</i>	288	17%	253	20%	295	23%	2.4%	16.6%

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Participation Growth/Decline	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	
Core vs Casual Distribution	Mostly Core Participants (greater than 75%)	More Core Participants (56-74%)	Evenly Divided (45-55% Core and Casual)	More Casual Participants (56-74%)	Mostly Casual Participants (greater than 75%)

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

BESSIE THOMAS SENIOR CENTER

5913 Euchee Creek Drive
District 4 - Grovetown, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Senior Center adjacent to County's abandoned library (being used for COVID-19 immunizations). Half building being used by Community Connections. Columbia Co. Transit also using building. Built in 1994

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 12.6

PARK TYPE: Special Purpose Facility

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Senior Center Portion of Building	4500		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Set up well for serving meals through the center
- Has working kiln
- Appears to have adequate parking

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- HVAC is inconsistent
- Roof will need replacement in 3-5 years
- Have overgrown the space, including lack of storage

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- This facility has been outgrown. Can the remainder of the building be acquired, or should the center be relocated?
- Address HVAC concerns
- Provide addt'l space- card room, small crafts room, storage
- Repair/replace asphalt curbing & pavement
- One ADA ramp at main entry-consider adding additional

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

BLANCHARD PARK

4541 Dewey Drive
District 2- Augusta, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

First and oldest park built by County. Planning on addition of new road extension. Also known as Martinez Park now, will become Blanchard Park after improvements

USAGE: LIGHT **MEDIUM** HEAVY

ACREAGE: 25

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Multi-purpose 60 x 80	2			√
Baseball 200'	1		√	
Playground 5-12 with rubber surface	1	√		
Walking trail	1			√
Pickleball courts	4			√
Bathroom building	1			√
Picnic pavilion	1		√	
Maintenance/storage	1			√
Old Maintenance Shed	1			√
"Sand Lot" Field	1			√
Dog Park	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Central location
- Has only dedicated pickleball courts in County, heavily used
- Youth football
- New Dog Park

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Bad erosion throughout park
- Condition of pavement including walking trail
- Youth football parking shortage. Need fence replacement

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Oak Ridge Drive (end of cul-de-sac) planned to connect with Blanchard Park. Plan to add trails
- Contemplate converting baseball to soccer?
- Replace storage build(s)- currently leaks, no climate control
- Irrigation and lights for "sandlot field"
- Redo road/ parking and address parking shortage
- No edging for playground surfacing
- Provide ADA access to playground
- Repair/replace pickleball court surfacing

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

BLANCHARD WOODS PARK

4600 Blanchard Woods Drive
District 3- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Referred to as “soccer complex” or “skatepark park”. Has Gaga Ball that was installed by Eagle Scout.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 153

PARK TYPE: Regional Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Multi-purpose fields @ 2.5 acres each	4			√
Playground 5-12 w/ rubber surfacing	1		√	
Skatepark	1	√		
BMX track	1			√
Cross country trail	1			√
Soccer stadium field @ 2.5 acres	1			√
Concessions/restrooms buildings	2		√	
Locker rooms	1			√
BMX building	1			√
Gaga Ball (Pit)	1			√
Picnic Pavilion	1	√		
Scoring Building	1			√

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Centrally located
- Multi-sport activities
- Has only Gaga Ball facility in the County

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Traffic & parking (near playground & skate park areas)
- Cross-country course & conflict with soccer fields
- Landscape islands in skate park

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Pave parking lots (from gravel) for most used areas, including skatepark area
- Address erosion near main entry & on cross country trail
- Add “learning area” to skatepark for beginners
- Replace roof on picnic pavilion
- Add edge constraint to playground safety surfacing
- Remove landscape islands in skate park
- Provide pedestrian access to skatepark
- Provide ADA access to playground
- Provide ADA access & seating for BMX spectators
- Add new scoring building/pressbox

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

**COLUMBIA COUNTY
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**

1000 Market St.
Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Under construction at time of inventory.
Usage is N/A - new

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 15

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Performing Arts Center		√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Location

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- N/A New

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Support facility planned

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

EUBANK BLANCHARD PARK

6868 Cobbham Road
District 3- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Park adjacent to Fire Department. "Co-owned" by County and Appling. EMS attached to conditioned shelter.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 15

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Conditioned Shelter w/ kitchen & fireplace	2200 sf	√		
Outdoor basketball court	1		√	
Ballfield- 300' -no lights	1	√		
5-12 Playground mulch surfacing	1	√		
2-5 Playground mulch surfacing	1	√		
Walking track- asphalt	0.4 miles	√		
Restroom building	1	√		
Volleyball court	1		√	
Pickup soccer/practice field	1		√	
Picnic pavilion	2	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Rental shelter is nice, heavily used & clean/ well maintained
- Not programmed but used by the surrounding community
- Has walking trail

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Playgrounds & restrooms not ADA accessible
- Asphalt parking, portion of walking trail need replacement
- No field lights, court lights

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Replace all failing asphalt including paving, curbing & trail
- Convert pickup area to soccer with irrigation & grassing
- Re-stripe basketball court, address grading concerns
- Add irrigation to ballfield?
- Consider adding lights to ballfield and proposed soccer
- Fix drainage issues at street
- Provide ADA access to playground and restroom building
- Consider permanent safety surface at playground

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

EVANS TOWNE CENTER PARK

7016 Evans Town Center Blvd.
District 1- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Urban park built in 2011, with Lady A amphitheater. Currently acts as Town's primary special event facility.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 15

PARK TYPE: Community Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Swings	1	√		
5-12 Playground with rubber surface	2	√		
Picnic pavilion	2	√		
Gazebo	1	√		
Ticket booth/restrooms	1	√		
Dog park with shelter	1		√	
Splash pad	1	√		
Lady A Amphitheater/Stage	1	√		
2-5 Playground	1	√		
Food truck pullover	1	√		
Picnic "huts"	4	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Well located with variety of activities & ability to host events
- Activities appear to be ADA accessible
- Newly installed playground surfacing (2-5 & 5-12)

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Dog park surfacing and fencing; needs additional shade
- Concrete walks need replacement in limited locations
- Park can stay wet following storm events

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Expand water feature, improve drainage and add shade
- Consider adding shade to playground areas & dog park
- Replace dog park fencing & consider improving surfacing
- Replace "grasspave" area, where grass is struggling
- Install missing "Gravity Q" swing (in the works)
- Lack of parking being addressed with new parking deck

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

EXHIBITION CENTER

212 Partnership Drive
District 4- Grovetown, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

County's exhibition center built in 2013 and operated by Parks, Recreation and Events. Currently rents space to the YMCA.

USAGE: LIGHT **MEDIUM** HEAVY

ACREAGE: N/A

PARK TYPE: Special Purpose Facility

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Exhibition Center	24,000 sf	√		
Halls A&B	15,400 sf	√		
Meeting Rooms (3)	2,175 sf	√		
Full Service Kitchen	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Flexible use facility periodically used for recreation events
- Has full service kitchen

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Renting space to Steiner Branch of Y- does this ever limit use of the larger space?

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Patio area does not get much use do to lack of shade/heat - consider adding shade to encourage use

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

GATEWAY PARK

215 Partnership Drive
District 4- Grovetown, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

New park built in 2020 and located in expanding part of the County (Grovetown).

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 19

PARK TYPE: Community Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Picnic pavilion w/ restrooms	1	√		
2-5 Playground	1	√		
5-12 Playground	1	√		
Splashpad	1	√		
Walking track	1	√		
Flexible use open space	1	√		
Picnic huts	4	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- New facility located in expanding part of County
- Playground and splash pad are ADA accessible
- Flexible use open space for community events

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Could use larger 2-5 playground area
- Need more shade in high use areas: playground & splashpad

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Add shelter or shade structures to playground & splashpad
- Dog park?

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

GATEWAY UNDEVELOPED SITE

Gateway Boulevard
District 4- Grovetown, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Possible tournament site located on Gateway Boulevard. Wooded site with prescribed vehicular access off Gateway Blvd.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 74.4

PARK TYPE: Undeveloped Regional Park

OVERALL RATING: N/A Undeveloped

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
N/A	1			

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Well located, near interstate and in path of progress

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Possible wetlands?

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Possible tournament facility

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

LAKESIDE PARK

2040 Panther Crossing
District 1- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

New park located near Lakeside High School with focus on soccer.

USAGE: LIGHT **MEDIUM** HEAVY

ACREAGE: 76

PARK TYPE: Regional Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Multi purpose fields with lights	4	√		
Tennis courts w/ lights & pickleball markings	5	√		
5-12 Playground with rubber surfacing	1	√		
Picnic pavilion	2	√		
Restroom/concession building	1	√		
Walking track	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- New facility being used more than anticipated
- Facilities are ADA accessible
- Ample parking

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Playground surfacing needs repair
- Need benches on walking track
- Back of playground rules sign used for graffiti

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Add seating along walking track
- Add “picnic huts” along walking track
- Paint back of playground rules sign with chalkboard paint
- Playground surface to be replaced by manufacturer

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

LONNIE MORRIS PARK

1951 Appling Harlem Highway
District 4- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Sports fields and courts complex

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 7

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Tennis court with lights	1			√
Outdoor basketball court with lights	1			√
Ballfield- 300' with lights	1	√		
Ballfield- 200' with lights	1	√		
Bathroom building	1		√	
Picnic pavilion with grill	1		√	
2-5 Playground with rubber surfacing	1	√		
Batting cage	1		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Good playground equipment
- Good playground surfacing
- Fields in good shape

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Playground is not ADA accessible
- Drainage/flooding affects west side of park
- No ADA or pedestrian access from parking to facilities

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Address storm drainage/flooding across parking lot, etc.
- Repair/replace cracked tennis & basketball court surfacing
- Repair/replace asphalt parking, expand parking if possible
- Add walks and provide ADA access to facilities
- Address ADA accessibility to playground

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

MEMORIAL GARDENS PARK

7022 Evans Town Center Blvd.
District 1- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Located near municipal complex (Library, County Offices, Courthouse)

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 9

PARK TYPE: Community Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Picnic pavilions	3	√		
Playground 5-12	1		√	
Splash pad	1	√		
Bathroom building	1	√		
Amphitheater stage	1		√	
Gazebo at pond	1	√		
Walking trail	1			√

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Well located with variety of activities
- Shaded playground area
- Ample parking for most activities

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Playground safety surfacing needs replacement
- Asphalt trail needs replacement due to tree root damage
- Amphitheater pergola needs repair (or replacement?)

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Replace playground surfacing
- Replace asphalt trail (root damage, etc.)
- Amphitheater pergola is dated and needs to be replaced

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

PATRIOTS PARK

5445 Columbia Road
District 3- Grovetown, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Large regional recreation complex built in 1994.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 122

PARK TYPE: Regional Park

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Gym with (2) indoor basketball courts	1		√	
Racquetball courts	4	√		
Workout / Cardio, Free Weight & Multipurpose Rooms	3	√		
18 Hole disc golf	1	√		
2-5 Playground	1		√	
Ballfields- 200'	5	√		
Ballfields- 300'	2	√		
Ballfields - (2) 320' & (2) 340+'	4	√		
Soccer/baseball field	1	√		
Multipurpose fields @ 2 acres ea.	8	√		
Tennis Courts with lights	9		√	
Picnic pavilions	2	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Variety of activities offered
- Park located on Euclaw Creek Greenway
- Strategically located between (2) major thoroughfares

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Aged buildings- Gymnasium needs new roof, AC leaks
- Scoring Tower/Concessions/Restroom buildings need to be renovated / replaced
- Tennis courts & roads/parking (throughout) need resurfacing

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Improve gym bldg to add gym, replace roof, new HVAC, expand multipurpose room space, reduce racquetball courts (not heavily used), improve spectator seating (29000 SF building)
- Replace fencing/netting on (4) older soccer fields
- Add restrooms at tennis complex
- Resurface tennis courts & consider upgrade to LED lighting
- Redesign & repave main entry road & parking
- Replace damaged concrete walks at tennis and baseball
- Bathrooms needed for old soccer fields
- Replace canvas dugout roofs with more permanent solution
- Renovate/replace restroom/concessions at ballfields (2)
- Shade structures scheduled for replacement
- Playground is mulched and not ADA accessible
- Consider converting small baseball field to new parking

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

PLAZA PARK & FARMER'S MARKET

7025 Towne Center Park Blvd.
District I- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

New park and Farmer's Market. Includes plaza across street from Evans Towne Center Park. Used for movie nights, football Saturdays and Farmer's Market.

USAGE: LIGHT **MEDIUM** HEAVY

ACREAGE: 4

PARK TYPE: Special Purpose

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Farmer's Market Covered Shelter	1	√		
Plaza	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- New facility- just completed
- Great location for centralized use
- Will be used for public events: movie nights, football Sat.

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- N/A

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- N/A

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

POLLARD HOUSE (UNFINISHED)

District 4- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Unfinished home acquired for undefined use. Potential special event venue

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 5.32

PARK TYPE: Special Purpose Facility

OVERALL RATING: Poor (Unusable)

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Unfinished Home	1		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Attractive brick facade with lots of roadside character
- Unique setting- includes pecan grove
- Is plumbed, no electrical is evident

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Unfinished home
- Would require significant investment

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Finish building including front porch
- Open up interior space for special event use
- Add back of house connection and patio space
- Develop defined entry drive, parking, pedestrian connection to the building

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

REED CREEK PARK

3280 Park Lane
District I- Martinez, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Unique "hands on" environmental park with wetland trail. Built in 2006

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 14

PARK TYPE: Natural Resource Park

OVERALL RATING: Good

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Environmental Education Center	1	√		
Boardwalk trail	1		√	
Boardwalk shelter	1	√		
Demonstration gardens (pollinators)	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Programs w/ strong outreach (home schoolers, storytime)
- Fills unique niche with live animals as ambassadors
- Not over-run, so provides quality experience

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Last section of boardwalk needs to be replaced/repared
- Park/parking lot can flood with rain events
- Vandalism- just reopened restrooms after fire

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Replace last segment of boardwalk
- Add boardwalk handrails where 30+” above grade
- Possible dredging behind Zaxby’s to reduce flooding
- Trail maintenance (no chemicals) during summer months
- Requested more full-time staff to meet public demands
- Promote facility/programs to increase public awareness

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

RIVERSIDE PARK

4431 Hardy McManus Road
District I- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Park built in 1994 by Riverside Elementary School with fishing pier & boat ramp, tennis courts, dog park and baseball fields.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 30

PARK TYPE: Regional Park

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Baseball/Softball fields w/ lights & tower	8		√	
Tennis Courts with lights	3		√	
Dog park(s) - big & small	1		√	
Playgrounds	2	√		
Beach volleyball	1	√		
Picnic pavilions	3	√		
Fishing pier	1	√		
Boat ramp with (2) floating docks	1		√	
Kayak rental shed (contracted offering)	1	√		
Maintenance Building	1			√

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- River access with fishing pier, kayak rental
- Close to Evans
- Variety of offerings (dog park, tennis, volleyball, ballfields, etc.)

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Aging facilities: ballfield tower needs renovation
- Dog wash area needs hose bibb, storm drain, new fence
- Tennis courts need resurfacing

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Resurface tennis courts
- Replace concrete walks & reinforce for service vehicle access at ballfield tower
- Parking lot serving tennis, dog park & fields 5-8 needs replacement
- Maintenance shed at dog park is eyesore: can it be screened?
- Replace dugouts and fencing at ballfields - renovate tower
- Install sidewalks for access to dog park
- Address catch basins on bricks that create hazards for small children
- Complete boat landing modifications

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

SAVANNAH RAPIDS PAVILION / PARK

3300 Evans to Locks Road
District I- Martinez, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Beautiful pavilion setting on Savannah River locks built in 1992. Building surrounded by decks and tied into Savannah Rapids Park. Hold 900 events per year. Has leasable conditioned space

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 33

PARK TYPE: Natural Resource Park and Special Purpose Facility (Pavilion)

OVERALL RATING: NRP - Good ; SPF - Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Upper Level Pavilion +/- 18,000 SF (Leasable Space)	1		√	
Lower Level Pavilion +/- 5,000 SF (Leasable Space)	1		√	
Dance Pavilion	1	√		
BBQ Pit	1	√		
Dining Hall (built 1935)	1	√		
Conv.Visitors Bureau Cottage (1880s)	3	√		
5-12 Playground with mulch surfacing	1		√	
Mill House with restrooms	1	√		
Picnic pavilions	3	√		
2-5 Playground with mulch surfacing	1		√	
Shed for storage	1		√	
Boat Dock	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Premiere facility location on Savannah River
- Multiple rental opportunities-Pavilion 2 floors and park facilities
- Historic Register property
- Total +/- 25000 SF of indoor space

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Pavilion needs significant reinvestment and lower deck redo
- Parking is inadequate, but expansion planned
- Playground not ADA accessible

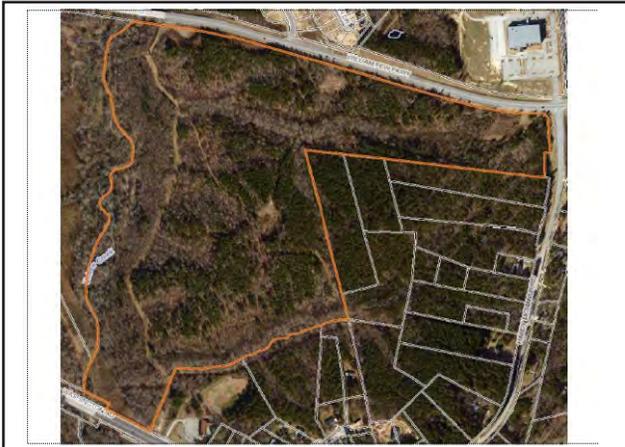
POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Renovate pavilion to include new elevator, improvement to grease trap, renovate lower level kitchen, new roof, new HVAC, replace doors and windows, renovate restrooms, acoustics a problem (between upper and lower users), need additional storage space, fix mechanical room / sump issue
- Replace lower level deck (has been patched)
- Gravel washout at Mills House sloped parking area scheduled to be improved with parking expansion
- Pavilion lacks elevator & lower level isn't ADA accessible
- 2-5 Playgrnd needs replacement, surfacing, ADA access

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

UNDEVELOPED PARK SITE (RIVERWOOD)

William Few Parkway & Washington Roads
District 3- Evans, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Undeveloped recreation complex property. Backs up to Uchee Creek and has frontage on both William Few Parkway to Washington Roads.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 120

PARK TYPE: Community Park

OVERALL RATING: N/A Undeveloped

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
N/A				

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Wooded site backing up to Uchee Creek
- Well located

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- N/A

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- N/A

APPENDIX D - COUNTY OWNED PARK & FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

WILDWOOD PARK

3780 Dogwood Lane
District 3- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

County park on Clark's Hill Lake. Beautiful waterfront property. Home to International Disc Golf Center (2700 SF) (built 2007 and leased to them)

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 870

PARK TYPE: Regional Park

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
RV/Camper campsites	61	√		
Primitive campsites	15	√		
Fish cleaning station (on septic)	1	√		
Boat ramps (one needs repair)	8	√		
Boat docks	4	√		
Sand volleyball court	1	√		
2-5 Playground w/ mulch surfacing	1		√	
5-12 Playground w/ mulch surfacing	1		√	
Bath houses w/ showers/toilets	3	√		
Restroom facilities	2	√	√	
Picnic shelters	9	√		
"Glamping" tent sites	4	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Beautiful setting on lake with "glamping"/waterfront camping
- Bath houses recently/under renovation
- International disc golf center and disc golf (3- 18 holes ea)

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- ADA accessibility for playgrounds
- Septic concerns for all bath houses, fish cleaning station
- No convenient restrooms at shelter/beach area

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- Address septic concerns for bath houses, fish cleaning station, dump stations. This is limiting development options
- Add restrooms at beach/ pavilion area
- Reconfigure beach access and pavilion area- consider expansion of beach to provide additional access
- Renovate restroom in Area 2
- Replace boat ramp left unusable by fluctuating water levels
- Replace roofs on Shelters C & D
- Provide ADA accessibility to playgrounds, consider new safety surfacing
- Pave gravel sections at campsites in Areas 1 & 3
- Address ditches w/ excessive erosion before gatehouse
- Repair/replace pavement with excessive cracking

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

CRAWFORD CREEK LEAGUE PARK

1475 Collins Drive
District 2 - Martinez, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Operating under agreement with Little League. County owns, but does not program or maintain, this is done by Little League. Located in residential neighborhood.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 24

PARK TYPE: Regional Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Poor

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Playground	1			√
Ballfields-200'	3		√	
T-ball-100' fields	3		√	
Batting Cage	1	√		
Covered batting cage	2	√		
Concession stand	1		√	
Bathrooms	1		√	
Scoretower	1		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Large property dedicated to recreation

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Grass/gravel undefined parking areas
- Fencing in bad shape; playground appears unsafe
- Lack of accessible route(s)

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

GLENN PHILLIPS MEMORIAL PARK

165 N Hicks Street
District 4- Harlem, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Small city park in Harlem (behind the pharmacy). Not County operated.

USAGE: LIGHT **MEDIUM** HEAVY

ACREAGE: 0.6

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Gazebo	1		√	
Benches	4	√		
Lawn Area			√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Used for hosting community events
- “City Park” serving Harlem

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Small site

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

GOODALE PARK

5207 Wrightsboro Road
District 4- Grovetown , GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Park owned/operated by City of Grovetown, maintained by County.

USAGE: LIGHT

MEDIUM

HEAVY

ACREAGE: 12

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Baseball 300' with lights	1		√	
Baseball- small field with lights	1		√	
Tennis courts w/ lights	2	√		
Basketball courts	2	√		
Walking trail- concrete	1		√	
Playground - old no safety surface	1			√
Playground - new, ADA accessible	1	√		
Pavilion	2	√		
Dog park (small & large)	1	√		
Restrooms/ Storage Bldg	1		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Good location
- Offers a variety of recreation activities

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Old playground needs safety surfacing, neither are ADA
- Inadequate parking and ill defined pedestrian pathways
- Baseball fields are being used for soccer/football

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

GROVETOWN LIBERTY PARK

1040 Newmantown Road
District 4- Grovetown , GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Park owned by City of Grovetown, located next to wastewater treatment facility. No park identification sign

USAGE: LIGHT **MEDIUM** HEAVY

ACREAGE: 214

PARK TYPE: Regional Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Ballfield- 275' with lights	1	√		
Ballfields-200' with lights	2	√		
T-Ball field with lights	1	√		
Central concession/restroom bldg	1	√		
Community center with gym & fitness	1		√	
Multipurpose Field			√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- ADA accessible community center entrance

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- N/A

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

HARLEM PARK

385 W. Church St.
District 4- Harlem, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

City of Harlem property that is programmed/operated by the County.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE: 14

PARK TYPE: Neighborhood Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Tennis court with lights	1			√
Outdoor basketball court	1			√
Ballfield- 300' with lights	2		√	
Ballfield - 200' with lights	2		√	
Picnic pavilion with grills	1	√		
2-5 Playground with mulch surface	1	√		
Walking track .2 mi	1		√	
Restroom building	1		√	
Old concession/maintenance shop- abandoned	1			√
Storage shed	1		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Trees in playground provide ample shade
- Ballfields are in fair condition- used for adult softball
- Decent parking area

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Old fencing, tennis & basketball courts need resurfacing
- Failing asphalt parking
- Not programmed much

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

KELLEY LITTLE LEAGUE PARK

Riverwatch Parkway
District I- Martinez, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Owned, operated & maintained by Little League volunteers. County does not provide programming or maintenance.

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM HEAVY

ACREAGE:

PARK TYPE: Special Purpose Facility - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Baseball fields with lights	2			
Concession/restroom building	1			
Batting cage	1			

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Central location

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Grassed and gravel access / parking
- No defined walks or ADA access

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

MISTLETOE STATE PARK

3725 Mistletoe Road
Districts 3 & 4- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

State Park located on Clarks Hill Lake

USAGE: LIGHT MEDIUM **HEAVY**

ACREAGE: 1920

PARK TYPE: Regional Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Camp store with restrooms	1	√		
Interpretive center	1	√		
Small outdoor amphitheater	1		√	
Rental cottages: 1 w/ dock; 5= log cabin	10	√		
Restrooms (3+ new one under construction)	4			√
Picnic shelters	5	√		
Leasable shelter @ beach w/ restrooms	1	√		
Boat ramps (and 1 dock)	3	√		
Hiking trails	15.5 mi.	√		
Playground	3	√		
Tent, trailer & RV sites w/ dump station	92	√		
Volleyball at beach	1		√	

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Beautiful lakefront park; known for great fishing
- Heavily used campsites and cabins
- All roads paved (except 1 camp loop) provides good access

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Could use more support facilities for campers (i.e. washers/ dryers)
- Could use bathhouse/restrooms near boat ramp

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

PETERSBURG CAMPGROUND

3998 Petersburg Road
District 3- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Campground facility developed on Clark's Hill Lake. COE Property

USAGE: LIGHT

MEDIUM

HEAVY

ACREAGE:

PARK TYPE: Regional Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Gatehouse	1			
Boat Ramps & Docks	2			
RV/Camper Sites & dump station	92			
Beach				
Restroom Buildings	11			
Playground	1			
Picnic Pavilion	1			
Bathouse with RR & Showers	1			
Primitive Campsites	8			
Small Restroom Building				
Fish Cleaning Station	1			
Gravel parking area	1			

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Nice, secluded campsites
- Waterfront location

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- Poor pavement throughout
- Lack of ADA access throughout

APPENDIX E - PARK & FACILITY (BY OTHERS) INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

WEST DAM RECREATION AREA

Sparrow Lane
District 3- Appling, GA



PARK DESCRIPTION:

Corps of Engineers Park on Clark's Hill Lake.

USAGE: LIGHT

MEDIUM

HEAVY

ACREAGE:

PARK TYPE: Regional Park - By Others

OVERALL RATING: Fair

FACILITY	# / SIZE	CONDITION		
		GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Beach	7	√		
Picnic Areas	Many	√		
Playground	2	√		
Restroom Building	2		√	
Small Bathroom Building	1		√	
Pavilion	1	√		
Gatehouse	1	√		

CURRENT FACILITY STRENGTH:

- Waterfront location

CURRENT FACILITY WEAKNESS:

- No boat ramp / launch
- Restroom locations are inconvenient
- First 2 beaches have no walks; many areas not ADA accessible

APPENDIX F - PARK MODELS

Upon completion of park/facility inventory and analysis site visits, a customized series of park models were developed that are unique to Columbia County. These categories were developed based on observations of existing parks and the types of uses that could be commonly found within them.

PARK MODEL GUIDELINES

This park model system includes five park types, which are **Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Regional Park, Natural Resource Park, and Special Purpose Facility or Park.**

The following lists all park types including their definition and purpose; recommended size criteria; level of service; potential location and types of facilities and features most commonly found within them. This park model system should be considered a guideline for future park development. It is not uncommon for adjustments to be made to park guidelines based on recommended levels of service, availability of land and financial resources. The actual number of parks recommended for the County has been adjusted based on a number of factors. When made, these adjustments may include adjustments to optimum size, acreage range, location and facilities included

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

A Neighborhood Park, by program and location, provides a combination of passive and active use spaces and recreation activities serving nearby neighborhoods. This park includes practice facilities and may include some programmed sports activities combined with passive use facilities.

PURPOSE:

- Provides some active services. Focus is on meeting needs for nearby neighborhood practice facilities and some programmed sports or activities as well as open space and gathering needs.
- Provides opportunities for a diverse mix of activities that appeal to a variety of age groups including walking and bicycling, various programmed and non-programmed field spaces and one or more sports courts.

OPTIMUM SIZE: 15 Acres

ACREAGE RANGE: 5 to 15 Acres

SERVICE RADIUS:

LOCATION CRITERIA:

- Strategically located to serve multiple neighborhoods.
- Located adjoining or immediately adjacent to an arterial or collector street providing safe vehicular access, thereby minimizing neighborhood traffic impacts.
- Connected with County trail and/or bike lane system.
- Adjoining or adjacent to an elementary school, middle school, high school, fire station, library, natural

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- Active and passive use recreation facilities, which may include:
 - o Sports Fields for practices/informal use for pickup play
 - o Game Courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, sand volleyball)
 - o Playground
 - o Picnic and sitting areas
 - o Restrooms
 - o Paved Jogging/walking trails and walks
 - o Low impact recreation areas (i.e. bocce ball, horseshoes, corn hole)
- Parking lots. Off-street parking calculated to satisfy demand of park and recreation activities provided. Includes bike racks.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK CONTINUED

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- Restrooms designed to accommodate the level of park and recreation activities provided and the number of people served. Restrooms should be located within a reasonable walking distance from children's play equipment and other high-use areas.
- Park maintenance and equipment storage
- Security, facility, and as appropriate, game court lighting
- Provision of recreational or gathering opportunities not otherwise available

PRIMARY FACILITIES:

- 1 Playground Structure
- 2+ Multi-Purpose Sports Fields
- 1+ Game Courts (Basketball, tennis, pickleball, sand volleyball)
- Restrooms
- Picnic Areas
- Benches
- Paved Jogging/Walking Trails
- Security Lighting
- Parking

COMMUNITY PARK

Community parks focus on meeting the passive recreation needs of several neighborhoods or sections of the County and are geographically centered to serve them. Connected/ serviced by collector roads to provide adequate access, they may be located adjacent to natural resources, greenways or adjacent to schools where

PURPOSE:

- Community parks are an important unit of the County's park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of nearby neighborhoods. Assists in meeting passive use community-based recreation and gathering areas.
- Provides a combination of passive recreational options for all ages, with an emphasis on youth and family.
- Unique site character helps create a sense of place for these parks.

OPTIMUM SIZE: 15 Acres

ACREAGE RANGE: 15 to 50 Acres

SERVICE RADIUS:

LOCATION CRITERIA:

- Centrally located for equitable access within service area
- Interconnected to trails / sidewalks / low-volume streets and within walking / biking distance of most users. High visibility to surrounding streets for public safety.
- Adjoining or adjacent to an elementary school, middle school, high school, fire station, library, natural

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- Compatible with the area's setting and park site constraints
- Capability for both passive and un-programmed pickup recreation activities

COMMUNITY PARK CONTINUED

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- Park features may include:
 - Unstructured open play areas for practice or pickup games or uses
 - Children’s playground/ Tot lot
 - Internal trails, connecting to greenway trails or sidewalks
 - Family event/ Group picnic/ Sitting areas with shelters
 - Conservation of natural features, as applicable
 - Game courts compatible with setting and park site constraints (Optional)
 - Dog park (Optional)
 - Off road biking or pump track and other unique activities (Optional)
- Restroom facilities.
- Security lighting.
- Bike racks with trail connections where possible.
- Parking: off-street parking spaces to support facilities and uses. On-street parking is acceptable if negative impact to residential properties can be mitigated. On-site parking is preferable as a planning objective.

PRIMARY FACILITIES:

- 1 Playground Structure/Tot Lot/Children’s play area
- 1 Open space for multi-use pickup and un-programmed, pickup recreation use
- Individual and group rentable picnic/sitting areas
- Paved jogging/walking trails and trail connections
- Restrooms
- Low impact recreation areas for bocce, corn hole, etc.
- Security Lighting
- Parking
- Dog Park (Optional)
- 1 Game Court (Basketball, tennis, pickleball, sand volleyball- Optional)
- Splashpad (Optional)
- Concessions or Food Truck Areas (Optional)
- Facilities for outdoor concerts, weddings, etc. (Optional)
- Off-road biking or pump track (Optional)

REGIONAL PARK

A Regional Park consolidates heavily programmed athletic facilities and/or other unique outdoor activities at fewer sites strategically located throughout the County. This park type serves local users as well as users from outside the County. It provides adequate activities to serve as a destination park and is accessible from

PURPOSE:

- Highly active facility that contains areas for active games such as athletic fields and game courts.
- Typically developed to accommodate athletic league sporting events, as well as tournament play.
- Intensely developed – offering a multitude of facilities in order to serve its intended geographic user area.
- Contains a variety of active and passive recreation offerings, providing options for a mix of age groups. Passive use areas include activities such as walking, biking, sitting and picnicking.
- Presents opportunities for non-traditional types of recreation.
- Can draw users from throughout the region, crossing jurisdictional lines.

OPTIMUM SIZE: 100 Acres

ACREAGE RANGE: 50 to 300 Acres

SERVICE RADIUS: County-wide and Beyond

LOCATION CRITERIA:

- Serves as an active recreation hub; requiring ease of access.
- Sites should be relatively flat to alleviate excessive grading for active facilities.
- Where possible, there should be an equal balance of wooded and cleared areas.
- Connectivity to neighborhoods as well as trail or greenway systems should be a consideration when choosing sites. Services provided by nearby hotels and restaurants should be considered when determining location.

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- If a natural water feature is present, the adjoining land should be developed primarily as passive recreation for uses such as walking, biking and picnicking.
- Informal and programmed active recreation facilities may include:
 - Multiple sports fields designed for league and/or tournament play
 - Multiple game courts
 - Large play structures/ Tot lot/ Children's play area
 - Biking/Jogging/ Walking trails connecting to greenway trails or sidewalks
 - Individual or group rental picnic shelters with picnic tables & grills
 - Informal open space
 - Unique natural features
 - Nature trails and observation areas
 - Boat Ramp(s) or access to Water (Optional)
 - Fishing piers/Boat docks (Optional)
 - Interactive water feature (Optional)
 - Recreation Center (Optional)
 - Primitive & Recreational Vehicle camping (Optional)
 - Glamping (Optional)
 - Swimming Beach (as applicable)
 - Concessions or Food Truck area (Optional)
 - Amphitheater (Optional)
- Parking lots. Off-street parking calculated to satisfy demand of park and recreation activities provided.
- Restrooms designed to accommodate the level of park and recreation activities provided and the number of people served. Restrooms should be located within a reasonable walking distance from children's play equipment and other high-use areas such as beaches. Restrooms supporting overnight users may provide showers, laundry facilities as appropriate.
- Park maintenance and equipment storage.
- Security, facility and sports field and game court lighting.
- Playground should be provided as an ancillary facility with adequate shade and nearby paved parking.
- Caretakers House (Optional)

PRIMARY FACILITIES:

- 4+ Athletic Fields, capable of supporting Tournaments
- 6+ Game Courts (basketball, tennis, pickleball, sand volleyball)
- 2 or more Playgrounds
- Unpaved off-road biking trails or tracks
- 2 Restrooms
- Multiple Picnic Areas
- Paved Leisure Trails for Walking or Jogging
- Security lighting
- Adequate Paved Parking
- Recreation Center (Optional)
- Interactive Water Feature (Optional)
- Amphitheater (Optional)
- Concessions/ Food Truck Area (Optional)
- Primitive/RV Camping/Glamping (Optional)
- Additional Game Courts (Optional)

NATURAL RESOURCE PARK

Natural Resources are materials or substances such as minerals, forests, water, and fertile land that occur in nature and can be used for economic gain. A Natural Resource Park preserves these materials or elements and uses them for educational purposes, protection from intrusion/development, and/ or protection of unique aesthetics and ecosystems.

PURPOSE:

- Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, ecosystems, open space and / or unique visual aesthetics

OPTIMUM SIZE / RANGE: Sufficient size to protect resources

SERVICE RADIUS: County-Wide and Beyond

LOCATION CRITERIA:

- Quality of resource(s). May exhibit unique landscapes of the region. Significant emphasis should be placed on water bodies and unique forests/habitats.
- Diversity and balance of natural areas, including wetlands, hillsides, forestlands, floodplain and water bodies.
- Natural areas that contain multiple ecosystems (i.e. water body, wetland and upland connectivity), enabling the protection of a wider variety of wildlife.
- Should have adjacency to other park system components, most notably greenways and/or trail system.
- Serves as a mechanism to protect unique and irreplaceable natural resources.

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- Preserves significant natural resources, ecosystems, open spaces and or unique visual aesthetics and may include:
 - o Functioning ecosystem(s)
 - o Wetlands, wetland buffers and water bodies
 - o Unique forests/woodlands
 - o Geologic features
 - o Protection of rare, threatened or endangered species
 - o Wildlife corridors/habitats
 - o Environmental education/ Interpretive exhibits
 - o Trails
 - o Picnic areas
 - o Demonstrates desired storm water management techniques such as bio-swales, rain gardens, naturalized basins, created wetlands, erosion control methods, etc.
 - o Historic and cultural sites
 - o Boat ramps/ Fishing piers/ Canoe & Kayak docks
 - o Parking lots. Off-street parking calculated to satisfy demand of park and recreation activities provided. Includes bike racks.

PRIMARY FACILITIES:

- 1 Restroom Facility
- Unpaved Nature Trail
- Picnic Area
- Security Lighting
- Parking
- 1 Playground (Optional)

SPECIAL PURPOSE FACILITY OR PARK

A special purpose park is often designed as a revenue-generating enterprise created to satisfy demand for a particular sport, recreational activity, special event, setting or use. A special use facility may be a single-focus facility and can be combined with enterprise activities that provide the County with additional recreation resource(s) and/or revenue generating capabilities.

PURPOSE:

- Facilities which do not fall into one of the above-mentioned park models and primarily provides a single purpose or specialized facility / use
- Provides recreation programming, sports, and special event attractions and activities for all age groups

OPTIMUM SIZE / RANGE: The actual size of a special use park is determined by land availability and facility / market demand for special uses or recreation programs.

SERVICE RADIUS: County-Wide and Beyond

LOCATION CRITERIA:

- Determined by the property opportunity, service area, and size objectives

FACILITIES AND FEATURES:

- Special events, fairs, festivals, expositions, symposiums, sports, community gatherings, ethnic / cultural celebrations, performance venues and numerous other recreational programs and activities
- Special use parks require facility programming that is user- or market-driven and based on community needs or economic and service principles for public and private partnerships. The magnitude and type of special use facilities may include:
 - o Stadiums
 - o Water Play Park
 - o Amphitheater
 - o Performing Arts Venue
 - o Festival / Swap Meet / Farmer's Market
 - o League / Individual Sports Complex
 - o Fitness / Entertainment Center
 - o Skateboard / In-Line / Ice Hockey Facility
 - o Remote-Control (RC) model airplane or car racing venue
 - o Pump Track, BMX, or Single Track / Mountain Bike Facility
 - o Wedding, Meeting or Family Gathering Venue
 - o Senior Center
 - o Exposition or Regional Meeting Space(s)
 - o Historical or Culturally Significant Venue
 - o Aquatics Facility

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER	
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR								
BESSIE THOMAS SENIOR CENTER & EUCHEE CREEK LIBRARY REPURPOSE											
Special Purpose Facility											
Rating: FAIR			X	\$2,328,750	1	\$2,328,750	45%	\$1,047,937.50	\$1,047,938	1	
Size (Ac): 12.6	Euchee Creek Library Repurpose (SPLOST \$ shown)			\$562,277	1	\$562,277	100%	\$562,277.00	\$562,277		
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Repair/ replace asphalt curbing and pavement</i>											
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access, landscaping/ irrigation, Storage</i>											
BESSIE THOMAS SENIOR CENTER & EUCHEE CREEK LIBRARY REPURPOSE											
Totals											
									\$1,739,876		
									\$0		
BLANCHARD PARK & PICKLEBALL COURTS											
Neighborhood Park											
Rating: FAIR	Multi-purpose 60 x 80		X	\$691,277	2	\$1,382,553	65%	\$898,659.45	\$898,659	1	
Size (Ac): 25	Baseball 200' - convert to multi-purpose field		X	\$691,277	1	\$691,277	100%	\$691,276.50	\$691,277		
	Playground 5-12 with rubber surface		X		1	\$0	0%	\$0.00	\$0		
	Walking trail		X	\$172,960	1	\$172,960	60%	\$103,776.00	\$103,776		
	Pickleball courts		X	\$53,130	4	\$212,520	60%	\$127,512.00	\$127,512		
	Bathroom building		X	\$322,000	1	\$322,000	65%	\$209,300.00	\$209,300		
	Picnic pavilion		X	\$41,170	1	\$41,170	30%	\$12,351.00	\$12,351		
	Old Maintenance Shed (Metal Buildings)		X	\$150,000	2	\$300,000	65%	\$195,000.00	\$195,000		
	"Sand Lot" Field - convert to multi-purpose field		X	\$691,277	1	\$691,277	100%	\$691,276.50	\$691,277		
	Dog Park		X		1	\$0	0%	\$0.00	\$0		
	Replace asphalt parking			\$452,000	1	\$452,000	100%	\$452,000.00			
	New Pickleball Courts			\$53,130	8	\$425,040	100%	\$425,040.00			
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Replace asphalt parking; New pickleball courts</i>											
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access, landscaping/ irrigation, Storage</i>											
BLANCHARD PARK & PICKLEBALL COURTS											
Totals											
									\$3,918,846		
									\$1,591,350		
									(\$2,327,496)		

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			QUANTITY/ SIZE	PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR							
BLANCHARD WOODS PARK										
Regional Park	1									
Rating: GOOD										
Size (Ac): 153										
Multi-purpose fields @ 2.5 acres each			X	4	\$691,277	\$2,765,106	65%	\$1,797,319	\$1,797,319	
Playground 5-12 w/ rubber surfacing		X		1	\$249,780	\$249,780	30%	\$74,934	\$74,934	
Skatepark	X			1		\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
BMX track			X	1	\$108,100	\$108,100	60%	\$64,860	\$64,860	
Cross country trail			X	1	\$108,100	\$108,100	60%	\$64,860	\$64,860	
Soccer stadium field @ 2.5 acres			X	1	\$691,277	\$691,277	65%	\$449,330	\$449,330	
Concessions/restrooms buildings		X		2	\$483,000	\$966,000	45%	\$434,700	\$434,700	
Locker rooms			X	1	\$161,000	\$161,000	65%	\$104,650	\$104,650	
BMX building			X	1	\$57,500	\$57,500	65%	\$37,375	\$37,375	
Gaga Ball (Pit)			X	1	\$16,281	\$16,281	60%	\$9,768	\$9,768	
Picnic Pavilion	X			1		\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Scoring Building			X	1	\$57,500	\$57,500	65%	\$37,375	\$37,375	
Pave/ improve parking				14,444	\$32	\$462,222	60%	\$277,333		
Improve skate park area - training/beginners area				1	\$117,683	\$117,683	100%	\$117,683		
Walk access & BMX seating				1	\$25,000	\$25,000	100%	\$25,000		
New scoring building/ pressbox				1	\$57,500	\$57,500	100%	\$57,500		
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Pave/improve parking; Improve skate park area; walk access & BMX seating; new scoring building/ pressbox</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access; landscaping & irrigation; Signage</i>										
BLANCHARD WOODS PARK										
Totals										\$92,204
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)										\$3,644,891
SPLOST										\$2,005,101
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)										(\$1,639,790)

COLUMBIA COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER										
Special Purpose Facility	1									
Rating: GOOD										
Size (Ac): 15										
Performing Arts Center	X					\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Support Facility - storage; commercial kitchen, restrooms, drop off & loading dock</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
COLUMBIA COUNTY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER										
Totals										\$6,471,490
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)										\$6,471,490
SPLOST										\$0
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)										\$0
CONNECTING COUNTY TRAILS - ROAD PROJECTS										
Trails and Greenways										
Rating: GOOD										
Size (Ac): N/A										
New paved trails	X			19.72					\$0	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
CONNECTING COUNTY TRAILS - ROAD PROJECTS										
Totals										\$0
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)										\$0
SPLOST										\$0
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)										\$0

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR							
EUBANK BLANCHARD PARK										
Neighborhood Park										
Rating: FAIR	X				2,200	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Size (Ac): 15		X		\$85,767	1	\$85,767	30%	\$25,730	\$25,730	
Conditioned Shelter w/ kitchen & fireplace			X		1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Outdoor basketball court		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Ballfield - 300' - no lights		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
5-12 Playground mulch surfacing		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
2-5 Playground mulch surfacing		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Walking track - asphalt		X			0.4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Restroom building		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Volleyball court			X	\$9,246	1	\$9,246	30%	\$2,774	\$2,774	
Pickup soccer/practice field - convert to multi-purpose field w/ lights			X	\$691,277	1	\$691,277	100%	\$691,277	\$691,277	
Picnic pavilion		X			2	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Replace failing asphalt paving, curbing & trails; Fix drainage issue at street; Building Renovations</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access, landscaping & irrigation</i>										
EUBANK BLANCHARD PARK										
Totals										
									SPLOST	\$2,376,416
									SURPLUS / SHORTFALL	\$0
EUCHEE CREEK GREENWAY - EXISTING										
Trails and Greenways										
Rating: GOOD	X				4.2				\$0	
Size (Ac): N/A									\$0	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
EUCHEE CREEK GREENWAY - EXISTING										
Totals										
									SPLOST	\$0
									SURPLUS / (SHORTFALL)	\$0
EUCHEE CREEK GREENWAY IMPROVEMENTS										
Trails and Greenways										
Rating: N/A									\$530,450	
Size (Ac): N/A									\$1,350,631	
<i>Greenway Improvements - Tier 1</i>										
<i>Greenway Improvements - Tier 2</i>										
<i>Greenway Improvements - Tier 3</i>										
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
EUCHEE CREEK GREENWAY IMPROVEMENTS										
Totals										
									SPLOST	\$6,179,669
									SURPLUS / (SHORTFALL)	\$0

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION		PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR							
EVANS TOWNE CENTER PARK									
Community Park	1								
Rating: GOOD									
Size (Ac): 15									
Swings	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
5-12 Playground with rubber surface	X			2	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Picnic pavilion	X			2	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Gazebo	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Ticket booth/restrooms	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Dog park with shelter		X		1	\$314,755	30%	\$94,427	\$94,427	\$94,427
Splash pad	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Lady A Amphitheater/Stage	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
2-5 Playground	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Food truck pullover	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Picnic "huts"	X			4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	\$0
Splashpad improvements				1	\$384,675	30%	\$115,403	\$115,403	
Replace grasspave area				1	\$100,000	100%	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Replace dog park surfacing and new fencing				1	\$250,000	100%	\$250,000	\$250,000	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Splashpad improvements; dog park surfacing & new fencing; replace grasspave area</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: (3) Playground & Dog Park shade structures; Signage</i>									
EVANS TOWNE CENTER PARK									
Totals								SPLOST SURPLUS/ SHORTFALL	
								\$465,403	
								\$99,000	
								\$658,829	
								\$0	
								(\$658,829)	

COMPONENTS	CONDITION		PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR							
EXHIBITION CENTER									
Special Purpose Facility	1								
Rating: GOOD									
Size (Ac): N/A									
Exhibition Center	X			24,000	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Halls A&B	X			15,400	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Meeting Rooms (3 at 2,175 sf each)	X			6,525	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Full Service Kitchen	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Facility upgrades				1	\$1,090,599	100%	\$1,090,599	\$1,090,599	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Facility Upgrades</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: Patio area shade, Signage</i>									
EXHIBITION CENTER									
Totals								SPLOST SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	
								\$1,177,599	
								\$87,000	
								\$1,177,599	
								\$0	

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR							
GATEWAY PARK										
<i>Community Park</i>										
Rating: GOOD										
Size (Ac): 19										
Picnic pavilion w/ restrooms	X				1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
2-5 Playground	X				1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
5-12 Playground	X				1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Splashpad	X				1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Walking track	X				1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Flexible use open space	X				1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Picnic huts	X				4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: Add shade structures to playground and splashpad</i>										
GATEWAY PARK										
Totals										
									SPLOST	\$0
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$50,000
GATEWAY - UNDEVELOPED SITE										
<i>Regional Park</i>										
Rating: N/A										
Size (Ac): 74.4										
Design and Construction of a new Regional Park consisting of (4) Multi-purpose fields;					1	\$19,838,830	100%	\$19,838,830	\$19,838,830	
(6) Outdoor Basketball courts; (2) Playgrounds; (5) miles of Unpaved bike trails; (2)										
Restroom Buildings; (3) Picnic areas w/ 20' x 20' shelters; (3) miles Paved jogging/										
walking trails										
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
GATEWAY - UNDEVELOPED SITE										
Totals										
									SPLOST	\$19,838,830
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0
NOTE: To upgrade (4) new multi-purpose fields to artificial turf, add \$1,234,894										
HARLEM CITY PARK										
<i>Other Facilities</i>										
Rating: N/A										
Size (Ac):										
Various renovations to park					1	\$583,495	100%	\$583,495	\$583,495	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
HARLEM CITY PARK										
Totals										
									SPLOST	\$583,495
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR							
MEMORIAL GARDENS PARK										
Community Park										
Rating: GOOD										
Size (Ac): 9										
Picnic pavilions	X				3	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Playground 5-12		X		\$249,780	1	\$249,780	30%	\$74,934	\$74,934	
Splash pad		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Bathroom building		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Amphitheater stage		X		\$100,000	1	\$100,000	30%	\$30,000	\$30,000	
Gazebo at pond			X		1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Walking trail			X	\$172,960	1	\$172,960	60%	\$103,776	\$103,776	
Replace playground surfacing				\$655,875	1	\$655,875	100%	\$655,875	\$655,875	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Replace playground surfacing</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: Sponage</i>										
MEMORIAL GARDENS PARK										
Totals										
									SPL/OST	\$0
									SURPLUS/ SHORTFALL	(\$876,585)

NEW COMMUNITY PARK TO MEET LOS SHORTFALL										
Community Park										
Rating: N/A										
Size (Ac): 42 +/-										
Location: South of I-20/ District 4										
Design and Construction of a new Community Park consisting of the prototypical facilities including a playground; open space for multi-use pickup recreation; a picnic area w/ 20' x 20' shelter; 1 mile of paved jogging/ walking trails; a restroom building; and a low impact recreation area for yard games				\$3,583,945	1	\$3,583,945.10	100%	\$3,583,945	\$3,583,945	
Additional facilities to meet the LOS needs include a 5-acre parking lot; an 80,000 sf Recreation Center building w/ (3) basketball courts; and a Splashpad									\$35,159,075	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
NEW COMMUNITY PARK TO MEET LOS SHORTFALL										
Totals										
									SPL/OST	\$0
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	(\$38,743,020)

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION		PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR							
NEW REGIONAL PARK TO MEET LOS SHORTFALL AND PROVIDE A NEW TOURNAMENT FACILITY									
Regional Park									
Rating: N/A									
Size (Ac): 100 +/-									
Location: District 4									
Design and Construction of a new Regional Park/ Tournament Facility consisting of the prototypical facilities including (4) Natural Grass Multi-purpose fields (Optional add: Artificial Turf); (6) Game Courts (two basketball courts/ four sand volleyball courts); (2) Playgrounds; (5) miles of unpaved biking trails; (2) Restroom Buildings; (3) Picnic areas w/ 20'x20' shelters; and (3 miles) Paved jogging/ walking trails			\$13,663,477	1	\$13,663,477	100%	\$13,663,477	\$13,663,477	1
Additional facilities to meet the LOS shortfalls including (5) Natural Grass Multi-purpose fields (Optional add: Artificial Turf); (4) sand volleyball courts; a Picnic Area w/ 20' x 20' shelter; a Skatepark; a Splashpad; and a archery/ shooting range								\$5,008,363	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>									
NEW REGIONAL PARK TO MEET LOS SHORTFALL AND PROVIDE A NEW TOURNAMENT FACILITY									
									Totals
									SPLOST
									\$18,671,840
Note: To upgrade (9) new multi-purpose fields to artificial turf, add \$308,723 per field.									\$0
									\$0
PARK UPGRADES									
Other Facilities									
Rating: N/A									
Size (Ac): N/A									
Park Upgrades - Tier 1								\$1,890,305	
Park Upgrades - Tier 2								\$1,125,509	
Park Upgrades - Tier 3								\$2,388,105	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>									
PARK UPGRADES									
									Totals
									SPLOST
									\$5,403,919
SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)									\$0

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR							
PATRIOTS PARK										
<i>Regional Park</i>										
Rating: FAIR										
Size (Ac): 122										
Gym with (2) indoor basketball courts		X		\$450	29,000	\$13,050,000	45%	\$5,872,500	\$5,872,500	
Racquetball courts		X			4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Workout / Cardio, Free Weight & Multipurpose Rooms		X			3	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
18 Hole disc golf		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
2-5 Playground			X	\$249,780	1	\$249,780	30%	\$74,934	\$74,934	
Ballfields - 200'		X			5	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Ballfields - 300'		X			2	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Ballfields - (2) 320' & (2) 340+'		X			4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Soccer/baseball field		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Multipurpose fields @ 2 acres ea.		X			8	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Tennis Courts with lights			X	\$87,170	9	\$784,530	30%	\$235,359	\$235,359	
Picnic pavilions		X			2	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible improvements: Replace fencing/netting on (4) older soccer fields; Replace canvas digout roofs with more permanent solution; Add restrooms at tennis complex; Renovate/replace restroom/concessions at ballfields (2); Redesign & repair main entry road & parking; Replace damaged concrete walks at tennis and baseball; Bathrooms needed for old soccer fields</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access</i>										
Totals										
									SPL0ST	\$9,587,143
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0
PLAZA PARK & FARMER'S MARKET										
<i>Special Purpose Park</i>										
Rating: GOOD										
Size (Ac): 4										
Farmer's Market Covered Shelter		X				\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Plaza		X				\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: Signage</i>										
Totals										
									SPL0ST	\$12,000
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	(\$12,000)
POLLARD HOUSE										
<i>Special Purpose Facility</i>										
Rating: POOR										
Size (Ac): 5.32										
Finish/Renovate existing building for public use; develop entry, parking, walks, rear patio				\$2,763,314	1	\$2,763,314	100%	\$2,763,314	\$2,763,314	
<i>Other Possible improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access, landscape & irrigation, Signage</i>										
Totals										
									SPL0ST	\$2,890,953
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITOL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION		QUANTITY/ SIZE	PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR							
PUBLIC UNPAVED TRAILS WITHIN THE COUNTY									
Trails and Greenways									1
Rating: GOOD	X		33.75					\$0	
Size (Ac): N/A								\$0	
<i>Other Possible improvements: None</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>									
Totals									
								SPLOST	
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0

REED CREEK PARK									
Natural Resource Park									1
Rating: GOOD	X				\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Size (Ac): 14		X	1	\$455,400	\$455,400	30%	\$136,620	\$136,620	
		X			\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
		X			\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible improvements: None</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>									
Totals									
								SPLOST	\$0
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	(\$136,620)

RIVERSIDE PARK									
Regional Park									2
Rating: FAIR		X	8	\$719,109	\$5,752,870	15%	\$862,931	\$862,931	
Size (Ac): 30		X	3	\$87,170	\$261,510	30%	\$78,453	\$78,453	
		X	1	\$314,755	\$314,755	30%	\$94,427	\$94,427	
	X		2	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
	X		1	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
	X		3	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
	X		1	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Boat ramp with (2) floating docks - Improve boat ramp area per existing Master Plan		X	1	\$350,000	\$350,000	30%	\$105,000	\$105,000	
Kayak rental shed (contracted offering)	X		1	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Maintenance Building		X	1	\$300,000	\$300,000	65%	\$195,000	\$195,000	
<i>Other Possible improvements: replace asphalt parking lot serving tennis, dog park & fields; renovate tower; fix hazardous catch basins</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access</i>									
Totals									
								SPLOST	\$1,667,104
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$3,033,246
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$3,033,246
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION			PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR	POOR							
RIVERWOOD - UNDEVELOPED PARK SITE										
Community Park										
Rating: N/A				\$3,583,945	1	\$3,583,945	100%	\$3,583,945	\$3,583,945	1
Size (Ac): 120										
Design and Construction of a new Community Park consisting of the prototypical facilities including a playground; open space for multi-use pickup recreation; a picnic area w/ 20' x 20' shelter; 1 mile of paved jogging/ walking trails; a restroom building; and a low impact recreation area for yard games										
Additional facilities include a Mountain bike trail and a BMX skills development facility; a Ropes course/ zipline facility; and a Splashpad									\$2,357,095	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>										
Totals										
RIVERWOOD - UNDEVELOPED PARK SITE									SPLOST \$5,941,040	
									\$5,941,040	
									SURPLUS/ SHORTFALL \$0	
SAVANNAH RAPIDS PARK & PAVILION										
Natural Resource Park										
Rating: GOOD/ FAIR				\$500	18,000	\$9,000,000	45%	\$4,050,000	\$4,050,000	1
Size (Ac): 33		X		\$500	5,000	\$2,500,000	45%	\$1,125,000	\$1,125,000	
Upper Level Pavilion +/- 18,000 SF										
Lower Level Pavilion +/- 5,000 SF		X								
Dance Pavilion		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
BBQ Pit		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Dining Hall (built 1935)		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Conv. Visitors Bureau Cottage (1880s)		X			3	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
5-12 Playground with mulch surfacing			X	\$249,780	1	\$249,780	15%	\$37,467	\$37,467	
Mill House with restrooms		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Picnic pavilions		X			3	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
2-5 Playground with mulch surfacing			X	\$249,780	1	\$249,780	15%	\$37,467	\$37,467	
Shed for storage			X	\$20,000	1	\$20,000	45%	\$9,000	\$9,000	
Boat Dock		X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Significant renovation of pavilion to include new elevator; address acoustics concerns; replace lower exterior decks; replace 2-5 playground & resurface</i>										
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA access to playground; Seizure</i>										
Totals										
SAVANNAH RAPIDS PARK & PAVILION									SPLOST \$8,672,858	
									\$8,672,858	
									SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL) \$0	

APPENDIX G - PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

PARK IMPROVEMENT AND RENOVATION CAPITAL COST ESTIMATES

COMPONENTS	CONDITION		PER UNIT COST FOR NEW	QUANTITY/ SIZE	EXTENDED NEW COST	UPGRADE % TO "GOOD"	UPGRADE TO "GOOD" COST	PARK TOTALS	TIER
	GOOD	FAIR							
WILDWOOD PARK									
Regional Park									
Rating: FAIR									
Size (Ac): 870									
RV/Camper campsites	X			61	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	1
Primitive campsites	X			15	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Fish cleaning station (on septic)	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Boat ramps (one needs repair)	X			8	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Boat docks	X			4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Sand volleyball court	X			1	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
2-5 Playground w/ mulch surfacing		X		1	\$249,780	15%	\$37,467	\$37,467	
5-12 Playground w/ mulch surfacing		X		1	\$249,780	15%	\$37,467	\$37,467	
Bath houses w/ showers/toilets	X			3	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Restroom facilities	X			2	\$644,000	45%	\$289,800	\$289,800	
Picnic shelters	X			9	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
"Glamping" tent sites	X			4	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	
Address septic concerns for bath houses, fish cleaning stations & dump stations									
Add restrooms at beach/ pavilion area				1	\$100,000	100%	\$100,000	\$100,000	
Reconfigure beach access and pavilion area				1	\$322,000	100%	\$322,000	\$322,000	
Replace boat ramp left unusable by fluctuating water levels				1	\$50,000	100%	\$50,000	\$50,000	
Replace roofs on Shelters C & D				1	\$250,000	100%	\$250,000	\$250,000	
Provide ADA accessibility to playgrounds				1	\$20,000	100%	\$20,000	\$20,000	
Pave gravel sections at campsites in Areas 1 & 3				1	\$25,000	100%	\$25,000	\$25,000	
Address ditches w/ excessive erosion before gatehouse				1	\$7,111	100%	\$7,111	\$7,111	
Repair/replace pavement with excessive cracking				1	\$10,000	100%	\$10,000	\$10,000	
<i>Other Possible Improvements: Address septic concerns for bath houses, fish cleaning station & dump stations; Add restrooms at beach/ pavilion area; Reconfigure beach access and pavilion area; Replace boat ramp left unusable by fluctuating water levels; Replace roofs on Shelters C & D; Pave gravel sections at campsites in Areas 1 & 3; Address ditches w/ excessive erosion before gatehouse; Repair/replace pavement with excessive cracking</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: ADA accessibility</i>									
Totals									
								\$23,764	
								\$1,672,609	
								SPLOST	
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	(\$1,672,609)

WILDWOOD PARK UNPAVED TRAILS									
Trails and Greenways									
Rating: N/A									
Size (Ac): N/A									
Unpaved Trails	X			3.86				\$0	1
<i>Other Possible Improvements: None</i>									
<i>System-wide Additions: None</i>									
Totals									
								\$0	
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0
								SPLOST	
								SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	\$0
								TOTAL ALL PARKS	\$143,426,961
								TOTAL SPLOST FUNDING	\$96,748,320
								TOTAL FUNDING SURPLUS/ (SHORTFALL)	(\$46,678,641)

Note: All Amenities identified as "Level of Service" needs have been accounted for in the parks above, except for the following: (2) Outdoor pools; (44,626) sf of Indoor Recreation Space (of the 124,626 sf needed by 2032); and (95,478) sf of Indoor Aquatic Space needed by 2032.

APPENDIX H - PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS

Core Program Area		
Special Events	Summer Camps	Senior Programs
Adult Sports	Environmental Education	Fitness and Wellness
Youth Sports	Active Adults & Seniors	Summer Sports Camps
Therapeutic Recreation		

Classifications		
Essential	Important	Value-Added
Easter Egg Scramble	Food Truck Fridays	Wetland Adventure Camp
Boom! In the Park	Screen on the Green	CSRA Adventure Camp
Trick or Treat	Evans Market	Weekend Workouts
Christmas Tree Lighting	Summer Beach Blast	Wellness Wednesdays
Tackle Football	Evans on Ice	Yoga
Soccer	Reed Creek Summer Camps	Jiu Jitsu
Baseball	Ceramic Classes	Aerobics
Softball	Guest Speakers	55+ Wetland Walks
Volleyball	Health Screenings	Homeschool Science & Nature Club
Basketball	Move Program	Chocolate Festival
Flag Football	Quarterly Move Events	Experience Club Hobbies
Tennis	Partnerships	Experience Book Club
Senior Center	Field Trips/Private Groups	Buddy Soccer
Arts & Crafts	Tiny Tot Story Time	
Bingo	Afterschool Nature Club	
Holiday Celebrations	Halloween Event	
Outings	Adult Softball	
RFID Scanner points program	Adult Soccer	
Patriots Park Gym - Open Play	Pickleball	
Reed Creek	Adult Kickball	
Visitor Hours	Baseball Camp	
Wetlands Walks	Football Camp	
Educational Animal Outreach	Softball Camp	
Saturday Classes	Soccer Camp	
	Tennis Camp	
	Volleyball Camp	
	Basketball Camp	

APPENDIX I - SIMILAR PROVIDERS

Other Service Providers					
Name of Agency	Location in the City / County	Operator (Public / Private / Not-for-Profit)	General Description	Price Comparison with your Services (Same / Lower / Higher)	Distance in minutes from your Prime Facility
Richmond County	Augusta, GA	Public			30
City of Grovetown	Grovetown, GA	Public			15
City of North Augusta	North Augusta, SC	Public			35
Marinez Evans Little League	Martinez, GA	Private	Volunteer run baseball sanction - Little league vs. Dixie Youth		10
Pop Warner Football	Various Locations in CSRA	Private	Community league tackle football organization	Higher	Various
YMCA	Grovetown, GA	Not-for-profit	Small, low competition, low pressure sports	Lower	6
Fort Gordon MWR	Richmond, GA	Public - DOD only	MRW leagues for DOD families and children	Same	20
Bulls Soccer Program	Evans/Grovetown	Private	Higher talent level, private soccer	Higher	>1

APPENDIX J - MINI BUSINESS PLAN

Program Area: _____

Completed By: _____ Date: _____

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF CORE PROGRAM AREA

DEPARTMENT VISION STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

CORE PROGRAM AREA OUTCOMES

SERVICE AREA PROFILE

Service Area Description:

Key Demographic Trends:

TARGET MARKETS

<u>Primary Markets</u>	<u>Secondary Markets</u>

AGE SEGMENT APPEAL

Program/ Amenity	Length of Experience	Age Segments								
		Under 5	6-8	9-12	13-18	19-30	31-45	46-60	61-75	76+

PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE TRENDS

Program/ Amenity												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<u>Opportunities</u>	<u>Threats</u>

COST OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

Program/ Amenity	Expenditures		Participants/ Attendance	Revenue	Net Income (Subsidy)		Cost per Participant		Cost Recovery	
	Direct	Total			Direct	Total	Direct	Total	Direct	Total

MARKETING & PRICING TACTICS

Tactic	Responsible	Timeline

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Outcome (from p.1)	Performance Measure	Result

APPENDIX K - VOLUNTEER / PARTNERSHIP BEST PRACTICES & RECOMMENDATIONS

BEST PRACTICES IN VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

In developing a volunteer policy, some best practices that the Department should be aware of include:

- Involve volunteers in cross-training to expose them to various organizational functions and increase their skill. This can also increase their utility, allowing for more flexibility in making work assignments, and can increase their appreciation and understanding of the Department.
- Ensure a Volunteer Coordinator (a designated program staff member with volunteer management responsibility) and associated staff stay fully informed about the strategic direction of the agency overall, including strategic initiatives for all divisions. Periodically identify, evaluate, or revise specific tactics the volunteer services program should undertake to support the larger organizational mission.
- A key part of maintaining the desirability of volunteerism in the agency is developing a good reward and recognition system. The consultant team recommends using tactics similar to those found in frequent flier programs, wherein volunteers can use their volunteer hours to obtain early registration at programs, or discounted pricing at certain programs, rentals or events, or any other County function. Identify and summarize volunteer recognition policies in a Volunteer Policy document. The Department should ensure that it is compliant with State Board of Accounts' requirements as the volunteer program and recognition is developed.
- Regularly review and update volunteer position descriptions, as needed. Include an overview of the volunteer position lifecycle in the Volunteer Manual, including the procedure for creating a new position. Develop volunteer manual or use a credible organization's volunteer program, specializing in volunteer management to build the Department's volunteer program.
- Add end-of-lifecycle process steps to the Volunteer Manual to ensure that there is formal documentation of resignation or termination of volunteers. Also include ways to monitor and track reasons for resignation/termination and perform exit interviews with outgoing volunteers when able.

In addition to number of volunteers and volunteer hours, categorization and tracking volunteerism by type and extent of work, is important:

- **Regular volunteers:** Those volunteers whose work is continuous, provided their work performance is satisfactory and there is a continuing need for their services.
- **Special event volunteers:** Volunteers who help with a particular event with no expectation that they will return after the event is complete.
- **Episodic volunteers:** Volunteers who help with a particular project type on a recurring or irregular basis with no expectation that they will return for other duties.
- **Volunteer interns:** Volunteers who have committed to work for the agency to fulfill a specific higher-level educational learning requirement.
- **Community service volunteers:** Volunteers who are volunteering over a specified period to fulfill a community service requirement.
- The full list of NRPA Recommended Guidelines for Credentialing Volunteers can be found at https://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpaorg/Membership/Endorsed_Business_Provider/NRPA%20recommended%20guidelines%20-%20Final.pdf.

The Department should encourage employees to volunteer themselves in the community. Exposure of staff to the community in different roles (including those not related to parks, recreation or events) will raise awareness of the agency and its volunteer program. It also helps staff understand the role and expectations of a volunteer if they can experience it for themselves.

BEST PRACTICE FOR ALL PARTNERSHIPS

All partnerships developed and maintained by the Department should adhere to common policy requirements. These include:

- Each partner will meet with or report to the Department staff on a regular basis to plan and share activity-based costs and equity invested.
- Partners will establish measurable outcomes and work through key issues to focus on for the coming year to meet the desired outcomes.
- Each partner will focus on meeting a balance of equity agreed to and track investment costs accordingly.
- Measurable outcomes will be reviewed quarterly and shared with each partner, with adjustments made as needed.
- A working partnership agreement will be developed and monitored together on a quarterly or as-needed basis.
- Each partner will assign a liaison to serve each partnership agency for communication and planning purposes.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The recommended policies and practices for public/private partnerships that may include businesses, private groups, private associations, or individuals who desire to make a profit from use of the Department's facilities or programs are detailed below. These can also apply to partnerships where a private party wishes to develop a facility on park property, to provide a service on publicly owned property, or who has a contract with the agency to provide a task or service on the agency's behalf at public facilities. These unique partnership principles are as follows:

- Upon entering into an agreement with a private business, group, association or individual, the Department staff and political leadership must recognize that they must allow the private entity to meet their financial objectives within reasonable parameters that protect the mission, goals and integrity of the Department.
- As an outcome of the partnership, the Department must receive a designated fee that may include a percentage of gross revenue dollars less sales tax on a regular basis, as outlined in the contract agreement.
- The working agreement of the partnership must establish a set of measurable outcomes to be achieved, as well as the tracking method of how those outcomes will be monitored by the agency. The outcomes will include standards of quality, financial reports, customer satisfaction, payments to the agency, and overall coordination with the Department for the services rendered.
- Depending on the level of investment made by the private contractor, the partnership agreement can be limited to months, a year or multiple years.
- If applicable, the private contractor will provide a working management plan annually that they will follow to ensure the outcomes desired by the Department. The management plan can and will be negotiated, if necessary. Monitoring of the management plan will be the responsibility of both partners. The agency must allow the contractor to operate freely in their best interest, if the outcomes are achieved, and the terms of the partnership agreement are adhered to.
- The private contractor cannot lobby agency advisory or governing boards for renewal of a contract. Any such action will be cause for termination. All negotiations must be with the Department Director or their designee.
- The agency has the right to advertise for private contracted partnership services or negotiate on an individual basis with a bid process based on the professional level of the service to be provided.
- If conflicts arise between both partners, the highest-ranking officers from both sides will try to resolve the issue before going to each partner's legal counsels. If none can be achieved, the partnership shall be dissolved.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Department currently has a strong network of recreation program partners. Therefore, the following recommendations are both an overview of existing partnership opportunities available to the Department, as well as a suggested approach to organizing partnership pursuits. This is not an exhaustive list of all potential partnerships that can be developed, but this list can be used as a reference tool for the agency to develop its own priorities in partnership development. The following five areas of focus are recommended:

1. **Operational Partners:** Other entities and organizations that can support the efforts of the Department to maintain facilities and assets, promote amenities and park usage, support site needs, provide programs and events, and/or maintain the integrity of natural/cultural resources through in-kind labor, equipment, or materials.
2. **Vendor Partners:** Service providers and / or contractors can gain brand association and notoriety as a preferred vendor or supporter of the County or Department in exchange for reduced rates, services, or some other agreed upon benefit.
3. **Service Partners:** Nonprofit organizations and / or friends' groups that support the efforts of the agency to provide programs and events, and / or specific constituents in the community collaboratively.
4. **Co-Branding Partners:** Private, for-profit organizations that can gain brand association and notoriety as a supporter of the Department in exchange for sponsorship or co-branded programs, events, marketing and promotional campaigns, and/or advertising opportunities.
5. **Resource Development Partners:** A private, non-profit organization with the primary purpose to leverage private sector resources, grants, other public funding opportunities, and resources from individual and groups within the community to support the goals and objectives of the agency on mutually agreed strategic initiatives.

APPENDIX L - PARK PROTOTYPE COST ANALYSIS

Neighborhood Park

Range: 5 - 15 Acres; Optimum Size: 15 Acres

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
1 Sitework					
A	Clearing & Grubbing	10	AC @	\$10,000	\$100,000
B	Erosion Control	1	LS @	\$50,000	\$50,000
C	Earthwork (Cut to Fill; Grading; Soil Import)	10	AC @	\$85,000	\$850,000
Subtotal					\$1,000,000
2 Utilities					
A	Storm Drainage	1	LS @	\$300,000	\$300,000
B	Water Service	1	LS @	\$80,000	\$80,000
C	Power Service	1	LS @	\$20,000	\$20,000
Subtotal					\$400,000
3 Paving					
A	Walks - concrete	20000	SF @	\$6	\$120,000
B	Parking - asphalt; 60 spaces; 500 sf per space	3333	SY @	\$32	\$106,656
Subtotal					\$226,656
4 Landscaping					
A	Grassing - Seed	220000	SF @	\$0.15	\$33,000
B	Trees & Shrubs	1	LS @	\$75,000	\$75,000
C	Irrigation	1	LS @	\$24,750	\$24,750
Subtotal					\$132,750
5 Site Furnishings					
A	Bench	10	EA @	\$2,300	\$23,000
B	Trash Receptacle	5	EA @	\$1,500	\$7,500
C	Bicycle Rack	6	EA @	\$2,400	\$14,400
D	Drinking Fountain	2	EA @	\$5,300	\$10,600
Subtotal					\$55,500
6 Security Lighting					
A	Light Standard	8	EA @	\$3,500	\$28,000
B	Equipment & Pedestal	1	LS @	\$10,000	\$10,000
C	50% for Trenching, Wiring, Equip & Misc.	1	LS @	\$19,000	\$19,000
Subtotal					\$57,000
7 Signage					
A	Park Identification Signage	1	LS @	\$12,000	\$12,000
B	Traffic Signage	1	LS @	\$5,000	\$5,000
Subtotal					\$17,000
8 Primary Facilities					
A	Playground	1	EA @	\$249,780	\$249,780
B	Multi-Purpose Sports Fields	2	EA @	\$691,277	\$1,382,553
C	Game Courts - Tennis	1	EA @	\$87,170	\$87,170
D	Restroom Building	1	EA @	\$322,000	\$322,000
E	Picnic Areas	1	EA @	\$23,230	\$23,230
F	Picnic Shelter - 10' x 10'	1	EA @	\$23,805	\$23,805

G	Jogging/ Walking Trails - one mile; paved	1	EA	@	\$172,960	\$172,960
Subtotal						\$2,261,498

9 **Contingency**

A	15% Contingency (excludes Park Amenities)	1	LS			\$283,336
Subtotal						\$283,336

Summary -

Neighborhood Park

1	Sitework					\$1,000,000
2	Utilities					\$400,000
3	Paving					\$226,656
4	Landscaping					\$132,750
5	Site Furnishings					\$55,500
6	Lighting					\$57,000
7	Signage					\$17,000
8	Primary Facilities					\$2,261,498
9	Contingency					\$283,336
Total Cost -						\$4,433,740

Community Park

Range: 15 - 20 Acres; Optimum Size: 15 Acres

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT		UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
-----	-------------	----------	------	--	-----------	----------

1 **Sitework**

A	Clearing & Grubbing	10	AC	@	\$10,000	\$100,000
B	Erosion Control	1	LS	@	\$75,000	\$75,000
C	Earthwork (Cut to Fill; Grading; Soil Import)	10	AC	@	\$85,000	\$850,000
Subtotal						\$1,025,000

2 **Utilities**

A	Storm Drainage	1	LS	@	\$450,000	\$450,000
B	Water Service	1	LS	@	\$120,000	\$120,000
C	Power Service	1	LS	@	\$30,000	\$30,000
Subtotal						\$600,000

3 **Paving**

A	Walks - concrete	20000	SF	@	\$6	\$120,000
B	Parking - Asphalt; 100 Spaces; 500 sf per space	5556	SY	@	\$32	\$177,792
Subtotal						\$297,792

4 **Landscaping**

A	Grassing - Seed	330000	SF	@	\$0.15	\$49,500
B	Trees & Shrubs	1	LS	@	\$112,500	\$112,500
C	Irrigation	1	LS	@	\$37,125	\$37,125
Subtotal						\$199,125

5 **Site Furnishings**

A	Bench	15	EA	@	\$2,300	\$34,500
B	Trash Receptacle	8	EA	@	\$1,500	\$12,000
C	Bicycle Rack	6	EA	@	\$2,400	\$14,400
D	Drinking Fountain	3	EA	@	\$5,300	\$15,900
Subtotal						\$76,800

6 Lighting

A	Light Standard	14	EA	@	\$3,500	\$49,000
B	Equipment & Pedestal	1	LS	@	\$15,000	\$15,000
C	50% for Trenching, Wiring, Equip & Misc.	1	LS	@	\$32,000	\$32,000
Subtotal						\$96,000

7 Signage

A	Park Identification Signage	1	LS	@	\$12,000	\$12,000
B	Traffic Signage	1	LS	@	\$7,500	\$7,500
Subtotal						\$19,500

8 Primary Facilities

A	Playground	1	EA	@	\$249,780	\$249,780
B	Open Space for multi-use pickup recreation	1	EA	@	\$97,175	\$97,175
C	Picnic Areas	1	EA	@	\$23,230	\$23,230
D	Picnic Shelter - 20' x 20'	1	EA	@	\$41,170	\$41,170
E	Jogging/ walking trails - one mile; paved	1	EA	@	\$172,960	\$172,960
F	Restroom Building	1	EA	@	\$322,000	\$322,000
G	Low impact recreation areas - bocce, cornhole, etc.	1	EA	@	\$16,281	\$16,281
Subtotal						\$922,596

9 Contingency

A	15% Contingency (excludes Park Amenities)	1	LS			\$347,133
Subtotal						\$347,133

Summary -		Community Park	
1	Sitework		\$1,025,000
2	Utilities		\$600,000
3	Paving		\$297,792
4	Landscaping		\$199,125
5	Site Furnishings		\$76,800
6	Lighting		\$96,000
7	Signage		\$19,500
8	Primary Facilities		\$922,596
9	Contingency		\$347,133
	Total Cost -	Community Park	\$3,583,945

Regional Park

Range: 50 - 300 Acres; Optimum Size: 100 Acres

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT		UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
1 Sitework						
A	Clearing & Grubbing	50	AC	@	\$10,000	\$500,000
B	Erosion Control	1	LS	@	\$75,000	\$75,000
C	Earthwork (Cut to Fill; Grading; Soil Import)	50	AC	@	\$85,000	\$4,250,000
Subtotal						\$4,825,000
2 Utilities						
A	Storm Drainage	1	LS	@	\$450,000	\$450,000
B	Water Service	1	LS	@	\$120,000	\$120,000
C	Power Service	1	LS	@	\$30,000	\$30,000
Subtotal						\$600,000

3 Paving						
A	Walks - concrete	40000	SF	@	\$6	\$240,000
B	Parking - Asphalt; 300 Spaces; 500 sf per space	16667	SY	@	\$32	\$533,344
Subtotal						\$773,344

4 Landscaping						
A	Grassing - Seed	440000	SF	@	\$0.15	\$66,000
B	Trees & Shrubs	1	LS	@	\$150,000	\$150,000
C	Irrigation	1	LS	@	\$49,500	\$49,500
Subtotal						\$265,500

5 Site Furnishings						
A	Bench	20	EA	@	\$2,300	\$46,000
B	Trash Receptacle	10	EA	@	\$1,500	\$15,000
C	Bicycle Rack	12	EA	@	\$2,400	\$28,800
D	Drinking Fountain	4	EA	@	\$5,300	\$21,200
Subtotal						\$111,000

6 Lighting						
A	Light Standard	32	EA	@	\$3,500	\$112,000
B	Equipment & Pedestal	1	LS	@	\$20,000	\$20,000
C	50% for Trenching, Wiring, Equip & Misc.	1	LS	@	\$66,000	\$66,000
Subtotal						\$198,000

7 Signage						
A	Park Identification Signage	2	EA	@	\$12,000	\$24,000
B	Traffic Signage	1	LS	@	\$10,000	\$10,000
Subtotal						\$34,000

8 Primary Facilities						
A	Athletic Fields (Multi-Purpose for Tournament)	4	EA	@	\$691,277	\$2,765,106
B	Game Courts (Tennis)	6	EA	@	\$87,170	\$523,020
C	Playground	2	EA	@	\$249,780	\$499,560
D	Off-road Biking Trails or Tracks - one mile; unpaved	5	EA	@	\$172,960	\$864,800
E	Restroom Building	2	EA	@	\$322,000	\$644,000
F	Picnic Areas	3	EA	@	\$23,230	\$69,690
G	Picnic Shelters - 20' x 20'	3	EA	@	\$41,170	\$123,510
H	Jogging/ walking trails - one mile; paved	2	EA	@	\$172,960	\$345,920
Subtotal						\$5,835,606

9 Contingency						
A	15% Contingency (excludes Park Amenities)	1	LS			\$1,021,027
Subtotal						\$1,021,027

Summary -

		Regional Park		
1	Sitework			\$4,825,000
2	Utilities			\$600,000
3	Paving			\$773,344
4	Landscaping			\$265,500
5	Site Furnishings			\$111,000
6	Lighting			\$198,000
7	Signage			\$34,000
8	Primary Facilities			\$5,835,606

9	Contingency					\$1,021,027
	Total Cost -			Regional Park		\$13,663,477

Natural Resource Park**Range and Size: Sufficient size to protect resources**

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
1	Sitework				
A	Clearing & Grubbing	5	AC @	\$10,000	\$50,000
B	Erosion Control	1	LS @	\$50,000	\$50,000
C	Earthwork (Cut to Fill; Grading; Soil Import)	5	AC @	\$85,000	\$425,000
	Subtotal				\$525,000
2	Utilities				
A	Storm Drainage	1	LS @	\$150,000	\$150,000
B	Water Service	1	LS @	\$40,000	\$40,000
C	Power Service	1	LS @	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Subtotal				\$200,000
3	Paving				
A	Walks - concrete	20000	SF @	\$6	\$120,000
B	Parking - Asphalt; 60 Spaces; 500 sf per space	3333	SY @	\$32	\$106,656
	Subtotal				\$226,656
4	Landscaping				
A	Grassing - Seed	20000	SF @	\$0.15	\$3,000
B	Trees & Shrubs	1	LS @	\$35,000	\$35,000
C	Irrigation	1	LS @	\$11,550	\$11,550
	Subtotal				\$49,550
5	Site Furnishings				
A	Bench	10	EA @	\$2,300	\$23,000
B	Trash Receptacle	5	EA @	\$1,500	\$7,500
C	Bicycle Rack	6	EA @	\$2,400	\$14,400
D	Drinking Fountain	1	EA @	\$5,300	\$5,300
	Subtotal				\$50,200
6	Lighting				
A	Light Standard	8	EA @	\$3,500	\$28,000
B	Equipment & Pedestal	1	LS @	\$5,000	\$5,000
C	50% for Trenching, Wiring, Equip & Misc.	1	LS @	\$16,500	\$16,500
	Subtotal				\$49,500
7	Signage				
A	Park Identification Signage	1	LS @	\$12,000	\$12,000
B	Traffic Signage	1	LS @	\$5,000	\$5,000
	Subtotal				\$17,000
8	Primary Facilities				
A	Restroom Building	1	EA @	\$322,000	\$322,000
B	Picnic Areas	2	EA @	\$23,230	\$46,460
C	Picnic Shelter - 10' x 10'	1	EA @	\$23,805	\$23,805
D	Picnic Shelters - 20' x 20'	1	EA @	\$41,170	\$41,170

E	Jogging/ walking trails - one mile; paved	3	EA	@	\$172,960	\$518,880
Subtotal						\$952,315

9 **Contingency**

A	15% Contingency (excludes Park Amenities)	1	LS			\$167,686
Subtotal						\$167,686

Summary -

Natural Resource Park

1	Sitework					\$525,000
2	Utilities					\$200,000
3	Paving					\$226,656
4	Landscaping					\$49,550
5	Site Furnishings					\$50,200
6	Lighting					\$49,500
7	Signage					\$17,000
8	Primary Facilities					\$952,315
9	Contingency					\$167,686
	Total Cost -					\$2,237,907

APPENDIX M - FACILITY PROTOTYPE COST ANALYSIS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
1 ATHLETIC DIAMOND FIELD					
1	Grassing - Sprigs	110000	SF @	\$0.50	\$55,000
2	Rootzone Material - 4" Thick; Sand/Organics Mix; Laser Graded	2017	TON @	\$86.00	\$173,462
3	Surfacing - Sand clay infield	300	CY @	\$40.00	\$12,000
4	Irrigation	110000	SF @	\$0.80	\$88,000
5	Lighting	1	LS @	\$175,000.00	\$175,000
6	Fencing and Gates, 6' Vinyl Coated Chain Link	1050	LF @	\$35.00	\$36,750
7	Backstop (30'back,10' wings, w/ hood)	130	LF @	\$220.00	\$28,600
8	Field Equip. (bags, home plate, rubber)	1	LS @	\$2,000.00	\$2,000
9	Foul line markers	1	PR @	\$3,300.00	\$3,300
10	Players Bench	2	EA @	\$1,700.00	\$3,400
11	Dugout Shelter	2	EA @	\$16,600.00	\$33,200
12	Bleachers - 5 row, 50 seats	2	EA @	\$7,300.00	\$14,600
	15% Contingency				\$93,796.80
	SUBTOTAL				\$719,109
2 BASKETBALL COURT (OUTDOOR)					
1	Surfacing (2.5" thick asphalt, incl. base)	800	SY @	\$32.00	\$25,600
2	Painted Court Markings	1	LS @	\$1,100.00	\$1,100
3	Goal, Backboard & Post	1	PR @	\$6,000.00	\$6,000
4	Fencing and Gates - 10' High Chain Link, vinyl coat	348	LF @	\$60.00	\$20,880
5	Lighting	1	LS @	\$21,000.00	\$21,000
	15% Contingency				\$11,187
	SUBTOTAL				\$85,767
3 BATTING CAGE					
1	Batting Cage	1	LS @	\$5,500.00	\$5,500
	15% Contingency				\$825
	SUBTOTAL				\$6,325
4 RECREATION CENTER w/ GYMNASIUM, MEETING & SENIOR SPACE					
1	Building (Face Brick w/ Concrete Block Backup & Steel Frame)	80000	GSF @	\$425.00	\$34,000,000
	15% Contingency				\$5,100,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$39,100,000
5 CONCESSION STAND (No hood or restrms, single story, split face block)					
1	Concession Stand (no grill or restrooms)	400	SF @	\$350.00	\$140,000
	15% Contingency				\$21,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$161,000
6 DOG PARK - With Small Dog Area: 100' x 75'; Large Dog Area: 100' x 150'					
1	Artificial Turf	9000	SF @	\$20.00	\$180,000
2	"Bark Park" Facilities	1	LS @	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
3	Small Shelter- 10' x 10'	1	LS @	\$16,000.00	\$16,000
4	Pet Waste Stations	2	EA @	\$750.00	\$1,500
5	Water Service	1	LS @	\$9,500.00	\$9,500
6	Drinking Fountains (pet friendly)	2	EA @	\$7,500.00	\$15,000
7	Fence and Gates - 4' ht. chain link vinyl coated	750	LF @	\$30.00	\$22,500
8	Bench	4	EA @	\$2,300.00	\$9,200
	15% Contingency				\$41,055.00
	SUBTOTAL				\$314,755

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
7	GRILL				
1	Outdoor Grill	1	EA @	\$1,500.00	\$1,500
	15% Contingency				\$225
	SUBTOTAL				\$1,725
8	MULTI-PURPOSE FIELD (225' X 360')				
1	Grassing - Sprig	81000	SF @	\$0.50	\$40,500
2	Rootzone Material - 4" Thick; Sand/Organics Mix; Laser Graded	1485	TON @	\$86.00	\$127,710
3	Irrigation	81000	SF @	\$0.80	\$64,800
4	Lighting	1	LS @	\$350,000.00	\$350,000
5	Bleachers- 5 Row 50 Seats	2	EA @	\$7,300.00	\$14,600
6	Goal	1	PR @	\$3,500.00	\$3,500
	15% Contingency				\$90,167
	SUBTOTAL				\$691,277
9	MULTI-USE OPEN SPACE				
1	Grassing - Sprig	65000	SF @	\$0.50	\$32,500
2	Irrigation	65000	SF @	\$0.80	\$52,000
	15% Contingency				\$12,675
	SUBTOTAL				\$97,175
10	LOW IMPACT RECREATION AREAS - BOCCE, CORNHOLE, ETC.				
1	Grassing - Sprig	10890	SF @	\$0.50	\$5,445
2	Irrigation	10890	SF @	\$0.80	\$8,712
	15% Contingency				\$2,124
	SUBTOTAL				\$16,281
11	PICKLEBALL COURT (34' X 64')				
1	Surfacing - Asphalt w/ Color Coat	242	SY @	\$70.00	\$16,940
2	Fencing and Gates - 10' High, vinyl coated	196	LF @	\$60.00	\$11,760
3	Lighting	1	LS @	\$13,000.00	\$13,000
4	Net & End Poles	1	SET @	\$2,000.00	\$2,000
5	Bench	1	EA @	\$2,500.00	\$2,500
	15% Contingency				\$6,930
	SUBTOTAL				\$53,130
12	PICNIC AREA				
1	Picnic Table - 6' vinyl coated	4	EA @	\$2,800.00	\$11,200
2	Trash Receptacles	2	EA @	\$1,500.00	\$3,000
3	Mulch	1	LS @	\$6,000.00	\$6,000
	15% Contingency				\$3,030
	SUBTOTAL				\$23,230
13	PICNIC SHELTER (10' X 10')				
1	Concrete pad (4" thick with base)	100	SF @	\$7.00	\$700
2	Shelter 10' x 10' metal, prefabricated	1	LS @	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
	15% Contingency				\$3,105
	SUBTOTAL (with contingency)				\$23,805
14	PICNIC SHELTER (20' X 20')				
1	Concrete pad (4" thick with base)	400	SF @	\$7.00	\$2,800
2	Shelter 20' x 20' metal, prefabricated	1	LS @	\$33,000.00	\$33,000

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT		UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
	15% Contingency					\$5,370
	SUBTOTAL (with contingency)					\$41,170
15	PLAYGROUND					
1	Modular Play Structure (Small Structure)	1	LS	@	\$110,000.00	\$110,000
2	ADA Surfacing (poured in place)	2500	SF	@	\$30.00	\$75,000
3	Playground Edging	200	LF	@	\$20.00	\$4,000
4	Bench	4	EA	@	\$2,300.00	\$9,200
5	Trash Receptacle	2	EA	@	\$1,500.00	\$3,000
6	Shade Structure	1	EA	@	\$16,000.00	\$16,000
	15% Contingency					\$32,580
	SUBTOTAL					\$249,780
16	RESTROOM BUILDING					
1	Restrooms	800	SF	@	\$350.00	\$280,000
	15% Contingency					\$42,000
	SUBTOTAL					\$322,000
17	SKATE PARK					
1	Walks (750 LF @ 5' wide)	3750	SF	@	\$6.00	\$22,500
2	Concrete Skate Pad	8000	SF	@	\$10.00	\$80,000
3	Skate Pad Equipment	1	LS	@	\$200,000.00	\$200,000
4	Benches	2	EA	@	\$2,300.00	\$4,600
5	Trash Receptacles	2	EA	@	\$1,500.00	\$3,000
	15% Contingency					\$46,515
	SUBTOTAL					\$356,615
18	SWIMMING POOL (Outdoor - 25 Meter: 45' x 80')					
1	Pool construction: sitework, excavation & equipment	3600	SF	@	\$115.00	\$414,000
2	Coated Concrete Decking	7200	SF	@	\$9.00	\$64,800
3	Bath House and Equipment (w/ restrooms & showers)	800	SF	@	\$325.00	\$260,000
4	Lifeguard Stations	2	EA	@	\$2,000.00	\$4,000
5	Fencing & gates - 6' High vinyl chain link	460	LF	@	\$30.00	\$13,800
6	Benches	4	EA	@	\$2,300.00	\$9,200
7	Trash Receptacles	2	EA	@	\$1,500.00	\$3,000
	15% Contingency					\$115,320
	SUBTOTAL					\$884,120
19	TENNIS COURT					
1	Surfacing - Asphalt w/ Color Coat	775	SY	@	\$40.00	\$31,000
2	Fencing and Gates - 10' High, vinyl coated	360	LF	@	\$60.00	\$21,600
3	Net & End Poles	1	EA	@	\$2,200.00	\$2,200
4	Lighting	1	LS	@	\$21,000.00	\$21,000
	15% Contingency					\$11,370
	SUBTOTAL					\$87,170
20	VOLLEYBALL COURT (OUTDOOR SAND)					
1	Surfacing- Sand 6" Deep	33	CY	@	\$80.00	\$2,640
2	Wood Edging	260	LF	@	\$10.00	\$2,600
3	Net & Poles	1	EA	@	\$2,800.00	\$2,800
	15% Contingency					\$1,206
	SUBTOTAL					\$9,246

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
21	PAVED NATURE OR LEISURE TRAIL - 1 MILE X 8' WIDE				
1	Asphalt Trail (2.5" thick with base)	4700	SY @	\$32.00	\$150,400
	15% Contingency				\$22,560
	SUBTOTAL				\$172,960
22	UNPAVED NATURE OR LEISURE TRAIL - 1 MILE X 8' WIDE				
1	Sitework - Clearing, Erosion Control, Earthwork	4700	SY @	\$20.00	\$94,000
	15% Contingency				\$14,100
	SUBTOTAL				\$108,100
23	SPLASHPAD				
1	Splashpad surfacing (colored, textured concrete)	3000	SF @	\$12.00	\$36,000
2	Splashpad equipment	1	LS @	\$250,000.00	\$250,000
3	Fence and Gates - 4' ht. chain link vinyl coat	500	LF @	\$35.00	\$17,500
4	Deck Drain @ Shower	1	EA @	\$500.00	\$500
5	Shade Sails	1	LS @	\$20,000.00	\$20,000
6	Shower	1	EA @	\$3,500.00	\$3,500
7	Signage	1	LS @	\$7,000.00	\$7,000
	15% Contingency				\$50,175
	SUBTOTAL				\$384,675
24	SENIOR CENTER				
1	Building	4500	GSF @	\$450.00	\$2,025,000
	(Face Brick w/ Concrete Block Backup & Steel Frame)				
	15% Contingency				\$303,750
	SUBTOTAL				\$2,328,750
25	SCORING BUILDING/ PRESSBOX				
1	Building (Prefabricated)	1	LS @	\$50,000.00	\$50,000
	15% Contingency				\$7,500
	SUBTOTAL				\$57,500
26	BOARDWALK TRAIL - 1/4 MILE X 6' WIDE				
1	Wood Trail w/ handrails	7920	SF @	\$50.00	\$396,000
	15% Contingency				\$59,400
	SUBTOTAL				\$455,400
27	HIGH ROPES / ZIPLINE FACILITY				
1	Facility	1	LS @	\$2,000,000.00	\$2,000,000
	15% Contingency				\$300,000
	SUBTOTAL				\$2,300,000
28	GUN AND ARCHERY RANGE - INDOOR				
1	Building - 100 feet x 100 feet x 12 feet ceiling height	10000	SF @	\$200.00	\$2,000,000
2	Walks - concrete	5000	SF @	\$6.00	\$30,000
3	Parking - asphalt; 60 spaces; 500 sf per space	3333	SY @	\$32.00	\$106,656
	15% Contingency				\$320,498.40
	SUBTOTAL				\$2,457,154
29	BMX/ PUMP TRACK				
1	Scoring Pavilion	400	SF @	\$150.00	\$60,000
2	Walks - concrete	5000	SF @	\$6.00	\$30,000
3	Pump Track - Asphalt	2500	SY @	\$50.00	\$125,000

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
	15% Contingency				\$32,250.00
	SUBTOTAL				\$247,250
30	MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL - 5 Miles x 6 Feet				
1	Sitework - Clearing, Erosion Control, Earthwork	17600	SY @	\$20.00	\$352,000
	15% Contingency				\$52,800.00
	SUBTOTAL				\$404,800

SUMMARY- FACILITY PROTOTYPE COSTS ANALYSIS

1	ATHLETIC DIAMOND FIELD				\$719,109
2	BASKETBALL COURT (OUTDOOR)				\$85,767
3	BATTING CAGE				\$6,325
4	RECREATION CENTER w/ GYMNASIUM, MEETING & SENIOR SPACE				\$39,100,000
5	CONCESSION STAND (No hood or restrms, single story, split face block)				\$161,000
6	DOG PARK - With Small Dog Area: 100' x 75'; Large Dog Area: 100' x 150'				\$314,755
7	GRILL				\$1,725
8	MULTI-PURPOSE FIELD (225' X 360')				\$691,277
9	MULTI-USE OPEN SPACE				\$97,175
10	LOW IMPACT RECREATION AREAS - BOCCE, CORNHOLE, ETC.				\$16,281
11	PICKLEBALL COURT (34' X 64')				\$53,130
12	PICNIC AREA				\$23,230
13	PICNIC SHELTER (10' X 10')				\$23,805
14	PICNIC SHELTER (20' X 20')				\$41,170
15	PLAYGROUND				\$249,780
16	RESTROOM BUILDING				\$322,000
17	SKATE PARK				\$356,615
18	SWIMMING POOL (Outdoor - 25 Meter: 45' x 80')				\$884,120
19	TENNIS COURT				\$87,170
20	VOLLEYBALL COURT (OUTDOOR SAND)				\$9,246
21	PAVED NATURE OR LEISURE TRAIL - 1 MILE X 8' WIDE				\$172,960
22	UNPAVED NATURE OR LEISURE TRAIL - 1 MILE X 8' WIDE				\$108,100

NO.	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	SUBTOTAL
23	SPLASHPAD				\$384,675
24	SENIOR CENTER				\$2,328,750
25	SCORING BUILDING/ PRESSBOX				\$57,500
26	BOARDWALK TRAIL - 1/4 MILE X 6' WIDE				\$455,400
27	HIGH ROPES / ZIPLINE FACILITY				\$2,300,000
28	GUN AND ARCHERY RANGE - INDOOR				\$2,457,154
29	BMX/ PUMP TRACK				\$247,250
30	MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL - 5 Miles x 6 Feet				\$404,800

NOTE: Costs do not include property acquisition; utility/infrastructure extensions to site; lighting (unless otherwise noted); fixtures; furnishings & equipment (unless otherwise noted); surveying; design fees or permitting.

APPENDIX N - ESTABLISHING THE COLUMBIA COUNTY PARKS FOUNDATION

The process for establishing a Foundation is outlined in the five steps below.

STEP 1: Ask the following two questions:



Keep the mission simple, as reflected in the example Charleston County Parks Foundation below (<https://www.ccprc.com/1553/Charleston-County-Parks-Foundation>) .

TO HELP ALL RESIDENTS EXPERIENCE THE CHARLESTON COUNTY PARKS & PROGRAMS

Charleston County Parks Foundation is a good example of an effective storyteller and a foundation approach that Columbia County could emulate.

The Parklands Foundation was created in May 1990 by the Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission to generate funding for the continued growth and development of the county park system and support increased leisure opportunities for residents using non-tax dollars. In May 2014, the foundation transitioned into more of a project-based foundation focused on specific aspects of the parks system needing additional support. In 2019, The Parklands Foundation was renamed the Charleston County Parks Foundation in order to closely associate the foundation with CCPRC and the positive reputation it has in the community.

STEP 2: Identify and reach out to a core group of diverse community representatives from private, non-profits, business leaders, including professionals like an accountant, an attorney, a marketing/public relations specialist, and retired corporate and governmental executives to help understand the complexities of corporate giving and non-profit ethics and regulation. The group must be action oriented and focused on achieving the mission and goals of the organization. To begin the process, gather a small core of individuals who will assist by recruiting other members. Personally visit those who you think will be committed to carrying out a meaningful program and include community leaders who have connections and influence among government officials, business representatives and other key groups. Make sure the group is culturally diverse and represents all ages.

STEP 3: Once assembled, empower members of the group by giving them meaningful roles. Encourage them to act as a catalysts and to be resourceful and partnership-oriented to reach out to other organizations to meet your objectives. They should be competitive. Competition is a basic part of any organization that is concerned with excellence. They must be proactive rather than reactive.

STEP 4: Choose the best type of organizational structure to pursue and if you do not have an attorney as a board member, hire one! The Community Foundation option is where the new “friends of” group initiates the appropriate non-profit state regulatory process but exists under the fiscal agency of the local Community Foundation. Choosing the right type of Foundation or non-profit entity and following the legal steps to establish the organization is best handled by an attorney who will guide the group to:

- Determine what legal form should be used (trust or not-for-profit corporation).
- Determine applicable state laws for financial and governance duties for the directors of the foundation.
- Draft organizational documents including articles of incorporation and bylaws.
- File for tax-exempt status with the IRSs.

STEP 5: Engage a qualified non-profit strategic planning consultant and establish strategic priorities and a 3-year strategic plan with initiatives that will define the activities the group will engage in, such as:

- Creating a Website and public relations plan
- Fundraising for capital improvements to parks, intergenerational programs, events, marketing, board support and includes Planned Giving and Grant Writing
- Increase Effectiveness, Capacity and Credibility by recruiting exceptional community and business leaders to the Board
- Adopt Board Best Practices to improve effectiveness and credibility
- Advocacy focused externally for community parks promoting health, happiness, resiliency, conservation, equity and inclusion by maintaining and improving the Board's independent website and focus resources on independent but collaborative/complimentary social media marketing program
- Broaden Foundation/Parks community support by researching best practices such as *Membership Programs* with benefits or creating an Adopt a Park program with trust or restricted donations/volunteers
- Partner with community non-profits and HOAs to increase neighborhood cohesion and park and program capacity county-wide

According to James E. Swiss, a total quality management expert from North Carolina State University, friends of, foundations and advocacy groups in general are similar to an entrepreneurial organizations where goals and objectives are continually examined and improved as the environment changes. "Quality is not a static attribute; it is a constantly changing target because it represents a delighted (not just satisfied) customer." What is defined as "high quality" today may not be tomorrow, so stay on top of the issues.

BEST BOARD PRACTICES

A board of directors is responsible for championing the mission of the organization at a strategic policy and resource level. This requires the assembling a board comprised of business, civic, cultural, citizen and County leaders who are well-connected and who deeply believe in the power of parks to improve the quality of life and appoint officers who can organize and deploy authority, funding and connections to move strategies forward. The following are recommended strategic best practices that the Foundation should build upon followed by specific recommendations for adoption by the Board:

1. Strengthen Board recruitment by clarifying responsibilities
2. Develop "Board Recruitment Plan" that matches strategic plan
3. Use strategic plan framework to create annual business plans
4. Use Board Committees to syndicate responsibilities, add capacity and support goals
5. Use a scorecard/dashboard during Board Meetings to measure progress on the plan
6. Communicate information internally and externally about performance (metrics=outcomes)

The board of directors or nonprofit organizations act as the fiduciary in the steward of the organization and as the guardian of the organization's mission. In carrying out these responsibilities board provides oversight for the management of the organization to ensure that the resources and financial assets are properly and effectively used in support of the mission and in accordance with the organization's articles of incorporation, bylaws, and other governing documents.

Board members should be willing to make the organization of priority for their own time, energy and resources and they should be willing and able to give money or fundraise. They should be comfortable with educating the public about the work of the organization. Fundamental board responsibilities include:

- Approving the mission and setting strategic goals
- Reviewing and approving the annual budget and key financial transactions
- Ensuring the integrity of the organization's accounting and financial reporting policies and practices
- Monitoring the management of investments and assets
- Recommending new board member candidates and providing onboarding
- Supervising and participating in overall fundraising efforts including identifying and cultivating individuals willing to contribute the time talent and treasure needed by the board and its committees

It is recommended that the following **Board Best Practices** be considered in establishing a Foundation:

1. Determine the size and composition of the board. The Foundation should consider no more than nine (9) initial members, strategically selected for specific competencies that elevate the Foundation's profile and drive fundraising, advocacy and community support. Considering the potential partners and sponsors available in CLV, new board prospects with legal, accounting, banker/finance, marketing/public relations, nonprofit fundraising and health/medical professional backgrounds should be considered. Board member recruitment practices should include establishment of a Board matrix of skill, competencies and diversity board needs to support strategic plan, i.e. legal, accounting, banker, fundraising, HR, finance, etc. Establish and empower the Nominating Committee as described in bylaws to serve as the board recruitment committee that maintains recruitment matrix and outreach efforts as described in the bylaws.
2. Consider establishing and adopt the appropriate Give or Get Policy, requiring Board members to pledge with their own resources or agree to raise cash in the amount agreed upon, typically \$1,000 annually.
3. Foundation bylaws should include the CLV Parks and Recreation director as an ex-officio board member, conferred all the rights and authority of an appointed board member while his/her employment as the Parks director continues.
4. Create and maintain a Board member Handbook that includes Mission/Vision/Values; job descriptions and responsibilities; Board Roster and Bios; Project list; Strategic plan and annual action plan; current budget; Annual Report; Audit report and last IRS 990; board liability insurance rider; organizational policies like code of conduct, conflict of interest, board terms, attendance policy and tracker, etc.
5. Establish a specific timeframe for board member terms. Typical best practices are three-year terms with a single option for an additional 3 years if approved by the board. Board members should rotate off the board for a minimum of 1 year after a 6-year term and may re apply at the board's discretion.
6. Similarly, consider limiting board officer (president, secretary, treasurer) terms to 1 to 2 years to allow for the full engagement of other board members.

7. The foundation should establish and empower the following Standing Committees after at least 2 years in existence:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- The Board's think tank
- Made up of officers and 1-2 at large board members
- Approves agendas, short term business strategies, review bylaws, new board member orientation, board succession planning, etc.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Leads the Foundation's funding in an aggressive and ethical manner

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Serves as the Board Recruitment Committee that maintains recruitment matrix & outreach efforts

Similarly, establish and empower 2 Ad-Hoc Committees:

COMMUNICATIONS, MARKETING, & BRANDING

- At a minimum - maintain website content, develop public relations / advertising campaigns and write a column in the department's newsletter or in a community newspaper

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

- Coordinates Board member participation and volunteers

8. Publish Annual Reports to summarize results and for use as a board and sponsor recruitment collateral.
9. Establish the frequency of board meetings to 6 times per year and allow for committee meetings to occur in the off months. Properly chaired working committees will provide reports to be included with the regular board meeting agendas distributed prior to board meetings. Committee chairs should give a brief oral report during the regular board meeting.
10. Establish a "Conflict of Interest" policy and statements and require board members to sign annually and receive Ethics Training at the beginning of each term. The policy may consider and include:
- **Code of Conduct:** should include guidelines for business ethics, financial accounting and record keeping, confidentiality of organizational records, anti-harrassment and substance abuse policies
 - **Conflict of Interest, Whistleblower, and Ethics Policies:** board members have a responsibility to promptly disclose any suspected action of fraud, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, retaliations or other illegal or unethical activity.
 - **Gift Acceptance Policy:** Establish donation / contribution policy for tangible and intangible (lobbying, etc.) gifts

11. Based on the 3-year Strategic Plan developed in concert with a qualified consultant, establish a balanced scorecard to evaluate the success of the implementation of the foundation's strategic planning initiatives. The metrics should be described in the Strategic Plan's Goals and once established and objectives and tactics clearly defined as sequential action steps, the following metrics may be applied:

- Higher profile of parks in community and government—increased # of foundation members, # of press coverage
- Increased funding raised each of 3 years
- Increased # of partners
- Increase Board cohesion measured by board report card and member survey
- Increased capital, programs and event # of participation and \$ contributions
- Increased volunteerism measured by # of Volunteers and # of projects

The Annual Report should serve as the foundation's Report Card and printed and presented at a Commission meeting annually.