

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

For The Town of Harrisburg,
North Carolina

October 2010



PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF HARRISBURG, NORTH CAROLINA

OCTOBER 2010

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Director of Parks and Recreation Department in Harrisburg is coordinating the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan. Assistance is being provided from the Director of Planning, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Committee, and the Town Administrator.

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Executive Summary

The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department and the Town Council have recognized the need to develop a Comprehensive Plan for Parks and Recreation for the Town of Harrisburg. The Plan shall address the needs of the citizens of Harrisburg and surrounding areas as they relate to park and recreation programs and facilities offered over the next twenty years. This is the first Comprehensive Plan conducted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Identification of Existing and Desired Facilities and Programs

The benefits of parks and recreation differ between communities, but in each community opportunities for recreation help define the quality of life for its citizens. The majority of the citizens in Harrisburg participate in some form of either active or passive recreation including sporting activities, cultural programs, art and exercise. Having a wide array of recreation programs establishes a unique quality of life that attracts business and tourism as well as encourages neighborhood development and enhances the livability of Harrisburg.

The planning process involved public participation in the form of an opinion survey, two focus groups (athletic and cultural), a map workshop, presentations to the community at Town-sponsored activities, and informal input from both elected officials and Town employees. The goal of this effort was to identify the number and type of existing facilities, to benchmark the level of facilities needed to maintain or enhance the level of parks and recreation programming based on projected population and demographics, and to understand the types of facilities and programs desired by the citizens of the Town of Harrisburg.

Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan

After completing the inventory and evaluation of the existing park and recreation sites within the Town, a facilities vocabulary was established to categorize these facilities. A facilities vocabulary creates a common set of terms and provides the necessary structure for developers, Town staff, planners, and policy makers to plan for desired future development and allocation of recreation resources. This is an important step in the process in order to objectively analyze and integrate the level of facilities and programming identified as a result of the benchmark study with the facilities currently in place. This effort produced a list of parks and recreation goals and action items to make the objectives a reality.

The first recommended action item is the incorporation of parks and recreation into the Town's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. Currently this ordinance addresses the incorporation of streets, water, schools, and sanitary sewer into the development policies but there are no policies or guidelines in place for land developers to provide for recreational opportunities or resources. Without recreation and open space policies in place, increased development will further limit the recreational resources available to Town residents and will place the burden of funding for recreational amenities on the Town and its citizens.

The second recommendation is to focus expansion of Stallings Road Park to a District Park. Based upon population projections and needs assessment completed through the public participation process, it is recommended that the Town add one district/sports complex to its park system. Stallings Road Park is strategically situated within the Town of Harrisburg and has, based on the facilities vocabulary, several elements in place as well as the potential for the Town to purchase adjacent land for incorporation into the park. The image below illustrates Roberta Road Extension that is scheduled for construction in 2013 to provide convenient access to Stallings Road and Hickory Ridge Road from NC 49. This park is adjacent to Harrisburg Elementary and with the purchase of property to the south of Stallings Road would be contiguous to Hickory Ridge High and Middle Schools. Road improvements to Hickory Ridge Road will include a bike lane and improvements to Stallings Road will include sidewalks. It is recommended that Fuda Creek, which cuts through the site, include a greenway trail to provide access to the park and schools and eventually join the Carolina Thread Trail. The plans for high-speed rail to pass just north of the park will provide for the inclusion of a grade separated pedestrian walkway over the railway as part of the Roberta Road extension. With the acquisition of property south of Stallings Road additional elements required of a district park including a community center, outdoor pool/splash pad, athletic fields, and picnic shelters can be constructed.



The third recommendation is for the development of a Pedestrian Master Plan that will address the community desire for greater connectivity through the use of sidewalks and greenways. The desire of citizens to be able to safely bike/walk to their destination was a consistent thread throughout the survey results. Creation of a Pedestrian Master Plan that is tied to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will maximize the effective use of Town resources to provide these amenities.

Funding of Projects

Important to the development of the Comprehensive Plan was the identification of funding mechanisms to enable the Town to accomplish its goals. As mentioned previously, inclusion of parks and recreation within the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance will place the burden of funding on the development community rather than the Town and its existing residents. As the need for expanded facilities is driven by the growth in population, incorporation of recreation within this Ordinance will enable those driving the need to fund the projects.

In addition to the inclusion of parks and recreation within this Ordinance, Section 7 describes several methods of acquiring the land needed to make this plan a reality and Section 12 outlines other funding opportunities the Town can consider including public/private partnerships, issuance of General Obligation Bonds, and State and Federal grants. It is recommended that the Town begin an aggressive grant writing campaign to leverage funds for implementation of recreation facilities and programs.

Section 1

Comprehensive Plan Purpose Statement

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department and the Town Council have recognized the need to develop a Comprehensive Plan for Parks and Recreation for the Town of Harrisburg. The Plan shall address the needs of the citizens of Harrisburg and surrounding areas as it relates to park and recreation programs and facilities offered over the next twenty years. This is the first Comprehensive Plan conducted by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Benefits of Parks and Recreation

There are numerous benefits of parks and recreation and they differ between communities, but in each community opportunities for recreation help define the quality of life for its citizens. The majority of the citizens in Harrisburg participate in some form of recreation whether it is active or passive, athletic or educational, or as a spectator. Sporting events provide opportunities for residents to gather and socialize to establish a sense of community. Organized youth athletics builds character in its participants and identifies the community. Cultural programs and classes satisfy the need to learn and discover our heritage and understand nature. A wide array of recreation programs from art appreciation to zumba classes establishes a unique quality of life that attracts business and tourism as well as encourages neighborhood development that defines a community and enhances the livability of Harrisburg.

Recreation improves physical and mental health with cultural education programs and activities for all ages. Recreation helps to bring families and neighborhoods together as a community when they participate in Town sponsored events such as the Fourth of July Festival, Farmers' Market, Christmas Tree Lighting, and Movies in the Park. In addition, parks help to protect the environment by preserving open space and creating greenways along streams and rivers to provide alternate methods of transportation and protect water resources. These greenway connectors create a network of trails to connect to parks, schools, neighborhoods, and businesses to further define the community and provide safe passage via healthy alternative transportation. All of this contributes to the economic growth and prosperity of Harrisburg.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The purpose of the comprehensive master plan is to inventory the existing programs and facilities, determine the Town's unmet recreation needs through a public participation process, and establish the framework to improve the Town's park and recreation system by making recommendations to enhance and expand recreation facilities, programs, and policies through a phased Action Plan to meet the future recreation needs of its citizens.

The plan addresses the recreation needs for the citizens of Harrisburg as they relate to programs and facilities over the next twenty years. The planning process involved public participation including an opinion survey, a map workshop, focus group meetings for athletics and cultural programs, public presentations to elected officials and at Town sponsored activities, and input from elected officials as well as employees of the Town. The planning process involves documentation and analyses of existing facilities and programs. The process compares existing facilities and programs to the recreation needs of the community as identified from the public input. The population projection for

the Town over twenty years offers many challenges to leaders of the community. The Comprehensive Master Plan for Parks and Recreation provides the Town with a planning tool to guide them through the process of meeting the increasing demands for recreation programs, facilities, and services.

Section 2

Demographic and Sociological Factors of the Town of Harrisburg

ECONOMY

Harrisburg has a diversified employment base with education, health, and social services being the largest employer and manufacturing a close second. Other employment industries in the area include finance, insurance, and real estate; transportation and warehousing; utilities; retail trade; and professional in descending order of market shares.

The top ten employers in Harrisburg are:

- Builders Firstsource – Atlantic Group, LLC
- Wilbert, Inc.
- Professional Care Management, Inc.
- Chemical Specialties, Inc.
- Lowe’s Food Stores, Inc.
- Saddle Creek Copak Services, Inc.
- Parks Heating and Cooling, Inc.
- All American Roofing, Inc.
- Berenfield Containers (Se), Ltd LLC
- Food Lion, LLC

Local industry plays an important role in parks and recreation by financially and socially subsidizing these programs and facilities.

Income

The estimated median household income in 2008 was \$80,098 as compared with the North Carolina average household income of \$46,549.

Cost of living index

December 2009 the cost of living index in Harrisburg was 84.5 as compared to the U.S. average of 100. The median single family dwelling value in 2008 was \$261,825 as compared with the North Carolina average of \$154,500.

Education

High school education or higher 89.7%

Bachelor’s degree or higher 27.4%

The Town of Harrisburg is a relatively young, affluent, well educated, family oriented community experiencing positive growth that is putting greater demand on its municipal services.

PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICE AREA POPULATION PROJECTION

The Master Plan is based on a planning period of twenty years from 2010 through 2030.

Within the past 30 years, the Town of Harrisburg has experienced different rates of growth. According to the 1990 census, the Town’s corporate limits population has increased 13% from 1980 to 1990. From 1990 to 2000 the corporate limits population increased 174% to 4,449 residents. The corporate limits population for 2008, according to the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management increased 37.53% to 6,179. The Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (CRMPO) forecasts significant population growth within the twenty-two traffic analysis zones (TAZ) that comprise the boundary of Harrisburg’s extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) to exceed 27,720 in population by the year 2030.

To determine the population projection for the parks and recreation service area in 2030 for the Town of Harrisburg, several sources and types of data were assessed. The foundation of the service area population projection was selected from the TAZ data for the years 2007 to 2030 for areas within the Town of Harrisburg’s future service area.

Projected Parks and Recreation Service Area Population					
Town of Harrisburg, NC					
TAZ	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
164	41	42	42	42	42
189	496	501	505	510	510
190	1	1	2	3	4
192	118	169	178	186	186
200	314	360	393	426	454
201	159	194	258	323	377
202	181	181	189	197	197
203	0	0	0	0	0
204	9	11	11	11	11
205	229	379	427	476	520
214	470	551	641	732	732
234	3	3	4	4	4
256	764	989	1,105	1,222	1,570
257	1,373	1,613	1,887	2,160	2,160
258	1,337	1,450	1,536	1,621	1,621
259	545	755	838	920	920
260	1,107	1,243	1,653	2,063	3,192
261	1,737	2,391	3,071	3,750	3,958
262	1,390	1,715	1,992	2,268	2,507
263	1,800	1,926	2,028	2,131	2,220
264	1,262	1,744	2,349	2,955	3,932
265	852	903	1,451	2,000	2,603
Total	14,188	17,121	20,560	24,000	27,720

Town of Harrisburg historic and projected population:

<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2010(est)</u>	<u>2020(est)</u>	<u>2030(est)</u>
1,433	1,625	4,493	6,179	14,188	20,560	27,720

Profile of General Demographic Characteristics by age for 2000 from the NC Office of State Budget and Management follows.

Under 5 years	6.4%
5 to 9 years	8.7%
10 to 14 years	8.5%
15 to 19 years	6.4%
20 to 24 years	2.9%
25 to 34 years	10.7%
35 to 44 years	20.9%
45 to 54 years	16.4%
55 to 59 years	5.2%
60 to 64 years	4.4%
65 to 74 years	5.4%
75 to 84 years	3.0%
85 years and over	1.1%

These estimated numbers reveal the following age group brackets that were used in the survey and their percentage within the total Town population:

Children	14 and under	23.6%
Youth	15-20	9.3%
Young adults	21-34	13.6%
Adults	35-65	46.9%
Senior Citizens	65+	9.5%

This categorization identifies the largest age brackets within the Town and also helps to reveal where the next shift in population age will occur. As adults age into retirement, there will be a need for additional facilities and resources that will satisfy their specific needs. Passive recreation, classroom space and a senior's center are all examples of facilities that may be needed.

As populations increase, so do the demands for recreation. Today, communities promote their "quality of life" such as low crime rates, good schools and ample parks. Parks that are connected with a system of greenways encourage walking and biking to the nearest park, grocery store, or school rather than driving. Multi-use trails satisfy citizen demands for a place to exercise and socialize as well as serve as a conduit for alternative transportation routes to work.

Section 3

Evaluation of Current and Projected Physical Factors

LOCATION AND HISTORY

Settled mostly by Scotch-Irish sometime between 1732 and 1765, Harrisburg, still home to families that arrived in the 1700s, came by its name from the Robert Harris family and his descendants. Mr. Harris was established on land of his own here in 1766. With the coming of the railroad in the 1850s, the depot took the name of the landowner from whom the right-of-way was purchased, becoming known as Harris Depot. In 1874 the Post Office underwent a change of name from Harris Depot to Harrisburg.

A business district and town center developed down by the railroad, but in 1923, with the construction of what is now known as NC 49, Harrisburg's business district shifted to the new road. Harrisburg Depot closed in 1933.

Located in southwest Cabarrus County bordering Mecklenburg County, the Town of Harrisburg was incorporated in 1973. Government is by a seven member council and mayor. The town hall built in 2003 is located on Main Street. A town-wide water system was completed in 1980, followed by the town's wastewater system in 1985. Harrisburg's close neighbors include Charlotte Motor Speedway and the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. Harrisburg is served by Harrisburg Fire Department, Inc., and contracts with the Cabarrus County Sheriff's Department for the full-time police protection.

Harrisburg's economic strength can best be judged by its business and industrial growth. With the building of an industrial park, availability of land and the quality of the work force, Harrisburg, a growing community, reflects and maintains its rural heritage.

TRANSPORTATION

NC 49 also known as University Boulevard in adjacent Mecklenburg County runs east west through the community. Interstate 485 serves as a major connector to Charlotte and destinations beyond Cabarrus County.

Major Collector Roads include Robinson Church Road, Rocky River Road, Hickory Ridge Road, Caldwell Road, Morehead Road, Roberta Road Blackwelder Road, Pharr Mill Road, Shamrock Road, Stallings Road, and Lower Rocky River Road.

Commercial air service is available from Charlotte Douglas International Airport. Private Air service is available from the Concord Regional Airport.

SCHOOLS

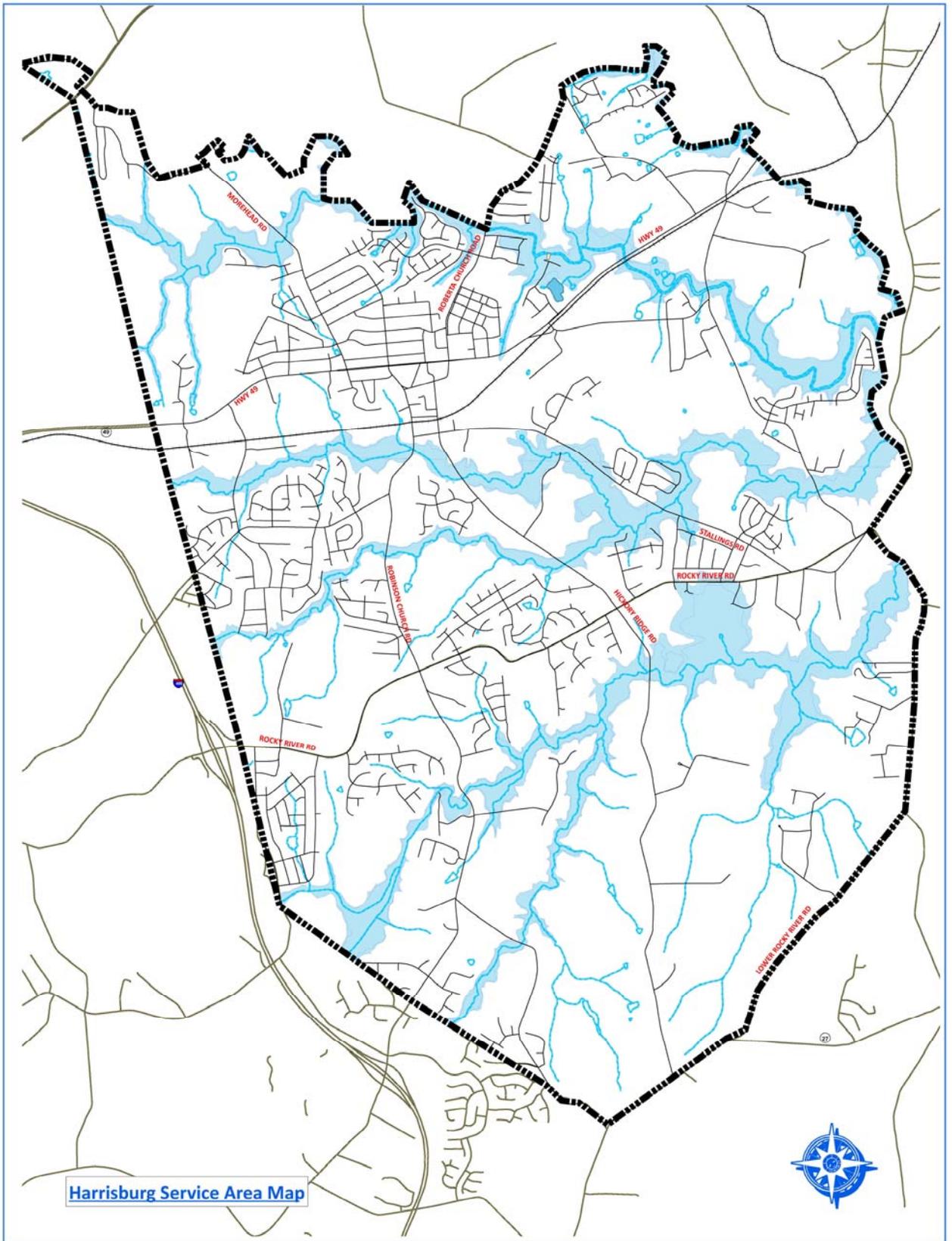
Hickory Ridge High School
Hickory Ridge Middle School (opens Fall 2010)
Carolina International (private)
Harrisburg Elementary
Pitts School Road Elementary
C. C. Griffin Middle School
Patriot Elementary (opens Fall 2011 adjacent to C. C. Griffin Middle School)

Rocky River Elementary
University of North Carolina-Charlotte

An elementary school has been discussed for future construction south of the intersection of Hickory Ridge Road and Rocky River Road.

PHYSICAL LIMITS

The physical limits of the Town of Harrisburg are well defined by the Cabarrus/Mecklenburg County line to the west and the City of Concord to the North and Northeast.



Section 4

Inventory and Evaluation of Existing and Potential Recreation and Park Sites

EXISTING HARRISBURG PARKS AND RECREATION SITES

The existing recreation and parks sites within the Town have been evaluated based on their facilities, their function, safety and overall accessibility, as well as other criteria. These initial reviews serve as a record of the components of each recreation and park site. Their strengths and weaknesses, as well as a compilation of opportunities and constraints as reviewed by the project team are included in this section. The Town Parks and Recreation maintenance staff currently maintains the facilities. Schools, clubs and others, but especially the Parks and Recreation Department, provide programming for each of the sites. The information presented here will be one of the components used to analyze park and recreation programs and facilities in order to make recommendations. At the end of this section, a matrix of evaluation topics and parks can be found for easy reference.

The park and recreation sites and facilities evaluated include:

Mini Parks

None

Neighborhood Parks

None

Community Parks

Harrisburg Park
Stallings Road Park
Pharr Mill Road Park

District Parks

None

Special Purpose Parks and Facilities

Pharr Mill Historic Site
Farmers' Market (Located within Harrisburg)
Triad Live Steamers (Located within Harrisburg)
Parks and Recreation Main Office (Located within Harrisburg)

Other Recreational Facilities in Harrisburg

Harrisburg YMCA
Harrisburg Elementary School Park
Pitts School Road Elementary School Park
Veterans Park

COMMUNITY PARKS

Harrisburg Park

Harrisburg Park is a Community Park that is home to the Town's Fourth of July Festival hosting a popular event that attracts from a much larger area than just the Town. The facility is comprised of multi-purpose fields, picnic areas, playground, restrooms, walking trails, and natural areas with established vegetation. The Park includes pedestrian access to the Farmers' Market, historic depot, and miniature railroad.

Existing Facilities

- Town Library
- Two (2) soccer/football fields
- One (1) picnic shelter (30' x 50')
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Picnic areas (16)
- Sand volleyball
- Gazebo
- Paved walking trails (approximately 1 mile)
- Mountain Bike trail
- Connection to Farmers' Market, historic structures, and miniature railroad
- Parking (approx. 250 spaces)

Size:

- 33.68 acres

Type:

- Community Park

General Opportunities and Constraints Evaluations:

- Explore opportunities to acquire contiguous land for expansion of athletic fields, walking trails, picnic areas, Fourth of July celebration staging
- Acquire property on south side of railroad tracks for facility and program expansion and create grade separated connection at railroad
- Develop acquired parcels for additional baseball fields, multi-purpose fields, and trails
- Construct universal accessible pedestrian connection with the Farmers' Market
- Renovate existing fields with synthetic surfacing for multi-purpose use if additional field complexes are not available in the future
- Additional parking and ingress/egress points
- Provide an area for Community Gardens that will tie into the Farmers' Market
- Provide additional programs that may include archery, disc golf, skateboard park, splash pad/spray park, and remote control airplanes.

Stallings Road Park (Develop as a District Park)

Stallings Road Park is a small Community Park that is adjacent to the Harrisburg Elementary School Park. The combination of the two facilities provides an opportunity for the Town to efficiently schedule baseball and softball programs for the community. In addition to the athletic fields there is a walking trail, picnic shelter, restrooms and playground. The facility is in desperate need of expansion to provide adequate parking and enhanced programming. As land becomes available in this area, this park is designated in the master plan to become a District Park and the primary active recreation facility for the community in the future.

Existing Facilities

- Picnic shelter (60' x 40') with restrooms and grills
- Three (3) tennis courts
- Two (2) lighted baseball fields
- Playground
- Rock dust walking trail (1 mile figure eight pattern)
- Parking (approximately 100 spaces)

Size:

- 12.72 acres

Type:

- Community Park

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- Create shade throughout the park with vegetation and structures
- Resolve drainage problems around ball fields
- Increase parking
- Permanent pedestrian connection to Harrisburg Elementary Fields
- Negotiate maintenance of Harrisburg Elementary ball fields to be responsibility of Town of Harrisburg
- Resolve drainage issues on Harrisburg Elementary ball fields
- Acquire adjacent property to construct Community Center/outdoor pool, expand athletic fields and add programs such as disc golf, remote control airplanes, splash pad, walking trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, archery range, to make this a park not a sports complex
- Provide trail connection along stream corridor and bike lane along Robinson Church Road
- Expand athletic fields for football, soccer, baseball, softball, tee ball and use synthetic surface where possible
- Add tee ball fields behind Harrisburg Elementary

Pharr Mill Road Park

Developed in 2007, this 37-acre park provides passive recreational activities in a beautiful wooded setting. This park is popular with walkers, runners, families, and nature lovers. Park amenities include boardwalk trails, walking and biking trails, volleyball courts, horseshoes pits, a playground, ponds, picnic shelters and individual picnic sites, nature areas and a restroom/vending building. The park has historic significance as well. One of the oldest cemeteries in the county, owned by Rocky River Presbyterian Church, is located within the park boundaries.

Existing Facilities:

- Picnic sites
- Playground
- Volleyball courts
- Horseshoe courts
- Fishing pond
- Boardwalk trails
- Walking trails
- Biking trails
- Picnic shelter with restroom

Size:

- 37.31 acres

Type:

- Community Park

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- Resolve drainage problems
- Fishing tournament program
- Acquire additional property along stream corridor north of Canterfield Estates to create greenway
- Add facilities and programs such as disc golf, additional horseshoe pits, volleyball courts
- Create shade for playground
- Add a large shelter near playground
- Provide a canoe launch/take out

SPECIAL PURPOSE PARKS AND FACILITIES

Pharr Mill Historic Site (develop as a Neighborhood Park)

Pharr Mill Historic Site, owned by the Town of Harrisburg, is in need of preservation. Located along the Rocky River at Pharr Mill Road and Shamrock Road intersection, this historic site exemplifies much of the local heritage. It provides a unique look into the community's heritage and offers an opportunity to expand the program offerings of the parks and recreation department.

Existing Facilities:

- Currently there are no facilities

Size:

- 4.1 acres

Type:

- Special Purpose Park

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- Add parking
- Construct interpretive kiosk
- Preserve site
- Create interpretive trail around structure and Rocky River
- Tie trail into community trail network
- Establish a neighborhood park with playground, shelter, restroom building, and other amenities necessary to establish a Neighborhood Park

Farmers' Market

The Farmers' Market is a part of the Harrisburg Park, located at the east edge of the park with access from Robinson Church Road. The Market is open seasonally from May through September on Mondays. It is located at the old Post Office and General Store along with the Triad Live Steamers.

Existing Facilities:

- Post Office and General Store
- Triad Live Steamers

Size:

- 4.1 acres

Type:

- Special Purpose Park

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- Add parking
- Construct permanent Market Place structure with restrooms to accommodate special events other than the seasonal market
- Provide an area for Community Gardens
- Incorporate surrounding elements in an overall complex
- Develop a trailhead to tie into community trail network

Triad Live Steamers

Triad Live Steamers Inc. is a private non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the lore and history of railroading with large scale model trains. The railroad and its equipment are for both children and adults alike to enjoy and ride on. You do not have to own any equipment in order to come and enjoy the club or to join. An interest in learning more about model trains is all that is required. The non-profit organization is currently working with the Town of Harrisburg to expand its track.

Existing Facilities:

- Support facilities for service, storage, and equipment

Size:

- 1,700 linear feet of 7 1/2" gauge track

Type:

- Special Purpose Park

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- Add parking
- Incorporate as a part of an overall complex with Farmers' Market
- Construct universal accessible trail to be a part of Harrisburg Park
- Tie trail into community trail network

Parks and Recreation Main Office

Located at Stallings Road Park, the recreation main office is the central office for operations for the Parks and Recreation Department. The administrative office is comprised of a double wide modular unit providing offices and administrative storage.

Existing Facilities:

- Four (4) offices
- Support rooms including restrooms, supply closets, etc

Size:

- 1,400 sf (administrative space)

Type:

- Special Purpose Facility

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- Centrally located and easily accessible to the community
- Administrative offices need a permanent home that offers indoor classrooms and space for recreation programming that cannot be accommodated with the current facilities.

SCHOOL PARKS

The school system is also a good partner in providing some recreational resources to the citizens of Harrisburg. The elementary schools, when not being utilized for its own programs, have several facilities to offer to the recreation department. The Town does not own these facilities and their use is at the pleasure of the Cabarrus County School System and the Principals of the individual schools.

Harrisburg Elementary School Park

Existing Facilities (utilized by the Parks and Recreation Department):

- Concession stand and equipment storage building
- Four (4) baseball fields (250', 260', 270', and 300' to centerfield)
- Two (2) baseball fields (< 200' to centerfield) (used as multi-purpose grass fields because there is no fence for the outfield)

Type:

- School Park

Pitts School Road Elementary School Park

This facility is not within the Town Limits of Harrisburg and use of its facilities must be considered temporary until the Town is able to construct its own athletic fields and courts.

Existing Facilities (utilized by the Parks and Recreation Department):

- Gymnasium
- Concession stand
- One (1) Tee ball baseball field/practice facility
- Two (2) baseball fields (225' and 300' to centerfield)

Type:

- School Park

OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES IN HARRISBURG

Harrisburg YMCA

Located in the Town Hall, the Harrisburg YMCA is a private recreational provider that serves Harrisburg and surrounding areas. The Cannon Memorial YMCA is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit organization that has served all of Cabarrus County and part of Rowan County since 1908. In December 2006 the Harrisburg Family YMCA joined the Cannon Memorial YMCA association as the third branch of their service area in Cabarrus County. By offering various programs such as before and after school programs, summer camp, fitness, sports, aquatics, and wellness, the YMCA provides activities that compliment the Town's recreational programs. The Harrisburg YMCA is an asset to the recreational offerings within the Town and continues to be a partner with the Town's efforts to provide citizens with quality recreational opportunities.

Existing Facilities:

- Multi-use room – 2500 sf
- Fitness Center
- Aerobics classes
- Locker room
- Day care

Type:

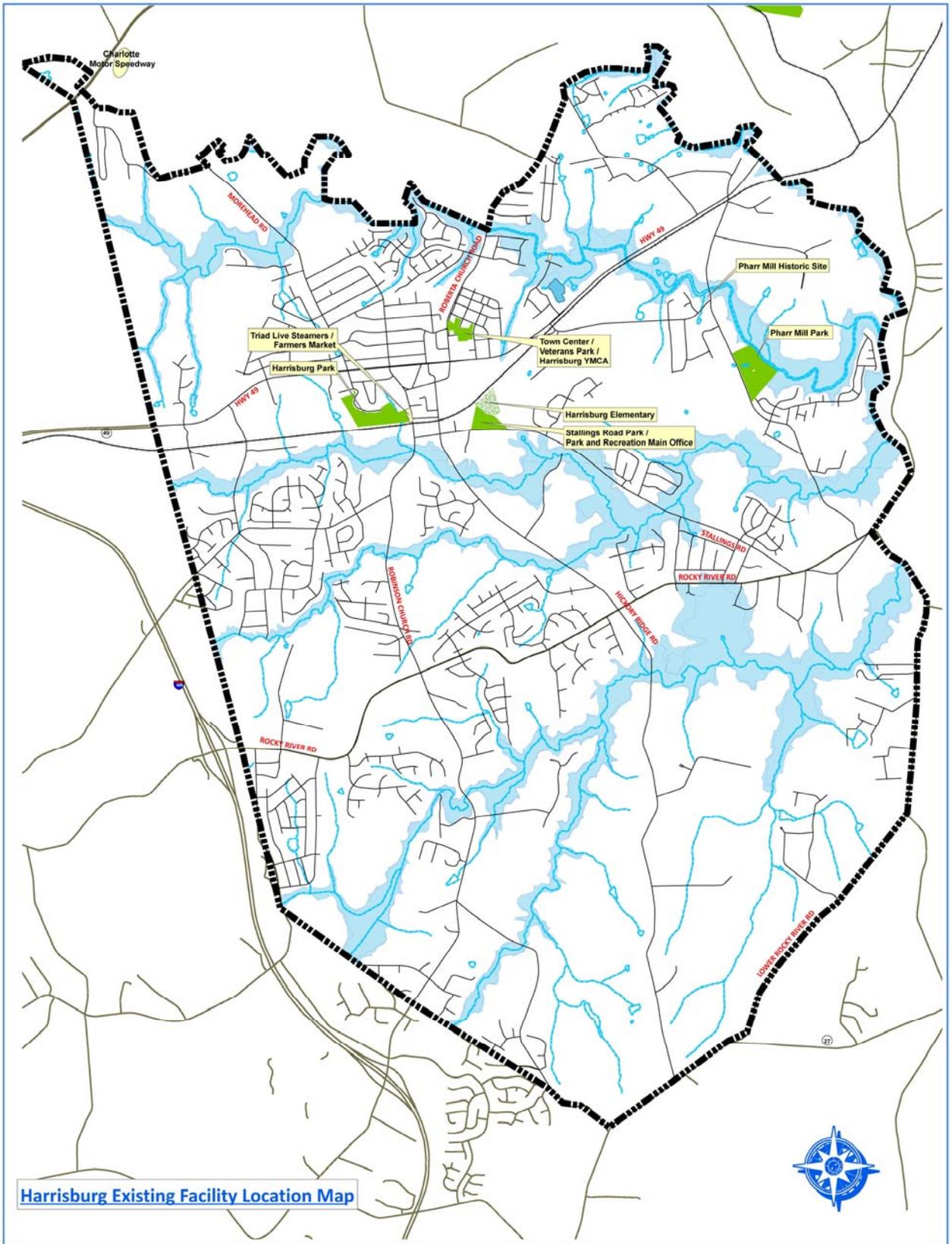
- Private Recreational Center

General Potentials and Constraints Evaluations:

- The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation will work with the YMCA to offer complementary classes and recreation programs.

Other Regional Interests

- Carolina Thread Trail
- Rocky River
- Veterans Park (land behind Town Hall owned by the Developer)
 - Taste of Harrisburg
 - Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony
 - Soccer for Tots



EXISTING HARRISBURG RECREATION PROGRAMS

The current offerings from the Town include programs geared to many different age groups. The strengths within the program offerings include the special events programs that are offered throughout the year as well as of seasonal interest. Other excellent programs offered include sports and active recreational activities, after school programs for youth and classes for all age groups. The current mission statement for recreational programming within the parks and recreation department is: To Provide quality recreation for the citizens of Harrisburg so as to improve their quality of life through leisure programming.

The following is a comprehensive list of the current program offerings. All programs are listed with their current (2010) participation fees if applicable.

Special Events

- **July 4th Celebration** – Held at Harrisburg Park this two-day celebration includes a parade, exhibits, games, pageant, live music, and fireworks sponsored by the University City Fellowship.
- **Movies in the Park** – Recent family-friendly films shown on a large outdoor screen with a super sound system. Free popcorn and drinks with CiCi Pizza for sale. Held on four Fridays during the summer at Harrisburg Park.
- **Easter Egg Hunt** – Held at Harrisburg Park, the annual Easter Egg Hunt includes games, face painting, inflatable slides, and prizes.
- **Taste of Harrisburg** – Held on the lawn at Town Hall, the Taste of Harrisburg invites restaurants from the Town to provide samplings to participants. Activities include games, live music, car show and an information exhibit celebrating the quality of life Harrisburg has to offer.
- **Halloween Carnival** – Held at Harrisburg Park in the area of the Farmers' Market, the events include games, trick or treating, and costume contests.
- **Christmas Tree Lighting** – Held on the lawn at Town Hall, the festivities include horse drawn wagon rides, complimentary hot chocolate and cider, live nativity scene, and Mr. and Mrs. Claus.
- **Home Decorating Contest** – Parks and Recreation Department sponsors a Christmas Holiday Home decorating contest with cash prizes for first and second place. The contest is open to Harrisburg residents who decorate the exterior of their home in a festive Christmas Holiday fashion.

Youth Activities

- **Kids Craft Time** – at Stallings Road Park Picnic Shelter 9 am; \$5/child on Friday, July 16, 2010 and Friday, August 6, 2010. All ages.
- **Tennis** – Summer Tennis camps and classes for 5-8 year olds and 9-15 year olds. Camps run Monday through Thursday during the summer at a cost of \$40 for 5-8 year olds and \$60 per week for 9-15 year olds. One hour classes are held on Tuesdays or Thursdays for 3 weeks in July at a cost of \$30 for 5-8 year olds and \$37.50 for 9-15 year olds.

- **Kids4Pets Animal Camp** - sponsored by the Humane Society of Concord and Greater Cabarrus County is a week long camp held during July with classes on obedience training and veterinary care to learn about sheltered pets and basic animal care.

Adult Activities (Adult Program Activities)

- **Yoga** – at Harrisburg Presbyterian Church on Mondays at 6:30 or Tuesdays at 9 am for 6 weeks at a cost of \$60 per person per 6 week term.
- **Bridge** – play Bridge at Harrisburg Town Hall Council Chambers on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 9:00 pm weekly for \$3 per person per day. Learn bridge Thursdays at 9:30 am until noon weekly for \$6 per person per day.

Senior Activities

- **Horseshoes** – play horseshoes at the refurbished facilities located at Harrisburg Park.
- **Senior Games** – Town of Harrisburg will sponsor events.

Youth Athletics

Participants in team sports must either live within the Town limits of Harrisburg and/or attend Harrisburg Town Schools

All Volunteer Coaches are certified through the National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)

SPRING

- **Baseball** – Effective Spring of 2010, Baseball will be offered for the following age groups: 3 and 4 (Instructional only), Age 5 and 6, 6U Machine Pitch, Age 7 and 8, Age 9 and 10, Age 11 and 12, Age 13 and 14 and Age 15 and 16. The participant's age as of April 30 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$50.00/County Resident - \$60/Non-County Resident.
- **Soccer (Coed)** – ages 3-4 Peewee, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-15. The participant's age as of October 15 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$90.00/County Resident - \$100/Non-County Resident.
- **Softball** – 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-15. The participant's age as of January 1 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$90.00/County Resident - \$100/Non-County Resident.

FALL

- **Baseball** – 3 - 4 Peewee, 5 – 6 T-Ball, 6U Machine Pitch, 7 – 8 Coach Pitch, 9 - 10, 11 - 12, 13 – 15. The participant's age as of May 1 of the current year determines which age division to participate. Participation fee - \$50.00/County Resident - \$60/Non-County Resident.
- **Cheerleading** – 7-8, 8-10, 9-11, 10-12, 11-14. The participant's age as of July 31 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$130.00/County Resident - \$150/Non-County Resident

- **Football** – Mighty Mites (age 7-8, weight: 45-90 lbs.), (age 9 weight: 45-70 lbs.) Junior Pee wee (age 8-10, weight: 60-105 lb.), (age 11 weight: 60-85 lbs.) Pee wee (ages 9-11, weight: 75-120 lbs.), (age 12, weight 75-100 lbs), Junior Football Program is affiliated with Pop Warner Football. The participant's age as of July 31 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$90.00/County Resident - \$100/Non-County Resident.
- **Soccer (Coed)** – ages 3-4 Pee wee, 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-15. The participant's age as of October 15 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$90.00/County Resident - \$100/Non-County Resident.
- **Softball** – 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-15. The participant's age as of January 1 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$90.00/County Resident - \$100/Non-County Resident.

Winter

- **Basketball** – 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, and 13-15. The participant's age as of October 15 of the current year determines age division for participation. Fees - \$90.00/County Resident - \$100/Non-County Resident.

Adult Athletic Activities

Spring

- Coed Adult Softball. Team registration fee - \$450
- Coed Adult Soccer. Team registration fee - \$450

Fall

- Coed Adult Softball. Team registration fee - \$575
- Coed Adult Soccer. Team registration fee - \$450

Winter

- Coed and men's flag football. Team registration fee - \$400

Athletic Field Rentals

- **Ballfields**
Hourly (no lights) - \$15/County Resident - \$20/Non-County Resident
Light fee (per hour) - \$15/County Resident - \$20/Non-County Resident
- **Tournament Rental** (Note: Lights not included in tournament rental)
One field per tournament (2 days) - \$150/County Resident - \$175/Non-County Resident
Additional Field Preparation - \$45/County Resident - \$60/Non-County Resident

- **Football/Soccer Fields**

Hourly (no lights) - \$25/County Resident - \$30/Non-County Resident

Light fee (per hour) - \$15/County Resident - \$20/Non-County Resident

Daily - \$150/County Resident - \$175/Non-County Resident

Field Preparation - \$60/County Resident - \$75/Non-County Resident

- **Shelter**

Hourly Rate - \$10/County Resident - \$20/Non-County Resident

One half day - \$40/County Resident - \$75/Non-County Resident

Full day - \$80/County Resident - \$150/Non-County Resident

Section 5

Town Survey

SURVEY SUMMARY

A park and recreation survey was developed and distributed to the Town residents through an online website as well as to recreation program participants. Approximately 350 surveys were returned and tabulated from an estimated 5,200 households that comprise the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation service area, establishing a 6.7% return rate. The intent was to gain citizen input as to the ideas, thoughts, concerns, current participation and opinions with regards to current and future park and recreation programs and facilities for the Town of Harrisburg. A copy of this survey with the results is included at the end of this section. The survey consists of general questions regarding residency, household age groups, and recreation and funding preferences. The survey responses were representative of household perceptions, opinions and answers as well as individual information.

SURVEY RESULTS

The following is a summary of the results of the survey:

Demographic Results

- Respondents racial group breakdown:
 - 88.1% Caucasian
 - 8.5% African American
 - 1.4% Native American
 - 3.4% Latino / Hispanic
 - 2.4% Asian / Pacific Islander

- Respondents by zip code:
 - 84% 28075
 - 6% 28027
 - 3% 28213
 - 3% 28025
 - 2% 28215
 - < 1% 28079
 - < 1% 28026
 - < 1% 28262

Parks and Recreation Perceptions

The following data are responses to survey questions. The percentages given are representative of the total number of responses to each individual question tallied. Each question within the survey has a separate sample of responses due to the non-answers per each question. See Section 13 Appendix A for all survey information.

Question number 20, which asked respondents for their feelings on the statement, “The existing activities/facilities for Harrisburg Parks and Recreation are adequate and meet the needs of my household,” received the following responses (percentages based on the number of respondents):

- 43.6% Agreed or strongly agreed
- 34.2% Disagreed or strongly disagreed
- 22.3% Undecided

Questions numbered 22 and 23, asked respondents for their feelings on the statement, “Recreation facilities at schools should be more accessible to the public when not in use, and new recreation facilities should be developed at new and existing school sites for use by the public” received the following responses (percentages based on the number of respondents):

- 66.7% Agreed or strongly agreed
- 7.6% Disagreed or strongly disagreed
- 26.8% Undecided

Recreation Activities

The following information identifies the top three (3) activities that were given for each category in question numbers 3 through 13. The percentages are representative of the number of responses for each category and not of the total number of surveys tallied. See Section 13 Appendix A for all survey information.

Nature/Environment Observation

- Nature walks (95%)
- Nature activities/ programs (30%)
- Bird watching (19%)

Games

- Miniature golf (69%)
- Golf (57%)
- Volleyball (33%)

Parks and Picnics

- Play in the park (80%)
- Picnic on the weekends (67%)
- Splash Pad (42%)

Special Events

- Fourth of July Festival (82%)
- Farmers’ Market (73%)
- Movies in the Park (63%)

Passive Outdoor Pursuits

- Walking/trails (82%)
- Gardening (60%)
- Visiting nature parks (57%)

Fitness Center Activities

- Weight Lifting (66%)
- Wellness Classes (61%)
- Circuit Training (51%)

Athletics

- Youth Soccer (52%)
- Youth Baseball (43%)
- Swimming (40%)

Active Outdoor Pursuits

- Hiking/trails (59%)
- Jogging/running (55%)
- Biking/cycling (54%)

Arts

- Concerts (80%)
- Historic sites and Museums (52%)
- Drama/theatre/community theatre/plays (51%)

Instructional Classes and Leagues

- Exercise/aerobics (78%)
- Arts/crafts (46%)
- Crochet /quilting/sewing (21%)

The following information identifies the top five activities that household members of the respondents participated in outside of Harrisburg as requested in question number 16. See Section 13 Appendix A for all survey information.

1. Running/walking/biking/hiking
2. Swimming/splash pad
3. Soccer
4. Golf
5. Gymnastics/camping/basketball (all with similar response)

The following information identifies the top five activities that respondents or members of their households would like to see provided by the Town in question number 17. See Section 13 Appendix A for all survey information.

1. Swimming pool/splash pad
2. Running/walking/biking/hiking
3. Volleyball program
4. Golf clinics/driving range/course
5. Soccer fields and more diversified programs

Parks and Recreation Funding

Question number 24, which asked respondents for their feelings on the statement, "I would be in favor of new or expanded financial methods to fund future activities of Harrisburg Parks & Recreation," received the following responses (percentages based on the number of respondents):

- 68% Agreed or strongly agreed
- 5% Disagreed or strongly disagreed
- 27% Undecided

Question number 25, which asked respondents what their feeling on the statement, "How should the Town of Harrisburg finance new recreation facilities," received the following responses (percentages based on the number of respondents):

- 32.3% Participation Fees
- 24.5% Annual Household Fee
- 22.0% Parks and Recreation Bond Issue
- 14.5% Increase Development Fees
- 6.7% Increase Property Tax

Note: See Section 13 Appendix A for all survey information.

Additional Comments

The following comments were taken from the final question of the survey regarding any additional comments or thoughts in relation to the parks and recreation facilities or programs in Harrisburg:

- I would like to see more sidewalks incorporated in Harrisburg especially along Stallings Road from Flowers Farms to the Stallings Road Park and Harrisburg Elementary School. Also, sidewalks along Robinson and Hickory Ridge especially going towards Lowes Foods. I would ride my bike and/or walk if I felt comfortable enough. I work at Harrisburg Elementary School and would ride my bike/walk to work every day but it is too dangerous on Stallings Road without sidewalks.
- I feel that Greenways are one the best ways to help residents to create a lifestyle of recreation and physical activity.
- Harrisburg desperately needs sidewalks and safe pathways connecting major destinations such as shopping, schools, and parks to residential areas.
- We live in Harrisburg and home school and must travel to Huntersville or Charlotte to find adequate physical activities/facilities for our teen boys. Would love to see greenways, hiking trails, a pool, and a recreation center much closer to home. Would prefer to pay our participation fees to Harrisburg!
- Please start thinking about the middle school and high school age kids. There are hundreds of things for little kids but virtually nothing for the pre-teen and teens. This would include a better YMCA for swim clubs and swim teams, gymnasium for basketball, more grown-up type movies in the park. You have a huge group of kids from 11-18 that you are not serving at all!
- Would absolutely LOVE a splash pad and a dog park!

- We need a swim team, and an indoor pool.
- There are not adequate soccer fields for the 11-12 and 13-15 soccer division. There are over 600 kids participating in Harrisburg soccer. There are not enough fields to support the program. New soccer fields would build the soccer program to a greater level.
- There needs to be more for adults to do, particularly adults who are 50+ and also for adults who work full-time and cannot take advantage of daytime activities.

Overall summary of the responses include construction of sidewalks along roadways and development of biking and hiking trails where possible for safe passage to schools, parks, and businesses as well as the following:

- More athletic fields for soccer and baseball,
- Recreation center to include classrooms and indoor/outdoor pool, splash pad and dog park
- Adjustment of recreation fees to reflect reasonable value for service and products provided

-See Appendix for Survey Responses

Dear Survey Participant,

Harrisburg is developing a long-range plan for Parks and Recreation and we need your help. Your input is critical in helping us meet the needs of our growing community. Please take a few moments of your time to provide us with your opinions on Harrisburg's Parks & Recreation programs and facilities. After you complete this survey, please follow the instructions at the end of the survey.

The Town Council is committed to improving the quality of life for the residents of Harrisburg and feel that recreation programs and facilities are an important part of their long-range plans. We appreciate your participation in this survey and invite you to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Town of Harrisburg

Michele Reapsmith, Town Administrator
Dan Sullivan, Parks & Recreation Director

W.K. Dickson & Co., Inc.
616 Colonnade Drive
Charlotte, NC 28205

Please Place Postage Stamp Here

**Harrisburg Parks & Recreation Department
Attention: Survey Response
PO Box 100
Harrisburg, NC 28075**

HARRISBURG PARKS & RECREATION SURVEY

May 2010

1. We want to verify that we receive input throughout The Harrisburg Parks & Recreation service area, we ask that you include your block, street name, and zip code to identify your neighborhood. (e.g. 4000 Stallings Road 28075)

Address: _____

Zip Code: _____

2. Please check specific recreation activities in the following categories in which members of your household currently participate.

Games

- Disc Golf
- Golf
- Horseshoes
- Miniature Golf
- Shuffleboard
- Table tennis
- Volleyball
- Other _____

Athletics

- Adult Baseball/Softball
- Adult Soccer
- Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Football
- Lacrosse
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Youth Baseball
- Youth Soccer
- Volleyball
- Other _____

Passive Outdoor Pursuits

- Gardening
- Rustic Cabin Rental/Camping
- Visiting Nature Parks
- Walking Trails
- Other _____

Active Outdoor Pursuits

- Biking/Cycling/Mountain Biking
- Canoeing
- Fishing
- Hiking Trails
- Horseback Riding
- Jogging/Running
- Other _____

Fitness Center Activities

- Circuit Training
- Fitness Activities
- Weight Lifting
- Wellness Classes and Training
- Other _____

Instructional Classes

- Aerobics/Pilates/Yoga
- Arts/Crafts
- Ceramics/Pottery
- Crochet/Knitting/Quilting/Sewing
- Other _____

Recreation Center Programs

- After School
- Karate
- Senior Oriented
- Summer Playground
- Tumbling
- Unique Populations
- Other _____

Nature/Environment Observation

- Bird Watching
- Butterfly Watching
- Nature Activities
- Walking
- Other _____

Parks and Picnics

- Dog Park
- Gardens/Rose/Themed
- Picnic
- Playground/Open Space Play
- Splash pad
- Other _____

Arts

- Art/Craft Shows
- Concerts
- Drama/Play/Theater
- Historic/Museums
- Other _____

Special Events

- Christmas Tree Lighting
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Farmer's Market
- Heritage Craft Day
- July 4th Festival
- Movies in the Park
- Taste of Harrisburg
- Other _____

3. Check the park and recreation facilities, which members of your household have used in the past year.

- Carolina Thread Trail
- Farmer's Market
- Harrisburg Park
- Pharr Mill Road Park

- Pitts School Fields
- Stallings Road Park
- Triad Live Steamers
- Other _____

4. Has anyone in your household participated in any parks and recreation activities provided by athletic, church, civic or other associations in Harrisburg?

Activity _____	Location _____
Activity _____	Location _____
Activity _____	Location _____

5. In what types of recreation activities do members of your household regularly participate outside of Harrisburg and where does this participation occur?

Activity _____	Location _____
Activity _____	Location _____
Activity _____	Location _____

6. List specific activities that members of your household would like to see provided by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation.

Activity _____	Location _____
Activity _____	Location _____
Activity _____	Location _____

7. If the following facilities were available in Harrisburg, how often would you use them?

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Never
Biking/Cycling/Walking Trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Center/Activities/Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Center/Gymnasium/Ball Fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fitness/Wellness Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indoor/Outdoor Pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports/Recreation Complex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Please indicate what time of day/week you would like to see Harrisburg Parks & Recreation increase its activities.

<input type="checkbox"/> Weekday Morning	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekday Afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekday Evening
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Morning	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/> Weekend Evening

9. Please indicate your feelings on the following statements:

a. The existing activities/facilities for Harrisburg Parks & Recreation are adequate and meet the needs of my household.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

b. Activities/facilities provided by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation are equally accessible to all citizens regardless of age, race, religion, gender or national origin.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

c. Recreation facilities at schools should be more accessible to the public when not in use.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

d. New recreation facilities should be developed at new and existing school sites for use by the public.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

e. I would be in favor of new or expanded financial methods to fund future activities of Harrisburg Parks & Recreation.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. How should Harrisburg finance new recreation facilities?

Annual Household Fee (\$25 - \$50)
 Increase Development Fees
 Parks/Recreation Bond Issue
 Participation Fees
 Property Tax
 Other _____

11. If parks and recreation spending were increased, would you prefer acquiring/developing new parks and facilities OR developing new activities/programs?

- Acquire/Develop New Activities/Programs Both Neither Undecided

12. How do you perceive the need for new or improved recreation facilities for Harrisburg?

- Extremely Important Important Not Important Undecided

13. How do you perceive the need for new or improved recreation activities for Harrisburg?

- Extremely Important Important Not Important Undecided

14. How do you perceive the need for a Greenway (which includes a trail for biking, running and walking) that interconnects many areas, parks and school facilities within Harrisburg?

- Extremely Important Important Not Important Undecided

15. What means of transportation do you usually use to get to a park or recreation activity?

- Bike Car Public Walk

16. Please indicate how you were recently informed about activities offered by Harrisburg Parks & Recreation.

- | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AM Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Charlotte Magazine | <input type="checkbox"/> Fliers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FM Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Charlotte Weekly | <input type="checkbox"/> Online |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charlotte Observer | <input type="checkbox"/> Huntersville Herald | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charlotte Observer online | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Tribune | |

17. Please indicate your ethnic/racial group that best describes your household. (Answer not required but needed for grant purposes)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

18. Please indicate how many individuals and gender are in each age range in your household.

Age	Female	Male
0-14	_____	_____
15-20	_____	_____
21-34	_____	_____
35-65	_____	_____
65+	_____	_____

Please share any additional comments or thoughts you may have regarding parks and recreation activities/facilities.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INTEREST!

Once you have completed the survey, please fold and tape the survey so that the address is on the outside of the survey, place a stamp in the upper right-hand corner and mail the survey to the address shown.

OR

Once you have completed the survey, please return the survey to one of the following drop box locations:

Harrisburg Parks & Recreation main office – 4050 Stallings Road
Harrisburg Town Hall – 4100 Main Street

OR

Complete the online survey at the Town website.

Section 6

Public Input

Public input is vital to the success of this Comprehensive Master Plan. There were several opportunities to gain public input as well as to collect data for the Master Plan. The primary methods of public participation were as follows:

- Park and recreation survey (Section 5)
- Focus Groups
- Map Workshop

The following summarizes the Focus Group meetings and the Map Workshop:

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

The primary observation is that the Town Parks and Recreation Department is growing and learning the recreation needs of the community. The consensus of the two focus groups is that the department needs to recognize what recreation offerings are currently provided in the private sector at local churches and the YMCA and not duplicate them.

Athletics Focus Group Comments

- 1. When you think of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department's Programs, services, and facilities, what comes to mind (in three words or less)?**
 - Support
 - Youth activities
 - Guidance

- 2. What benefits do you think are provided to the Town by offering publicly sponsored parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities?**
 - Convenient
 - Customer friendly
 - User friendly – online and approachable
 - Sense of community – kids know their coaches
 - Always open

- 3. What Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation programs, services, or activities have you participated in within the last year?**
 - Baseball, basketball, soccer, karate, dance, cheerleading, movies in the park

- 4. How would you describe the relationship between you as a participant and the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department staff?**
 - Positive relationship

5. What facilities would you like to see Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department provide?

- Outdoor pool, covered pool (bubble), aquatic center, indoor gym, stage, place to walk indoors, recreation center with a full kitchen.
- Community Garden

6. Where would you like to see these facilities built or renovated?

- Flowers furniture store, vacant fitness center, Hickory Ridge Middle School

7. How would you like to see the Town pay for the building or renovation of these facilities?

- Bonds and grants. There are no funds in the budget. A recreation bond would be supportive, but the process needs to be transparent. The community is willing to pay for recreation, but they want to see that the dollars are spent intelligently and efficiently. Citizens of the Harrisburg community are involved.

8. What programs, services, or activities do you participate in the most provided by the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation?

- Sports

9. What programs, services, or activities would you like to see offered by the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation?

- Community Garden
- Fishing derby
- Greenways

10. How do you perceive the image or reputation of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department within the community?

- Convenient
- Supportive
- Growing and learning
- Accessible

11. Rate Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department on the following areas, using values from 1 lowest to 5 highest. (quality of service, attractiveness, convenience, format, parking, signage, variety of offerings, frequency of offerings, accessibility to persons with disabilities, safety, publicity and advertising)

- 4 Quality of service
- 4 Attractiveness
- 5 Convenience
- 5 Format
- 2 Parking
- 2 Signage
- 2 Variety of offerings
- 4 Frequency of offerings
- 2 Accessibility to persons with disabilities
- 1-2 Safety
- 4 Publicity and advertising

12. What groups of people are represented within the Town?

- Youth athletics and athletics in general

13. Which groups do you perceive to be served more by the Parks and Recreation Department?

- Youth athletics and athletics in general
- Family athletics

14. Which groups do you perceive to be served less by the Parks and Recreation Department?

- Adult activities, Seniors
- Teenagers over the age of 14
- Runners
- Adult basketball

15. How do you rate the pricing structure of the Parks and Recreation programs and services?

- Fairly reasonable
- Harrisburg residents will pay for service

16. What is your overall impression of the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation?

- I like it
- Good job
- Don't bite off more than you can handle
- Let the private sector do what they do and enhance the services they offer do not duplicate
- Staffing will be an issue in the future
- Learning
- Trying hard to improve
- Full plate

- If church has it covered, do not try to take it over

Additional Comments -

- Safety issues on fields due to improper drainage and low spots Batting cages in need of repair - balls flying out of net.
- Possibly use Griffin Middle school facilities; offer maintenance trade-off with schools for use of facilities.

Cultural Focus Group Comments

- Desire and need for classrooms
- Desire for recreation center
- Dog park

1. When you think of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department's Programs, services, and facilities, what comes to mind (in three words or less)?

- Sports, Sports, Sports,
- Community event

2. What benefits do you think are provided to the Town by offering publicly sponsored parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities?

- Low cost affordable activities
- Desire and need for event space
- Convenience
- Family recreation. Families come to Harrisburg Parks and Recreation events because you see parents with strollers and small children.

3. What Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation programs, services, or activities have you participated in within the last year?

- Taste of Harrisburg
- Farmers' Market
- Craft Fair
- Fourth of July Festival
- Christmas
- Movies in the Park
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Activities not sponsored by the Town include Zumba and scrap booking.

4. How would you describe the relationship between you as a participant and the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department staff?

- Good, supportive, available

5. What facilities would you like to see Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department provide?

- Recreation Center with kitchen facilities, classrooms, stage, and multi-purpose space for activities. There is limited rental space within the community for events.
- Swimming pool and splash pad.
- After school programs.
- Recreation Center because there is no place to meet and have a class.

6. Where would you like to see these facilities built or renovated?

- Recreation center attached to a school gymnasium.
- Would like to see existing facilities expanded to centralize recreation programs, facilities, and activities.
- Potential sites include the remax and zmac properties across from the Harrisburg Park. (adjacent to Public Works Facility)
- Property across the road from Stallings Road Park.
- Like for the Town to take over the homes near the Farmers' Market for classrooms.

7. How would you like to see the Town pay for the building or renovation of these facilities?

- Raise taxes, participation fees, household fee, and impact fee.
- As long as fees are transparent the Town will support them.

8. What programs, services, or activities do you participate in the most provided by the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation?

- Non-athletic activities.

9. What programs, services, or activities would you like to see offered by the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation?

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Lacrosse | Disc Golf |
| Adult basketball | Aerobics (non-senior) |
| Art programs | Community Gardens |
| Dance | Compliment YMCA activities |
| Cards | Hobby type classes. |
| Indoor summer camp | Teen night |
| Gymnastics | Senior programming |
| Senior aerobics | Concert Series |
| 5K Run | |

10. How do you perceive the image or reputation of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department within the community?

- Growing pains, new director, new department

11. Rate Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department on the following areas, using values from 1 lowest to 5 highest. (quality of service, attractiveness, convenience, format, parking, signage, variety of offerings, frequency of offerings, accessibility to persons with disabilities, safety, publicity and advertising)

- | | |
|-----|------------------------|
| 3-4 | Quality of service |
| 4-5 | Attractiveness |
| 5 | Convenience |
| 2-3 | Format |
| 2 | Parking |
| 2 | Signage |
| 1 | Variety of offerings |
| 2-3 | Frequency of offerings |

- 4 Accessibility to persons with disabilities
- 2-3 Safety
- 2-3 Publicity and advertising

12. What groups of people are represented within the Town?

- Youth athletics and athletics in general

13. Which groups do you perceive to be served more by the Parks and Recreation Department?

- Youth athletics and athletics in general

14. Which groups do you perceive to be served less by the Parks and Recreation Department?

- Seniors
- Special needs
- Teenagers over the age of 14
- Dogs (lack of dog park)

15. How do you rate the pricing structure of the Parks and Recreation programs and services?

- Comparable to other public and private offerings

16. What is your overall impression of the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation?

- The little engine that could
- Room for improvement

MAP WORKSHOP

The Map Workshop was held in conjunction with the Taste of Harrisburg. Over 200 participants shared their thoughts and ideas with the project team by making comments on a floor map or sketching on photos and plans hung on the walls. Points of consensus and contention were identified as they relate to parks and recreation programs and facilities. Participants were asked to express their thoughts and ideas directly on a map that covered the council chamber floor.

Comments from Map Workshop

The purpose of the map workshop is to have open dialogue regarding specific recreation activities, programs, and facilities impacting the citizens of Harrisburg. The following comments were taken from the floor map following the workshop.

- Move or expand the YMCA with an indoor and outdoor pool
- Skateboard park
- Pedestrian connectivity throughout the community
- Pembroke Road property developed as a neighborhood park with slides, swings and monkey bars. Maintain existing canopy trees.
- Allow horseback riding on trails
- Allow mountain boarding in parks. Mountain boards have hand brakes; skateboards do not.
- Trails need to have mile markers.
- Need more sidewalks – Morehead Road, Hillcrest Drive and at School bus stops.
- Need parks south of Stallings Road
- How will the Bloom Community impact the neighborhood surrounding it.
- YMCA – pool, disc golf, playground, splash pad, mini golf
- YMCA at new middle school with public pool
- Splash pad at Stallings Road Park
- Canoe launch along Rocky River great idea.
- Splash pad at the common area near Town Hall
- Public Pool
- Bowling Alley
- Drive-in movies
- Sidewalks, Sidewalks, Sidewalks
- Water park; splash pad
- Horseshoe pit at Harrisburg Park (second that)
- Stallings Road extension to improve vehicular circulation through town
- Bike lane along Robinson Church Road
- Bike lane along Caldwell Road
- Extend sidewalks along NC 49
- Need sidewalk connections to Town
- More sidewalks to connect people and encourage exercise
- Cannot get from home to park or school without driving (need sidewalks)
- Turn lanes and traffic lights at dangerous intersections
- Trails along streams and floodplains
- Harrisburg Park partner with AGAPE Learning Center housed at Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church
- Bike and Hike trails along Rocky River
- Stallings Road sidewalk
- Hickory Ridge Road sidewalk

Section 7

Parks and Recreation Planning and Programming Policies

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is:

- To state the established planning objectives and define a vocabulary that will give the Town of Harrisburg the framework of planning principles to direct future parks and recreation resources and facilities.
- To specify programming guidelines for the Town that will outline the necessary steps to become and maintain a status of an accredited Parks and Recreation Agency in the future.

Town of Harrisburg has an abundance of natural resources and open space for public use and preservation for future generations. There is limited recognition of the need to create parks and preserve open space in the current Land Use Plan and Town Subdivision Regulations. A strong commitment to open space preservation and recreation in the Land Use Plan that is being updated and in the existing Subdivision Regulations would strengthen Harrisburg's opportunity to expand recreation facilities and programs as well as enhance the quality of life in the community.

The Parks and Recreational concepts and its related goals and objectives for the Parks and Recreation System for Town of Harrisburg were developed using a number of sources. These range from the history of the area, the unique stream and river oriented physical settings, and assessment of the current parks and recreation system.

The Parks and Recreation concepts represent the overall ideas related to the Town of Harrisburg's responsibilities in providing parks and recreation facilities and service its citizens.

Overall Parks and Recreation Concept

The Town would like to enhance the quality of life for its citizens by expanding its recreation facilities and programs using the community input as its guide. Goals of the overall concept include the following.

- Enhance the quality of life with a full array of recreation programming.
- Enhance the physical and mental health of the community by providing recreation opportunities through expanded park and greenway system.
- Enhance community aesthetics by preserving open space.
- Protect stream corridors and historic sites by creating parks and greenways.
- Generate economic development by enhancing quality of life through accentuation of recreation and leisure opportunities, natural and historic beauty, spectator sports, performing arts, and musical activities to create a desirable place to live.
- Operate park facilities and programs effectively and efficiently by complementing offerings of the private sector and integrating community involvement in the planning process.

Park School Concept

Provide recreation opportunities through efficient and complimentary actions.

- Bring recreation opportunities close to where people live through shared use.
- Provide economy in government by avoiding duplication and utilize publicly owned property and facilities to benefit a broad segment of the community.
- Establish cooperative working relationship with school board.
- Work toward a mutually acceptable cooperative atmosphere for joint-planning of recreation facilities and programs.
- Create a framework for future development of recreation facilities and equipment.

Greenway Concept

Provide access and connectivity to the many destinations throughout the community for school, play, work, shop, and relax.

- Develop trails and parks along major streams and Rocky River.
- Develop bike lanes along primary transportation routes to provide safe passage to schools, businesses, and parks.
- Provide recreation opportunities along trails for biking, hiking, and environmental interpretation.
- Connect neighborhoods to parks, schools, and businesses.
- Enhance visual interest of the entrance corridors by protecting viewsheds and buffering unattractive land uses.
- Protect streams and Rocky River through prudent land use ordinance and subdivision regulations.

PLANNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Parks and Recreation Department has established the following goals and objectives. These goals were developed by the Comprehensive Master Plan Committee and are used as the framework in making decisions that affect the citizens of the Town for their park and recreation needs.

Quality of Life Goal

The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreational system will contribute to the improvement of the richness of life for citizens by directing the systematic development of a broad spectrum of recreation and leisure opportunities and services which entail both current and future public, joint, and private service facilitators and providers, and by playing the leading role in the delivery of these opportunities and services.

Objectives

- To offer and provide a comprehensive program of both structured and non-structured recreation opportunities and services to meet both the active and passive needs and desires of citizens.
- To acquire a network of parks, open spaces, and greenways throughout the Town, to design and develop them, and to manage and promote their use.
- To furnish a broad range of high quality, well-equipped, well-maintained, and accessible public recreation facilities.
- To assure accessibility and equitable distribution of the parks, recreation, and leisure opportunities, resources, and services to all citizens in the Town, regardless of socio-economic position, age, sex, and physical or mental capabilities.
- To achieve a firm financial basis for both operational and capital improvements requirements.

Citizen Participation Goal

Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department will uphold the public trust by creating and operating a concerted, continuous citizen participation program, to become aware of and remain attuned to the recreation leisure needs and desires of the residents of Town of Harrisburg and of those who are attracted to the Town facilities and services offered through the parks and recreation system.

Objectives

- To provide speakers and continually updated programs for civic and service organizations, schools, and religious groups.
- To develop, make available, and exhibit displays for parks, shopping areas, other public places, and conferences.
- To publicize widely the attractions, beauty, and historical and natural significance of the offerings of Town of Harrisburg's Parks and Recreation programs.
- To establish and increase park and facility identity throughout the Town, leading to better accessibility and usage rates.
- To establish formal processes to solicit citizen input and increase general administrative openness and access to the public.
- To ensure that the parks and recreation system is adaptable to changing needs and expressed desires of its citizens.
- To promote programs of voluntarism in programs, service offerings, and the parks.

Operational Efficiency Goal

The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department will cultivate resource conservation (human, natural, and financial) and efficiency by coordinating planning and management operations with other public and private providers of recreation and leisure services and facilities and other units of government.

Objectives

- To seek out planning, financial, and management coordination with other entities prior to final decision-making including:
 - The Town Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
 - The Harrisburg Chamber of Commerce
 - County Economic Development Commission
 - County School Board
 - Town Council and Boards
 - The North Carolina Division of Parks
 - The U.S. Heritage Conservation and Recreation Services
- To explore contractual and cooperative arrangements with other governmental units and with the private, educational, and institutional sectors providing facilities and services where the public would be best and most efficiently served through concession, lease, rental, and other agreements.
- To secure from all residential developers contributions toward providing for new recreation land facilities according to the projected need that will be generated from their endeavors.
- To encourage Town government to accept land contributions from developers where they appropriately are of value to the parks and recreation system.

- To dispose of properties no longer valuable to the parks and recreation system through dedication, sale, trade, and other considerations.
- To assess departmental operating procedures and practices for resource waste on a regular basis.
- To incorporate the latest appropriate technologies in all new and renovation designs for facilities and structures to render them energy and resource efficient.

To assess and upgrade physical plants and grounds routine maintenance and security programs and procedures, stepping up both land and building improvement and renovation.

Visual, Environmental, and Design Harmony Goal

The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department will supply leadership in the public interest for the creation and maintenance of vital environment, seeking a harmonious level of compatibility and balance between human creation and natural systems in the Town.

Objectives

- To identify, acquire, and manage unique natural, cultural, and historic areas and sites in the Town, particularly within the physical context of greenways.
- To participate in an advocacy role in Town efforts related to growth management, land-use planning, and environmental protection.
- To work for the identification and preservation of open space important to the quality of life and natural environment of the Town.
- To acquire, manage, and maintain parks, taking into consideration both the needs and desires of users, existing and proposed Town infrastructure, and the preservation of the natural environment.
- To participate in the thoroughfare planning for the urban area, taking into consideration proposed street and highway systems in the parks and recreation master planning and implementation process.
- To encourage and lead in the development of alternate forms and networks of transportation in the urban area for pedestrians, runners, bicyclists, and commuters, and to advocate alternate forms of mass transit both in recreational and purely functional modes.
- To practice good land, water, and vegetation stewardship in the management of all properties to assure the best possible park experience for the people by giving special attention to upkeep, safety, and cleanliness, and to set good examples for other sectors both public and private.

The understanding of these goals and objectives is vital in the development of planning guidelines, policies, and standards for parks and recreation in Town of Harrisburg.

PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES

There are no existing standards that give direction to specific program offerings by a local level of the public sector. There are, however, some identifiable and acceptable standards that relate to the process of determining how programs should be planned, implemented and evaluated in a local recreation department. The National Commission of Accreditation for Local Park and Recreation Agencies, under the auspices of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration and the National Recreation and Park Association, have set forth standards for evaluating the effectiveness of programs and services management by local recreation departments. Although only 21 parks and recreation agencies have received accreditation, many more across the country are considering

participating. One of the primary benefits to accreditation is the identification of operational areas within the department that may further enhance the quality of programs, facilities, and services that are provided.

As part of Town of Harrisburg's on going self-evaluation as well as preparing for the future or long-range goal of accreditation, the following program evaluation criteria should be considered:

1. Program and service determinants

- Programs shall have specific objectives based on:
- Conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure to enhance positive leisure lifestyles
- Constituent needs
- Community opportunities
- Desired experiences by constituency
- Department's stated mission, goals, and objectives

2. Nature of programs and services

Programs and services shall be delivered in a variety of formats such as:

- Structured leadership programs
- Outreach
- User services
- Rental
- Information and referral services
- Leagues, tournaments, contests
- Self-initiated, drop-in programs
- Seminars, workshops, conferences
- Clubs

3. Objectives of programs and services

There shall be specific objectives established for each program and/or service element.

4. Diversity of programs

There shall be a variety of program offerings that provide opportunities for various levels of proficiency, ages, and gender of targeted participants as well as special needs groups. This variety may include as many of the following as appropriate to service constituency:

- Visual and performing arts
- Cultural education
- Outdoor recreation
- Sports for skill development and/or competition
- Self-improvement services such as parent groups, book discussions, toastmasters
- Tourism
- Special events
- Environmental education
- Outdoor adventure-based

5. Selection of program content

The selection of program content, specific activities and opportunities shall be based upon an

understanding of the individual differences and the cultures of the community.

6. Participant involvement

The program shall provide structurally for a wide range of participant involvement.

POLICY GUIDELINES

The purpose of this section is to provide an opportunity to:

- Discuss policies that provides the necessary framework for land acquisition, recreation funding, and development of a comprehensive park system
- Outline and compare recreation, park facility, and open space standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) with Town of Harrisburg
- Establish a set of standards specifically designed for the Town of Harrisburg.

Combining general guidelines for park and recreation facilities with a community's unique social, economic, and institutional structure best creates policies and standards for parks and recreation facilities. Park and recreation standards are not universally applied. Many changes have occurred over the last several decades, including reductions in federal and state programs and funding, increased concern for environmental issues, and significant growth in suburban areas. Consequently, the reliance on absolute national standards that were previously recognized and widely accepted including the standard of ten (10) acres of recreation facilities/1,000 persons is no longer applicable.

The publication *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenaway Guidelines* by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) offers outdoor recreation planning guidelines. Combined with the recreation needs of a community, current level of parks and recreation facilities, and existing land area, the NRPA guidelines establish general standards to meet the park and recreation needs of a community.

As the method of determining standards continue to be updated, more research and studies are finding that parks and recreation needs are not solely derived from a per capita basis. The combination of applying these standards with the component of public involvement/input can produce a more highly effective planning tool. A comprehensive analysis of public involvement can be found in Section 5, Town Survey, and Section 6, Public/Administrative Input.

Population growth is inevitable in the Town of Harrisburg. The pressure to enhance the quality of life of its residents is already being felt by the Parks and Recreation Department and is reflected in its mission statement. To manage the demand for recreation and enhance quality of life standards in the Town, it is necessary to incorporate appropriate recreation policies and development guidelines into the projected growth of the Town. Parks and recreation programs and facilities are major amenities offered to all residents of the Town.

Currently there is an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance in the Town of Harrisburg that includes provisions to enhance streets, water, schools, and sewer. However, it does not include recreation. Without recreation and open space policies in place, as more residential development occurs and the population of the Town increases, there will be less recreational resources available to residents of the Town unless the Town accepts the burden to provide these recreational amenities on its own. As

people look for places to relocate and businesses look for new places to build; recreation, open space, and quality of life are important features that attract businesses and people to Town of Harrisburg.

In addition to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance other methods of acquiring land through purchase and acquisition procedures include the following:

- Gifts — Gifts are usually an outright donation of the property that may give the donor significant tax benefits. Other benefits to the donor include potential elimination of real estate taxes, possible income tax reductions, and estate tax reductions.
- Fee Simple Purchase — This method entails purchase of the property typically at fair market value. However, as land prices continue to increase, it is unlikely that this method will be the sole land acquisition procedure. Fee simple purchase does have the advantage of being relatively easy to administer and is a widely known transaction by the general public.
- Bargain Sale — This method involves purchase of the property for a price under fair market value. This has obvious advantages to the Town in obtaining the property for less than the going rate. It also has advantages to the seller because they will receive a combination of monetary compensation and tax deductions. According to IRS code, the seller can take the reduction in the sales price (amount below fair market value) as a charitable contribution. Also by selling at a lower price, the seller will have less capital gains tax to pay.
- Purchase and Lease Back — This method allows purchase of the property with the option to either lease or sell to a prospective user with deed restrictions that would protect the land from abuse or development.
- Purchase of Development Rights — Private property owner retains all ownership rights of the property under the current usage. However, the owner exchanges the rights to future development for an upfront payment. This method is viable for obtaining open space and greenway tracts.
- First Right of Purchase — This method allows the Town to be notified in the event that certain property will be sold and developed in a way that may be incompatible with specific long-range land uses within that area. The Town would then have the right to purchase the property before it is sold to the party requesting the purchase.
- Easement — The Town may purchase an easement typically during final subdivision approval or by soliciting landowners and offering tax deductions. Easements will entitle the Town to specific rights of usage as specified within the agreement, lowering the full price of the title to only the cost of those land use privileges. This agreement works very well with greenways and trails.
- Reserved Life Estate — This method allows the seller of the property to sell with a reserved life estate so that the seller and their immediate family members may continue to use the property during their lifetime. The landowner would continue to pay real estate taxes on the land while using the property.
- Property Condemnation — This is a method by which the Town may condemn property when complications with the existing deed make acquisition from a willing seller difficult. Generally, condemnation of property from an unwilling property owner should be used only in a last case scenario.

Section 8

Parks and Recreation Policies and Standards

ESTABLISHING A FACILITIES VOCABULARY

As Harrisburg continues to grow and develop, the Town will use the established guidelines to direct future parks and recreation resources and facilities. These guidelines are the tools that decision makers, planning staff, developers, general public, and others use to make decisions affecting parks and recreation resources. A parks and recreation land use ordinance, sub-section of a comprehensive land use ordinance, or a subdivision regulations plan are the most common planning tools that set the standards for development and define the vocabulary for future parks and recreation facilities. Town of Harrisburg has these tools; but recreation is not adequately addressed in the Land Use Plan or the Subdivision Regulations. In absence of those references, the following section defines the recreation vocabulary necessary for these planning documents. Section 7 described methods for the Town to require recreation fees from future developments.

The concept of a parks and facilities land use ordinance is not a new idea. In fact, even as early as the late 1700s, the City of Raleigh adopted what some might consider a land use ordinance directly targeted at parks and recreation. As the original 400 acres were planned and laid out for streets and development, the city used a simple system, similar to the city of Philadelphia, of public squares. These squares provided the open spaces necessary for the recreational activities of the time. Only one-half of the original 400 acres was allocated for development; nearly 40 acres, or 20% of the land, was reserved as open space. By creating this early system and adhering to some basic principles, the City of Raleigh has been able to provide a nationally recognized system of parks and open spaces.

Facilities Vocabulary

Developing a vocabulary of recreational facilities and areas is the first step of any parks and recreation planning tool. A common set of terms provides the necessary structure for developers, Town staff, and park planners to communicate and plan for the appropriate recreation area. In Section 4, Inventory and Evaluation of Existing and Potential Parks and Recreation Sites and Programs, these terms have been applied to the existing recreational facilities in the Town of Harrisburg. Each of the following definitions has been worded in a way to be incorporated into the Town Land Use Plan or the current subdivision regulations.

Mini-Park

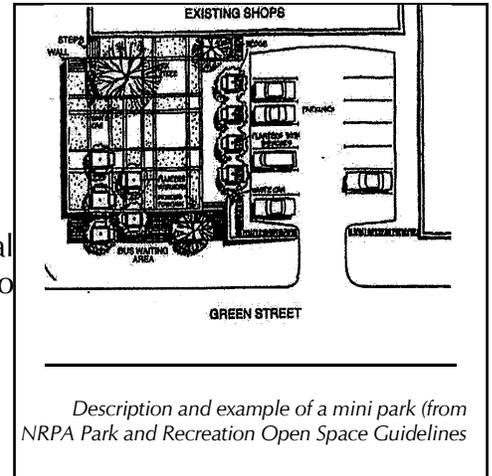
Mini park is the smallest park classification and is used to address limited or isolate recreational needs.

Examples include:

- Concentrated or limited populations
- Isolated development areas
- Unique recreational opportunities

In a residential setting, vest-pocket parks serve the same general purpose as mini parks and tot lots of the past. They are also intended to address unique recreational needs, such as:

- Landscaped public use area in commercial areas
- Scenic overlooks
- A play area adjacent to the downtown shopping district



Although the past classification mini park was often oriented toward active recreation, the new classification vest-pocket park has a broader application that includes both active and passive uses. Examples of passive uses include picnic areas, arbors, and sitting areas.

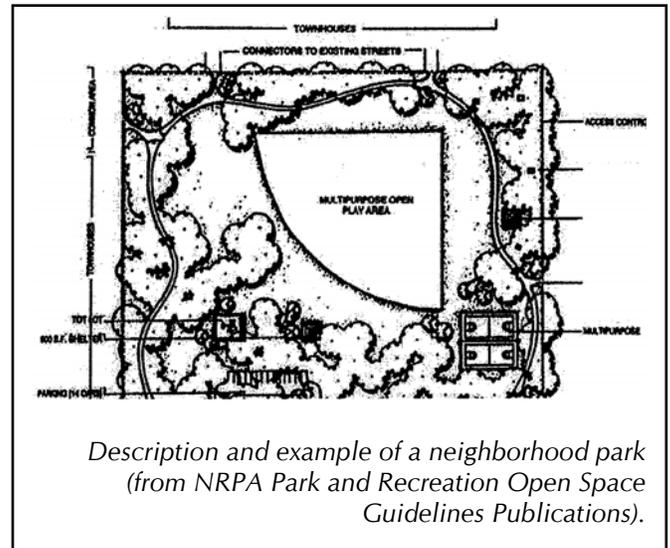
There are no parks within the Town Parks and Recreation system classified as a mini-park. The normal service area in a residential development is less than 1/4 of a mile in radius. Typically, vest-pocket parks are between 2,500 square feet and one acre in size. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) classify park areas less than 5 acres as mini-parks. The Town-owned parcel at the intersection of Pembroke Road and Rocky River has potential to become a mini park.

As a general rule, several mini parks are less desirable than having one community park or one neighborhood park because of greater management and maintenance requirements. It is suggested that the design vocabulary for a mini park be placed within a land use or subdivision ordinance with the understanding that the use of mini parks does, in specific cases, add value to a park and recreation system. A mini park is most desirable when placed along greenways, located to enhance the greenway experience, landscaped public space in a downtown or commercial area, and in isolated neighborhoods that are far from neighborhood or community parks. They can also provide recreation for existing neighborhoods that have limited land areas and resources

Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks remain the basic unit of the park system and serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. We recommend that they be developed for both active and passive recreation activities geared specifically for those living within the service area. Accommodating a wide variety of age and user groups, such as children, adults, the elderly and special populations, is important. Creating a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood is vital to successful design.

There are no parks classified as neighborhood parks in the Town recreation system. Population density within the park's service area is the prime determinant of size for a neighborhood park. Five acres is accepted as the minimum size necessary to meet the recreation program requirements of a neighborhood park and 5 to 10 acres is considered optimal. Active recreational facilities are used in an informal and unstructured manner. With the exception of limited use by youth teams, neighborhood parks are not used for programmed activities.



Description and example of a neighborhood park
(from NRPA Park and Recreation Open Space
Guidelines Publications).

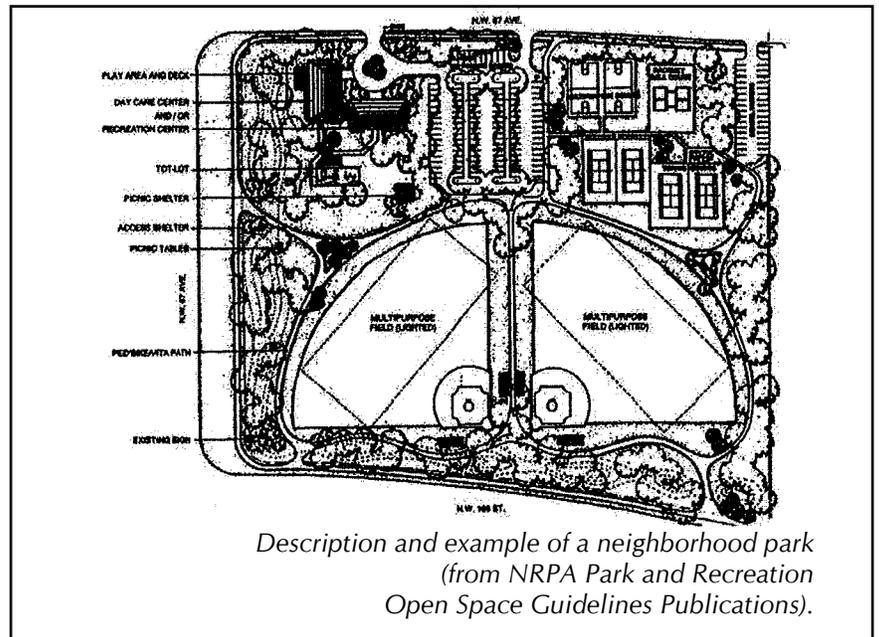
The typical programs for this recreational facility includes play structures, court games, informal playfield or open space, tennis, volleyball, shuffleboard, horseshoe pits, and bocce courts. Passive recreation activities include internal trails, picnic/sitting areas, general open spaces, and people watching areas. Passive and active recreation areas are usually equal in spatial allocation.

The criterion of supplying 2.5 acres per 1,000 populations is a standard that is consistent with the NRPA. It is recommended that the Town of Harrisburg lower this requirement to 1.5 acres per 1,000. This is less than the 2 acres per 1,000 criteria recommended by the *Outdoors North Carolina Report*. The acreage difference is applied to the larger acreage district park category. By providing less acreage than suggested by NRPA, a lower acreage overall is required for neighborhood parks, but a higher quantity of acreage for district parks will be provided. This reflects the desire expressed through the public participation process to have a single community/district park.

Community Parks

There are currently three community parks in the Town. Through the comprehensive master planning process, the residents of the Town strongly expressed the desire to have a centrally located recreation facility offering a wide variety of activities including those described in the definition of a community and district parks. In future planning efforts for developing new parks and expanding existing parks, consideration must be given to locate tracts that have expansion capability as well as large contiguous tracts approximately 20-50 acres in size and larger. The following NRPA descriptions are used to define this single category.

Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. Community parks are larger in size and serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks. Their focus is on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. They allow for group activities and offer other recreational opportunities not feasible — nor perhaps desirable — at the neighborhood level. As with neighborhood parks, community parks should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities.



Description and example of a neighborhood park
(from NRPA Park and Recreation
Open Space Guidelines Publications).

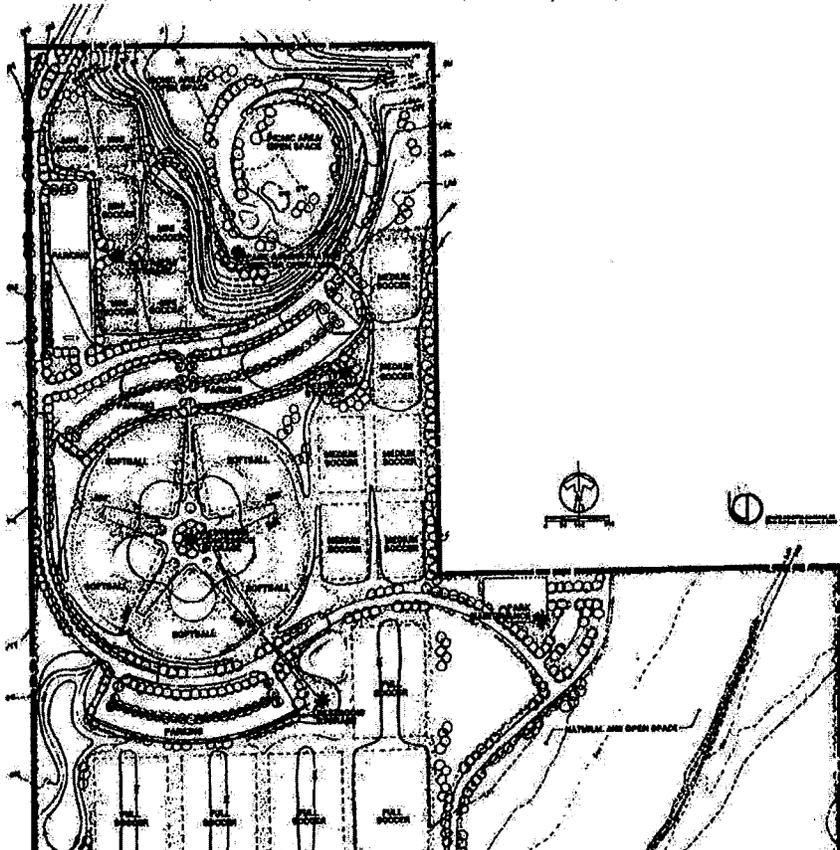
Community parks serve the special needs of communities through community centers, sports fields, citywide parks, large school parks, and special resources such as an aquatics facility and senior center. The three community parks in the Town of Harrisburg recreation system are all in need of expansion of facilities to create a wider variety of programs for the Town. A community park serves two or more neighborhoods with a service area up to 3.0 miles radius. Optimal size for a community park is between 20 and 50 acres. The actual size is determined by the program requirements of the service area.

District Park

The District Park classification consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities at larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community. This allows for.

- Economies of scale and higher quality facilities
- Improved management/scheduling
- Improved control of facility use
- Greater control of negative impacts to neighborhood and community parks, such as overuse, noise, traffic congestion, parking, and domination of facilities by those outside the neighborhood

District parks should be developed to accommodate the specific needs of user groups and athletic associations based on demand and program offerings. Where it is possible, school park sites should be used for youth athletics such as T-ball, soccer, and flag football, to minimize duplication of facilities Athletic fields are a good example of the multiple use concepts in park facility grouping. The fields can be used for a variety of sports so as to accommodate more participants. Also, the facility can be scheduled more heavily than a single use facility. District parks include fields and courts for softball, soccer, tennis, basketball, volleyball, and racket ball.



Description and example of a district park, (from NRPA Park and Recreation Open Space Guidelines Publications).

Special Purpose Parks and Facilities

Areas for specialized or single use purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, zoos, and gun ranges as well as dirt bike courses, gardens, fairgrounds or other specialized activities.

As defined within the Outdoors North Carolina Report, these parks vary in size and are not designed to meet service area criteria or size per capita requirements. They are established because of the unique characteristics and recreational opportunities offered by the park. The Farmers' Market, Triad Steamers, and the historic general store are a unique group of recreation facilities and activities located inside Harrisburg Park.

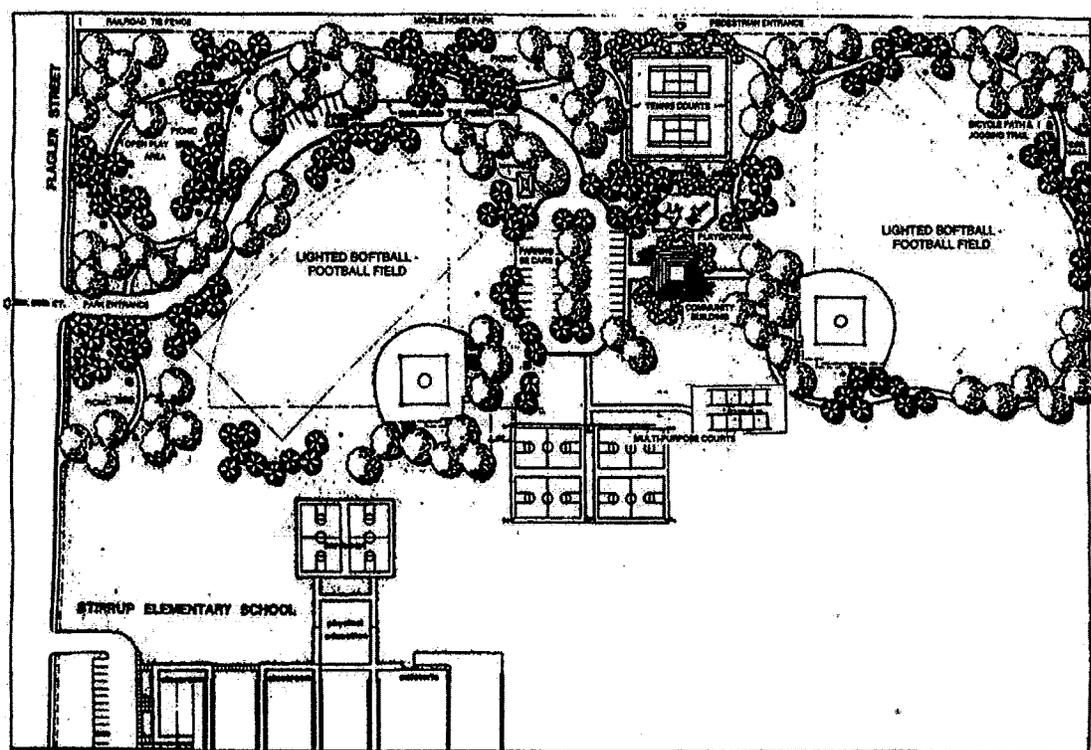
Historic /Cultural Area

Areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings and places of archeological, historical, or cultural significance.

As defined within the Outdoors North Carolina Report, these areas include local, state, or national historic sites, national military parks, arts and crafts training, and interpretive areas. Like Special Purpose Parks and Facilities, these parks are established because of the unique characteristics and recreational opportunities offered by the resource. These parks vary in size and should not be specifically designed to meet service area criteria or size per capita requirements. By adding this definition, any future facility or site that is identified as having historic and or cultural significance will have a designation. The Pharr Mill located at the intersection of Shamrock Road and Pharr Mill Road provides an opportunity for Harrisburg to preserve a unique part of the community's heritage.

School Park

By combining the resources of two public agencies, the School Park classification allows for expanding the recreation, social and educational opportunities available to the community in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Depending on the circumstances, school park sites often complement other community open lands. As an example, an elementary/middle school site could serve as a neighborhood park. Likewise, a middle or high school could serve as a community park or as youth athletic fields. Depending on its size, one school park size may serve in a number of capacities, such as a neighborhood park, youth athletic fields, and a school. Given the inherent variability of type, size, and location, determining how a school-park site is integrated into the park system will depend on its specific circumstance. The important outcome in the joint-use relationship is that both the school district and the park system benefit from a shared use of facilities and land area.



Description and example of School Park (from NRPA Park and Recreation Open Space Guidelines Publications).

It is recommended that during the development of new schools, the design processes incorporate planning for park and recreation facilities and include the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department staff and the Advisory Committee in the planning process. Currently the Town of Harrisburg School Board is considering an additional elementary school site south of the intersection of Hickory Ridge Road and Rocky River Road. It is the recommendation of this master plan to incorporate a school park into the programming of this school site. It is strategically located along the future greenway trail.

Walking, Biking, Hiking, and Paddle Trails

During the planning process, walking, biking, hiking, and paddle trails were major considerations for recreational activities within the Town. The Rocky River and numerous streams that cross through the Harrisburg service area provide an excellent opportunity for biking, hiking, and limited canoeing to connect neighborhoods to the Carolina Thread Trail, parks, and schools. In addition to the stream buffers, there are opportunities to use sanitary sewer right-of-ways and other utilities easements to provide further connectivity. The Town is in the process of adding sidewalks to many roadways and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has plans to widen and improve several of the major thoroughfares to include bike lanes. There is a proposed improvement to the railway that divides the Town and NCDOT intends to provide grade separated crossings with pedestrian and cycling incorporated into the design.

Greenways

Tie park systems components together to form a cohesive park environment. Greenways serve a number of important functions including:

- Tie park components together to form a cohesive park, recreation, and open space system.
- Emphasize harmony with the natural environment.
- Allow for uninterrupted and safe pedestrian movement between parks, schools, and businesses throughout the community.
- Provide people with a resource-based outdoor recreational opportunity and experience.
- Can enhance property values

It is recommended that the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department work with the Town Planning Department to create a Greenways and Open Space Master Plan. This plan would provide the framework for all recreational development and land use decisions that would occur in the future. Trails, linear parks or mini parks, protected streams and watercourses, and natural buffers are just some of the types of spaces that could be considered a greenway.

Natural Resources Areas/Preserve/Open Lands

Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering. These lands consist of:

- Individual sites exhibiting natural resources
- Lands unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential including parcels with steep slopes and natural vegetation, drainage ways and ravines, surface water management areas, and utility easements
- Protected lands, such as wetlands/lowlands and shorelines along waterways, lakes, and ponds

Because of its broad definition, most parks and greenways can be considered open space. Just like greenways, open space is important to identify and plan as open space areas become the recreational areas to future developments, help to preserve existing large environmentally significant areas, and provides a balance for land use planning. The Town of Harrisburg has an abundance of natural resources that have not been developed. It is an opportune time to protect these areas deemed environmentally sensitive for the enjoyment of future generations.

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY STANDARDS

Parks and Recreation facility standards or level of service standards have been determined to document the existing level of service and establish the future level of service for Parks and Recreation facilities. These standards provide Town decision-makers and the Parks and Recreation department with the framework to acquire and develop future recreation facilities.

The survey was used to establish the existing level of service of recreation facilities as well as to determine what facilities are needed. To establish the existing level of service, the survey asked respondents to indicate what types of activities and facilities they have used or participated in within the last year. To understand what facilities are needed, the survey asked respondents to indicate what facilities they would like to see in the Town. The respondents indicated that they would like to see more parks. They did not differentiate between the three classifications: neighborhood, community, or district parks. They indicated equally for each classification. Their emphasis was for programming supported by community and district parks.

Other methods of determining future level of service standards include data collected during the focus group meetings, map workshop, feedback from preliminary draft plan, and other meetings with community leaders.

As standards for the Town of Harrisburg's parks and recreation are developed, the national standards as established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) are referenced in order to understand standards from an established, national perspective. Many municipalities and counties within North Carolina have established their own standards for parks and recreation. The national standards were not designed to be the ultimate "rulebook" for the development of all parks and recreation facilities, but rather this information is used as a guideline for future recreation facilities. The national guideline, coupled with a site inventory and an understanding of citizen and community recreation needs determined through public participation, establishes the framework to develop unique recreation standards for Town of Harrisburg. Town recreation standards are designed to reflect the demographics, population, and overall character of the Town in concert with the knowledge gained through the public participation process of the master planning process.

Facility guidelines as per the NRPA use population census data as the major tool in determining the multiplier for comparison of existing resources to the standards. This same method has been applied to Town of Harrisburg utilizing the following census data as presented in Section 2, Demographic and Sociological Factors of the Town of Harrisburg:

- 2008 – Population within Town limits 14,188 (current estimate service area)
- 2020 – Population within Town limits 20,560 (projected in 10 years)
- 2030 – Population within Town limits 27,720 (projected in 20 years)

Although the standards are developed based upon the number of residents within the Town, it is important to note that the total service area for the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department is subject to varying depending upon specific activities and services. For example, during certain events and programs, participants may come from other areas just outside of the Town. Also in some cases, Town residents may choose to participate in other programs and

services provided outside of the Town. Therefore, the standards reflect only Town residents and assume that the disparity between those that are choosing to recreate in the Town of Harrisburg from other areas versus Town residents choosing to participate outside of the Town create a balance in participation. The Town of Harrisburg should be open to the idea of providing some recreational resources for the benefit of all.

The following facility standards chart is created so that as the Town grows the needed facilities and recreation areas may be determined simply by adjusting the population data within the matrix. The following example has been provided to assist in understanding how the charts may be used:

A		B	C	E	F	G
Park and Facility types	Existing Harrisburg Standards Acres or facilities/ Population	NRPA or NC Standards Acres or facilities/ Population	Proposed Harrisburg Standards Acres or facilities/ Population	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed - 2010 (pop. 14,188)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2020 (pop. 20,560)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2030 (pop. 27,720)
Tennis Courts	s	r	r	3.2 - 3 = .2 Courts	4.6 - 3 = 1.6 Courts	6.2 - 3 = 3.2 Courts

Proposed Harrisburg standard determined through public participation, survey, meetings, etc.

**2010 Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Facility Standards
Needs for Harrisburg's Parks and Recreation Facilities**

	A	B	C	E	F	G
Park and Facility Classification	Existing Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ Service Area Population) Ownership Town (C) School (S) YMCA (Y)	NRPA or NC Standards (Acres and facilities/ Population) and (size required)	Proposed Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ population) and (size required)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2010 (pop 14,188)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed - 2020 (pop 20,560)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2030 (pop 27,720)
Miniparks	0 acre/1000	* 2,500 sq. ft. to 1 acre	* 2,500 sq. ft. to 1 acre	*	*	*
Neighborhood	0 acre/1000	2.5 ac/1000 (5-10 acres)	2.5 ac/1000 (5-10 acres)	35.5 - 0 = 35.5 acres	51.4 - 0 = 51.4 acres	69.3 - 0 = 69.3 acres
Community Parks	5.9 ac/1000 83.1 total acres	3.1 ac/1000 30-50 acres	5 ac/1000 +/- 30 acres	70.9 - 83.1 = (12.2 ac)	102.7 - 83.1 = 19.7 acres	138.6 - 83.1 = 55.5 acres (1 park)
District Parks	0 acre/1000	2.5 ac/1000 20- 100 acres	2.5 ac/1000 > 50 acres	35.5 - 0 = 35.5 acres	51.4 - 0 = 51.4 acres (1 park)	69.3 - 0 = 69.3 acres (1 park)
School Parks	2 schools (Harrisburg and Pitts School Road Elementary)	N/A Size requirement similar to neighborhood and community parks	Similar to neighborhood and community parks - *Establish resource with all existing and new schools	*	*	*

	A	B	C	E	F	G
Park and Facility Classification	Existing Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ Service Area Population) Ownership Town (C) School (S) YMCA (Y)	NRPA or NC Standards (Acres and facilities/ Population) and (size required)	Proposed Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ population) and (size required)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2010 (pop 14,188)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed - 2020 (pop 20,560)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2030 (pop 27,720)
Special Parks	Varies	*	*	*	*	*
Historic and Cultural Areas	Varies	*	*	*	*	*
Open Space	N/A 0 acres	*	2.5ac/1000 contiguous open space	35.5 - 0 = 35.5 acres	51.4 - 0 = 51.4 acres	69.3 - 0 = 69.3 acres
Biking, Hiking, and Paddle Trails (multi-use)	0 mile/1000 approx 1/2 mile	*	1 mi/1000 multi-purpose trails/bike lanes	14.2 - 0.5 = 13.7 miles	20.6 - 0.5 = 20.1 miles	27.7 - 0.5 = 27.2 miles
Community Pool	0/14,188 no facilities	1/20,000	1/20,000	0.7 - 0 = 0.7 outdoor pool	1.1 - 0 = 1.1 1 outdoor pool	1.4 - 0 = 1.4 1 outdoor pool
Aquatics Facility (indoor)	0/14,188 no facilities	1/20,000 50 meter	1/20,000 50 meter	YMCA 25 m facility is expected to be expanded in the next 10 yrs	YMCA 25 m facility is expected to be expanded in the next 10 yrs	1.4 - 0 = 1.4 aquatics facilities

	A	B	C	E	F	G
Park and Facility Classification	Existing Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ Service Area Population) Ownership Town (C) School (S) YMCA (Y)	NRPA or NC Standards (Acres and facilities/ Population) and (size required)	Proposed Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ population) and (size required)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2010 (pop 14,188)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed - 2020 (pop 20,560)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2030 (pop 27,720)
Community Center or Indoor Facilities/Gym	0/14,188 no facilities	1/25,000 community centers	1/20,000 community centers	0.7 - 0 = 0.7 community center	1.1-0 = 1.1 1 community center	1.4 - 0 = 1.4 1 community center
Senior Center	0/14,188 no facilities	*	1/25,000 indoor facility	.6 - 0 = 0.6 senior center	.8 - 0 = 0.8 senior center	1.1 - 0 = 1.1 senior center
Tennis Courts	1/4,729 3 Courts	1/2000 Outdoor	1/4,500 Outdoor	3.2 - 3 = .2 .2 Courts	4.6 - 3 = 1.6 1.6 Courts	6.2 - 3 = 3.2 3.2 Courts
Basketball courts (outdoor)	0/14,188 no facilities	1/500 outdoor	1/2500 outdoor	5.7 - 0 = 5.7 basketball courts	8.2 - 0 = 8.2 basketball courts	11 - 0 = 11 basketball courts
Baseball Fields (15-18 and adult)	1/ 3,722 Regulation diamond 90' (290-350' R)	1/ 12,000 Regulation diamond 90' (300-350' R)	1/3,500 Regulation diamond 90'	4.1 - 4 = .1 ballfields	5.9 - 4 = 1.9 ballfields	7.9 - 4 = 3.9 ballfields
Baseball Fields (Junior)	1/ 3,722 Regulation diamond 60' (200-280' R)	1/ 12,000 Regulation diamond 60' (200-250' R)	1/ 3,500 Regulation diamond 60'	4.1 - 4 = .1 ballfields	5.9 - 4 = 1.9 ballfields	7.9 - 4 = 3.9 ballfields

	A	B	C	E	F	G
Park and Facility Classification	Existing Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ Service Area Population) Ownership Town (C) School (S) YMCA (Y)	NRPA or NC Standards (Acres and facilities/ Population) and (size required)	Proposed Harrisburg Standards (Acres and facilities/ population) and (size required)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2010 (pop 14,188)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed - 2020 (pop 20,560)	Harrisburg Acreage or Quantities Needed 2030 (pop 27,720)
Baseball Fields (youth)	1/ 7,094 (< 200' R)	1/6000 (< 200' R)	1/5,000 (< 200' R)'	2.8 - 2 = .8 ballfields	4.1 - 2 = 2.1 ballfields	5.5 - 2 = 3.5 ballfields
Football Fields	1/7,094 160' x 360'	* 160' x 360'	1/6,000 160' x 360'	2.4 - 2 = .4 fields	3.4 - 2 = 1.4 fields	4.6 - 2 = 2.6 fields
Soccer Fields	0/14,188 no facilities	* 195' - 225' x 330' - 360'	1/3,500 195' - 225 x 360'	4.1 - 0 = 4.1 fields	5.9 - 0 = 5.9 fields	7.9 - 0 = 7.9 fields

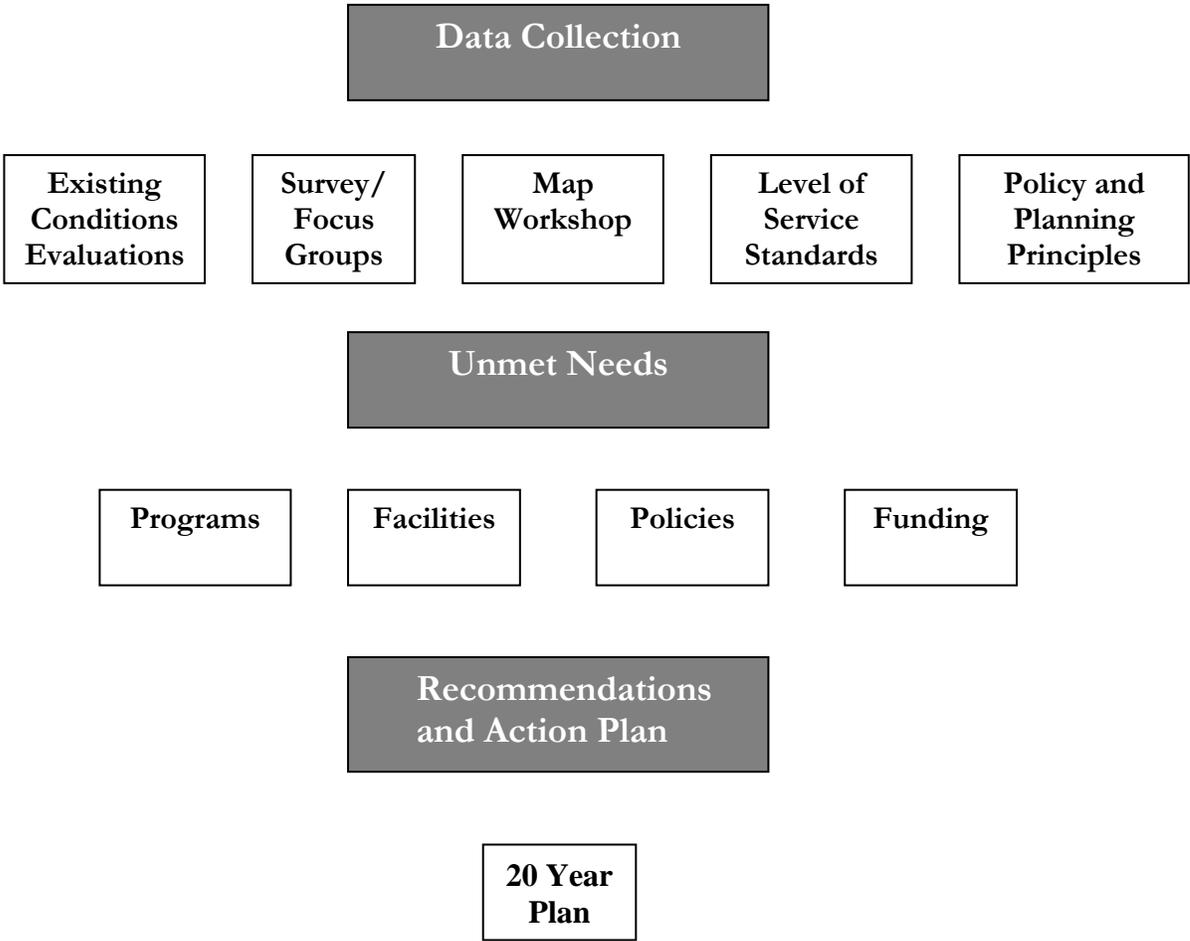
*indicates standards or acreage is unavailable.

1. Harrisburg's parks and recreational service area is based upon 2007 TAZ data.
2. Column "A" reflects facilities and Park acreage within the Harrisburg service area which extends beyond the Town's Corporate Limits.
3. All facility needs are based upon existing conditions as of the date of this standard. When using this tool existing facility conditions (ie: number of fields used, access to school and private facilities, number of participants, etc.) should be verified in order to accurately determine facility needs.
4. Shaded areas represent needed parks or facilities.

Section 9 Unmet Needs

NEEDS DETERMINATION

To determine the unmet recreation needs of the Town of Harrisburg, the community-wide survey, focus group meetings, map workshop, and inventory of existing conditions were used. Harrisburg recreation standards, presented in Section 9, are referenced as guidelines in determining unmet facility needs. The following diagram illustrates the process used in determining unmet needs:



UNMET NEEDS CLASSIFICATION

Unmet recreation needs for the Town of Harrisburg are based on the information gathered from the public participation process. Several tools have been used throughout this process to gain an understanding of the current status of the Town of Harrisburg’s Parks and Recreation programs and facilities. Each topic references the needs identified during each step of the master plan process.

PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY NEEDS

Existing Programs

The first area of unmet needs for programs and activities is within the existing Town programs. The table below charts the growth of some of these programs in which data is available in order to demonstrate the participation trends.

Table 10.1 – Program Participation

PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES	2009	2010
Spring Summer Fall Tennis (all ages)	NA	90
Yoga	NA	120
Spring Summer Bridge	NA	60
Spring Baseball (3-4 years T-Ball)	103	98
Spring Baseball (5-6 years T-Ball)	112	106
Spring Baseball (7-8 years)	119	108
Spring Baseball (9-10 years)	104	96
Spring Baseball (11-12 years)	76	77
Spring Baseball (13-15 years)	33	44
Spring Soccer (3-4 years)	122	103
Spring Soccer (5-6 years)	102	108
Spring Soccer (7-8 years)	87	123
Spring Soccer (9-10 years)	105	99
Spring Soccer (11-12 years)	69	86
Spring Soccer (13-15 years)	31	63
Spring Softball (7-8 years)	41	44
Spring Softball (9-10 years)	26	25
Spring Softball (11-12 years)	29	20
Spring Softball (13-15 years)	12	12
Fall Baseball (3-4 years T-Ball)	58	55
Fall Baseball (5-6 years T-Ball)	34	74
Fall Baseball (7-8 years)	63	63
Fall Baseball (9-10 years)	54	56
Fall Baseball (11-12 years)	46	41
Fall Baseball (13-15 years)	12	34
Cheerleading (Pop Warner)	41	17
Football (Pop Warner)	171	150

PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES	2009	2010
Fall Soccer (3-4 years)	NA	161
Fall Soccer (5-6 years)	133	188
Fall Soccer (7-8 years)	100	148
Fall Soccer (9-10 years)	104	112
Fall Soccer (11-12 years)	70	84
Fall Soccer (13-15 years)	49	85
Fall Softball (7-8 years)	21	41
Fall Softball (9-10 years)	13	21
Fall Softball (11-12 years)	12	10
Fall Softball (13-15 years)	NA	1
Winter Basketball (5-6 years)	0	0
Winter Basketball (7-8 years)	0	0
Winter Basketball (9-10 years)	0	0
Winter Basketball (11-12 years)	0	0
Winter Basketball (13-15 years)	0	0
Spring Coed Adult Softball	8 Teams	12 Teams
Spring Coed Adult Soccer	NA	4 Teams
Fall Coed Adult Softball	24 Teams	16 Teams
Fall Coed Adult Soccer	4 Teams	6 Teams
Winter Coed Men's Flag Football	24 Teams	NA

Within each program listed, growth has occurred at some level. For many of the Parks and Recreation Department's programs the maximum program participation has been reached due to lack of facilities and program instructors. Space for organized youth activities relies heavily on the availability of school park facilities and the availability of a supervisor from each school to be present during the activity.

Potential Programs and Activities

Based on the information gathered from the public participation process, many new program ideas and concepts have presented themselves as unmet needs. Two general categories of needs for programs and activities include supervised or instructed programs and self-directed activities. The unranked lists that follow are some of the activities that fit within the scope of services currently provided that are identified within the data as unmet needs:

Self-Directed Activities

- Bike and hiking trails
- Mountain Biking
- Swimming (indoor and outdoor)
- Canoeing

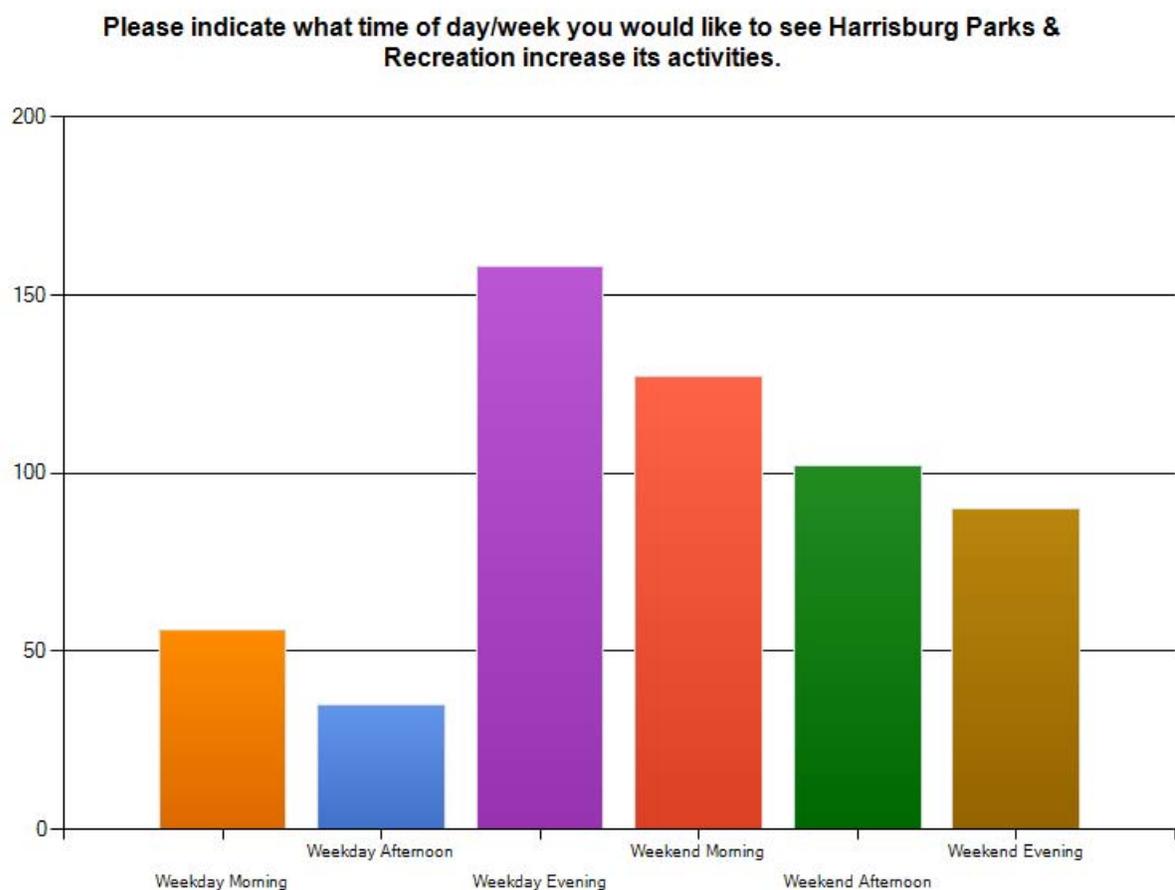
Supervised and Instructed Activities and Programs

- Organized sports for youth and adults (wide variety)
- Fitness/Aerobics
- Senior programs
- Instructional classes (gymnastics, quilting, crochet, sewing, arts and crafts)

- Programming for young children
- Programming for teenage children
- Arts/Drama/Multicultural programs

Program Constituency

- The survey suggested that programs and activities should be expanded. The following chart illustrates the survey result requesting the participant to indicate what time of day/week they would like to see Harrisburg Parks and Recreation increase its activities.



Service Providers

The Town-wide recreation program is in the early stages and it will take several years to fully implement a comprehensive recreation program. Town wide programming started in the budget year 2007-08. The Town Council appointed a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to assist in the development of the recreation program. The Town should explore opportunities to work with private program and activity providers through public/private partnerships to help provide recreational services to diverse user groups.

- Continue to work with Cabarrus County Parks and Recreation Department.

- Create public/private partnerships.
- Create joint ventures with community based recreation groups.

FACILITY NEEDS

The standards outlined in Section 8, the survey, the site inventory, and the map workshop all have contributed to this list of comprehensive unmet facility needs. Each facility type and recreation area is considered within this list as well as location deficiencies.

Facility Types and Recreation Areas

These standards have determined an appropriate level of service for parks and facilities based on estimated population data. The following needs lists provide the 20-year needs for each of the facility types and recreation areas.

Mini-Parks

There are no mini parks in Harrisburg, and there is no level of service established for this category of park in the Town. Mini parks occur depending upon opportunity and development. There is one identified opportunity for a mini-park in the Harrisburg service area at the intersection of Pembroke Road and Rocky River Road. This small parcel provides the Town with the opportunity to explore this classification with the construction of a pocket park.

Neighborhood Parks

Currently there are no neighborhood parks within the Harrisburg service area. A total of 69 acres is required to meet the Town recreation needs in the 20-year study period. This indicates that approximately 6-8 neighborhood parks need to be added to the Town's park system. The development timeline has divided the total need into equal development plans, so that within 20 years the unmet needs for neighborhood parks will be met.

- 1-10 years - 35 acres (3-4 parks)
- 10-20 years - 35 acres (3-4 parks)

Community Parks

Currently 83 acres of community parks exist within the Town. A total of 55 additional acres is required to meet the Town recreation needs in the 20-year study period. This indicates that approximately 1 or 2 additional community parks need to be added to the Town park system or the existing parks need to be enhanced with additional land and facilities. The development timeline has divided the total need into equal development plans, so that within 20 years the unmet needs for community parks will be met.

- 1-10 years - 25 acres (enhance existing parks)
- 10-20 years - +/- 30 acres (add one park)

District Parks

Currently there is not a district parks/sports complex within the Town's recreation service area. A total of 70 acres is required to meet the Town recreation needs in the 20-year study period. This indicates that one district park/sports complex needs to be added to the Town's park system. The development timeline has divided the total need into equal development plans, so that within 10 years the unmet needs for district parks/sports complexes will be met. It is the recommendation that Stallings Road Park be expanded to meet the classification of a District and become the central

location for sporting events in the Community.

- 1-10 years - 51 acres (acquire property for 1 park with facilities added over the next 10 years)
- 10-20 years - 70 acres (1 park)

School Parks

No specific standard has been given for school parks. This model of community recreation is an excellent way for the Town of Harrisburg to gain the optimum use of public owned facilities. The Town of Harrisburg currently relies on schools to provide space for recreational activities. The current relationship with the recreation department and the schools could be improved so that school facilities are available for organized recreation during non-school hours. As new schools are placed within the Town, the park and recreation system should be enhanced with school parks.

- 1-10 years - improve current agreement and policies
- 10-20 years - develop school parks at the proposed elementary school site

Indoor Facilities

Data gathered through the public participation process suggests a need for indoor facilities through a recreation center/complex. This type of facility creates opportunities for the many year round activities that occur indoors. Also these facilities contribute to the expansion of program and activity offerings. The following major facilities have been identified as unmet needs.

	1-10 years	10-20 years	Total
▪ Community Pool (outdoor)	1	0	1
▪ Aquatics Center (indoor)	0	1	1
▪ Community Centers/Gymnasium	1	0	1

Outdoor Park Components

The following outdoor facility needs have been identified as unmet needs. These are the total unmet needs after subtracting all existing or accessible facilities.

	1-10 years	10-20 years	Total
▪ Tennis Courts	2	1	3
▪ Basketball Courts	8	3	11
▪ Baseball Fields (adult > 300')	2	2	4
▪ Baseball Fields (youth 200-300')	2	2	4
▪ Baseball Fields (youth < 200')	2	2	4
▪ Football Fields	1	2	3
▪ Soccer Fields	6	2	8

Open Space

The open space recommendations are provided in order to give a well-rounded approach to the facility types within the array of recreational facilities for the Town. The total of 70 acres has been divided into equal developments, or acquisition, plans so that within 20 years the unmet needs for open space will have been met. The Town's current Land Use Plan encourages the Town and

Cabarrus County to work together to develop an open space ordinance that will preserve and protect open space as well as rivers and streams.

- 1-10 years - 35 acres
- 10-20 years - 35 acres

Trails

A total of 28 miles of trails is identified to meet the need for the 20-year study period. The total is divided equally into development plans in order to meet the unmet need. The public participation process indicated an overwhelming need for trails and sidewalks within the community. The system of trails will contribute to the Carolina Thread Trail and create links to areas outside of the community. Once completed the trail system will provide connectivity throughout the community to schools, neighborhoods, parks, and businesses.

- 1-10 years - 21 miles
- 10-20 years - 7 miles

POLICY NEEDS

Land Use Policies

As identified in Section 7, having in place the official policies and procedures for providing parks and recreation to all residents that would set forth the methods of receiving fees from the adequate facilities ordinance for recreation, acquiring land, and developing parks is of the utmost importance. All these policies should be developed and adopted within the immediate planning period. The following list identifies the primary unmet needs for land use policies within the Town:

- Adopt a set of facility definitions for incorporation into land use master plan and subdivision regulations.
- Incorporate recreation facilities into the adequate public facilities ordinance.
- Work with Cabarrus to develop an open space ordinance that will preserve and protect open space as well as rivers and streams.
- Develop written policies and procedures for the department to acquire lands for parks, recreation conservation, and historical-cultural purposes.
- Develop written land development policy and procedures for development of land and facilities within the financial framework of the department.
- Develop procedures for protection of park and recreation lands and facilities from encroachment.
- Develop written procedures for providing safeguards for the public interest when it becomes necessary to dispose of parks and recreation lands.
- Include the Parks and Recreation Department on the Technical Review Committee to assist in coordination of site plans and dedication of open space in accordance with the current policies.

Planning

New or renovated facilities are not developed overnight. Several key ideas may assist the recreation department, its advisory committee, and others in planning for these facilities.

- Work with the school system in the development of school parks for all new schools
- Improve working relationship with school system to use existing facilities
- Work with community-based recreation groups to provide the facilities and services

- Follow goals and objectives for planning and development of park and recreation facilities
- Work with the Town Planning Department to develop a greenway master plan that works in conjunction with the Land Use Plan

Parks and Recreation Administration

Although a great deal of what has been presented is the responsibility of the recreation department, we recommend that implementing these unmet needs be a focus for all Town staff. The action plan reveals several strategies for implementation of the unmet needs.

- Implement a marketing plan including an advertising campaign for recreation programs and services.

FUNDING NEEDS

The lists provided within this unmet needs section will certainly require expanded funding. This next series of unmet needs lists provides categories where funding will be required. Also, the final list provides several funding sources that are either not utilized or that may be expanded in order to accomplish the increases within each of the funding areas:

Operations

- Personnel expenditures to make increases in salary and to hire full-time, part time, and contracted employees
- Travel and training
- Equipment, materials, and supplies
- Facility operations

Capital Improvements

- Land purchase and development
- Project renovations
- Facility design
- Establish a capital reserve account for park development
- Establish a written policy saving surplus year-ending funds in a capital reserve contribution account (CRC) for future capital improvements and acquisition of park and recreation land.

Revenue Generating Resources

- Include Recreation Services into the Town's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance
- Create Annual Household Fee
- Develop public-private partnerships for park facilities
- Partner with North Carolina Community Foundation to establish an endowment fund for future park improvements and to lessen the burden on the tax base as improvements are needed over the next 30-40 years.
- Parks and Recreation bonds
- Facility development or renovation grants
- Program grants
- Participation fees
- Volunteerism
- Fundraising

- Increase Town funding from property tax

Section 10

Programs and Activities Expansion

The hallmark of quality recreation and park services can be found in the programs offered by the public sector. Programs, activities, and services are the means by which the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department delivers the benefits of leisure to individuals, special interest groups, specific communities, and the Town at large. **Positive programming experiences improve the quality of life for participants, residents, and nonresidents, as well as public, nonprofit, and private agencies, organizations, and businesses.** The types and variety of programming should depend on the desires, interests, and needs of the population to be served. Program development is influenced by historical, environmental, organizational, cultural, and social factors. The Town's ability to provide high quality programs depends on the availability of the following resources: physical, human, financial, technological, and natural.

The value of a program very often depends on the personal experience of the participant(s) involved; therefore, value is added to programs when they are efficiently and effectively delivered, appropriately designed, priced, and marketed, attractive, and convenient. The ultimate consumer is the ordinary citizen upon whom inadequate and inappropriate provision of recreation services can leave an indelible mark in terms of social problems and unfulfilled expectations. People participate in parks and recreation programs for a variety of reasons: empowerment, prevention, intervention, or rehabilitation of some human or social condition, but mostly for just plain fun. The reasons are influenced by age, gender, racial and ethnic groups, religions, economic levels, and political persuasions as they progress through different life stages, styles, and situations. Recreation program delivery is a social system created to meet human needs and has a dual responsibility of adapting to the demands (interests and desires) of the public and offering leadership in addressing public needs.

Programming is very time-specific in nature. For this reason, all of the program recommendations and related action steps should be achieved by the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department as soon as adequate resources can be secured. Quantitative and qualitative data relative to programming needs were identified and analyzed from the following information sources: a Town-wide citizen needs survey, a Town-wide recreation programs' inventory, two focus groups, a Town-wide map workshop, and various other departmental reports and documents. Analyses of these data sources focused on the variety of program types, formats and scheduling, access to constituents, coordination with other entities, and comprehensiveness of service.

The following provides recommendations for improvement of Park and Recreation programming and administrative and organizational issues which need to be addressed by the Town of Harrisburg and its Parks and Recreation Department in order to achieve program objectives.

Expand Program Types and Formats

As expressed through a variety of input mechanisms, the highest demand for parks and recreation programming is in the following areas:

- Trails— paths of all kinds that are interconnected throughout the Town — walking and biking trails were the most desired
- Active outdoor pursuits – hiking, jogging, biking and cycling
- Fitness/Aerobics/Exercise – weight lifting, wellness classes, and circuit training
- Swimming/splash pad (instructional, team-related, recreation) — outdoor and indoor
- Instructional classes — wide variety desired
- Arts/Drama/Multicultural/Educational
- Expanded variety of organized sports for youth and adults — (youth soccer, baseball and swimming, - very high demand)
- Expanded locations for after school and summer camps for youth
- Structured and unstructured programs for adults

Broaden Target Markets Reached by Offering Creative Programs at Desired Times and Places

Simply providing the above stated recommended programs will not increase the usage or satisfaction of participants. **Offering programs at desired times are essential to satisfying public demand.** Data sources indicate a very high demand for a variety of program offerings to children and youth during after school hours, during the evening hours, and on the weekends for all age groups, except young children and seniors, who prefer leisure opportunities during the weekdays.

All data sources indicated an **overwhelming demand for more diversified programming** that does not duplicate what is provided in the private sector. There was a desire to see an **increased use of current and future school sites** for public recreation during non-school hours.

Expand Communications/Publicity to Increase Visibility of the Department

Survey data suggests that the department should **further develop its use of the varied methods for communicating** its services to the public. Most of the survey responses indicated that people generally find out about the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department programs through the Town website or through flyers brought home by their children. This means that the other sources of communication - newspaper, cable, and community information boards - are not being efficiently utilized. Members of the community who do not utilize a computer or do not have children in school have limited exposure to the Parks and Recreation Department's programming.

We recommend the department develop a creative, easily recognizable logo that when seen will instantly connect it with Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department and will identify Town-sponsored programs when they take place. We also recommend the Town design and construct prominent monument and directional signs to identify parks and recreation facilities and to direct the public to these venues.

Another way to increase the visibility and recognition of the important role of Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department is for the department to **seek out more partnership opportunities** with nonprofit and private organizations and businesses within the Town, region, and state to positively affect comprehensive public service functions. The department should seek to develop partnerships with the school system to increase community-based programming. Special attention

needs to be given towards the development of partnerships between the department and commercial businesses to provide increased visibility to the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department.

Issues That Need To Be Addressed To Accomplish Program Objectives

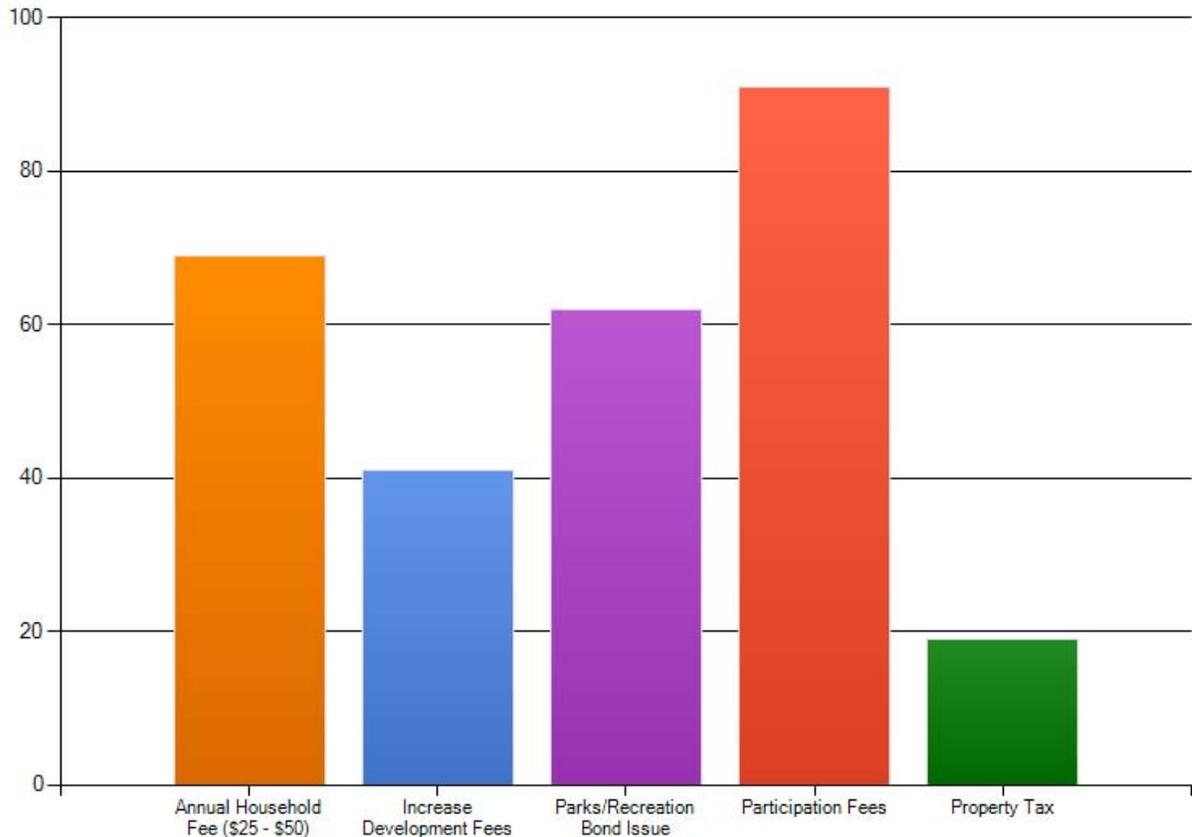
In order to accomplish the recommendations in the previous section, the following issues need to be addressed:

Staffing — As variety and frequency of programming increases, the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department will have to assure that it has an adequate number of trained staff. This relates to fulltime, part-time, seasonal, and volunteer staff. Adequate administrative support staff must be provided in order to develop and maintain quality programs. (Priorities - Athletic Program Director, Athletic Supervisor, Park Maintenance Assistant, Senior/Culture Program Coordinator)

Facilities and Natural Resources — In order to meet the current and future demands for programs, the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department will need to acquire or build facilities where such programs will occur. Related to these programming needs is the need for adequate storage, parking, and administrative office spaces, as well as the need for equipment and supplies.

Financial — The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department has very few of its own facilities and natural resource areas, so the greatest challenge will be obtaining the financial resources to acquire the necessary facilities and natural resource areas. Increased partnerships and sponsorships will alleviate some of the financial burden in providing the increased demand for Town-operated parks and recreation programs. Aggressive grant-seeking efforts are required. There are many Federal, State, and foundation grant sources available for the promotion and provision of public parks and recreation services, but successful attempts to access these resources require timely submission of well-prepared grant applications or proposals. The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department needs to work closely with a grant writer on Town staff or a consultant. Public input has indicated the willingness of respondents to pay for quality services through participant fees or public bond issues.

How should Harrisburg finance new recreation facilities?



Partnerships and Sponsorships — We recommend that the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department identify and develop formal relationships with various Town organizations and businesses in order to meet the current demand for increased levels and variety of programs until the necessary facilities and natural resource areas can be acquired by the Town. These would include memorandums of agreement for use of facilities within the school system will enhance the opportunities to expand and diversify programs.

Administration and Policies — We recommend that the Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department continue to improve upon its organization of operational processes and its customer service relations with the public. Issues such as scheduling of practices and games, registration, game-day operations, screening process for placement of participants on teams, and responding to complaints need to be dealt with consistently throughout the program offerings.

Section 11 Capital Improvement Planning

Harrisburg Park (Community Park)



Recommended Action

- Explore opportunities to acquire property to the west of the park and south of the railroad tracks to construct a community center, outdoor pool, and splash pad on the existing parcel and baseball and multi-purpose fields on adjacent property to effectively transform Harrisburg Park to meet the classification of a District Park.
- Create grade separated connection over/under railroad for connectivity to the additional parcel.
- Construct universal accessible trail between existing fields and the Farmers' Market.
- Explore opportunities to acquire adjacent property to the east and temporarily utilize existing structures as classrooms and meeting rooms.
- Renovate existing fields with synthetic surface for multi-purpose use and enhance playability and safety.
- Add parking to accommodate expanded facilities and programs.
- Provide an area for Community Garden contiguous to the Farmers' Market.
- Add a Dog Park.

Capital Improvements (\$3,700,000)

Recommended action includes investigation to purchase adjacent parcels to add facilities and programs and renovate/expand existing facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Synthetic surface ex multi-use fields	Renovation	0	\$ 1,300,000
Baseball and multi-use fields (2/2)	New	1,200,000	\$ 1,000,000
Multi-use trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 100,000
Dog Park	New	0	\$ 50,000
Community Garden	New	0	\$ 50,000

The master plan recommends the acquisition of an additional 20 to 35 acres to meet the classification of a District Park and satisfy the unmet needs for facilities and programs called for in the comprehensive master plan.

Stallings Road Park (Conversion to a District Park Classification)



Recommended Action

- Create shade throughout the park with vegetation and structures.
- Resolve drainage problems around ball fields.
- Increase parking with 50 additional spaces for existing facilities.
- Create permanent pedestrian connection to Harrisburg Elementary Fields.
- Acquire adjacent property to construct community center, outdoor pool, splash pad, expand athletic fields and add programs such as disc golf, remote control airplanes, splash pad, walking trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and archery range to make this a park not a sports complex.
- Expand athletic fields for football, soccer, baseball, softball, tee ball and use synthetic surface where possible.

Capital Improvements (\$13,875,000)

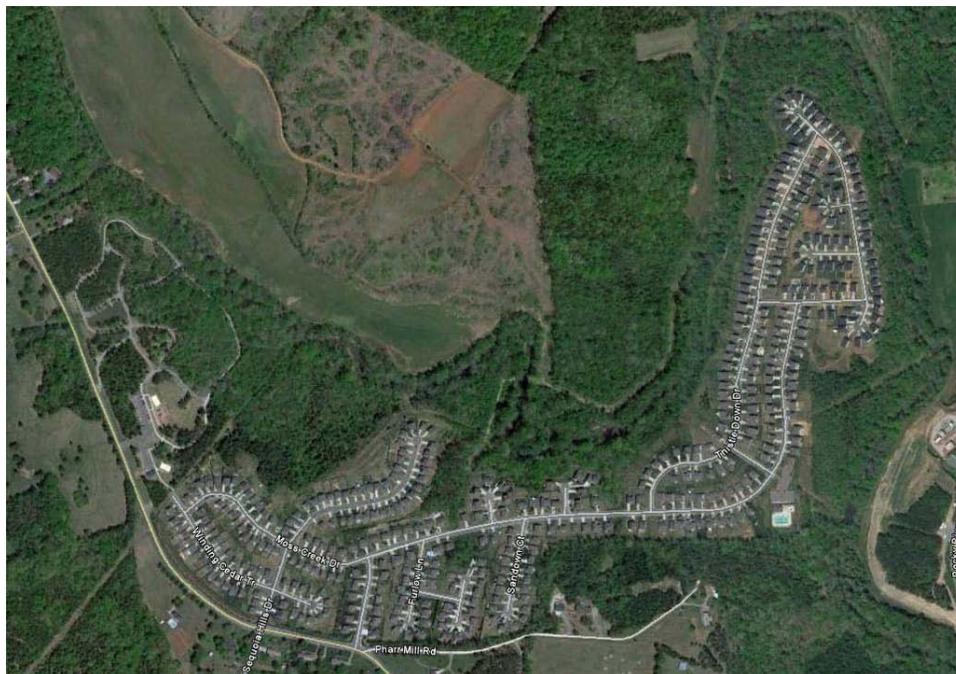
Recommended action includes investigation to purchase adjacent parcels to add facilities and programs and renovate/expand existing facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Create shade with structures and trees	Renovation	0	\$ 50,000
Community center/outdoor pool	New	\$ 500,000	\$ 7,000,000
Baseball and multi-use fields (4/4)	New	1,000,000	\$ 3,000,000
Add property for expanded programs	New	1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Resolve drainage problems ballfields	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Additional Parking Spaces (50)	New	0	\$ 125,000

Multi-use trail construction (.5 mile) New 0 \$ 100,000

The master plan recommends the acquisition of approximately 20 acres to meet the classification of a Community Park and satisfy the unmet needs for facilities and programs called for in the comprehensive master plan.

Pharr Mill Road Park (Community Park)



Recommended Action

- Resolve drainage problems
- Fishing tournament program
- Acquire additional property along stream corridor north of Canterfield Estates to create greenway
- Add programs to include a disc golf course, horseshoe pits, etc.
- Create shade for playground
- Add a large shelter near playground
- Provide a canoe access to Rocky River

Capital Improvements (\$485,000)

Recommended action includes investigation to purchase adjacent parcels to add facilities and programs and renovate/expand existing facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Create shade with structures and trees	Renovation	0	\$ 50,000
Resolve drainage problems	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Add programs - disc golf/horseshoes	New	0	\$ 35,000
Canoe access to Rocky River	New	0	\$ 50,000
Multi-use trail construction (2.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 250,000

The master plan recognizes that this park will be given to the Town of Harrisburg by Cabarrus County Parks and Recreation as well as the right to construct a multi-use trail along the stream buffer behind Canterfield Estates neighborhood. This trail will eventually become a part of the Carolina Thread Trail.

New Community Park (Possible School Park)



Recommended Action

- Create a new community park in the southern portion of the recreation service area. Specific site is not determined. General location would be along Hickory Ridge Road south of McKee Creek and Rocky River Road. This is in the same location as a possible new elementary school. Plans need to be investigated to create a School Park in conjunction with a new elementary school. Land acquisition of approximately 30 acres to meet the classification of a Community Park and satisfy the unmet needs for facilities and programs called for in the comprehensive master plan.

Capital Improvements (\$5,000,000)

Recommended action to construct a community park in the southern portion of the Harrisburg Park and Recreation service area.

<u>Proposed Improvement</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Land Cost</u>	<u>Improvement Cost</u>
Community Park	New	1,500,000	\$ 3,500,000

New Neighborhood Parks



Recommended Action

Create 6 new neighborhood parks throughout the recreation service area. The program includes picnic shelters, restrooms, grills, trash receptacles, playground, hard surface court, and multi-purpose open play area.

- Three sites are recognized in the master plan. Pharr Mill Historic site, a tract of land spun off from the proposed Epic development, and a 25 acre parcel along the stream in the Stafford Road area.
- Land acquisition of approximately 70 acres to meet the classification of a Neighborhood Park and satisfy the unmet needs for facilities and programs called for in the comprehensive master plan.

Capital Improvements (\$9,000,000)

Recommended action to construct a community park in the southern portion of the Harrisburg Park and Recreation service area.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Neighborhood Park (each park)	New	500,000	\$ 1,000,000

Pharr Mill Historic Site (Neighborhood Park)



Recommended Action

- Add 10 parking spaces
- Construct interpretive kiosk
- Preserve site
- Create interpretive trail around structure and Rocky River
- Establish a neighborhood park

Capital Improvements (\$370,000)

Recommended action includes preservation of the historic site and interpretation of the historical significance.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Add parking spaces	New	0	\$ 35,000
General site work for preservation	New	0	\$ 250,000
Interpretive Kiosk	New	0	\$ 35,000
Canoe access to Rocky River	New	0	\$ 25,000
Interpretive trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 50,000

The master plan recognizes a unique opportunity within the community to preserve a part of the local heritage. The location provides excellent opportunities to connect this site with Pharr Mill Road Park via a paddle trail down the Rocky River. Planning for this Special Use Park must be closely coordinated with the Harrisburg Historical Society.

Harrisburg Elementary Baseball (School Park)



Recommended Action

- Resolve drainage issues on Harrisburg Elementary ball fields
- Negotiate maintenance of Harrisburg Elementary ball fields to be responsibility of Town of Harrisburg
- Add tee ball fields behind Harrisburg Elementary

Capital Improvements (\$350,000)

Recommended action involves making improvements to the existing facility to include drainage and playability of the baseballs as well as policy improvements with the school to benefit both parties. No improvements will take place until a contractual agreement has been reached with the school and Cabarrus County School Board for the Town to use the facilities.

<u>Proposed Improvement</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Land Cost</u>	<u>Improvement Cost</u>
Resolve drainage issues	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Field and facility improvements	Renovation	0	\$ 250,000

Pitts School Road Elementary School (School Park)



Recommended Action

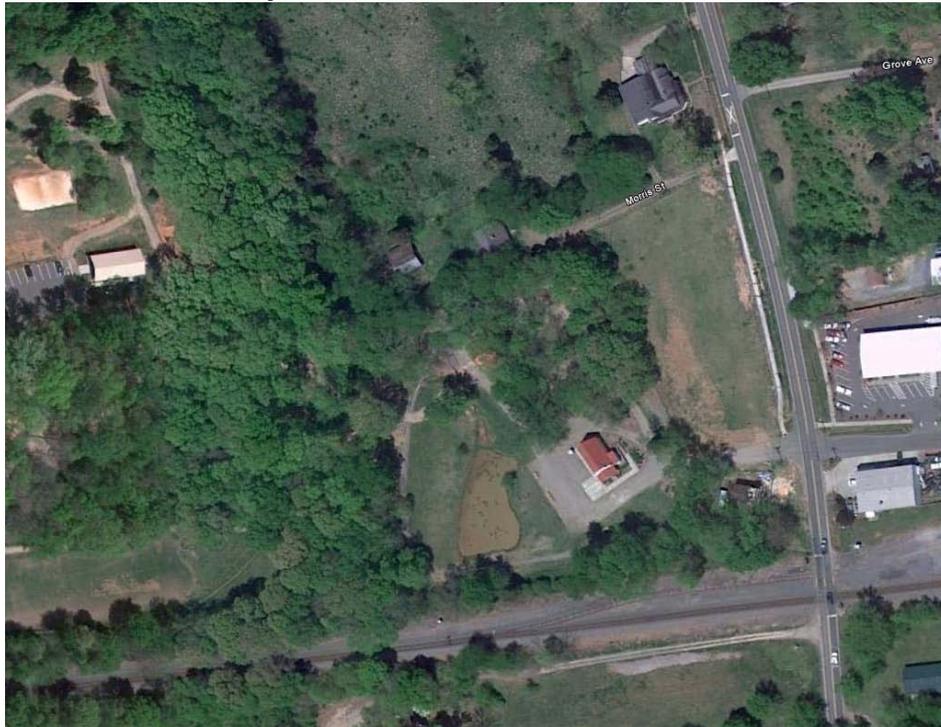
- Use the facilities present at the school
- Temporary facility until permanent replacement is constructed in the Park and Recreation system
- Most popular wood floor gym

Capital Improvements (\$350,000)

Recommended action involves making improvements to the existing facility to include drainage and playability of the baseballs as well as policy improvements with the school to benefit both parties. No improvements will take place until a contractual agreement has been reached with the school and Cabarrus County School Board for the Town to use the facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Resolve drainage issues	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Field and facility improvements	Renovation	0	\$ 250,000

Farmers’ Market (Special Use Park)



Recommended Action

- Connect to Harrisburg Park
- Sidewalk or bike lane connection from Robinson Church Road
- Acquire adjacent properties and utilize structures for recreation programming until permanent structures can be created
- Permanent structure for market

Capital Improvements (\$910,000)

Recommended action creating permanent structure for the market and improving ADA compliance as well as health and safety issues regarding pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns. Investigate acquisition of three adjacent parcels.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Permanent structure for market	New	0	\$ 250,000
Acquire adjacent property (3 parcels)	New	\$ 600,000	\$ 0
Sidewalk bike lane connection	New	0	\$ 10,000
Trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 50,000

The master plan acknowledges the level of interest this special use park has within Harrisburg Park and the community. This preserved historical site offers unique programming with the live steamers exhibit as well as the general store historic structure. The Farmers’ Market could be enhanced with a permanent structure including restrooms. There is a potential to create a community garden in the area to create additional interest and participation in the Market.

Biking, Hiking and Paddle Trails



Recommended Action

- Greenways along existing streams and utility easements
 - Fuda Creek adjacent to Hickory Ridge High School and Middle School
 - McKee Creek south of Rocky River Road
 - Mallard Creek
 - Rocky River Corridor
- Update in the Harrisburg Land Use Plan and Subdivision Regulations
- Work with NCDOT for bike lane improvements of the following roadways
 - Stallings Road Sidewalk Improvements
 - Hickory Ridge Road Bike Lane
 - Robinson Church Road Bike Lane
 - Roberta Church Road Bike Lane
 - Downtown Pedestrian Way

Capital Improvements (\$3,400,000)

Recommended action to acquire property and easements as necessary to construct a unified trail system throughout the service area. The trail and greenway plan is to connect all parks and schools through a network of trails that utilize stream buffers, utility easements and NCDOT right of ways.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Approximately 28 miles	New	0	\$ 2,800,000
Acquire easements	New	\$ 600,000	0

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGETING

The Budget, which is presented below, was developed in accordance with the preceding Capital Improvement Planning and Programming section of the plan.

The total 20 year budget amounts to \$37,440,000. Land acquisition accounts for \$8,900,000 and \$28,040,000 is designated for equipment and facilities improvements. All amounts are in 2010 dollars.

Twenty Year Capital Budget Synopsis

Overall Allocations

Classification	Land Acquisition	Improvements
District	2,500,000	11,375,000
Community Park	2,700,000	6,485,000
Neighborhood (6)	3,000,000	6,000,000
School Parks	0	700,000
Special Use Parks	600,000	680,000
Biking and Hiking Trails	600,000	2,800,000
Total	\$9,400,000	\$28,040,000

PARK PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The sites have been located to best serve the entire recreation service area. Regardless of the sites identified in the plan, the Town should be prepared to adjust and adapt locations based on market conditions and availability of land. In order to be cost efficient the Department must be able to act quickly to secure land as soon as it becomes available. This may require that parks or facilities be placed in different locations than originally proposed. The Department will then have to analyze the overall suitability of the new site or facility to determine if its development capabilities or use can overcome its location.
- Additionally, the Department must also analyze how a new facility will affect the need for existing facilities. The worst case scenario is for the Department to be forced to close, sell, or otherwise dispose of existing sites in order to provide better service and facilities. Development of a land trust would help these efforts.
- Regardless of the following suggested improvements, site master plan updates should be prepared for any major park improvement or renovation and the public should be involved with the development process.
- Community parks will most likely house a majority of the active facilities such as sports fields and courts until the Harrisburg Park has been converted into a District Park. The community parks will allow for multi-purpose activities. A District Park is typically between 50 and 100 acres to provide for multi-purpose use that enables more diverse programming.

ACQUISITION ALTERNATIVES

Usually when the word "acquisition" is used in a conversation, the first thought that comes to mind is the outright purchase of property. But purchasing is not the only way to obtain real estate. There are a number of ways to "acquire" sites. These ways are discussed in the following so that an understanding can be had of what the several alternatives are for implementing the acquisition recommendations for New Facilities, Advance Acquisition, and Site Development Plans.

Outright Purchase: Some potential sites and additions to existing parks will have to be acquired through real estate transaction, requiring the purchase of property for cash. This is where the fee simple deed to the land is transferred to the buyer.

Long and Short Term Options: For a given sum of money, an option for the right to purchase a site at a later date can be obtained for a period of one or a number of years. This transaction can be renewed from time to time. Normally the amount of money used to obtain the option is applied to the price of the land. But if the option to buy is not exercised, all or part of the option money can be lost. Options can be used to reserve or "bank" land that appears to be under threat of loss to another use until the Town is ready to purchase.

Deed Transfer: Property can be deeded over to the department either from other agencies, departments, or from private entities with no monetary transaction.

Advance Acquisition: There are several ideal parcels in the Town of Harrisburg adjacent to existing parks. These properties are prime prospects for other types of urban development such as housing and shopping centers. Potential park sites can be purchased or options can be taken out on them for future purchase. Advance acquisition is a very effective tool for reserving land for future parks.

Land Banking: A tool that has not been applied very often in North Carolina is land banking. This is a process which involves the purchase of very large tracts of land at reasonable prices which may or may not be used eventually for parks and recreation. For instance, if 500 acres of rural land were acquired in a general path of urban growth, and it was determined that only 50 -100 acres were needed to meet the leisure time needs in that vicinity, part or all of the tract might be traded, sold, leased, or used by the Town for other purposes. The point of land banking is comparable to that of advance acquisition in that the land is placed on reserve for a later time when it might be needed.

Joint Use Agreements: Sometimes land is held by others which would be of value to the parks and recreation system but is also needed on a continuing basis by the owner. An example would be a school that has several facilities types such as ball fields, basketball and tennis courts, and a gymnasium.

During the school year, these types of facilities are used during school hours and sometimes after school hours, but there are many other times that they could be made available for use by the general population. For certain considerations, such as maintenance, improvements, and fees, the school's recreational facilities can be made available for use by the department. This probably is the most economical means to provide sports and athletic facilities for the entire population because the property and equipment are already owned by the public.

Leasing: Some lands can be leased for nominal fees for long periods of time. There are examples where an land owner will make property available to the Parks and Recreation Department for \$1 per year for 30 years or on other terms. All leases might not be so reasonable, but leasing is a good method for providing land and facilities for much less than what a purchase price might be.

Subdivision Dedication: An excellent way to acquire land or cash in lieu of property is through provisions placed in subdivision regulations. Some communities and counties require that ten percent of all new subdivisions be set aside for park purposes by the developer or, in lieu of dedication, that payment be made to the local government to acquire land for park and recreation purposes elsewhere. The subdivision regulations must be written to insure that the department does not end up with unusable land. If not properly handled, the Town could be the inheritor of a large amount of small, useless parcels.

Density Transfer: Particularly along proposed stream buffers, density transfer could prove to be a very welcome method for developers to receive some very positive benefits. Where land for development along waterways is required to meet maximum density standards (e.g., .5 units per acre), and portions of it are low lying and occasionally flooded, it is "unbuildable" while the density requirement remains. Through density transfer, the developer can be given special dispensations to build in a more compact pattern and at the same time to use the "unbuildable" land as credit to meet his density requirements. His responsibility would be to provide easements and use rights for his land lying in the stream buffer. This way the department avoids the expense of purchase or lease. Both parties benefit.

Easements: Rights to use of land can be given through easements from developers or property owners. This entails recordation on subdivision plats, in deeds, and in legal description. Acquiring easements after development takes place often is more difficult, but it can be accomplished for compensation and other considerations.

Sponsorship: A popular method of acquisition and financial support is through sponsorship. Some recreational facilities may be prime prospects for sponsorship by civic clubs, garden clubs, and other organizations. The sponsoring associations may wish to have the facility named after them and the park may become their foremost club project.

Parkland Trust: A Parkland Trust or Friends of the Parks organization for the Town would operate as a non-profit corporation whose purpose would be to acquire properties and then deed them over to the department for operation. The trust would seek out unique properties which would be of potential value to the system. The organization could purchase, improve, and manage lands and parlay them into valuable assets for donation to the parks and recreation department. "Friends of the Park", as an IRS 501(c) (3) Corporation, could also finance the purchase of equipment and facilities and even finance special position in the department.

Outright Gifts and Donations: A method that can prove to be quite successful for the acquiring of property is to seek out property owners who are willing to bequeath or donate land to the department, either for tax purposes or other considerations such as the naming of parks or memorials. Real estate management in the department is a must if this approach becomes popular so that unusable or nontransferable property is not accumulated. A "Gifts Catalogue" now being prepared in the department could list properties, facilities, and equipment for which there is a need.

MASTER PLAN IMPACT ON THE OPERATING BUDGET

Industry standards indicate that a rule of thumb for estimating maintenance budget is to allocate \$15,000 increase in the maintenance budget for every \$100,000 invested in facilities. The following table indicates the impact on operating budget the proposed facilities will create.

Classification	Proposed Improvements	Impact on Operating Budget*
District	11,375,000	1,706,250
Community Park	6,485,000	972,750
Neighborhood (6)	6,000,000	900,000
School Parks	700,000	105,000
Special Use Parks	680,000	102,000
Biking and Hiking	2,800,000	420,000
Total	\$28,040,000	\$4,206,000

* Impact on operating budget includes maintenance, equipment, and staffing.

Section 12

Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

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

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

Implementing the Master Plan will result in meeting the future needs for parks and recreation services, as well as preserving open space in Town of Harrisburg. The Town will need to continue to establish annual budgets for the department based on projected capital improvement costs, staffing needs, and operations and maintenance costs. The action plan is designed to give Town of Harrisburg a realistic approach to finance the proposals and recommendations of the Master Plan. Additionally, as the Town of Harrisburg Planning department develops strategies for land use issues this plan can be used as a guide to identify needs for recreation land.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The capital improvement program for the acquisition, renovation, and development of parks for the 20-year planning period was prepared with input from Town staff and the master plan steering committee. All of the proposed costs are shown in 2010-dollar values. The capital improvement costs include funds for land acquisition, site preparation, site utilities, access, and parking along with renovation and significant maintenance improvements.

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

▪ Renovation/Upgrade Program	\$ 2,300,000
▪ Land Acquisition Program	\$ 9,400,000
▪ New Development Program	\$25,740,000
Total Capital Improvement Cost	\$37,440,000

This total figure equates to spending approximately an average of \$1,847,000 annually through the year 2030.

PROPOSED OPERATIONS BUDGET

The proposed operations budget includes cost for staff, operations, and general maintenance requirements similar to those that are currently being performed by the department. The Fourth of July Festival is approximately \$100,000 of the current year's budget. Operation budgets from the past four fiscal years (FY) of the department were studied in making the forecast for the planning period. The overall historical budgets are as follows:

Year	Total Operating Budget
FY 07/08	\$ 336,331 (RRS)
FY 08/09	\$ 473,337 (09 audit)
FY 09/10	\$ 618,000
FY 10/11	\$ 709,066

There has been a steady increase in the total operating budget for the Parks and Recreation Department over the past four years. This is indicative of the importance the Town recognizes for park and recreation services. It is anticipated that the operating budget will continue to grow as facilities and programs are added to the recreation offerings of the Town. A comparison of municipalities in North Carolina that have service areas between 25,000 and 30,000 population indicate that the per capita expenditure of the operating budget for parks and recreation is between \$85 and 90. This indicates that the Town should anticipate an operations budget of nearly \$2.5 million in 2030 without accounting for inflation.

STAFF NEEDS

In order to expand and balance the current level of recreation service provided to the 14,188 residents of the Town of Harrisburg recreation service area. Additional staff will allow the department to provide recreation services to meet the growing demand throughout the community.

Staffing will provide the basis for high-quality service and help to develop an effective organization. Competent professional leadership must be employed to develop and operate programs and services within the department's goals and objectives. The master plan identified current recreation programming and needed additional recreation services in the 20-year planning period. In order to meet the service delivery needs of all citizens in Town of Harrisburg the department will need additional full-time staff positions to operate and coordinate programs.

The following staffing positions are priority recommendation to the existing department structure:

- 1 – Athletic Program Director
- 1 – Athletic Supervisor
- 1 – Park Maintenance Assistant
- 1 – Senior/Culture Programming Superintendent

Athletic Program Director

Assist in the management of Town wide athletic programs and activities. Assist in planning the short-

term plans and day-to-day activities dealing with athletic issues and concerns. The athletic program coordinator will be responsible for providing an expanding and flexible program of recreation activities for all segments, groups, ages, and interest levels in the community. Assist the athletic superintendent in developing long range plans for athletic programs for youth and adults.

Park Maintenance Assistance

Assist in the maintenance of all parks and recreation facilities in their assigned geographic park district. Assist in planning the short-term plans and day-to-day maintenance activities in their assigned recreation area. Assist the facility and maintenance superintendent in developing long range plans for the provision of recreation facilities and open space for the leisure time enjoyment of the public. Recommend the acquisition and direct the development and maintenance of park and playground areas and structures and facilities to best serve the broad interests of the community.

Senior /Culture Programming Superintendent

The superintendent will perform a variety of administrative and professional duties in the management of senior citizens services and cultural programs. Responsible for providing an expanding and flexible program of recreation activities for all senior citizen segments, groups, ages, and interest levels in the community. The senior culture programming superintendent develops long range plans for the provision of senior services for the leisure time enjoyment of the public; provides direction to all senior programs. Solicits advisory assistance of and provides administrative support to local community groups and organizations. Allocates and supervises the work of part-time seasonal employees; provides programs of training for staff subordinates. The superintendent will also maintain close relationships with other public agencies.

PRICING RECOMMENDATIONS

The department needs to update the pricing policies to accurately reflect the value of the services provided to the residents of the Town. The pricing policy should reflect three levels of pricing for services. Recreation by its nature is a consumptive service. It is within this mind set that services are broken down into a public service, a merit service, and a private benefit service. A public service is a service that has high public benefit (equal benefit to everyone) and should be free and supported by taxes. An example of this is a playground in a park. A merit service provides some public service and some private benefit not afforded to other users of the Town. An example of this type of service is reserving a shelter in a park for a person's exclusive use or a program that provides a product that a user gets to keep like a T-shirt. A private service is where the person receiving the service benefits totally and the general taxpayer benefits are not existent. Therefore, the user should pay the total cost of providing the service. An example of this is private lessons for a program service.

The Town of Harrisburg provides mainly public and merit type services. The Town needs to establish an activity based costing model to track the true cost of all program services. This will help make informed decisions on whether some costs for a program should be passed onto the user because of the merit or private benefits the user receives. Additionally, the department can make an informed decision to subsidize some program costs as part of policy within a department revenue plan. Across the United States, communities have different levels of tax subsidy they will support based on the

value and importance they place on recreation services.

The recommendations for pricing for Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation services are the following:

- Over the next two years, establish a pricing program that evaluates direct and indirect cost for each aspect of program and park services.
- Once these costs have been identified, evaluate the merit or private benefit that is being provided and determine at what level of public subsidy support the Town wants to contribute for each activity reviewed.
- The Town then can determine if they would like to find a sponsor or grant to support the program cost or to bring down the cost to a minimum level. If so, establish a strategy to seek out those opportunities through a formal request process.
- Depending on whether the Town seeks to find outside private or public sources to fund a portion of the program, they will need to communicate to the users what percentage of monies the Town is contributing to the experience and what level the outside sources are contributing. From this strategy the department over time can make appropriate adjustments according to willingness to pay and market elasticity in the Town of Harrisburg area.
- All new program services provided in the future should be priced at appropriate levels of public subsidy that is in tune with the Town's value system for the program provided. Pricing elasticity.

EARNED INCOME OPPORTUNITIES

In developing earned income opportunities the Town should consider these earned income opportunities.

- Sponsorships from private businesses operating in the Town of Harrisburg area. Sponsorship opportunities within the department will need to be coordinated to not confuse sponsors by sending two or three request to the same business. Sponsorships typically come in the form of product sponsors, event sponsors, program sponsors, cause-related sponsors, and in-kind sponsors.
- Based on the needs of the department, grants from local foundations, State and Federal agencies, or individuals are typically created by staff. Most grants take time to prepare and require coordination effort with other agencies or departments from within the Town to create a quality submittal. Grants also require extensive tracking of expenditures and outcomes for attaining future funding.
- Partnerships are the new area of earned income that many municipalities are seeking to share cost in providing services to the community. Many times the partners are two or more government agencies. This earned income requires both agencies to have a common vision, values, and goals for the partnership to be successful. Typically, partnerships follow some of these general trends:
 - Church partnership in providing neighborhood park or recreation services.
 - Trail sponsors that adopt sections of trails for maintenance and cleanup.
 - Adopt-a-park partners that help maintain parklands. These sponsors are typically in the form of neighborhood associations and businesses that are next to parks.
 - School partnerships whereby both partners invest in the development of facilities and programs based on shared use of facilities and staff.

- Special Event partners that assist with the development of communitywide events.
- Program partners who assist each other in providing services to the community. These could be between a YMCA or schools, and the Town.
- Park foundation development is another earned income opportunity that municipalities have embraced to achieve added dollars to the Town's budget. Park foundations help the Town seek out individuals who would like to invest in the Town by providing donations of land, cash, or in-kind related services. These donations can add value to the Town of Harrisburg.
- Advertising and licensing in programs, facilities, and events the Town provides. This earned income allows Harrisburg to leverage highly exposed advertising space where businesses will pay a premium for the right to advertise.
- Volunteer development programs are a highly valued earned income opportunity the Town can create through effective recruitment. Volunteers can create advocacy and bring down the cost of programs and services. Volunteers will be more important as the department grows and offers more activities and facilities like a recreation center.
- Privatization of the development of facilities or services is an earned income opportunity that is used in most municipalities when they are unable to control the cost of labor and are unable to find the needed capital to develop a recreation facility or a concession operation. This gives the Town a management tool to create an asset or improve a service without tapping the Town's resources. Examples of the type of facilities typically privatized include golf courses, marinas, camping/RV facilities, boat rentals, and other forms of concessions.
- Marketing strategies are important components for development of earned income opportunities. The department needs to consider assessing each program participant \$1 for development of a marketing budget to provide promotional services and research services for the department. This will provide an opportunity for the Town to fill more classes and facilities and to bring more awareness of the activities provided by the department. This will be more important to the department with the development of a Community Center.

KEY FUNDING/REVENUE SOURCES

The Town of Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Department has a short history of good public support for funding of parks, programs and services. Existing funding sources have not been able to keep up with the needs of the community and the management of park assets. The proposed additional facilities and expanded operations will only add to the need for additional dollars from a variety of sources. The Town needs to create a combination of new revenue sources to meet the future needs of Town of Harrisburg residents. The following funding sources are provided to help Town of Harrisburg evaluate all their options.

Revenue Plan

Upon adoption of the comprehensive master plan for recreation, the Town needs to continue with establishing a revenue plan. A revenue plan incorporates all available funding resources in a community, prioritizes them, and puts each option into a funding strategy. In a revenue plan the following funding alternatives are evaluated for its appropriate use in funding capital improvements and programs.

General Tax Revenues

General tax revenues traditionally provide the principle sources of funds for general operations and maintenance of a municipal recreation and parks system. Recreation as a public service is scheduled along with health, public safety, schools, etc. in regular budgets established by the governing body. Assessed valuation of real and personal property provides the framework for this major portion of the tax base for the Town. Town of Harrisburg proposed budget for (FY10/11) has a property tax valuation of \$1.57 billion, which would generate approximately \$4.81 million in tax revenues based on a tax rate of .20/\$100 valuation and a collection rate of 96%. Based on the proposed FY10/11 property valuation figures, a 1¢ increase in the current property tax rate (.20/\$100) would generate approximately \$3.14 million over the 20-year planning period (\$157,000 per year). General tax revenues typically cover park services as a whole. Recreation facilities such as athletic fields, courts, greenways, and trails are covered by a combination of general tax revenues and user fees. All governing bodies have different values in place for how they fund various portions of a recreation experience. Tax subsidies vary by activity.

The Town will need to update its current revenues and pricing policy as part of the revenue plan based on the values and guiding funding principals of the Town.

General Obligation Bonds

General tax revenue for parks and recreation are usually devoted to current operation and maintenance of existing facilities. In view of the recommended capital improvements suggested in this plan, borrowing of funds to acquire new lands and develop facilities will be necessary. The State of North Carolina gives local governments the authority to accomplish this borrowing of funds for parks and recreation through the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). For the purpose of paying the debt on these bonds the Town is empowered to levy a special tax. Total bonding capacities for local government is limited for parks and recreation to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

The real value of a municipality's bonding authority and capacity is not necessarily the funds made available for capital improvement program alone (in terms of local monies). Bonding enables the Town to utilize local funds to match federal grant-in-aid monies or state funds. General obligation bonds are still the greatest source utilized to fund park projects in North Carolina. The Town will need to create a series of bond referendums to achieve the capital improvements identified in the plan.

Revenue Bonds

Revenue bonds have become a popular funding method for financing high use specialty facilities like complexes for baseball/softball and soccer, and aquatic centers. The user and other revenue sources on-site pay revenue bonds.

Limited Option or Special Use Tax

Limited option or special use taxes can be established in various ways. A municipality from property valuation, transfer taxes, or sales tax can establish the tax source. The proposal will require legislative approval if it is structured on sales tax or transfers. A local governing body can approve a tax that is

identified or earmarked on existing property valuation. The idea behind a special option or limited option tax is that the tax is identified or limited for a special purpose or projects and the duration can also be limited to the accomplishment of the purpose or projects.

Park Foundation

Town of Harrisburg has the opportunity to create a park foundation to assist the Town in acquiring land, developing facilities, sponsoring programs, and buying equipment for the department. Park foundations typically create five funding strategies for accessing money to build up their coffers. These include a foundation membership, individual gifts, grants from other recognized and national foundations, long term endowments, and a land trust for future acquisitions.

General Foundations

Another source of revenue is the direct contribution of money from General Foundations within the state or nation. A listing of appropriate foundations can be found in the text entitled Grant Seeking in North Carolina, made available through the North Carolina Center of Public Policy Research, P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602.

Foundation funds should be sought for both development and construction of facilities as well as providing programs. They should include general purpose foundations that have relatively few restrictions, special program foundations for specific activities, and corporate foundations found with few limitations and typically from local sources. The Trust for Public Land has been instrumental in providing financial assistance for development of greenways in North Carolina and would be a good source to investigate. Other sources of local assistance may be available by contacting large corporations with a local presence to review any possible funding opportunities they might offer through existing grant programs or they may be interested in creating a program or partnership for specific projects. The department should actively pursue grants from foundation and trust sources on a regional and national level. Information on trusts and foundations can be found through the Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003-3076 (www.fdncenter.org) and the Non-Profit Gateway to Federal Government agencies (www.nonprofit.gov).

Federal and State Assistance

Federal funding sources necessary to help finance the master plan have historically been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Potential funding through the U.S. department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is also available given certain conditions. Other potential sources for recreation funding are available through the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The North Carolina General Assembly passed a bill in 1995 creating a consistent source of funds for parks and recreation in the state. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) will provide money for capital improvements, repairs, renovations, and land acquisition in state and local parks. Revenues from the State's portion of the real estate deed transfer tax support the Fund and are estimated to be \$15-\$18 million annually. Of the funds allocated, 65% will go to the state parks system, 30% will provide matching grants to local governments, and the remaining 5% will go to the Coastal and

Estuarine Water Beach Access Program. The maximum matching grant is limited to \$500,000 for a single project. The PARTF system allows Town of Harrisburg to apply for a 50/50 cost sharing grant to develop or acquire parkland and facilities and it is in the best interest of the Town to apply for funds through this program.

Additionally, the North Carolina department of Transportation (NCDOT) administers funds for alternative transportation and the Town can use these funds for developing portions of any proposed greenway system. The State also makes funds available for development of facilities and programs through the Community Development Block Grant system (CDBG) administered by the Division of Community Assistance. Eligible communities can use these federal funds for development of projects such as recreation facilities, land acquisition, and neighborhood centers. Non-profit neighborhood groups can receive assistance from this program and the department can assist these groups by identifying possible projects.

Another source of state administered funding is through the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF). These funds are set aside for the acquisition of riparian properties, financing of innovative waste water management initiatives, storm water mitigation and stream bank restoration projects, support for greenways, and some planning programs. The acquired or purchased property can be used for recreation while protecting valuable water resources from the affects of urban encroachment. The North Carolina State General Assembly has initially set aside \$50 million for the CWMTF to allocate grants to restore and/or protect water quality in the State's rivers, lakes, and estuaries.

MASTER PLAN FUNDING STRATEGY

Over the 20-year planning period, Town of Harrisburg will not be able to support the proposed capital improvements and operations budget of \$41,646,000 (in 2010 dollars) solely through the current level of contributions from the General Fund (approximately \$709,066 FY 10/11). The Town must use a combination of revenue sources to accomplish the recommendations of the Master Plan. There are numerous combinations of funding strategies that can be explored and implemented by Town Council. Upon careful analysis of past budget documents, current practices, available resources, national trends, and standards, a funding strategy is presented for consideration. The master plan proposes a viable funding strategy that emphasizes realism.

General Fund

This strategy proposes a goal for the General Fund to cover 35% of the total capital improvements and operations budget. This is less than the current situation where the General Fund is paying for 65% of the total budget. In order for capital improvements to occur funding will have to come from alternative resources such as general obligation bonds and matching grants. A successful bond and grant writing campaign will increase the total budget but the contributions of the General Fund will remain constant, only increasing in amount as the population of the Town increases. This 35% goal falls in line with current national trends for revenue contributions to general funds and allows the Town to expand the level of service provided its citizens.

This strategy proposes that the Town maintain a constant per capita general fund contribution through

the life of the master plan. This amount is based on current contributions generated from a tax rate of .20/\$100 valuation. Additional funds could be generated from a property tax increase and the following information is presented to show how a 1¢ increase would generate funding.

- A 1¢ increase equates to a \$100,000 property paying an additional \$10 per year in taxes or less than 3¢ per day.
- Based on FY10/11 property valuation figures, a 1¢ increase would generate approximately \$3.14 - million over the 20-year planning period.

General Obligation Bonds

General Obligation Bonds should be used in acquiring and developing new parks and recreation facilities as well as renovating existing facilities. The funding strategy proposes bond issues be targeted to raise approximately \$6.25 million. The total funds used from the bonds for development would be less, with the remaining funds used for debt service and administrative cost associated with the bonds. The \$6.25 million in bonds could be used within the first five (5) years of the plan to purchase new property and provide revenue generating facilities.

User Charges

A crucial strategy to accomplish the goals of this plan is to price services based on the value and benefits received by the participants beyond those of all taxpayers. Increasing participants in using the facilities and programs will increase revenue opportunities. A good time to price services to their value and benefits is after facilities have been renovated to enhance a participant's recreation experience. A proposed user charge revenue strategy is not a quantum leap to market value pricing but, a slightly enhanced program of increasing fees based on new and renovated facilities that will create more revenue and capacity opportunities for Harrisburg's growing population.

The audit for year end June 30, 2009 indicates that there were \$473,337 of expenses and \$168,774 total charges for services, which is $\pm 35\%$ of the overall budget. Assuming this level of funding continues through the 20 year planning period it will generate approximately \$16.658 million for implementing the Master Plan. To accommodate this goal, revenue from user charges must meet the expectation of the user. With renovations to existing facilities and new facilities on-line, this goal is achievable with modest changes to the current fee structure for activities and programs.

Partnerships, Grants, and Gifts

A combination of partnerships, grants, gifts, or other revenue sources will need to offset the remaining 15% or \$6,246,400 of the total budget for the master plan (\$41,646,000). There are a substantial number of opportunities in Town of Harrisburg to support this contribution. As described in the Funding Sources section of this chapter, any combination of grants, donations, in-kind services, and partnership agreements can contribute to this portion of the funding strategy. The State of North Carolina, Federal grants, local private sector entities, school districts, and non-profit groups should be aggressively approached in assisting with the funding of the master plan proposals. It should be noted that any growth in revenues from user charges would lower the annual amount needed from partnerships, grants, gifts, or other sources accordingly.

Summary of Funding Strategy

Funding Source	% of Budget	Amount
General Fund	35%	\$ 14,576,100
Bonds	15%	\$ 6,246,100
User Charges Revenue	35%	\$ 14,576,100
Partnerships/Grants/Gifts	15%	\$ 6,246,100
Total	100%	\$ 41,646,000

OTHER METHODS FOR ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

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

Fee Simple Purchase

The outright purchase is perhaps the most widely used method of obtaining parkland. However, this method is the most difficult to reconcile with limited public resources. Fee simple purchase has the advantage of being relatively simple to administer and to explain to the general public in terms of justifying a particular public expenditure.

Fee Simple with Lease-Back or Resale

This technique of land acquisition enables the Town to purchase land to either lease or sell to a prospective user with deed restrictions that would protect the land from abuse or development. This method is used by governments who impose development restrictions severe enough that the owner considers himself to have lost the major portion of the property's value and it is more economical for him to sell with a lease-back option.

Long-Term Option

A long-term option is frequently used when a particular piece of land is seen as having potential future value though it is not desired or affordable to the Town at the time. Under the terms of a long-term option, the Town agrees with the landowner on a selling price for the property and a time period over which the Town has the right to exercise its option. The first benefit of this protective method is that the land use of the property is stabilized because its future is in doubt and an expenditure of money for the property would be lost in the previously agreed upon selling price. Secondly, the Town does not have to expend large sums of money until the land is purchased. Thirdly, the purchase price of the land is settled upon. The disadvantage of this method lies in that a price must be paid for every right given by the property owner. In this case, the cost of land use stabilization and a price commitment comes in the form of the cost of securing the option.

First Right of Purchase

This approach to acquiring parkland eliminates the need for fixing the selling price of a parcel of land yet alerts the Town of any impending purchase which might disrupt the parkland acquisition goals. The Town would be notified that a purchase is pending and would have the right to purchase the property before it is sold to the party requesting the purchase.

Land Trust

The role and responsibility of a Land Trust is to acquire parkland and open space while maintaining a well balanced system of park resources representing outstanding ecological, scenic, recreation, and historical features. A Land Trust is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation made up of key knowledgeable leaders in Town of Harrisburg who represent a cross section of recreation, historic, conservation, preservation, land development, and environment. Their goals and responsibilities are to work with landowners to acquire parkland for current and future generations. The individuals appointed to the Land Trust must have a good knowledge of land acquisition methods and tools to entice land owners to sell, donate, provide easements, life estates, irrevocable trusts, or a combination of all. This includes seeking out a good land acquisition attorney who is trained in these areas to provide the most efficient and effective processes to achieve the balance of types of land to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Local Gifts

A significant and yet often untapped source of providing funds for acquisition and development of local park projects is through a well organized local gifts program. The pursuit of land, money, construction funds, or donated labor can have a meaningful impact on the development of a balanced recreation system.

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

Some municipalities have developed a gift catalog as a tool for emphasizing an organized gifts program. Such a publication should explain the role and importance of the gifts program, describe its advantages, define the tax advantages that may occur to the donor, and identify various gifts (land, labor, play equipment, materials, trees, etc.) that are needed to meet local program needs. The gifts catalog should be prepared in a format that can be distributed effectively and inexpensively and should employ a clear statement of needs; typical costs associated with various gifts, and are made readily available to the public.

To aid this type of gift program, a strategy for contacting potential donors (individuals, businesses, foundations, service clubs, etc.) should be developed. An important part of this strategy should include contacting the local Bar Association, trust departments of lending institutions, and the Probate Court. Communicating with these groups regularly will make them aware of the potential for individuals to include a gift to the Parks and Recreation department as part of their tax and estate planning.

Life Estate

A life estate is a deferred gift. Under this plan, a donor retains use of his land during his lifetime and relinquishes title to such land upon his death. In return for this gift, the owner is usually relieved of the property tax burden on the donated land.

Easement

The most common type of less-than-fee interest in land is an easement. Since property ownership may be envisioned as a bundle of rights, it is possible for the Town to purchase any one or several of these rights. An easement seeks either to compensate the landholder for the right to use his land in some manner or to compensate him for the loss of one of his privileges to use the land. One advantage of this less-than-fee interest in the land is the private citizen continues to use the land while the land remains on the tax records continuing as a source of revenue for a Town. Perhaps the greatest benefit lies in the fact that the community purchases only those rights that it specifically needs to execute its parkland objectives. By purchasing only rights that are necessary to the system and on the land itself, the Town is making more selective and efficient use of its limited financial resources.

In Kind Contributions

Many grant programs accept in-kind contributions for matching funds in their application process. It is critical that the timing of the contributions be coordinated appropriately and documented correctly to receive full benefit.

Zoning/Subdivision Regulations/Mandatory Dedication

Zoning ordinances, subdivision regulation, and mandatory dedications may be utilized to create new parkland at no cost to the community. This must be approved through special state legislation in Raleigh.

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

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

A variation of the mandatory land dedication is payment of a fee in lieu of land dedication. The fee payment for dwelling unit construction goes directly into a special fund earmarked for park acquisition and development. The benefits of this method for park development in newly evolving neighborhoods are many. The Town is financially able to purchase parks in accordance with a predetermined set of plans.

- The money is available when needed.

- The residents involved directly feel the benefit of the park fee.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan recommendations are the by-product of analysis, public input, and the development of the recreation standards for Town of Harrisburg. The following table is a priority list of policy and facility recommendations of the comprehensive master plan.

- Incorporate Recreation Services into the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.
- Include the Parks and Recreation Department as a member of the Technical Review Committee in the Town’s site plan and subdivision review process.
- Make formal contractual agreements with Cabarrus County Schools to utilize their facilities when not in use by the schools.
- Work with Cabarrus County Schools to develop a policy to integrate school parks as part of the planning process for all future school sites. The proposed elementary school site in the area of Hickory Ridge Road and Rocky River Road is a primary example.
- Work with the Town’s Planning Department to develop a greenway and trail master plan.
- Work with the Water and Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County (WSACC) to develop access to construct trails in utility easements.
- Establish a grant writing program for design and implementation of recreation facilities and programs.
- Be aware of opportunities to expand the land area of all parks and establish a new community park or neighborhood parks within the recreation service area.

Stallings Road Park (\$13,875,000)

Recommended action includes investigation to purchase adjacent parcels to add facilities and programs and renovate/expand existing facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Community center/outdoor pool	New	500,000	\$ 7,000,000
Create shade with structures and trees	Renovation	0	\$ 50,000
Baseball and multi-use fields (4/4)	New	1,000,000	\$ 3,000,000
Add property for expanded programs	New	1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
Resolve drainage problems ballfields	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Additional Parking Spaces (50)	New	0	\$ 125,000
Multi-use trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 100,000

Biking and Hiking Trails (\$3,400,000)

Recommended action to acquire property and easements as necessary to construct a unified trail system throughout the service area. The trail and greenway plan is to connect all parks and schools through a network of trails that utilize stream buffers, utility easements and NCDOT right of ways.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
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Approximately 28 miles	New	0	\$ 2,800,000
Acquire easements	New	\$ 600,000	0

Harrisburg Park (\$3,700,000)

Recommended action includes investigation to purchase adjacent parcels to add facilities and programs and renovate/expand existing facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Synthetic surface ex multi-use fields	Renovation	0	\$ 1,300,000
Baseball and multi-use fields (2/2)	New	1,200,000	\$ 1,000,000
Multi-use trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 100,000
Dog Park	New	0	\$ 50,000
Community Garden	New	0	\$ 50,000

The master plan recommends the acquisition of an additional 20 to 35 acres to meet the classification of a District Park and satisfy the unmet needs for facilities and programs called for in the comprehensive master plan.

New Community Park (\$5,000,000)

Recommended action to construct a community park in the southern portion of the Harrisburg Park and Recreation service area.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Community Park	New	1,500,000	\$ 3,500,000

Six New Neighborhood Parks (\$9,000,000)

Recommended action to construct a community park in the southern portion of the Harrisburg Park and Recreation service area.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Neighborhood Park (each park)	New	500,000	\$ 1,000,000

Harrisburg Elementary School Park (\$350,000)

Recommended action involves making improvements to the existing facility to include drainage and playability of the baseballs as well as policy improvements with the school to benefit both parties.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Resolve drainage issues	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Field and facility improvements	Renovation	0	\$ 250,000

Pitts School Road Elementary School Park (\$350,000)

Recommended action involves making improvements to the existing facility to include drainage and playability of the baseballs as well as policy improvements with the school to benefit both parties.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Resolve drainage issues	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Field and facility improvements	Renovation	0	\$ 250,000

Pharr Mill Historical Special Use Park (\$370,000)

Recommended action includes preservation of the historic site and interpretation of the historical significance.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Add parking spaces	New	0	\$ 35,000
General site work for preservation	New	0	\$ 250,000
Interpretive Kiosk	New	0	\$ 35,000
Canoe access to Rocky River	New	0	\$ 25,000
Interpretive trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 50,000

Farmers’ Market Special Use Park (\$910,000)

Recommended action creating permanent structure for the market and improving ADA compliance as well as health and safety issues regarding pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns. Investigate acquisition of three adjacent parcels.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Permanent structure for market	New	0	\$ 250,000
Acquire adjacent property (3 parcels)	New	\$ 600,000	\$ 0
Sidewalk bike lane connection	New	0	\$ 10,000
Trail construction (.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 50,000

Pharr Mill Road Park (\$485,000)

Recommended action includes investigation to purchase adjacent parcels to add facilities and programs and renovate/expand existing facilities.

Proposed Improvement	Type	Land Cost	Improvement Cost
Create shade with structures and trees	Renovation	0	\$ 50,000
Resolve drainage problems	Renovation	0	\$ 100,000
Add programs - disc golf/horseshoes	New	0	\$ 35,000
Canoe access to Rocky River	New	0	\$ 50,000
Multi-use trail construction (2.5 mile)	New	0	\$ 250,000

Section 13

Appendix

LIST OF ITEMS

- A – Survey Information
- B – Meeting Minutes
- C – News Articles
- D – References

Appendix A

Survey Information

SURVEY DATA

The following information is the data downloaded from Survey Monkey indicating all results and responses from the participants.

Insert file from

Appendix B

Meeting Minutes

The following items are minutes that were taken during meeting that were held during the development of the Harrisburg Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

Appendix C

News Articles

Appendix E References

PROJECT RESOURCES

The following sources were publications used during the development of the Harrisburg Recreation Master Plan and may be of further assistance later on: