



**“2013 – 2018 PARKS, RECREATION
AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN”
FOR THE
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH, NC**



**TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH BOARD OF ALDERMEN
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH PLANNING AND PARKS DEPARTMENT
Dr. JAMES H. HERSTINE, Ph.D., Consultant
Sage Washington, Student, University of North Carolina Wilmington**
Adopted by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee on January 7, 2013
Adopted by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Board of Aldermen on May 9, 2013

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary of the Master Plan Process & Recommendations	1 – 6
Chapter One: Introduction	7 – 10
▪ Purpose of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan	8
▪ Previous Community Studies and Assessments	9
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division Statement of Purpose	10
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division Mission Statement	10
Chapter Two: Master Plan Goals & Objectives	11 – 14
▪ Vision	12
▪ Goals and Objectives	12 – 14
Chapter Three: Town of Wrightsville Beach Characteristics & Demographics	15 – 19
▪ Location/Geography/Natural Resources	15
▪ Demographics	16 – 19
Chapter Four: Inventory of Existing Programs, Services, Areas & Facilities	20 – 30
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division “Parks”	21 – 23
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division “Special Areas and Facilities”	24
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division “Athletics, Programs and Special Events”	25
▪ Other Public Parks, Recreation and Open Space Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities	26 – 27
▪ North Carolina Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Sites	28 – 29
▪ New Hanover County School Sites and Facilities	29
▪ Private, Commercial, Non-Profit and Church Recreational Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities	30
Chapter Five: Assessment of Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks, Recreation & Open Space Needs	31 – 62
▪ Inspection, Analysis and Evaluation of Existing Parks, Recreation and Open Space Areas and Facilities	32 – 37
▪ Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—Public Meetings (3)	37 – 41
▪ Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—Meeting with Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee	41 – 42
▪ Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—Focus Group	42 – 44
▪ Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—2012 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey	45 – 55
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan	55 – 60
▪ City of Wilmington 2010 – 2015 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan	60 – 61
▪ 2009 Pelican Drive/Salisbury Street Bicycle Plan for the Town of Wrightsville Beach	61
▪ New Hanover County 2006 Master Plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space	61
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach 2005 Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Land Use Plan	61 – 62
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina 2002 Surface Water Use Plan	62

Wrightsville Beach



Chapter Six: Parks, Recreation & Open Space Standards	63 – 91
▪ Nature Preserves	66
▪ Regional Parks	67
▪ Community Parks	68
▪ Sports Complex	69
▪ District Parks	70
▪ Neighborhood Parks	71
▪ Mini-Parks	72
▪ School-Parks	72
▪ Greenways	73
▪ Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Sites	74
▪ Boat Access Sites	75
▪ North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2009 – 2013 Park and Recreation Area Class Names and Description	76 – 77
▪ Standards for Public Facilities	78
▪ Trends in Parks, Recreation and Open Space	79 – 86
▪ Town of Wrightsville Beach Facility Standards	87 – 91
Chapter Seven: Master Plan Proposals & Recommendations	92 – 102
▪ Land Acquisition—2013 – 2018	94 – 95
▪ Area and Facility Development—2013 – 2018	95 – 98
▪ Program and Service Development—2013 – 2018	98 – 99
▪ Policy and Procedure Considerations—2013 – 2018	99 – 100
▪ Personnel Considerations—2013 – 2018	101 – 102
Chapter Eight: Implementation Plan	103 – 115
▪ Land Acquisition—2013 – 2018	104
▪ Area and Facility Development—2013 – 2018	104 – 106
▪ Program and Service Development—2013 – 2018	107
▪ Policy and Procedure Considerations—2013 – 2018	107 – 108
▪ Personnel Considerations—2013 – 2018	109
▪ External Grant Funding Opportunities	110 – 115
Appendices	116 – 123
Appendix A—Population	116
Appendix B—Top 14 Employers in New Hanover County (2010)	117
Appendix C—April 2010 Population Summary	118
Appendix D—Persons By Age (2000 – 2010)	118
Appendix E—Racial Composition (2000 – 2010)	119
Appendix F—Educational Attainment (2000 – 2010)	119
Appendix G—2012 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey	120 – 121
Appendix H—Current Organizational Chart	122
Appendix I—Proposed Organizational Chart	123





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan process is a vital component of any local government operation. The purpose of the master plan is to assess, analyze and evaluate the current state of affairs regarding the provision of local community parks, recreation and open space services, stimulate an open public discussion of future needs for community parks, recreation and open space programs, services, areas and facilities, and, establish a plan of action for the future growth, development and implementation of community parks, recreation and open space services. The end product of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan process provides the Town of Wrightsville Beach local government officials in general and the Parks and Recreation Division in specific a viable blueprint and plan of action to guide the future orderly growth and development of the community's comprehensive parks, recreation and open space system. This section of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* contains a brief synopsis of the community characteristics

of the Town of Wrightsville Beach, a quick description of the public input portion of the planning process, and a summary of the master plan recommendations.

Community Characteristics

The Town of Wrightsville Beach is a coastal town located primarily on a barrier island on the Atlantic Ocean in New Hanover County in Southeastern North Carolina. The Town of Wrightsville Beach is situated just east of Wilmington, North Carolina. The town consists of a barrier beach island that is approximately four miles long, an interior island called Harbor Island, and three (3) significant and high impact commercial areas. Its location, weather, climate, natural resources and amenities make the Town of Wrightsville Beach an ideal year-round resort community.

The Town of Wrightsville Beach incorporated on March 6, 1899. The permanent, year-round population was 2,477 at the 2010 census (**Appendix A**). This figure represents almost a 5% decrease in population from 2000 to 2010. Current census estimates project the Town of Wrightsville Beach is not expected to experience any significant population growth over the next 5 to 10 years. However, the influx of day-trippers, summer residents and tourists can increase the actual population of the Town of Wrightsville Beach to over 30,000 individuals on most spring and summer weekends as well as some summer weekdays.

Public Input

A significant amount of time and effort was expended identifying the desires, needs and interests of the citizens of the Town of Wrightsville Beach for parks and recreation programs, services, areas and facilities. To this end, the citizens of the Town of Wrightsville Beach were provided the following opportunities to directly and actively participate in the process:

- Three (3) public meetings were facilitated—March 26, 2012, March 27, 2012 and April 28, 2012
- A formal information gathering session was held on May 7, 2012 with the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee specifically to discuss and provide input into the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan process

- Seven (7) key parks, recreation and open space stakeholders were identified and participated in a Focus Group discussion on August 1, 2012
- A Parks, Recreation and Open Space Community Needs Assessment Survey instrument was administered to town residents through the Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division

Pertinent Public Support Information

When asked in the Town of Wrightsville Beach 2012 Needs Assessment Survey to respond to the question “In your opinion, what are the three most important new facilities that the town needs to provide”, almost 41% of the respondents stated the “Town does not need to provide new facilities.” When asked in the survey “In your opinion, what are the three most important new recreational activities that the town needs to provide”, over 46% of the respondents stated the “Town does not need to provide new recreational activities.” When asked in the survey “In your opinion, what are the three most important new health and wellness programs that the town needs to provide”, almost 48% of the respondents stated the “Town does not need to provide new health and wellness programs. On the other hand, almost 51% of the respondents to the survey stated they would support new parks, recreation and open space facilities for the town if the facilities were funded through private sources or grants. However, over 57% of the respondents stated they would not support a property tax increase to provide for new parks, recreation and open space facilities. Approximately 39% of the respondents stated they would support new parks, recreation and open space activities if they were funded through private sources or grants but 49% responded they would not support a property tax increase to provide for new parks, recreation and open space activities. Over 35% of the respondents stated they would support new health/wellness programs if they were funded through private sources or grants but almost 47% stated they would not support a property tax increase to provide new health and wellness programs.

Summary of Recommendations

The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* outlines the existing and anticipated parks and recreation needs for the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The Master Plan primarily focuses on the issues and

challenges of land acquisition, area and facility development, program and service development, policy and procedure considerations, and personnel considerations.

While focusing on these five (5) identified issues and challenges, the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* also acknowledges the facts that **a)** the Town of Wrightsville Beach adopted a *”2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan”* in August 2007; **b)** New Hanover County is a relatively small county and the Town of Wrightsville Beach is closely impacted by parks and recreation programs, services, areas and facilities provided by New Hanover County itself and the City of Wilmington; and, **c)** the economic and fiscal environment in and surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach is not currently, nor expected to be over the next 3 – 5 years, supportive of a high-dollar Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan detailing significant and costly parks and recreation services recommendations. With these facts in mind, this Master Plan makes specific recommendations for the next five (5) year period (2013 – 2018).

Land Acquisition—2013 – 2018

This document recommends the Town of Wrightsville Beach acquire any available land in the central business district/main downtown section of the town suitable for parks, recreation and open space purposes. The Master Plan also recommends that the Town of Wrightsville Beach take a hard and aggressive look at existing town owned and other public entity owned land and determine if any of the existing Town of Wrightsville Beach land or other public entity owned land that is presently used for purposes other than public parks, recreation and open space is suitable as land for parks, recreation and open space. The other land acquisition recommendation is that the Town of Wrightsville Beach implements an aggressive initiative to acquire properties that become available that are affordable and/or offer specific advantages for parks, recreation and open space. This acquisition could be through outright purchase, but it could also include land donations and conservation easements.

Area and Facility Development—2013 – 2018

In terms of area and facility development, recommendations include, but are not limited to, improving, renovating and upgrading the existing Fran Russ Recreation Center; constructing a new and more spacious Recreation Center; widening and improving the John Nesbitt Loop; implementing, improving and constructing a comprehensive, safe and functional pedestrian and bicycle network; constructing a skateboard park; constructing a “dog park/area”; constructing a Frisbee golf course area; and, marking and constructing designated kayak/canoe/paddleboard trails and routes.

Program and Service Development—2013 – 2018

Recommended programs and services include offering additional arts and cultural classes; additional health and wellness programs; additional fitness and weight training classes; and, expanded programs and services for youth and teenagers.

Policy and Procedure Considerations—2013 – 2018

The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* discusses several policies and procedure changes impacting the delivery of parks, recreation and open space programs and services to Town residents. Policy and procedure considerations presented in the Master Plan include but are not limited to the continued establishment and expansion of formal partnerships and cooperative agreements with interested existing community agencies and organizations; and, continued cooperation with the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) regarding the establishment of a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian non-motorized vehicular transportation network/system for the Town of Wrightsville Beach.

Personnel Considerations—2013 – 2018

The recommendations presented in this document require a commitment by the Town of Wrightsville Beach to provide adequate professional parks and recreation staff to carry out the existing needs and proposed changes. The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* recommends 1) the re-establishment of a separate and distinct Town Parks and Recreation

Department; the conversion and upgrade of the existing Parks and Recreation Program Supervisor position into the position of Director of Parks and Recreation; and, 2) the creation and hiring of two (2) additional full-time staff positions—a Recreation Specialist and a Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker.

Highlights

- + the preservation, conservation and protection of green space and open space***
- + the acquisition of parks, recreation and open space land as it becomes available***
- + the development and construction of a safe and comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian non-vehicular transportation network***
- + the improved maintenance and renovation of existing areas and facilities, particularly the “neighborhood parks”***
- + the creation of a separate Parks and Recreation Department***
- + the creation and hiring of a full-time Director of Parks and Recreation and two (2) additional staff members—a Recreation Specialist and a Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker***
- + the upgrading and improvement of the existing Fran Russ Recreation Center and the construction of a new Recreation Center/Facility***
- + the possible construction/provision of a skate park***
- + the construction/provision of a “doggie park/area”***
- + the construction/provision of a Frisbee golf course***

The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks and Recreation Master Plan* is intended to be a working document that is not encumbered by hypothetical or academic scenarios that hold little practical application in the real world. This Master Plan gives the citizens, managers and administrators of the Town of Wrightsville Beach solid recommendations that are both feasible and realistic given the economic, political, cultural and social climates of the time and area.

Standards developed and recommended by organizations such as the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), Division of Parks and Recreation were considered and evaluated in the preparation of this Master Plan. These general standards were judged only to be guidelines to be considered and not requirements to be met. A listing of these standards is presented in Chapter Six of this document as well as specific standards for the Town of Wrightsville.



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* is to identify, analyze and define the parks, recreation and open space interests and needs of the citizens of the Town of Wrightsville Beach and to provide a recommended, practical, comprehensive plan of action for meeting the immediate, short-term and long-range parks, recreation and open space needs and interests for services, programs, areas and facilities in the Town of Wrightsville Beach.

The Town of Wrightsville Beach traditionally provides its residents and visitors a wide variety of recreational and leisure opportunities and experiences through the Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division. This division provides a diversity of recreation and leisure opportunities and experiences and unique amenities for the Town of Wrightsville Beach and its residents and visitors. Opportunities and experiences for leisure fulfillment and enjoyment provided by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division include, but are not limited to, men’s basketball league, men’s flag football, the

Farmers' Market, Zumba, Pilates and Yoga classes, cooking and hip-hop classes for kids, tennis lessons, an After School Program, shag and line dancing lessons, and much more.



Purpose of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

The purpose of the ***Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*** is to assess and evaluate the recreation and leisure needs, goals, objectives, and priorities of the citizens, elected officials, appointed officials and staff of the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The ***Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*** is intended to serve as a comprehensive, practical planning document and procedural guide for public policy decisions pertaining to the quantity, quality, location, and, scope of parks, recreation and open space services, programs, areas and facilities. The Master Plan also provides recommendations regarding the administration, acquisition, development and operation of these parks, recreation and open space services, programs, areas and facilities.

The ***Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*** is organized into ten (10) sections:

Executive Summary of the Master Plan Process & Recommendations

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Master Plan Goals & Objectives

Chapter Three: Town of Wrightsville Beach Characteristics & Demographics

Chapter Four: Inventory of Existing Programs, Services, Areas & Facilities

Chapter Five: Assessment of the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks, Recreation & Open Space Needs

Chapter Six: Parks, Recreation & Open Space Standards

Chapter Seven: Master Plan Proposals & Recommendations

Chapter Eight: Implementation Plan

Appendices

The scope of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* was delimited to the existing jurisdiction of the Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division. However, the analysis recognized the fact that residents of the Town of Wrightsville Beach are also residents of New Hanover County and that New Hanover County includes three other municipalities (Carolina Beach, the City of Wilmington and Kure Beach) in addition to the Town of Wrightsville Beach. As a result, the parks, recreation and open space needs and resources of the entire County are factored into the analysis process in recognition of the fact that individuals' recreation and leisure involvement patterns and preferences are not normally restricted and limited by municipal and/or county lines, boundaries and jurisdictions.

Previous Community Studies and Assessments

The following previous studies and assessments were consulted and examined in the preparation of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*:

- ✓ 2012 Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey
- ✓ Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan
- ✓ City of Wilmington 2010 – 2015 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan
- ✓ 2009 Pelican Drive/Salisbury Street Bicycle Plan
- ✓ New Hanover County Master Plan for Parks, Recreation & Open Space, January 2006
- ✓ Town of Wrightsville Beach 2005 Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Land Use Plan
- ✓ Town of Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina Surface Water Use Plan—May 2002





Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division Statement of Purpose

“Consistently seeks opportunities to improve the delivery of services, to enhance the park settings and other sites throughout the Town, and to maximize a variety of program opportunities. We strive to provide services and leisure opportunities that will contribute significantly toward the physical, social, and emotional well being of the community”.

Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division Mission Statement

“The overall objective of the Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division is to provide a variety of leisure opportunities, whether of an active or passive nature, that will contribute significantly toward the physical, social, and/or emotional well-being of the citizenry thereby enhancing the overall quality of life”.





CHAPTER TWO:

MASTER PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Contained within this chapter of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* are the overall vision, goals and objectives of the planning process and the master plan itself. It is with this stated vision and these overall goals and objectives in mind that the planning process was conducted and the structure of the master plan itself designed and formulated.

A clear, concise and dynamic vision of the future and statements of concrete goals and objectives based upon that vision are important elements of a comprehensive and successful Master Plan. The vision statement provides the target to be achieved. Goals and objectives provide structure, guidance and direction in the formulation of a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan. In addition, clear and concise goals and objectives assist in the definition of overall public policy and aid in decision-making during the planning, development and implementation phases of the Master Plan process. However, a progressive and successful parks, recreation and open space delivery system for the Town of Wrightsville Beach will require long-term commitment, adequate public and private funding by the Town of Wrightsville Beach and coordinated action by all

stakeholders in order to achieve these goals and objectives. This long-term commitment and coordinated action must be coupled with an effective program of overall citizen involvement in and support for parks, recreation and open space programs, services, areas and facilities.

VISION*

✚ To provide a comprehensive, practical and responsive parks, recreation and open space delivery system for the Town of Wrightsville Beach that celebrates and protects the social, cultural and natural heritage of the area while enhancing and enriching the local ambience

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES*

✚ GOAL #1—OPEN SPACE AND GREEN SPACE PRESERVATION

Safeguard and ensure the protection, preservation and conservation of open space and green space in and surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach

- ✓ Objective A—to conserve, preserve and protect green and open spaces in existing park areas and facilities
- ✓ Objective B—to acquire land for open space and green space as it becomes available
- ✓ Objective C—to convert existing Town of Wrightsville Beach owned land and facilities not currently under the management of the Parks and Recreation Division and no longer utilized by another Town of Wrightsville Beach department of record into open space and green space
- ✓ Objective D—to improve and expand parks, recreation and open space programs and services related to environmental education and sustainable tourism
- ✓ Objective E—to implement “green” practices in the planning, construction, evaluation and operation of all parks, recreation and open space programs, services, areas and facilities



✚ GOAL #2—CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE INTEGRITY

Emphasize, accentuate and protect the unique cultural, historical and natural heritage aspects and components of the Town of Wrightsville Beach

- ✓ Objective A—to preserve and protect the current “small town ambience” of the Town of Wrightsville Beach by maintaining the “status quo” as nearly as possible
- ✓ Objective B—to make every effort to decrease the continued loss of unique cultural, historical and natural heritage resources in the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ✓ Objective C—to provide programs and services emphasizing the cultural, historical and natural heritage resources of the Town of Wrightsville Beach

✚ GOAL #3—PEDESTRIAN AND NON-MOTORIZED VEHICULAR MOVEMENT ENHANCEMENT AND SAFETY

Provide safe and secure pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular movement for all residents and visitors to the Town of Wrightsville Beach

- ✓ Objective A—to improve and expand the existing pedestrian and bike facilities thereby creating new and safer non-motorized vehicular movement and acceptable alternatives to vehicular movement in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ✓ Objective B—to educate the public regarding all issues related to pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular safety and movement in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ✓ Objective C—to work closely and cooperatively with the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) regarding all pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular movement issues



GOAL #4—OPEN AND UNENCUMBERED ACCESS

Provide and ensure easily accessible, conveniently located and equitably distributed parks, recreation and open space areas, facilities, programs, services, experiences and opportunities to serve the needs and interests of all citizens of the Town of Wrightsville Beach

- ✓ Objective A—to protect public access to the waters surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ✓ Objective B—to keep the existing street ends serving as public access points open and available
- ✓ Objective C—to add public water access areas, sites and facilities when and where possible



**The Vision, Goals and Objectives of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan were developed in conjunction and collaboration with the staff of the Parks and Recreation Division and the members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee*



CHAPTER THREE:

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

CHARACTERISTICS & DEMOGRAPHICS

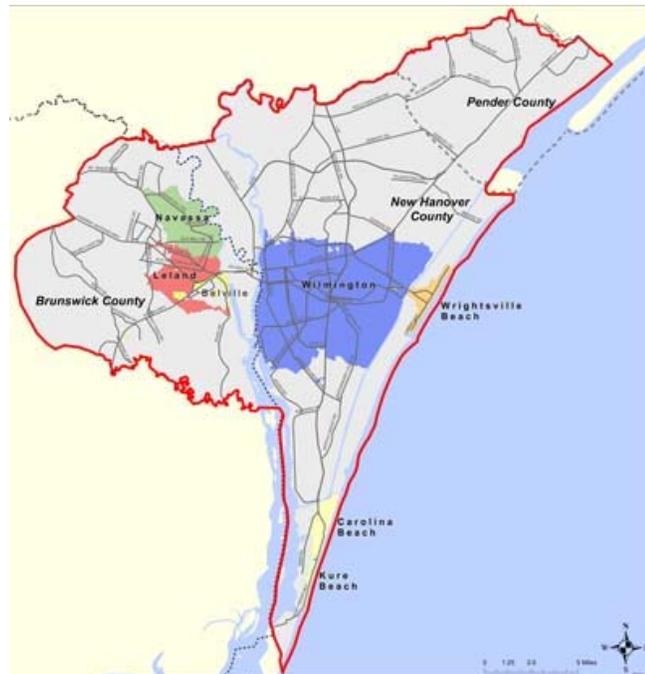
Location/Geography/Natural Resources

It is beyond the scope and purpose of this master plan to describe the particular physical and geographical characteristics of the Town of Wrightsville Beach in great detail. It is important, however, to set forth in brief form those characteristics that have significant implications for meeting parks, recreation and open space needs and interests in the Town of Wrightsville Beach and New Hanover County.

The Town of Wrightsville Beach is located in the southeastern portion of North Carolina approximately 10 miles east of downtown Wilmington and covers an area of approximately 1.334 square miles. Its primary physical feature is a barrier island approximately 4.5 miles long on a predominantly north to south axis. The Town of Wrightsville Beach is bound on the west by the City of Wilmington; on the east by the Atlantic Ocean; on the north by Figure Eight Island; and, on the south by Masonboro

Island. The Town of Wrightsville Beach is surrounded by water and accessible only by boat or bridge.

The largest employers in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach include the New Hanover Regional Medical Center, New Hanover County School System, General Electric, the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), New Hanover County Government, the City of Wilmington, PPD Inc. and Wal-Mart (**Appendix B**). None of these employers are located within the municipal limits of the Town of Wrightsville Beach. Tourism is currently the second largest industry and major overall employer in the area and continues to grow each year.



Demographics

In general, the population of the Town of Wrightsville Beach is highly mobile. The census data does show there are consistently growing youth and young adult populations. The number of persons per household at the April 2010 census was 2.29. This compares to a state-wide average of 2.48 persons per household (**Appendix C**). The permanent, year-round population was 2,593 at the April 2000 census and the North Carolina State Data Center identified the April 2010 estimated year-round population of

the Town of Wrightsville Beach as 2,477 persons (**Appendix A**). This figure represents almost a 5% decrease in population from 2000 to 2010. This seems to be a consistent trend as the population of the Town of Wrightsville Beach decreased almost 10% from 1990 to 2005. Current estimates also project that the Town of Wrightsville Beach is not expected to experience any significant population growth over the next 5 to 10 years. In fact, the population is projected to continue to decrease. The important conclusion to be drawn from these data is that the permanent population of Wrightsville Beach is currently declining. However, the influx of day-trippers, summer residents and tourists can increase the actual population of the Town of Wrightsville Beach to be over 30,000 individuals on most spring and summer weekends as well as some summer weekdays.

Year-Round Population Trends

It is readily apparent that while New Hanover County's population continues to increase steadily, Wrightsville Beach's greatest period of growth was from 1960 to 1980. Population growth in the Town of Wrightsville Beach then leveled off as the acreage of land available for development and expansion declined. Over the last couple of decades, Wrightsville Beach's population has actually declined slightly (between 5% - 10% each census period since 1990). The cause of these trends was the unprecedented building boom in New Hanover County triggered in part by the completion of I-40 and the lack of substantial land area available for new development in the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The decrease in population from 1990 through 2010 in Wrightsville Beach is also due to other factors such as the redevelopment-conversion of quadraplex and triplex structures to larger duplexes and single-family homes; a dramatic increase in home prices that has caused many year-round residents to sell their homes to owners who are using them primarily for seasonal purposes; and, the redevelopment of smaller single-family homes to larger homes used for seasonal purposes.

As a result, the number of seasonal homes increased by 105% from 603 seasonal homes in 1990 to 1,240 in 2010. Evidence suggests these trends will persist over the next 5 to 10 years. The Town of Wrightsville Beach is not expected to experience any significant population growth. However, given recent

development projects in the surrounding areas (e.g., Mayfaire), vehicular traffic is likely to increase, particularly during seasonal periods.



Permanent Population Projections

Given the lack of developable land and existing height and density restrictions, there is no reason to believe that Wrightsville Beach's population will grow in any significant way over the next 5, 10 or 20 years unless there is significant changes in the density allowed pursuant to the Town's zoning ordinances and a corresponding redevelopment of land in accordance with these higher densities. Instead, given current zoning and the policies and actions recommended, the population is likely to increase or decrease slightly as the ratio of full time to seasonal residents varies. If the current trend towards seasonal housing continues, the population is likely to continue its slight decrease. If the trend reverses itself, the population might increase slightly to around 2,700 but these increases are likely to have a negligible effect on the Town's infrastructure or services.

Age of the Population

The *median age* of residents of the Town of Wrightsville Beach is 35.6 years. This is comparably young among North Carolina beach communities. The low median age may be explained, in part, by the Town's proximity to Cape Fear Community College (CFCC) and the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW). From 2000 to 2010, the age groups ranging from 25 to 64 on a percentage basis were more prevalent in the Town of Wrightsville Beach than in the rest of New Hanover County. In 1990, the percentage of people aged 65 and over in New Hanover County was slightly larger than the percentage in

Wrightsville Beach. However, from 2000 – 2010 the percentage of those 65 and over in the Town of Wrightsville Beach was larger than New Hanover County (**Appendix D**).

Racial Composition

Less than 3 percent of the Town of Wrightsville Beach’s population is non-white and 0.3 percent is black (**Appendix E**). This stands in contrast to New Hanover County where 21 percent of the population is non-white and 14.8 percent is black. Comparing the 2000 and 2010 racial compositions, Wrightsville Beach has become slightly more diverse, but still lags far behind New Hanover County.

Education Attainment

Residents of the Town of Wrightsville Beach are generally better educated than residents in New Hanover County (**Appendix F**). Approximately 99 percent of all adults in Wrightsville Beach are high school graduates compared to 90 percent in New Hanover County. Sixty-six percent of residents have a bachelor’s degree or additional advanced degrees compared to only 36 percent in the County.





CHAPTER FOUR: INVENTORY OF EXISTING PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AREAS & FACILITIES

This chapter provides an inventory of existing parks, recreation programs, recreation services, recreation areas, recreation facilities and open space sites in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach area. Most of the programs, services, areas and facilities identified and described are Town of Wrightsville Beach owned and operated and are primarily provided for recreation purposes for the citizens of Wrightsville Beach. Significant additional sites and facilities owned and operated by other public, private, commercial and non-profit organizations and agencies are also included in this document. Only those programs, services, areas and facilities provided by non-Wrightsville Beach entities that could impact the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* are included in this inventory.

The Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division provides a variety of facilities and services that contribute significantly toward the community's overall quality of life. Programs and activities provided year-round by

the Department include, but are not limited to Adopt a Beach Access, senior aerobics, Pilates, yoga, tennis lessons, sand wheelchairs, tone and stretch classes, line dancing lessons and an after-school program. Seasonal programs and services vary from year to year and generally include softball, basketball, flag football, various youth summer camps and a variety of special events designed to attract both residents and visitors.

In addition to maintaining a variety of beach access sites and facilities, the Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department maintains and operates a 13-acre park, a small waterfront park, and five (5) smaller parks. The smaller parks range in size from .5 to .8 of an acre and are located on both Harbor Island and the barrier island.

Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division “Parks”

Wrightsville Beach Park—13 acres

- ◆ Location—Municipal Complex at 321 Causeway Drive
 - a. Tennis courts/back-wall
 - b. Sand volleyball courts
 - c. Basketball courts
 - d. Softball field
 - e. Soccer/football/multipurpose field
 - f. Jogging/fitness trail—John Nesbitt Loop
 - g. Exercise station
 - h. Playground areas and equipment
 - i. Outdoor Amphitheater
 - j. Picnic shelters with grills
 - k. 104 vehicle parking lot
 - l. Public restrooms



Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park—.85 acres

- ◆ Location—2 Waynick Boulevard
 - a. Transient dockage
 - b. Outdoor shower
 - c. Gazebo
 - d. Benches
 - e. Waterfront walkway



Causeway Drive Park—.5 acres

- ◆ Location—1 Causeway Drive
 - a. Protective fence



Greensboro Street Park—.8 acres

- ◆ Location—12 West Greensboro Street
 - a. Playground equipment
 - b. Covered shelter and picnic table
 - c. Benches



South Channel Drive Park—.5 acres

- ◆ Location—101 South Channel Drive at the intersection of South Channel Drive and Jasmine Place
 - a. Benches—view of Banks Channel
 - b. Steps leading to sand area/Banks Channel



Island Drive Park—.5 acres

- ◆ Location—30 Island Drive
 - a. Benches—view of Motts Channel
 - b. Steps leading to sand area/Motts Channel



Lee's Nature Park—.5 acres

- ◆ Location—453 Causeway Drive
 - a. Nature-oriented park for plant and bird identification
 - b. Bench—view of salt marsh on Harbor Island



Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division “Special Areas and Facilities”

◆ **Fran Russ Recreation Center—2,450 square feet with 1,350 square feet in the aerobics/multipurpose area**

The Fran Russ Recreation Center is located behind the Town of Wrightsville Beach Town Hall. The Center is equipped with indoor areas for recreation programs including yoga, aerobics, line dancing lessons, Pilates, tone and stretch, and after-school programs, as well as serving as a room for community meetings and events. The facility includes a fully equipped kitchen. It is generally agreed that the demand for recreation programs and services exceeds the current capabilities and possibilities for use of the Fran Russ Recreation Center.



◆ **John Nesbitt Loop**

One of the most popular facilities offered by the Town of Wrightsville Beach is the John Nesbitt Loop. “The Loop” as it is locally addressed, is a walking/jogging looped trail approximately 2.45 miles long that runs along Causeway Drive, across the South Banks Channel Bridge onto the barrier island, along North Lumina Avenue to West Salisbury Street and then swings back until it reconnects with Causeway Drive. The trail provides a paved surface for walking/jogging as well as designated rest areas with water. The trail is approximately 4 feet wide and follows the designated pedestrian sidewalk.



**Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division “Athletics,
Programs and Special Events”**

- ◆ *Adult Men’s 4 on 4 Basketball League—Summer Season*
- ◆ *Adult Men’s Flag Football Leagues—Spring Season*
- ◆ *Outdoor Concerts in the Park*
- ◆ *Bark in the Park Canine Disc Championships*
- ◆ *Surf-Sun-Sand Volleyball and Bocce Ball Tournaments*
- ◆ *Surf Movie Viewing in the Park*
- ◆ *Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony/Visit with Santa and Elves*
- ◆ *Adopt-A-Beach Access*
- ◆ *After School Program*
- ◆ *Art and Jewelry Camp*
- ◆ *Boot Camp*
- ◆ *Extreme Cross Training*
- ◆ *Soccer Camp*
- ◆ *Ladies’ and Men’s Singles Tennis Ladders*
- ◆ *Tennis Lessons*
- ◆ *Tennis Camp*
- ◆ *Low Impact Aerobics*
- ◆ *Pilates*
- ◆ *Zumba*
- ◆ *Hatha Yoga*
- ◆ *Power Yoga*
- ◆ *Tone, Strengthen and Stretch*
- ◆ *Cotillion*
- ◆ *Performance Club*
- ◆ *Bridge Workshops and Lessons*
- ◆ *Line Dancing Lessons*
- ◆ *Hip Hop Dance for Youth*
- ◆ *Cooking Classes for Youth*
- ◆ *Shag Lessons*



Other Public Parks, Recreation and Open Space Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities

- ◆ *Cape Fear Museum*
- ◆ *Greenfield Lake Park*
- ◆ *Legion Stadium Sports Complex*
- ◆ *Masonboro Island National Estuarine Research Reserve*
- ◆ *New Hanover County Parks, Gardens and Senior Resource Department*
 - Airlie Gardens
 - 67 acres of gardens, 10 acres of freshwater lakes, 1 1/8 mile walking trail
 - Bradley Creek School Park—8 acres
 - Playground equipment, multi-purpose court, multi-purpose soccer/football field
 - Hugh MacRae Athletic Complex—20 acres
 - Lighted baseball field, 3 lighted softball fields, 4 soccer fields, restrooms, seasonal concessions
 - Hugh MacRae Park—98 acres
 - Lighted tennis courts, playgrounds, ball fields with seasonal concessions, an equestrian ring, a pet exercise area, 6 picnic shelters, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, garden, gazebo, pond and a 1.55 mile walking/running trail
 - Hugh MacRae Nature Trail
 - Ogden Park—160 acres
 - 3 lighted baseball fields, lighted softball field, 3 lighted soccer/football fields, lighted youth football stadium, 9 lighted tennis courts, playgrounds, restrooms, seasonal concessions, picnic area with 3 shelters, walking/jogging trail, pet exercise area
 - Summer Rest Trail—1.5 miles with parking off Eastwood Road



◆ ***Public Boat Ramps***

- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Ramp into the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) at the Heide-Trask draw bridge



◆ ***UNC Wilmington Campus***

- Kenan Auditorium
- Cultural and Fine Arts Center
- Lumina Theater
- Boseman Softball Stadium
- Brooks Baseball Stadium
- Soccer Stadium
- Trask Coliseum
- Hanover Gymnasium
- Tennis courts
- Track
- Student Recreation Center
- Gazebo Park
- Intramural fields
- Natatorium
- Ropes/Challenge Course



North Carolina Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Sites

- ◆ *Wrightsville Beach*—The Town of Wrightsville Beach has 44 designated public access points. There are 4 ocean accessible public restrooms, one public restroom in the Wrightsville Beach Park, and 8 ADA accessible ocean access points.

- **Designated Public Access Points**

1. North End Turn Circle
2. 2698 N. Lumina Avenue
3. 2498 N. Lumina Avenue
4. 2398 N. Lumina Avenue
5. North Ridge Lane
6. South Ridge Lane
7. 2200 Block N. Lumina Avenue
8. 1800 N. Lumina Avenue
9. 1700 N. Lumina Avenue
10. Mallard Street
11. Crane Street
12. Sandpiper Street
13. Heron Street
14. Shearwater Street
15. Seagull Street
16. E. Salisbury Street
17. E. Greensboro Street
18. E. Henderson Street
19. E. Oxford Street
20. E. Fayetteville Street
21. E. Ashville Street
22. Augusta Street
23. Raleigh Street
24. E. Charlotte Street
25. E. Atlanta Street
26. E. Columbia Street
27. Birmingham Street
28. Oceanic Street
29. Stone Street
30. Latimer Street
31. Chadbourne Street
32. Arrindale Street
33. Seashore Street
34. Taylor Street
35. Bridgers Street
36. Across From 650 S. Lumina Avenue
37. Beside Surf Suites, 711 S. Lumina Avenue
38. Wright Street

- 39. Corbett Street
- 40. Albright Street
- 41. Northrop Street
- 42. Jack Parker Boulevard—East Entrance
- 43. Jack Parker Boulevard—Southeast Entrance by Gazebo
- 44. Jack Parker Boulevard—Southwest Entrance

- **Public Restroom Ocean Access Locations**

- 1. 2698 N. Lumina Avenue—29 parking spaces, ADA accessible, restrooms, and a shower
- 2. 2398 N. Lumina Avenue—99 parking spaces, ADA accessible, and restrooms
- 3. 25 E. Salisbury Street—parking spaces, ADA accessible, gazebo, restrooms, and shower
- 4. 650 S. Lumina Avenue—86 parking spaces, ADA accessible, restrooms, and a shower
- 5. 9 Bob Sawyer Drive (Wrightsville Beach Park)—parking spaces, ADA accessible, and restrooms

- **ADA Accessible Ocean Access Points**

- 1. 2698 N. Lumina Avenue
- 2. 2498 N. Lumina Avenue
- 3. 2398 N. Lumina Avenue
- 4. 1800 N. Lumina Avenue
- 5. 1700 N. Lumina Avenue
- 6. 25 E. Salisbury Street
- 7. 650 S. Lumina Avenue
- 8. 1000 S. Lumina Avenue

New Hanover County School Sites and Facilities

- ◆ *Elementary Schools*

- Wrightsville Beach Elementary School
 - Playground equipment
 - Open green space area
 - Pier with floating dock



**Private, Commercial, Non-Profit, and Church Recreational Programs,
Services, Areas and Facilities**

- ◆ *Atlantic Marine*
- ◆ *Aussie Island Surf Shop*
- ◆ *Battleship North Carolina*
- ◆ *Bellamy Mansion Museum*
- ◆ *Brooklyn Arts Center*
- ◆ *Cape Fear Cycling Club*
- ◆ *Cape Fear Kayaks and Outfitters*
- ◆ *Cape Fear Optimist Little League*
- ◆ *Cape Fear Soccer Association*
- ◆ *Cape Fear Serpentarium*
- ◆ *Captain Bill's*
- ◆ *Crest Fitness Center*
- ◆ *Hook, Line and Paddle*
- ◆ *Landfall Country Club*
- ◆ *Louise Wells Cameron Art Museum*
- ◆ *Marine Max*
- ◆ *Nauti Times*
- ◆ *North Carolina Holiday Flotilla*
- ◆ *O2 Fitness*
- ◆ *Reliant Marine*
- ◆ *South End Surf Shop*
- ◆ *Sports and Courts*
- ◆ *Starling Marine*
- ◆ *Sweetwater Surf Shop*
- ◆ *Thalian Hall Center for the Performing Arts*
- ◆ *Wilmington Children's Museum*
- ◆ *Wrightsville Beach Scenic Cruises*
- ◆ *Wrightsville Beach Museum of History*
- ◆ *YMCA of Wilmington*
- ◆ *YWCA of Lower Cape Fear*





CHAPTER FIVE: ASSESSMENT OF THE TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE NEEDS

A *Needs Assessment* is defined as a systematic exploration of the “*way things are*” and the “*way they should be.*” A typical Needs Assessment is a four-step process:

1. Perform a “Gap” Analysis to determine the “Need”—identify the “*current state of affairs*” and the “*desired state of affairs.*” The difference is the “*need*”.
2. Identify priorities and importance.
3. Identify causes of problems/threats and/or opportunities.
4. Identify solutions and make recommendations.

Chapter Four (Inventory of Existing Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities) of the master plan document gives us a very clear and understandable picture of the “*way things are*” and the “*current state of affairs.*” Chapter Five, this chapter, provides the

information collected from all sources pertinent and important to the delivery of parks, recreation and open space services in the Town of Wrightsville Beach area in relation to the “*way things should be*” and the “*desired state of affairs*” and identifies priorities and importance. Chapter Six (Parks, Recreation and Open Space Standards) and Chapter Seven (Master Plan Proposals & Recommendations) complete the Needs Assessment process.

Inspection, Analysis and Evaluation of Existing Parks, Recreation and Open Space Areas and Facilities

Each of the Town of Wrightsville Beach parks, recreation and open space areas and facilities was inspected, analyzed and evaluated to assess and determine its current disposition and status. The results were then analyzed and synthesized along with other information to provide guidance and direction in the establishment of the final *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*.

Wrightsville Beach Park

Wrightsville Beach Park Evaluation—This park is the flagship of the system as it is the largest and most diverse park. Amenities include a softball field, outdoor basketball courts, a multipurpose field, picnic shelters, tennis courts, tennis/lacrosse back-wall, playground equipment (one for 5 – 12 year olds and one for 3 – 5 year olds), sand volleyball pits, parking lot, landscaping, exercise station, public restrooms and an outdoor amphitheater. Internal pedestrian movement through the park is facilitated by a walkway system that connects the major park components. Additional facilities and amenities can be added to the park such as more outdoor tennis courts, lights for the existing tennis courts, a Frisbee golf course, a shuffleboard area, a horseshoe area, a bocce ball area, additional exercise stations, and a “doggie park/area”.



✚ **Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park**

Wynn Plaza Evaluation—The park is located on Banks Channel at the southeast corner of the Banks Channel bridge onto the barrier island. The Wynn Plaza Boat Dock facility is a wonderful component of the Town’s parks, recreation and open space system. Parking is minimal within the park itself, but more plentiful on the nearby streets. The availability of water access and boat dockage is fantastic and greatly needed. The site furnishings are suitable and adequate for the park. Vandalism does not appear to be a problem and the overall condition of the park and its component is very good for the level of use it receives. Litter can at times be a problem. Every effort should be made to maintain the visual beauty of the park through landscaping and proper maintenance. A designated kayak/canoe/paddleboard launching dock/area could be established to facilitate public access to Banks Channel for non-motorized watercraft.



✚ **Causeway Drive Park**

Causeway Park Evaluation—The park is located on the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) to the south of the Heide-Trask drawbridge over the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW). The park is small and receives very little use. Litter can be a problem at the park due to its proximity to the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission boat ramp. A gazebo and benches could be added to the park to allow residents the opportunity to take better advantage of the view of the AIWW and passing vessels. A rain garden could also be constructed for beautification purposes and to reduce non-point source pollution.



Greensboro Street Park

Greensboro Street Park Evaluation—The park provides an excellent set of amenities as a small neighborhood mini-park. The play equipment, picnic shelter/gazebo, picnic table, benches and landscaping are well placed and attractive. There is room within the park for the addition of a water fountain and a small playground structure for ages 5 - 12.



South Channel Drive Park

South Channel Drive Park Evaluation—The park is a small open space grassed area on Harbor Island with benches that provides a scenic overlook onto Banks Channel on the sound side of the barrier island. It is within easy walking distance from most homes in the neighborhood. The site is protected from erosion by a bulkhead and rip rap and has a set of steps leading down to Banks Channel. These steps require maintenance and periodic replacement. Litter and dog waste can be a problem even though a Dogi Pot dispenser is located on the property to help encourage dog owners to clean up after their pets. The facilities are adequate; however, additional landscaping could be added to include a rain garden.



Lee's Nature Park

Lee's Nature Park Evaluation—The park is very natural and provides excellent visual quality. Its close proximity to the Wrightsville Beach Park and its placement along the John Nesbitt Loop make it easily accessible. The existing facilities are adequate for the use the park receives.



Island Drive Park

Island Drive Park Evaluation—The park is a small open space located along Island Drive on Harbor Island with benches providing a scenic overlook of Motts Channel. The site is grassed, protected from erosion by a rock revetment and contains a “Dogi Pot” to help control pet waste disposal problems. There are concrete steps with a wooded hand rail leading down and over the rock revetment for access to Motts Channel and a low-tide sand/beach area. Additional landscaping would serve to beautify the site to include a rain garden. The access steps require maintenance and periodic replacement.



Fran Russ Recreation Center

Fran Russ Recreation Center Evaluation—The Recreation Center is the only indoor parks and recreation program facility. It is centrally located in conjunction with the Municipal Complex, Wrightsville Beach Park and the parks and recreation office. There is approximately 1,800 square feet of useable space and a small kitchen area within the center. Numerous programs and services are currently offered at the center. There is a definite need and opportunity to upgrade and improve this facility. Recommended improvements and upgrades include adding a state of the art sound system and renovating the interior of the facility.



Kayak/Canoe/Paddleboard System

Kayak/Canoe/Paddleboard System Evaluation—The Town of Wrightsville Beach is surrounded by water and therefore offers excellent opportunities and experiences for kayak/canoe/paddleboard enthusiasts. However, there are no signs, buoys or markers designating any actual trail routes. Public access is provided at the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission boat ramp on Harbor Island and can be gained at the Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park. Access can also be gained at various other private and unofficial public locations. Signage, markers and trail buoys could be erected that accurately describe the available routes to users and provide easy follow directions. Additionally, information kiosks could be placed in strategic locations around town and an information brochure/pamphlet could also be created and distributed.

John Nesbitt Loop

John Nesbitt Loop Evaluation—The John Nesbitt Loop is without doubt the most used facility offered by parks and recreation in the Town of Wrightsville Beach. “The Loop” draws participants from all over New Hanover County. Fortunately, the maintenance and operation costs for the John Nesbitt Loop are relatively low. Items that would effectively improve “The Loop” include widening the existing trail to at least 6 feet where possible; resurfacing the trail where possible with a surface more flexible and resilient than concrete; improving the lighting along the length of the trail; installing a system to provide a watering mist at strategic locations along the length of the trail; additional landscaping; and, adding fitness/exercise stations along the length of the trail.



Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—Public Meetings (3)

Direct community and citizen input was generated and received at three (3) public meetings conducted on March 26, 2012, March 27, 2012 and April 28, 2012 at the Town of Wrightsville Beach Board of Aldermen Council Chambers. This information was utilized to provide an initial understanding and assessment of the specific expressed parks, recreation and open space needs and priorities of the citizens of the Town of Wrightsville Beach. This input from the Town of Wrightsville Beach citizens and residents was then analyzed and synthesized along with other information to provide guidance and direction in the establishment of the final *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*.

Ms. Katie Ryan, Recreation Program Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Division, Planning and Parks Department, opened the meetings by welcoming the attendees and giving a brief synopsis regarding the Town's interest in developing an updated comprehensive parks, recreation and open space master plan to replace the existing *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*. Ms. Ryan stressed to those in attendance the importance of public participation in the overall comprehensive master plan process and introduced Dr. Jim Herstine, Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW), the consultant hired by the Town of Wrightsville Beach to lead the comprehensive master plan process. Dr. Herstine led each of the public meetings by asking the following questions:

- 1) What areas and facilities are you currently using for parks, recreation and open space program, services and activities?
- 2) What parks, recreation and open space programs, services and activities do you currently participate in?
- 3) What parks, recreation and open space program, services and activities would you like to participate in that are not currently provided?
- 4) What general and specific issues and areas of interest should the Town of Wrightsville Beach Master Plan address?
- 5) Do you have any additional questions or comments?

The information generated and discussed at each of the public meetings regarding Questions 3, 4 and 5 above is summarized below:

MARCH 26, 2012 MEETING (11 Residents in Attendance):

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas, and Facilities “Needs”

THE TOWN NEEDS:

- ◆ Additional opportunities for indoor activities
- ◆ To provide new and expanded indoor programs and services for youth
- ◆ To provide new and expanded indoor programs and services for adults including fitness classes and weight training classes
- ◆ A full-service Natatorium/Indoor Swimming Complex
- ◆ Additional arts and cultural classes
- ◆ Better utilize existing green space and open space
- ◆ To beautify and renovate the existing downtown area of the town
 - Add landscaping
 - Move utilities underground

- ◆ To expand and improve the existing Fran Russ Recreation Center
- ◆ Additional green space and open space
- ◆ To provide a “Dog Park”—a safe and convenient place for people to take their dogs
- ◆ An adult softball league
- ◆ Increased community indoor meeting and class space
- ◆ A more “bike and pedestrian friendly” environment

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel “Considerations”

THE TOWN SHOULD CONSIDER:

- ◆ Improved and increased cooperation and assistance with the New Hanover County School System
- ◆ “Stay Green”
- ◆ Acquiring the vacant lot next to the King Neptune Restaurant and across from Robert’s Market
- ◆ Contracting with the commercial sector/private industry to run and operate some of the programs and services
- ◆ Providing visual improvements and overall beatification of the island including the entrance to the town over the drawbridge
- ◆ Year-round “dog friendly” rules and regulations for the beach area at the north end of the island
- ◆ Utilizing the old Fire Station Warehouse as green/open space

The highlights of the comments and recommendations from this public meeting in a non-priority order are the need:

- 1) for a safe and practical alternative to vehicular transportation in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- 2) for the Town of Wrightsville Beach to conserve, protect and acquire green space and open space
- 3) for a comprehensive Natatorium/Indoor Swimming Complex to be provided in cooperation with the New Hanover County Parks Department, the City of Wilmington, the New Hanover County School System and other appropriate and interested groups, organizations and entities
- 4) for increased and improved cooperation and collaboration between the Town of Wrightsville Beach and the New Hanover County School System
- 5) to increase indoor programs, services, opportunities and experiences for youth and adults
- 6) to provide opportunities and experiences for dog owners to recreate with their dogs
- 7) to renovate, visually enhance and beautify all areas of the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- 8) to improve and expand the Fran Russ Recreation Center

MARCH 27, 2012 MEETING (9 Residents in Attendance):

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas, and Facilities “Needs”

THE TOWN NEEDS:

- ◆ To conserve, preserve, protect and acquire green space and open space
- ◆ Expand the “Summer Concert in the Parks” series
- ◆ To address the issue of pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular transportation to make the town more “bike friendly”
- ◆ To provide cooking classes
- ◆ To increase, enhance and expand youth involvement, particularly middle school aged youth, in the parks, recreation and open space programs and services
 - Conduct a youth survey to determine their wants, needs and desires
 - Provide non-team sports and activities
 - Offer dances and other social opportunities and experiences
 - Provide water-related programs and services such as paddle boarding
- ◆ An expanded and improved indoor recreation facility

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel “Considerations”

THE TOWN SHOULD CONSIDER:

- ◆ Partnering with private agencies and enterprises
- ◆ Creating a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Foundation

The highlights of the comments and recommendations from this public meeting in a non-priority order are the need:

- 1) for the conservation, protection and preservation of green space and open space
- 2) to provide a safe, reasonable and obtainable alternative to motorized vehicular transportation within the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- 3) for an expanded “Summer Concert in the Park” series
- 4) to encourage and expand the involvement of youth in the parks, recreation and open space programs and services
- 5) to provide an expanded and enhanced indoor recreation facility
- 6) to partner and collaborate with the private/commercial sector to improve the provision of parks, recreation and open space programs, services, areas and facilities
- 7) the creation of a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Foundation



APRIL 28, 2012 MEETING (2 Residents in Attendance):

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas, and Facilities “Needs”

THE TOWN NEEDS:

- ◆ Increased and improved kayaking opportunities to include a marked and designated kayak trail
- ◆ Offering anything people can do “in flip-flops”
- ◆ A Bocce Ball area/facility
- ◆ A Frisbee Golf area/facility

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel “Considerations”

THE TOWN SHOULD CONSIDER:

- ◆ Working with Wrightsville Beach Elementary School to provide increased and improved kayaking opportunities
- ◆ Improving the quality of the vendors associated with the Holiday Flotilla
- ◆ “Fine tuning” existing programs, services, areas and facilities

The highlights of the comments and recommendations from this public meeting in a non-priority order are the need:

- 1) to increase efforts related to kayaking opportunities and experiences by working closely and cooperatively with Wrightsville Beach Elementary School and by marking, designating and maintaining kayak trail(s) in the area
- 2) to build/construct a Bocce Ball area/facility at an existing town park
- 3) to build/construct a Frisbee Golf area/facility at an existing town park

Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—Meeting With Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

A formal informational session was held with members of the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee on May 7, 2012 to receive input from the Committee members regarding the parks, recreation and open space needs and priorities for the Town of Wrightsville Beach. This input from the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee was then analyzed and synthesized along with other information to provide guidance and direction in the establishment of the final *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*.

The information generated, discussed and collected at the Committee meeting is anonymously summarized below:

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas, and Facilities “Needs”

THE TOWN NEEDS:

- ◆ To conserve, preserve and protect open space and natural areas
 - Preserve small town ambience
 - Maintain “status quo”
- ◆ Improve pedestrian and bike safety
- ◆ To become more “dog friendly” by creating a dog park or play area
- ◆ To protect and preserve public access to the waters in and surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach
 - Keep street ends open
 - Keep encroachment out of the access ways
 - Enforce the public’s right of access to water
- ◆ To construct and operate a Skate Park
- ◆ Provide increased programs and services for “teens” and “tweens”

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations

- ◆ When addressing the issue of pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular transportation recognize the need to create new pedestrian and bicycle space and not just make the existing spaces smaller
- ◆ Remodeling/converting old and existing town buildings for parks, recreation and open space purposes

The highlights of the comments and recommendations from the advisory committee meeting in a non-priority order are the need:

- 1) to conserve, preserve and protect green space and open space
- 2) to provide safe pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular transportation
- 3) to protect public access to water

Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—Focus Group

The Focus Group was formed from a purposive, deliberate sample of seven (7) Town of Wrightsville Beach stakeholders. The Focus Group members met on August 1, 2012. The encounter was led by Dr. Jim Herstine, Ph.D. The Focus Group members were collectively asked to address the following questions:

- 1) What do you think are the best/most successful programs, services, areas and facilities currently offered by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division?

- 2) What new programs, services, areas and facilities would you like to see the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division offer in the future? What needs exist in terms of parks, recreation and open space?
- 3) What do you think are the ten (10) most important issues in terms of programs, services, areas and facilities the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division must address in the future?

This input from the Focus Group was then analyzed and synthesized to provide guidance and direction in the establishment of the final *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*.

The information generated, discussed and collected at the Focus Group meeting is anonymously summarized below:

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas, and Facilities “Needs”

THE TOWN NEEDS:

- ◆ Connected and comprehensive pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular (bike) transportation system
 - Education program for cyclists and pedestrians
 - Increased police enforcement of existing biking rules and regulations
 - Pedestrian bridge over Banks Channel
- ◆ A “pump-out station” for boats at Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park
- ◆ Additional landscaping along “The John Nesbitt Loop”
- ◆ A “Community Garden”
- ◆ A Skate Park
- ◆ To enhance, beautify and improve Lee’s Cut Park

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations

- ◆ Creating a “Hospitality Group/Visitor Assistance” organization to assist residents and visitors to the town and to supplement the current work of the Ambassadors and Park Ranger
 - Tourist education—maybe a brochure
- ◆ Creating and operating an “Intra-Island Shuttle” for residents to move from location to location within the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ◆ Listen to residents regarding their wants, needs and desires and provide formal and informal opportunities for residents and visitors to express their wants, needs and desires
- ◆ Providing better protection for pedestrians at designated crosswalks
- ◆ Providing increased and enhanced basic services for the transient boaters who moor in Banks Channel

- ◆ Eradicating any and all invasive and non-native plant species within town parks and other town areas and facilities
- ◆ Redesigning “The John Nesbitt Loop” to improve user safety, satisfaction and efficiency
- ◆ Enforcing the existing “No Wake Zones” and implementing new “No Wake Zones”
- ◆ Constructing and maintaining bio-retention basins and “rain gardens” in suitable areas
 - to assist in the control of non-point pollution
 - to enhance the beauty and visual appeal of the town
- ◆ Acquiring the land currently utilized by the elementary school for parks, recreation and open space purposes
- ◆ Constructing “speed bumps” along Waynick and Lumina Boulevards

The “Top” recommendations/needs as identified by the Focus Group in a non-priority order are:

- 1) Traffic Master Plan for the Town of Wrightsville Beach that includes pedestrians, bicyclists and automobiles
- 2) Landscaping and Beautification
 - Use of native plants
 - Seek “sponsorships” to pay for the landscaping and to maintain the landscaping
 - Bio-retention basins
 - Rain gardens
- 3) Redesign and expand “The John Nesbitt Loop”
- 4) Provide an “Intra-Island Shuttle”
- 5) Provide increased services for transient boaters
 - Pump-out station at Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park
 - Educational/informational Brochures
- 6) Visitor and Resident Education/Awareness/Enforcement
 - “Hospitality Ambassadors”
 - Police on bicycles
 - Brochures on Safety
 - Signage
 - Recycling
- 7) Speed bumps at critical areas and pedestrian crossings
- 8) Skateboard Park
- 9) Green space and open space preservation, conservation, protection and acquisition
- 10) “No Wake Zones”

Community and Citizen Input on Parks, Recreation and Open Space Needs and Priorities—2012 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey

A survey instrument (**Appendix G**) entitled “*2012 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey*” was developed and administered through a combined effort by the Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and Katie Ryan—Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Program Supervisor. The survey instrument opened with the following statement: **“The Town of Wrightsville Beach Board of Aldermen, Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee and Town staff are committed to maintaining and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Wrightsville Beach. Public recreation facilities and recreation programs are an important part of the Town’s immediate and long-range planning efforts and we need your input. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions in this survey and return it to us in the enclosed postage paid envelope prior to February 10, 2012. The results will help Town officials and staff in their efforts to provide the best possible recreational opportunities for the citizens of Wrightsville Beach”**.

The survey instrument was distributed to 2,603 Wrightsville Beach property owners on January 17, 2012. A total of 544 completed surveys were collected representing a response rate of approximately 21%. Thirty-eight (38) percent of the respondents stated they reside in the Town of Wrightsville Beach full-time. When asked “how long have you lived in Wrightsville Beach”, 11% responded 5 years or less; 12% responded 5 – 10 years; 15% responded 10 – 15 years; and, 49% responded over 15 years. The data from the survey was analyzed and synthesized along with other information to provide guidance and direction in the establishment of the final *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*.



The information discussed and collected from the survey data is summarized below:

✚ **Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas, and Facilities**

◆ *When asked “Which of the following Wrightsville Beach recreational facilities or parks have members of your household visited or used in the last 12 months? (Check all that apply)”, the responses were:*

- 369 or 67.8% of the respondents had visited or used the **John Nesbitt Loop**
- 211 or 38.7% of the respondents had visited or used the **Wrightsville Beach Park Playground**
- 123 or 22.6% of the respondents had visited or used **Lees Nature Park**
- 122 or 22.4% of the respondents had visited or used the **Tennis Courts**
- 96 or 17.6% of the respondents had visited or used the **Fran Russ Recreation Center**
- 89 or 16.3% of the respondents replied “**I/we haven’t used any of these facilities**”
- 83 or 15.2% of the respondents had visited or used the **South Channel Park**
- 73 or 13.4% of the respondents had visited or used the **Island Drive Park**
- 69 or 12.6% of the respondents had visited or used **Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park**
- 66 or 12.1% of the respondents had visited or used the **Greensboro Street Park**
- 64 or 11.7% of the respondents had visited or used the **Basketball Courts**
- 56 or 10.2% of the respondents had visited or used the **Picnic Shelters**
- 54 or 9.9% of the respondents had visited or used the **Soccer Field**
- 24 or 4.4% of the respondents had visited or used the **Softball Field**
- 21 or 3.8% of the respondents **did not provide a response** to the question
- 15 or 2.7% of the respondents had visited or used the **Volleyball Courts**



Facility or Park	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>John Nesbitt Loop</i>	<i>369</i>	<i>67.8%</i>
<i>Wrightsville Beach Park Playground</i>	<i>211</i>	<i>38.7%</i>
<i>Lees Nature Park</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>22.6%</i>
<i>Tennis Courts</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>22.4%</i>
<i>Fran Russ Recreation Center</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>17.6%</i>
<i>I/we haven't used any of these facilities</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>16.3%</i>
<i>South Channel Park</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>15.2%</i>
<i>Island Drive Park</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>13.4%</i>
<i>Wynn Plaza</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>12.6%</i>
<i>Greensboro Street Park</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>12.1%</i>
<i>Basketball Courts</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>11.7%</i>
<i>Picnic Shelters</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>10.2%</i>
<i>Soccer Field</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>9.9%</i>
<i>Softball Field</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>4.4%</i>
<i>No Response</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>3.8%</i>
<i>Volleyball Courts</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>2.7%</i>

◆ When asked “Which of the following Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Department programs and activities have you or members of your household participated in within the last 12 months? (Check all that apply)”, the responses were:

- 357 or 65.6% of the respondents had participated in the **Farmers’ Market**
- 230 or 42.2% of the respondents had participated in the **Concerts in the Park**
- 134 or 24.6% of the respondents replied “**I/we haven’t participated in any of these programs or activities**”
- 91 or 16.7% of the respondents had participated in the **Movies in the Park**
- 64 or 11.7% of the respondents had participated in the **Bark in the Park**
- 38 or 6.9% of the respondents had participated in **Yoga**
- 26 or 4.7% of the respondents had participated in **Low Impact Aerobics**
- 26 or 4.7% of the respondents had participated in **Tennis Lessons**
- 22 or 4.0% of the respondents had participated in **Pilates**
- 19 or 3.4% of the respondents had participated in **Tone & Stretch**
- 16 or 2.9% of the respondents **did not provide a response** to the question
- 12 or 2.2% of the respondents had participated in the **Kayak / Paddleboard Workshop**
- 10 or 1.8% of the respondents had participated in the **Boot Camp**
- 9 or 1.6% of the respondents had participated in the **Art Camp**
- 9 or 1.6% of the respondents had participated in the **Kids Night Out**

- 8 or 1.4% of the respondents had participated in **Bridge Lessons**
- 7 or 1.2% of the respondents had participated in **Shag Lessons**
- 6 or 1.1% of the respondents had participated in the **Soccer Camp**
- 4 or 0.7% of the respondents had participated in the **Lacrosse Camp**
- 4 or 0.7% of the respondents had participated in the **Tennis Camp**
- 3 or 0.5% of the respondents had participated in the **After School Program**
- 3 or 0.5% of the respondents had participated in the **Performance Camp**
- 3 or 0.5% of the respondents had participated in the **Tennis Ladder**
- 2 or 0.3% of the respondents had participated in **Cotillion**
- 1 or 0.1% of the respondents had participated in the **Basketball League**
- 1 or 0.1% of the respondents had participated in the **Flag Football League**

Program/Activity	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Farmers' Market</i>	357	65.6%
<i>Concerts in the Park</i>	230	42.2%
<i>I/we haven't participated in any of these programs and activities</i>	134	24.6%
<i>Movies in the Park</i>	91	16.7%
<i>Bark in the Park</i>	64	11.7%
<i>Yoga</i>	38	6.9%
<i>Low Impact Aerobics</i>	26	4.7%
<i>Tennis Lessons</i>	26	4.7%
<i>Pilates</i>	22	4.0%
<i>Tone & Stretch</i>	19	3.4%
<i>No Response</i>	16	2.9%
<i>Kayak/Paddleboard Workshop</i>	12	2.2%
<i>Boot Camp</i>	10	1.8%
<i>Art Camp</i>	9	1.6%
<i>Kids Night Out</i>	9	1.6%
<i>Bridge Lessons</i>	8	1.4%
<i>Shag Lessons</i>	7	1.2%
<i>Soccer Camp</i>	6	1.1%
<i>Lacrosse Camp</i>	4	0.7%
<i>Tennis Camp</i>	4	0.7%
<i>After School Program</i>	3	0.5%
<i>Performance Camp</i>	3	0.5%
<i>Tennis Ladder</i>	3	0.5%
<i>Cotillion</i>	2	0.3%
<i>Basketball League</i>	1	0.1%
<i>Flag Football League</i>	1	0.1%

◆ *When asked the open ended question “Please list in order of preference the top 6 recreational activities enjoyed by members of your household either at Wrightsville Beach or elsewhere”, the top responses were:*

- 191 or 35.1% of the respondents listed **Walk/Run**
- 137 or 25.1% of the respondents listed **Biking**
- 119 or 21.8% of the respondents listed **The Loop**
- 116 or 21.3% of the respondents listed the **Beach**
- 115 or 21.1% of the respondents listed **Boating**
- 103 or 18.9% of the respondents listed **Tennis**
- 99 or 18.1% of the respondents listed **Swimming**
- 77 or 14.1% of the respondents listed **Kayaking/Paddle Boarding**
- 70 or 12.8% of the respondents listed **Surfing**
- 59 or 10.8% of the respondents listed **Fishing**
- 55 or 10.1% of the respondents listed **Concerts/Music**
- 50 or 9.1% of the respondents listed **Farmers’ Market**
- 39 or 7.1% of the respondents listed **Golf**
- 32 or 5.8% of the respondents listed **Playgrounds**
- 28 or 5.1% of the respondents listed **Basketball**
- 24 or 4.4% of the respondents listed **Movies**
- 22 or 4.0% of the respondents listed **Soccer**
- 22 or 4.0% of the respondents listed **Yoga**
- 22 or 4.0% of the respondents listed **Skateboarding**



Activity	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Walk/Run</i>	<i>191</i>	<i>35.1%</i>
<i>Biking</i>	<i>137</i>	<i>25.1%</i>
<i>The Loop</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>21.8%</i>
<i>The Beach</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>21.3%</i>
<i>Boating</i>	<i>115</i>	<i>21.1%</i>
<i>Tennis</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>18.9%</i>
<i>Swimming</i>	<i>99</i>	<i>18.1%</i>
<i>Kayak/Paddle Boarding</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>14.1%</i>
<i>Surfing</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>12.8%</i>
<i>Fishing</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>10.8%</i>
<i>Concerts/Music</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>10.1%</i>
<i>Farmers' Market</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>9.1%</i>
<i>Golf</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>7.1%</i>
<i>Playgrounds</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>5.8%</i>
<i>Basketball</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>5.1%</i>
<i>Movies</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>4.4%</i>
<i>Soccer</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>Yoga</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>4%</i>
<i>Skateboarding</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>4%</i>

◆ *When asked the open ended question “In your opinion, what are the three most important new facilities that the town needs to provide”, the top responses were:*

- 220 or 40.4% of the respondents stated the **Town does not need to provide new facilities**
- 115 or 21.1% of the respondents gave **No Answer**
- 67 or 12.3% of the respondents stated **Bike Paths/Trails/Lane**
- 52 or 9.5% of the respondents stated **Skateboard Park**
- 28 or 5.1% of the respondents stated **Recreation Center**
- 19 or 3.4% of the respondents stated **Dog Park**
- 17 or 3.1% of the respondents stated **Improve Current Parking**
- 13 or 2.3% of the respondents stated **Public Pool**



Facility	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Town Does Not Need to Provide New Facilities</i>	220	40.4%
<i>No Answer</i>	115	21.1%
<i>Bike Paths/Trails/Lane</i>	67	12.3%
<i>Skateboard Park</i>	52	9.5%
<i>Recreation Center</i>	28	5.1%
<i>Dog Park</i>	19	3.4%
<i>Improve Current Parking</i>	17	3.1%
<i>Public Pool</i>	13	2.3%

◆ *When asked the open ended question “In your opinion, what are the three most important new recreational activities that the town needs to provide”, the top responses were:*

- 251 or 46.1% of the respondents stated the **Town does not Need to Provide new Recreational Activities**
- 164 or 30.1% of the respondents gave **No Answer**
- 43 or 7.4% of the respondents stated **Bike Paths/Trails/Facilities**
- 28 or 5.1% of the respondents stated **Skateboard Park**
- 15 or 2.7% of the respondents stated **Dog Park**

Recreational Activity	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Town Does Not Need to Provide New Recreational Activities</i>	251	46.1%
<i>No Answer</i>	164	30.1%
<i>Bike Paths/Trails/Facilities</i>	43	7.4%
<i>Skateboard Park</i>	28	5.1%
<i>Dog Park</i>	15	2.7%

◆ *When asked the open ended question “In your opinion, what are the three most important new health and wellness programs that the town needs to provide”, the top responses were:*

- 261 or 47.9% of the respondents stated the **Town does not Need to Provide new Health and Wellness Programs**
- 151 or 27.7% of the respondents gave **No Answer**
- 18 or 3.5% of the respondents stated **Yoga**

- 17 or 3.3% of the respondents stated **Exercise Classes**
- 14 or 2.5% of the respondents stated **Bike Lanes/Paths/Trail**
- 11 or 2.0% of the respondents stated **Walking**

Health and Wellness Programs	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Town Does Not Need to Provide New Health and Wellness Programs</i>	<i>261</i>	<i>47.9%</i>
<i>No Answer</i>	<i>151</i>	<i>27.7%</i>
<i>Yoga</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>3.5%</i>
<i>Exercise Classes</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>3.3%</i>
<i>Bike Lanes/Paths/Trails</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>2.5%</i>
<i>Walking</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>2.0%</i>

 **Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations**

◆ *When asked the open ended question “If you indicated in the previous questions that you Sometimes, Rarely, or Never use Wrightsville Beach recreation facilities or participate in recreation programs or activities offered by the Town please indicate why”, the twelve (12) top responses were:*

- 101 or 18.5% of the respondents reported **Part-time Resident**
- 40 or 7.4% of the respondents reported **Busy, Schedule Conflicts**
- 39 or 7.2% of the respondents reported **Age or Health Conditions**
- 30 or 5.5% of the respondents reported **Using Beach**
- 28 or 5.1% of the respondents reported **Lack of Interest**
- 25 or 4.5% of the respondents reported **Engaged in Other Activities**
- 17 or 3.1% of the respondents reported **Unaware**
- 13 or 2.3% of the respondents reported **Use Other Places with Similar Opportunities**
- 6 or 1.1% of the respondents reported **Family/Children not Here or Grown**
- 5 or 0.9% of the respondents reported **Too Few Tax Paying Residents to Support Parks & Recreation**
- 5 or 0.9% of the respondents reported **Timing, Location of Farmers’ Market is Difficult**
- 3 or 0.05% of the respondents reported **Prices are too High (Expensive)**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Part-Time Resident</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>18.5%</i>
<i>Busy, Schedule Conflicts</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>7.4%</i>
<i>Age or Health Conditions</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>7.2%</i>
<i>Using Beach</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>5.5%</i>
<i>Lack of Interest</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>5.1%</i>
<i>Engaged in Other Activities</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>4.5%</i>
<i>Unaware</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>3.1%</i>
<i>Use Other Places with Similar Opportunities</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>2.3%</i>
<i>Family/Children not Here or Grown</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>1.1%</i>
<i>Too Few Tax Paying Residents to Support Parks & Recreation</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0.9%</i>
<i>Timing, Location of Farmers' Market is Difficult</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0.9%</i>
<i>Prices are too High (Expensive)</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0.05%</i>



◆ *When asked “Would you support new facilities if they were funded through private sources or grants”, the responses were:*

- 275 or 50.5% of the respondents stated **Yes**
- 112 or 20.5% of the respondents stated **No**
- 9 or 1.6% of the respondents stated **Maybe**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	<i>275</i>	<i>50.5%</i>
<i>No</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>20.5%</i>
<i>Maybe</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>1.6%</i>

◆ *When asked “Would you support a property tax increase to provide for new facilities”, the responses were:*

- 95 or 17.4% of the respondents stated **Yes**
- 312 or 57.3% of the respondents stated **No**
- 2 or 0.3% of the respondents stated **Maybe**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>17.4%</i>
<i>No</i>	<i>312</i>	<i>57.3%</i>
<i>Maybe</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0.3%</i>

◆ *When asked “Would you support new activities if they were funded through private sources or grants”, the responses were:*

- 212 or 38.9% of the respondents stated **Yes**
- 107 or 19.6% of the respondents stated **No**
- 1 or 0.1% of the respondents stated **Maybe**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	<i>212</i>	<i>38.9%</i>
<i>No</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>19.6%</i>
<i>Maybe</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0.1%</i>

◆ *When asked “Would you support a property tax increase to provide for new recreational activities”, the responses were:*

- 61 or 17.4% of the respondents stated **Yes**
- 267 or 49.0% of the respondents stated **No**
- 1 or 0.1% of the respondents stated **Maybe**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>17.4%</i>
<i>No</i>	<i>267</i>	<i>49.0%</i>
<i>Maybe</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0.1%</i>

◆ *When asked “Would you support new health/wellness programs if they were funded through private sources or grants”, the responses were:*

- 195 or 35.8% of the respondents stated **Yes**
- 106 or 19.4% of the respondents stated **No**
- 20 or 3.6% of the respondents stated **Maybe**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>35.8%</i>
<i>No</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>19.4%</i>
<i>Maybe</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>3.6%</i>

◆ *When asked “Would you support a property tax increase to provide for new health and wellness programs”, the responses were:*

- 56 or 10.2% of the respondents stated **Yes**
- 253 or 46.5% of the respondents stated **No**
- 19 or 3.4% of the respondents stated **Maybe**

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
<i>Yes</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>10.2%</i>
<i>No</i>	<i>253</i>	<i>46.5%</i>
<i>Maybe</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>3.4%</i>

Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

The following is a list of comments/recommendations within the **Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan** that have an impact upon and relevance to the **Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan**:

***Items in green color and bold print were successfully completed, implemented and/or initiated between 2007 – 2012**

✚ **Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities, 2007 - 2012**

- ◆ Construction of a new community recreation center
- ◆ **Planning and initial development of a system of non-vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle transportation network***
- ◆ Development of facilities for additional public beach and coastal waterfront access
- ◆ Install lighting for the existing tennis courts at the Wrightsville Beach Park
- ◆ Construction of three (3) additional lighted tennis courts at the Wrightsville Beach Park
- ◆ **Construction of one (1) additional basketball court at the Wrightsville Beach Park***
- ◆ **Construction of an outdoor amphitheater at the Wrightsville Beach Park***
- ◆ **Increase available parking at the Wrightsville Beach Park***
- ◆ Upgrade and modernize the existing parks and facilities
 - Wrightsville Beach Park
 - ✓ Replace the fence at the softball field; enclose the tennis back-wall; add a wooden boardwalk over the marsh; and, add landscaping
 - John Nesbitt Loop
 - ✓ Widen the loop trail to at least six (6) feet; resurface the trail where appropriate; install a system to spray a water mist at strategic locations; improve the lighting of the trail; and, add fitness stations where practical
 - Fran Russ Recreation Center
 - ✓ Install a state of the art sound system and **resurface the aerobics/exercise room floor***
 - Causeway Drive Park
 - ✓ Add covered benches overlooking the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW)
 - Greensboro Street Park
 - ✓ **Add play equipment*** and a water fountain
 - South Channel Drive Park
 - ✓ **Add steps leading to the low-tide beach area and Banks Channel*** and add landscaping
 - Island Drive Park
 - ✓ Add landscaping
 - Kayak and Canoe Trail
 - ✓ Add trail markers and buoys and expand the length of the trail
- ◆ **Collaborate with other local entities to establish a Farmers' Market***
- ◆ **Increase emphasis on aquatic and aquatic-related programs***
- ◆ **Offer additional outdoor programs and services utilizing the amphitheater***

- ◆ **Implement more bicycle related programs and services in conjunction with the development of the bicycle and pedestrian non-vehicular transportation network***
- ◆ **Offer programs emphasizing active living and fitness***
- ◆ **Offer programs related to hobbies and life-long interests***

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations—2007 – 2012

- ◆ **Expand and enhance the number and type of cooperative partnerships***
- ◆ **Form a Pedestrian and Non-Motorized Vehicular Transportation Committee***
- ◆ **Provide Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility to all citizens***
- ◆ Contract with a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) to inspect all parks and playground equipment and areas
- ◆ Create a separate and distinct Parks and Recreation Department
- ◆ Create and hire a full-time position of Director of Parks and Recreation
- ◆ Create and hire a full-time position of Recreation Specialist
- ◆ Create and hire a full-time position of Parks Maintenance Worker



The following tables highlight the **significant accomplishments** and **status of the pertinent comments/recommendations** for the period 2007 – 2012 within the Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan:



**SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND STATUS OF THE
PERTINENT 2007 – 2012 COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS
CONTAINED IN THE 2007 – 2012 TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE
BEACH PARKS, RECREATION AND
OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

2007 – 2012 AREA AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

2007 – 2012 PROJECT	CURRENT STATUS
Community Recreation Center	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Non-Vehicular Transportation Network	In-Progress and continued in 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Water Access	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Tennis Court Lighting	Resurfaced existing courts and moved lighting to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Tennis Courts (3)	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Basketball Court	Completed
Outdoor Amphitheater	Completed
Parking Improvements	Completed
Wrightsville Beach Park Improvements	Some completed, some in-progress, and some moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
John Nesbitt Loop Improvements	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Fran Russ Recreation Center Improvements	Some completed and some moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Causeway Drive Park Improvements	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Greensboro Street Park Improvements	Completed
South Channel Drive Park Improvements	Completed
Island Drive Park Improvements	Completed
Kayak and Canoe Trail	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan

2007 – 2012 PROGRAM AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT



PROJECT	STATUS
Farmers' Market	Completed
Aquatic and Aquatic-Related Programs	Completed
Outdoor Programs	Completed
Bicycle Programs	Completed
Active Living and Fitness Programs	Completed
Hobbies and Life-Long Interest Programs	Completed



2007 – 2012 POLICY AND PROCEDURE CONSIDERATIONS

PROJECT	STATUS
Collaborative Partnerships	In-Progress: Continued in 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Transportation Committee	In-Progress: Continued in 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	In-Progress: Continued in 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI)	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan



2007 – 2012 PERSONNEL CONSIDERATIONS

PROJECT	STATUS
Director of Parks and Recreation	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Recreation Specialist	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan
Parks Maintenance Worker	Moved to 2013 – 2018 Master Plan

City of Wilmington 2010 – 2015 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities

- ◆ Construct a comprehensive, full-service Natatorium/Indoor Swimming Complex as part of a joint and cooperative effort and partnership between the City of Wilmington, the New Hanover County Parks Department, the New Hanover County School System and other appropriate and interested groups, organizations and agencies

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations

- ◆ Continued planning, construction and development of a system of non-motorized vehicular and pedestrian transportation between and connecting public areas and facilities within the City of Wilmington’s planning jurisdiction and in concert with the *Cross-City Trail*
- ◆ Expand, enrich and enhance the number and type of cooperative partnerships with other non-governmental and governmental agencies and organizations
 - Work with the Town of Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover County and the Town of Carolina Beach to complete a comprehensive pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular transportation system for New Hanover County

2009 Pelican Drive/Salisbury Street Bicycle Plan for the Town of Wrightsville Beach

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities

- ◆ Make the Town of Wrightsville Beach a bicycle friendly community, particularly the east-west bicycle connectivity along Salisbury Street, as well as Pelican Drive, and north-south connectivity along Lagoon Drive and North Lumina Avenue

New Hanover County 2006 Master Plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities

- ◆ Develop a county-wide greenway plan and system
- ◆ Develop a county-wide bike plan and system
- ◆ Expand opportunities for water access

Town of Wrightsville Beach 2005 Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Land Use Plan

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities

- ◆ Addition and renovation of the Frances L. Russ Recreation Center
- ◆ Addition of lights to the tennis courts and softball fields
- ◆ Improve existing access sites by adding more shower and changing facilities, fixing dune walkover structures, adding bike racks, and installing mats or other devices at one or more access sites to improve the ability of the disabled to access the water
- ◆ Additional soccer field

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations

- ◆ Maximize public access to the beaches and public trust waters of the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ◆ Implement policies and recommendations that assure satisfactory access to all segments of the community including persons with disabilities
- ◆ Reduce user conflicts in the public trust waters of Wrightsville Beach
- ◆ Appropriately mark sound-side public access points
- ◆ Maximize recreational opportunities for residents and visitors

Town of Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina 2002 Surface Water Use

Plan

✚ Input Identification—Programs, Services, Areas and Facilities

- ◆ The Town of Wrightsville Beach should work to develop additional public boat launching facilities
- ◆ The Town of Wrightsville Beach should make the Wynn Plaza Boat Dock a convenient access point for kayaks and canoes

✚ Input Identification—Policy and Personnel Considerations

- ◆ The Town of Wrightsville Beach should sponsor, through a non-profit organization, the preparation of a locally produced video, combining an overview of the area's scenic and recreational water resources, with a summary of the most important boater precautions and safe boating tips
- ◆ The Town of Wrightsville Beach should work with the New Hanover County Commissioners to post a “*Wrightsville Beach Area Safe Boating Rules*” sign at the public boat ramp and at five (5) strategic locations along specific, well-traveled navigation channels





CHAPTER SIX: PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

Parks, recreation and open space standards are more likely to serve the needs and interests of a community if those standards meet certain specific criteria. In truth, the real measure of a good and practical standard is the level of citizen satisfaction with the standards. In developing parks, recreation and open space standards for the Town of Wrightsville Beach, the following criteria were considered:

- ✚ **Relevance**—the standards should reflect the needs, interests and lifestyles of the community’s residents.
- ✚ **People Orientation**—the standards should reflect the unique needs and preferences of specific people in the area being served.
- ✚ **Performance Standards**—the standards should provide a basis for measuring achievement of community objectives. They should measure the quality of parks, recreation and open space services rather than simply the quantity.

- ✚ **Feasibility**—the standards should be attainable within a reasonable timeframe and with available funding sources.
- ✚ **Practicality**—the standards should be simple to understand and apply. They should be based on sound planning principles, information and a credible development process. They should also be flexible enough to handle unanticipated situations and rapidly changing needs.

The national and state parks and recreation standards presented in this section of the Master Plan were utilized strictly as guidelines and benchmarks for comparison in the preparation of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*. These national and state standards were not judged to be requirements. They were considered to be subjective recommendations that necessitated modification in order to meet the specific and particular demands and requirements of the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The standards served only as tenets for what national and state professional agencies and organizations in the field of parks and recreation consider adequate and acceptable types and numbers of parks and recreation programs, services, areas and facilities. They were compiled by and proposed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), Division of Parks and Recreation.

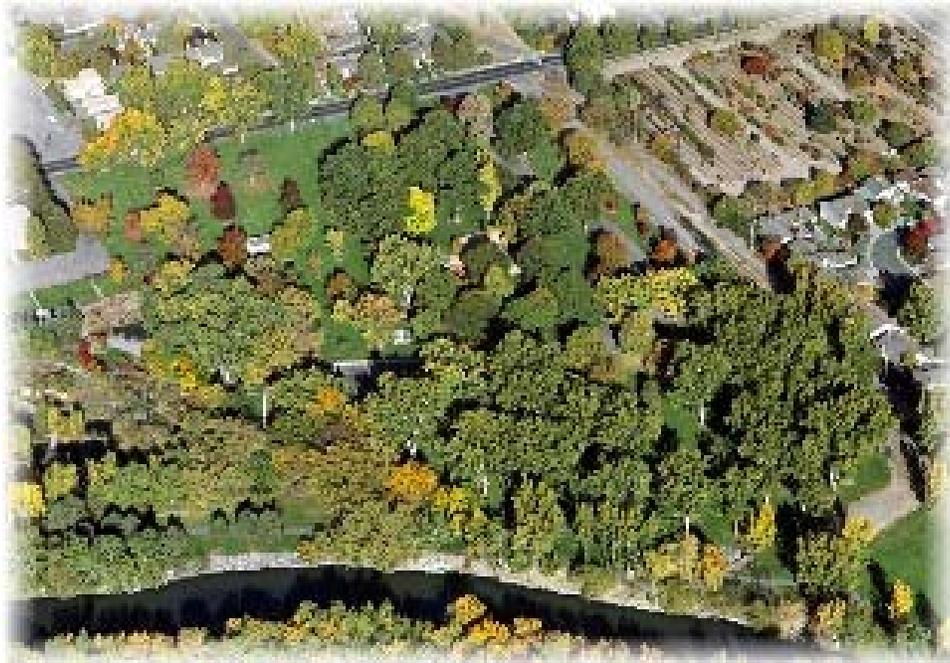
These national and state standards provided a starting point for establishing local standards for parks and recreation development for the Town of Wrightsville Beach. It is appropriate to state that the NRPA, in a 1995 report entitled “Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines”, reached the conclusion that there are no “national standards” for parks and recreation development. In fact, the report reaffirms that notion that each local community is unique, and that standards reflecting the local community’s “uniqueness” should be established. This is the approach that was utilized and implemented in constructing standards for the Town of Wrightsville Beach.

The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* analysis considered and evaluated two types of parks and recreation standards: 1) the total acreage of parkland and open space recommended for inclusion within a park, recreation and open space system; and, 2) the programs, services, and facilities necessary to adequately meet the parks, recreation and open space needs of the

citizens of Wrightsville Beach. The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* incorporates these park standards in its recommendations for evaluating the current parks, recreation and open space system and for establishing a plan of action to meet future growth patterns.

Parks, Open Space and Greenways Classifications

A comprehensive parks, recreation and open space system is made up of a variety of park types. These park types range from very large Nature Preserves or Regional Parks, often encompassing hundreds of acres, to the very small neighborhood and mini-parks, sometimes less than one acre. Some of these park types are the responsibility of governmental entities other than municipalities, such as federal, state or county government. To fully appreciate and understand the Town of Wrightsville Beach’s role in the provision of parks and recreation services to its citizens, one needs to comprehend the context that makes up a total parks, recreation and open space system.



Nature Preserves—the acquisition and development of Nature Preserves are typically undertaken by federal and state governments

Nature Preserves are typically very large sites, encompassing unique qualities that exemplify the natural features found in the region, the diverse land formations, and the variety of vegetation and wildlife. Examples of the types of facilities provided in a Nature Preserve are environmental centers, camping, nature trails, observation decks, and picnic areas. Open fields for non-structured activities, such as Frisbee throwing or kite flying, are also generally found.

Land chosen for future preserves, or the expansion of existing sites, should contain the previously mentioned characteristics accompanied with natural water features such as lakes, rivers, and creeks. The majority of the site should be reserved for passive recreation, with the remaining acreage utilized for active recreation.

Specific standards and criteria for developing Nature Preserves are as follows:

Service Area:	County/Region Wide
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Desirable Range:	150 – 1,000 acres with adequate area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed
Typical Facilities:	Environmental Center Equestrian Center Vending Beach Swimming Nature Trails Boat Docks Parking RV Camping
	Picnic Tables/Grills Restrooms Primitive Camping Group Camping Boating Fishing Pier Observation Decks Picnic Shelters/Grills Caretaker’s House

Specialty areas and facilities may be added to or substituted for other areas and facilities, depending on regional/community needs or special site characteristics.



Regional Parks—the acquisition and development of Regional Parks typically fall within the responsibility of county government

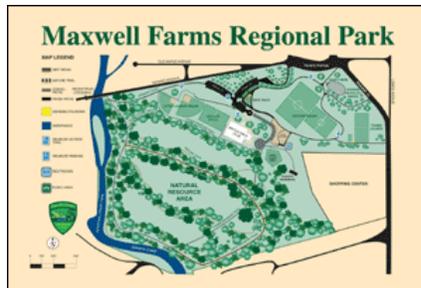
Regional Parks are typically large sites that provide a wide and varied range of both active and passive recreational opportunities. These parks are intended to serve a substantial number of people who are willing to spend travel time to visit the sites. Examples of the types of areas and facilities provided in a Regional Park are sports complexes, swimming pools, nature trails, fitness trails, restrooms, parking, concessions, picnic shelters, playgrounds, amphitheaters, recreation centers, picnic areas, boating facilities and open play areas.

Land selected for Regional Parks should be located on major transportation corridors and easily accessible by a large number of citizens. The majority of the site should be reserved and utilized for active recreation with adequate provision for passive recreation.

Specific standards and criteria for developing Regional Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	8-mile radius—typically serves a population base of approximately 60,000	
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000	
Desirable Range:	125 – 500 acres	
Desirable Size:	±250 acres	
Minimum Size:	125 acres	
Typical Features:	Picnic Shelters/Grills	Picnic Tables/Grills
	Nature Trails	Tennis Complex
	Tournament Baseball Fields	Playground
	Tournament Softball Fields	Fitness Trails
Specialty Features:	Swimming Pool	Recreation Center

Specialty areas and facilities may be added to or substituted for other areas and facilities, depending on regional/community needs or special site characteristics.



Community Parks—the acquisition and development of Community Parks typically fall within the responsibility of county and municipal governments

Community Parks provide a full range of facilities to support tournament competition for athletic and league sports. These parks also present opportunities for non-traditional types of recreation. Activities that generate large crowds, such as special events and tournament competitions, are well suited for Community Parks, where adequate space and parking are provided. Approximately fifty percent (50%) of a Community Park should be developed for only passive recreation. These relatively undisturbed areas may serve as buffers around the park or act as buffers between active areas and facilities.

Community Parks should have varying topography and vegetative communities. Forested areas should have a variety of tree species. Cleared areas should be present for placing active recreation areas and facilities. One or more natural water features, such as a lake, river, or creek should be included in a Community Park. Parkland should also be contiguous and strategically located in order to be accessible to all users within the service area.

Specific standards and criteria for developing Community Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	.5 – 3 mile radius—typically serves several neighborhoods		
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5 – 8 acres per 1,000 persons		
Desirable Range:	15 – 100 acres		
Desirable Size:	±25 acres		
Typical Facilities:	Recreation Center	Playground	
	Picnic Shelters/Grills	Basketball Court	
	Picnic Tables/Grills	Tennis Courts	
	Nature Trails	Restrooms	
	Tournament Baseball Fields	Parking	
	Tournament Softball Fields	Volleyball Courts	
	Concessions	Soccer Fields	
	Special Facilities:	Golf Course	Swimming
		Beaches	Environmental Center
		Boating	Equestrian Center
Amphitheater		Fishing Pier	
Boat Docks		Observation Decks	
Marina Operations		Swimming Pool	
	Fitness Course	Paddle Boats	

Sports Complex—the acquisition and development of a Sports Complex typically falls within the responsibility of county or municipal governments

A Sports Complex functions as the major source of active recreation in the local community. Programs, services and activities found at a Sports Complex are similar to those in a Community Park, but are developed to support tournament competition. Passive recreation experiences and opportunities are generally limited, but may be found in undisturbed areas, preferably within the surrounding buffers.

Sites for Sports Complexes should be relatively flat to alleviate excessive grading and land preparation for active areas and facilities. Sites without significant vegetation or natural features are preferable since most of the land will be developed for active recreation such as athletic fields. Sites should be easily accessible from major thoroughfares. Direct access to residential areas should be limited and buffers provided adjacent to residential areas.

Specific standards and criteria for developing a Sports Complex are as follows:

Service Area:	3 – 5 mile radius	
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000 persons	
Desirable Range:	80 – 100 acres	
Desirable Size:	±100 acres	
Typical Features:	Playgrounds	Picnic Shelter/Grills
	Basketball Courts	Nature Trail
	Tennis Courts	Baseball Fields
	Softball Fields	Benches
	Parking	Multi-Purpose Fields
	Service Yard	Volleyball Courts
	Restrooms/Concessions	
	Tournament Level Soccer Fields	
	Tournament Level Baseball/Softball Fields	
	Tournament Level Tennis Complex	
Alternate Facilities:	Recreation Center	Running Track
	Amphitheater	Observation Decks

Specialty areas and facilities may be added to or substituted for other areas and facilities, depending on community needs or special site characteristics.

District Parks—the acquisition and development of District Parks typically fall within the responsibility of municipal government

District Parks function as the major source of active recreation in the neighborhoods they serve. Activities are similar to those found in Community Parks, but are not developed to support tournament competition. Their smaller size often requires District Parks to be more intensely developed than the Community Parks. Passive recreation opportunities are found in the undisturbed areas, preferably within surrounding buffers.

Sites for District Parks should be relatively flat to alleviate excessive grading of active areas and facilities. Where possible, there should be an equal balance of wooded and cleared areas. If a natural water feature is present, the adjoining land should be developed primarily with passive recreation. Accessibility to neighborhoods should also be a consideration when choosing a site for a District Park.

Specific standards and criteria for developing a District Park are as follows:

Service Area:	1 – 2 ½ mile radius	
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5 acres per 1,000 persons	
Desirable Range:	20 – 100 acres	
Desirable Size:	±50 acres	
Typical Features:	Playgrounds	Picnic Shelter/Grills
	Basketball Courts	Nature Trail
	Tennis Courts	Baseball Fields
	Softball Fields	Benches
	Parking	Multi-Purpose Fields
	Service Yard	Volleyball
	Soccer Fields	
	50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped	
Alternate Facilities:	Recreation Center	Tennis Center
	Football Fields	Running Trail
	Boating	Amphitheater
	Observation Decks	Fishing Piers
	Swimming Pool	Fitness Course

Specialty areas and facilities may be added to or substituted for other areas and facilities, depending on community needs or special site characteristics.

Neighborhood Parks—the acquisition and development of Neighborhood Parks typically fall within the responsibility of municipal government

Neighborhood Parks offer the local citizens a convenient source of accessible recreation and serve as the basic unit of the parks and recreation system. These parks are located in residential areas and usually within walking distance of the areas served and provide a variety of activities to interest all age groups. While their small size requires intense development, fifty percent (50%) of each site should remain undisturbed to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent land owners and users.

Specific standards and criteria for developing Neighborhood Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	¼ - ½ mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding neighborhood population	
Acreage/Population Ratio:	1 acre per 1,000 persons	
Desirable Range:	5 – 25 acres	
Desirable Size:	± 15 acres	
Typical Facilities:	Playground	Basketball Courts
	Softball Field	Baseball Field
	Multi-Purpose Field	Picnic Shelters/Grills
	Picnic Tables/Grills	Benches
	50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped	
Alternate Facilities:	Tennis Courts	Nature Trail
	Fitness Course	

These areas and facilities may be added to or substituted for other areas and facilities, depending on community needs or special site characteristics.



Mini-Parks—the acquisition and development of Mini-Parks typically fall within the responsibility of municipal government

Mini-Park is the smallest park classification. Mini-Parks are often very small in size and are only easily accessible by the citizens immediately surrounding the park. These small parks are usually located within walking distance of the area serviced and provide a limited variety of activities to targeted interest groups.

Specific standards and criteria for developing Mini-Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	¼ - ½ mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding population	
Acreage/Population Ratio:	.25 acres per 1,000 persons	
Desirable Size:	±½ acre	
Typical Facilities:	Benches	Picnic Tables/Grills
	Playground	
Specialty Features:	Water Fountain	½ Basketball Courts
	Open Play Area	
	Landscaped Public Use Areas	

These areas and facilities may be added to or substituted for other areas and facilities, depending on community needs or special site characteristics.

School-Parks—the acquisition and development of School-Parks typically fall within the responsibility of municipal and county governments

The joint use of public areas and facilities is a national growing trend. Through joint use both local government and the school system benefit from shared use of areas and facilities and valuable land resources. The School-Park concept takes full advantage of the joint use objective and provides a planned area and/or facility that also maximizes public funding. Historically, elementary and small middle schools provide the ideal setting for a neighborhood park while large middle schools and high schools are suitable for a community park or a sports complex.

Specific standards and criteria for developing School-Parks are as follows:

Service Area:	Varies depending upon the type of school and park
Desirable Size:	Varies depending upon the type of school and park
Typical Facilities:	Varies depending upon the type of school and park

Greenways—the acquisition and development of Greenways typically fall within the responsibility of municipal and county governments

Greenways provide an important component of most municipal and county park systems. A greenway is a corridor of protected open space managed for conservation, recreation and non-motorized transportation. Greenways often follow natural geographic features such as ridge lines, wetlands, streams and rivers, but may also be built along canals, utility corridors, or abandoned rail lines. Widths may vary from thirty (30) to a thousand (1,000) feet. Most greenways include a trail or bike path, but others may be designed strictly for environmental or scenic protection.

Greenways, as vegetated linear parks, provide tree cover, wildlife habitat, and riparian buffers to protect streams. The environmental benefits include reduced storm-water runoff, flood reduction, water quality protection, and preservation of biological diversity. The trails within the greenways provide access between neighborhoods and destination points, opportunity to travel without an automobile, outdoor education classrooms, and close-to-home paths for walking, jogging, bicycling, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. Tree cover and use of bicycles instead of cars provide for better air quality, fewer hard surfaced parking lots, and reduced energy costs.

Specific standards and criteria for developing Greenways are as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Desirable Size: | Varies considerably—A thirty (30) feet width is generally considered a minimum |
| Typical Facilities: | Paved and non-paved paths, benches and lighting |



Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Sites—the acquisition and development of Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Sites typically fall within the responsibility of municipal and county governments

The public’s right of access to beach and coastal waterfront areas is a long-standing tenet of the Public Trust Doctrine with its corresponding issues of Public Trust Rights. One way to guarantee and protect the public’s right to shorelines and waters is for local government to establish public beach and coastal waterfront access sites.

The North Carolina Division of Coastal Management recognizes four (4) types of public access sites: Regional, Neighborhood, Local and Waterfront.

- ✚ Regional—these access sites are generally the largest of the access sites. There are exceptions, but usually these sites have ample parking (25+), and often have additional facilities such as restrooms, showers and picnic tables
- ✚ Neighborhood—these access sites have fewer parking spaces than regional sites and often do not have facilities such as showers or restrooms. However, there are exceptions.
- ✚ Local—these sites are often simply dune crossovers with little or no associated parking and no facilities. However, bicycle racks may be provided. These are primarily used by pedestrians who reside within a few hundred yards of the site.
- ✚ Waterfront—these access sites are generally located on estuarine waters in urbanized areas. They vary greatly in the amount of parking and facilities provided.



This is a representative photo of a Neighborhood Site



This is a representative photo of a Local Access Site

Boat Access Sites—the acquisition and development of Boat Access Sites typically fall within the responsibility of municipal, county and state governments

Most public boat access sites in North Carolina are designed, constructed and maintained by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. However, there are standard construction and design guidelines for boat ramps.

Specific standards and criteria for developing boat access sites are as follows:

Standard Dimensions for Concrete Launch Ramp:

- ✚ Length—varies by site characteristics. Ensure that the bottom of the ramp at Mean Low Water (MLW) will be in at least 3’ of water. The top of the ramp should be at least 1’ above Mean High Water (MHW)
- ✚ Width—single launch ramp should be at least 14’ wide
- ✚ Thickness—concrete should be at least 6”.

Launch Ramp Slope:

- ✚ Approximately 14%, but can vary from 15% to 12.5%

Construction and Materials:

- ✚ Sub-Grade Preparation—the concrete ramp should be placed on compacted aggregate which is placed on geo-textile fabric to prevent washout.
- ✚ Push Slab—use a push slab for the launch ramp below the MLW level. The steel reinforced concrete slab should be cast on upland and allowed to cure for a minimum of 21 days before it is pushed into place. Typically, a 32’L x 14’W x 6”T push slab can be properly placed when the water level is at MLW
- ✚ Cast in Place Section—once the push slab is cast in place, there should be at least 2 – 3 feet of ramp left above the water line. The remaining ramp should be cast in place



**North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive
Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2009 – 2013**

Park and Recreation Area Class Names and Descriptions

Neighborhood Park—Area for intensive recreation such as field and court games, playground equipment, picnicking and wading pools. 6 – 8 acres is a typical size. Examples include mini-parks serving residential areas, playgrounds, sports field complexes and combination playgrounds/sports fields/passive natural areas.

Community Park—Area providing a wide array of active recreational opportunities including a recreation center building, fields, hard surface courts, and picnicking. Natural or landscaped areas are provided for passive recreation. May include a swimming pool or be in conjunction with a school. 10 – 20 acres is a typical size. Examples include large parks/school complexes; recreation center/pool/sports field and court complexes; and community center/park complexes.

District/Metro Area Park—Area serving one or more suburban or rural communities. Similar to the Community Park, these areas offer intensive recreation activities and natural environment areas. Typical size is 20 – 100 acres. Examples include intensively developed county parks, developed public recreation sites at large reservoirs, and state recreation areas.

Local Parks—Combines Neighborhood, Community and District/Metro Area parks classes described above.

Regional/State Parks—Area of natural quality for natural resource-based outdoor recreation. Generally, 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management with less than 20% developed for recreation. Typical size is 3,000 – 5,000 acres. Examples include state parks, state recreation areas, state natural areas, educational state forests and large natural resource-based county parks. Activities include nature study, picnicking, camping, fishing, boating, swimming and various trail uses.

Dispersed Use/Conservancy Area—Area for protection and management of the natural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective. Certain multiple use management approaches produce natural resource outputs such as timber, agricultural produce and minerals. Examples include state game-lands, multiple use areas of national

and state forests, reservoir shoreline buffer lands, and Blue Ridge Parkway acreage. Typical size should be sufficient to protect and manage the primary resource while providing secondary recreational use.

Wilderness Area—Area characterized by unmodified natural environment of fairly large size. Low interaction between users and evidence of others is minimal. Motorized use is not permitted. Typical size is 5,000 – 15,000 acres. Examples are congressionally designated National Wildlife Areas.

Historic/Cultural Area—Area that preserves, maintains, and interprets buildings and places of archaeological, historical, or cultural significance. Should be of sufficient size to protect and interpret the resource while providing optimum use. Examples include local, state, and national historic sites.



STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES

<u>Facility</u>	<u>NRPA Standard</u>	<u>NCDENR Standard</u>
<u>Fields</u>		
Adult Baseball	1 per 12,000 persons	1 per 5,000 persons
Youth Baseball/Girls Softball	N/A	N/A
Adult Softball	1 per 5,000 persons	1 per 5,000 persons
Football	1 per 10,000 persons	1 per 20,000 persons
Adult Soccer	1 per 10,000 persons	1 per 10,000 persons
Youth Soccer	N/A	N/A
<u>Courts</u>		
Basketball	1 per 5,000 persons	1 per 5,000 persons
Tennis	1 per 2,000 persons	1 per 2,000 persons
Volleyball	1 per 5,000 persons	1 per 5,000 persons
Shuffleboard	N/A	N/A
Horseshoe	N/A	N/A
<u>Outdoor Areas</u>		
Picnic Shelters	N/A	1 per 3,000 persons
Playgrounds	N/A	1 per 1,000 persons
Trails		
Hiking	1 per region	.4 mile/1,000 persons
Interpretive	1 per region	.2 mile/1,000 persons
Equestrian	N/A	.4 mile/1,000 persons
Camping	N/A	2.5 site/1,000 persons
Archery Area	1 per 50,000 persons	1 per 50,000 persons
<u>Specialized</u>		
Community Center	1 per 20,000 persons	1 per 20,000 persons
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000 persons	1 per 20,000 persons
Golf Course	1 per 25,000 persons	1 per 25,000 persons
Bicycling		
Urban	N/A	1 mile/1,000 persons
Rural Touring	N/A	2 mile/1,000 persons
Canoeing		
Stream Mileage	N/A	.2 mile/1,000 persons
Stream Acreage	N/A	1 per 10 miles

TRENDS IN PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Increased Participation

The 2002 – 2007 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment results for North Carolina indicate that participation in recreational activities is increasing rapidly. Trend information from the survey shows that the number of participants in the following groups of recreational activities has increased by nearly 50 percent in the past decade.

Activity Type	Percent Participating 1995	Millions of Participants 1995	Percent Participating 2006	Millions of Participants 2006	% Change in Number Participants 1995 – 2006
Trail/Street/Road Activities	66.1	3.713	85.7	5.812	56.5
Individual Sports	20.2	1.137	28.2	1.913	68.2
Team Sports	26.5	1.490	21.6	1.468	-1.5
Spectator Activities	56.1	23.152	62.4	4.232	34.3
Viewing/Learning Activities	68.8	3.865	81.7	5.543	43.4
Camp	11.8	0.662	17.9	1.212	83.1
Snow/Ice Activities	21.8	1.226	28.7	1.949	59.0
Hunting	9.4	0.528	9.9	0.670	26.9
Fishing	26.7	1.500	36.7	2.493	66.2
Boating	28.7	1.612	31.0	2.105	30.6
Swimming	50.8	2.856	53.1	3.605	26.2
Outdoor Adventure Activities	33.0	1.853	51.2	2.475	87.5
Social Activities	67.8	3.811	88.2	5.986	57.1
TOTAL		27.4		40.5	

2002 – 2007 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE)

The 2002 – 2007 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) is the eight in a series of national surveys started in 1960 by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC) and now coordinated by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. The survey was accomplished by interviewing approximately 90,000 Americans aged 16 and over in random-digit-dialing telephone samplings. In 2007, the US Forest Service prepared an analysis of responses to the NSRE for residents of North Carolina.

Ten (10) Most Popular Outdoor Recreation Activities for North Carolina Residents By Percent Participation

✚ Walk for Pleasure	82%
✚ Family Gatherings	74.6%
✚ Gardening or Landscaping for Pleasure	65.4%
✚ Driving for Pleasure	58.2%
✚ View/Photograph Natural Scenery	57%
✚ Visit Nature Center's, etc.	52.9%
✚ Sightseeing	52.9%
✚ Picnicking	50%
✚ Attend Sporting Events	48.6%
✚ Visit a Beach	44.2%



**Percentage of North Carolina Residents Participating
in Developed-Setting Activities**

✚ Walk for Pleasure	82%
✚ Family Gathering	74.6%
✚ Gardening or Landscaping	65.4%
✚ Driving for Pleasure	58.2%
✚ Picnicking	50%
✚ Yard Games (e.g. horseshoes)	38.5%
✚ Bicycling	31%
✚ Attend Outdoor Concerts, Plays, etc.	30.6%
✚ Horseback Riding	7.8%

**Percentage of North Carolina Residents Participating
In Nature-Based Land Activities**

✚ Visit a Primitive Area	29.8%
✚ Day Hiking	29.7%
✚ Visit a Farm	28.2%
✚ Drive Off-Road (Any Type)	20.7%
✚ Developed Camping	20.5%
✚ Mountain Biking	15.7%
✚ Primitive Camping	14.6%
✚ Hunting (Any Type)	9.9%
✚ Backpacking	8.4%
✚ Horseback Riding on Trails	7.3%

Percentage of North Carolina Residents Participating
In Water-Based Activities

✚ Visit a Beach	45%
✚ Swimming in an Outdoor Pool	39.9%
✚ Swimming in Lakes, Streams, etc.	39.7%
✚ Boating (Any Type)	31%
➤ Motor-boating	22.5%
➤ Rafting	9.3%
➤ Canoeing	6.7%
➤ Sailing	3.7%
➤ Kayaking	3.1%
➤ Rowing	2.5%
✚ Freshwater Fishing	30.9%
✚ Warm-water Fishing	25.9%
✚ Visit Other Waterside (Besides Beach)	25%
✚ Saltwater Fishing	17%
✚ Coldwater Fishing	11.5%
✚ Use Personal Watercraft	8%

Percentage of North Carolina Residents Participating
In Individual Sports

✚ Running or Jogging	28.3%
✚ Tennis Outdoors	14.8%
✚ Golf	13.9%
✚ In-Line Skating	9.5%
✚ Handball or Racquetball	3.1%

Percentage of North Carolina Residents Participating
In Outdoor Recreation Activities

Rank	Activity	%	Rank	Activity	%
1	Walk for Pleasure	82	41	Coldwater Fishing	11.5
2	Family Gathering	74.6	42	Hunting (Any type)	9.9
3	Gardening/Landscaping	65.4	43	In-Line Skating	9.5
4	Driving for Pleasure	58.2	44	Rafting	9.3
5	View/Photo Natural Scenery	57	45	Soccer Outdoors	9
6	Visit Nature Center	52.9	46	Volleyball Outdoors	9
7	Sightseeing	52.9	47	Softball	8.9
8	Picnicking	50	48	Basketball Outdoors	8.5
9	Attend Sports Events	48.6	49	Backpacking	8.4
10	Visit a Beach	44.2	50	Use Personal Watercraft	8
11	Visit Historic Sites	43.1	51	Sledding	8
12	View/Photo Wildlife	43	52	Horseback Riding (Any Type)	7.8
13	View/Photo Wildflowers/Trees	41	53	Horseback Riding on Trails	7.3
14	Swimming in an Outdoor Pool	39.9	54	Big Game Hunting	7.2
15	Swimming in Lakes, Streams, etc.	39.7	55	Canoeing	6.7
16	Yard Games, e.g. horseshoes	38.5	56	Small Game Hunting	6.4
17	View/Photo Birds	34	57	Waterskiing	6.3
18	Bicycling	31	58	Downhill Skiing	6.1
19	Boating (Any Type)	31	59	Mountain Biking	5.3
20	Freshwater Fishing	30.9	60	Football	4.2
21	Attend Outdoor Concerts/Plays, etc.	30.6	61	Caving	4.2
22	Visit Primitive Area	29.8	62	Snorkeling	4.1
23	Day Hiking	29.7	63	Sailing	3.7
24	Running/Jogging	28.3	64	Baseball	3.5
25	Visit a Farm	28.2	65	Anadromous Fishing	3.1
26	View/Photo Fish	26.5	66	Kayaking	3.1
27	Gather Mushrooms, Berries, etc.	26.3	67	Handball or Racquetball	3.1
28	Warm-water Fishing	25.9	68	Snowboarding	3.1
29	Visit Other Waterside (Not a Beach)	24.4	69	Orienteering	3
30	Motor-boating	22.5	70	Rowing	2.5
31	Boat Tours/Excursions	21.7	71	Rock Climbing	2.3
32	Drive Off-Road (Any Type)	20.7	72	Ice Skating Outdoors	2.1
33	Developed Camping	20.5	73	Surfing	1.8
34	Visit Archeological Sites	18	74	Migratory Bird Hunting	1.7
35	Snow/Ice Activities (Any Type)	17.9	75	Snowmobiling	1.5
36	Saltwater Fishing	17	76	Scuba Diving	1
37	Mountain Biking	15.7	77	Cross Country Skiing	1
38	Tennis Outdoors	14.8	78	Windsurfing	0.5
39	Primitive Camping	14.6	79	Snowshoeing	0.2
40	Golf	13.9	80	Ice Fishing	0

Longer, Healthier Lives

The North Carolina population is aging as “Baby Boomers” retire, birth rates have slowed and average life expectancy increases. The median age in the state rose from 26.5 years old in 1970 to 36.2 years old in 2000. By the year 2010, the median age is projected to rise to 38.5 years old. People are living longer. Improved living conditions, medical discoveries, advances in healthcare and knowledge about the effects of lifestyle have all contributed to the longer lives. Questions about how long life spans can be extended through discoveries of biological research are being debated, but the trend of increased life expectancy is projected to continue. Lifestyle choices, including participating in recreation and exercise, can affect an individual’s life span.

Life Expectancy at Birth, 1900-2005

	1900	1920	1940	1960	1980	2000	2005
AVERAGE	49.2	56.4	63.6	69.9	73.9	75.4	77.8
MALE	47.9	49.9	57.7	65.5	70.1	71.8	75.2
FEMALE	50.7	57.4	65.9	73.2	77.6	78.8	80.4

Source: National Vital Statistics System

Not only are lives getting longer, but they are likely to be healthier at all ages. Continued improved medical care, drug discoveries, biotechnology advances and technological innovations are expected. Even with millions more people reaching retirement age, the number of people in nursing homes declined nationwide during the 1990s, according to surveys by the Duke Center for Demographic Studies. The center also found that Medicare recipients are much less likely to be disabled than 20 years ago. Healthy people are more likely to participate in outdoor recreation. With longer and healthier lives, people are remaining active in their chosen activities longer in life, creating additional demand for outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

While the elderly participate in outdoor recreation less frequently than younger persons, they participate more frequently than in past years. An increasing interest in physical fitness and improved health has led to more participation. When higher participation rates are coupled with large increases in the over-65 age group, the elderly will demand services to a much greater degree than they do now. Increased demand can therefore be expected for activities that have high participation by older Americans. These include walking, sightseeing, attending family gatherings, visiting a beach or

waterside, picnicking, visiting a historic site or nature center, bird-watching and attending sporting events. Older Americans also participate in a wide variety of other outdoor recreation activities including wildlife viewing, attending concerts, nature study, fishing, swimming, motor boating, biking and golf. Participation in team sports and other physically demanding activities are, as one might expect, considerably higher for the young and middle-aged than for the elderly. (National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, 2000)

Surveys designed to determine the demand for parks, recreation and open space have been conducted by the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA), the State of North Carolina and by various other associations and organizations.

2011 National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) Survey

The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) conducts an annual survey of sports participation. “Sports Participation in 2011: Series I” repeats the highly successful participation study done by NSGA over the past 25 years, measuring data on the annual number of participants in each sport, the frequency of participation (number of days of participation in 2011), total days of participation, and the mean (average) and median (mid-point) number of days of participation. This study is based on an online survey of more than 55,000 U.S. households, and was conducted for NSGA by Irwin Broh Research using the TNS panel.



**2011 Sports Participation
Ranked by Total Population
Participated more than once (in millions)
Seven (7) years of age and older
Percent change is from 2010**

Sport	Total	Percent Change	Sport	Total	Percent Change
Exercise Walking	97.1	1.3%	Table Tennis	10.9	-15.2%
Exercising with Equipment	55.5	0.3%	Softball	10.4	-4.2%
Swimming	46.0	-11.4%	Volleyball	10.1	-5.1%
Camping	42.8	-4.3%	Saltwater Fishing	9.7	-0.7%
Aerobic Exercising	42.0	8.9%	Dart Throwing	9.3	-11.2%
Bicycle Riding	39.1	-1.6%	Tackle Football	9.0	-3.0%
Hiking	39.1	3.8%	Kayaking	7.1	26.6%
Running/Jogging	38.7	8.9%	Alpine Skiing	6.9	-7.1%
Bowling	34.9	-10.6%	Skateboarding	6.6	-14.3%
Work-Out at Club	34.5	-4.6%	Archery	6.3	-3.3%
Weightlifting	29.1	-7.4%	In-Line Roller Skating	6.1	-18.4%
Freshwater Fishing	28.0	-6.4%	Mountain Biking	6.0	-17.8%
Basketball	26.1	-2.9%	Paintball Games	5.3	-13.2%
Yoga	21.6	6.9%	Target Shooting	5.3	0.1%
Golf	20.9	-4.3%	Hunting with Bow & Arrow	5.1	-0.2%
Billiards/Pool	20.0	-16.9%	Snowboarding	5.1	-16.1%
Target Shooting	19.6	-1.2%	Gymnastics	5.1	7.6%
Boating	16.7	-17%	Water Skiing	4.3	-17.8%
Hunting with Firearms	16.4	0.6%	Wrestling	3.2	9.4%
Soccer	13.9	3.0%	Muzzleloading	3.1	0.2%
Tennis	13.1	7.0%	Ice Hockey	3.0	-9.2%
Baseball	12.3	-1.9%	Lacrosse	2.7	3.5%
Backpacking	11.6	3.7%	Cross Country Skiing	2.3	11.5%

Source: National Sporting Goods Association, Mt. Prospect, IL 60056

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH
FACILITY STANDARDS

Minimum standards for public recreational facilities (i.e., ball fields, pools, courts, playground areas, etc.) proposed for the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division were developed in accordance with industry guidelines established by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NC DENR) and input from staff and community citizens generated during the needs assessment component of the master plan process. These standards, identified in **Table 6.1 “Standards for Public Recreational Facilities”**, are the minimum recreation facility standards that should be used in establishing the public recreation facility needs for the Town of Wrightsville Beach.

Table 6.1 “Standards for Public Recreational Facilities*”

Facility	NRPA	NC DENR	Town of Wrightsville Beach
<u>FIELDS</u>			
Adult Baseball	1/12,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
Youth Baseball	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/5,000
Softball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/2,500
Football/Soccer/Multi-Purpose	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/2,500
<u>COURTS</u>			
Basketball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/1,500
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/400
Volleyball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/1,500
Shuffleboard	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/2,500
Horseshoe	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/2,500
Bocce Ball	N/A	N/A	1/2,500
<u>OUTDOOR AREAS</u>			
Picnic Shelters	N/A	1/3,000	1/1,000
Playgrounds	N/A	1/1,000	1/1,000
Multi-Purpose Trails	1/Region	.4 mile/1,000	.25 miles/500
<u>SPECIALIZED</u>			
Community Centers/ Recreation Centers	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/1,250
Swimming Pools	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/Community
Golf Course	1/25,000	1/25,000	N/A
Skateboard Park	N/A	N/A	1/Community
Fitness Center	N/A	N/A	N/A
Amphitheater	N/A	N/A	1/Community
Water Access	N/A	N/A	1/1,000

*National and state standards for public recreational facility development were used as a guide in developing standards for the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The actual standards developed and established for the Town of Wrightsville Beach are based on input generated during the public input process and reflect both staff and citizen comments.

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

EXISTING FACILITIES

Table 6.2 “Town of Wrightsville Beach Existing Public Recreational Facilities” depicts the number of existing public recreational facilities (i.e., ball fields, pools, courts, playground areas, etc.) currently maintained and/or operated by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division.

Table 6.2 “Town of Wrightsville Beach Existing Public Recreational Facilities”

Facility	Town Standard	Town of Wrightsville Beach 2,500 Residents in 2012
<u>FIELDS</u>		<u>EXISTING FACILITIES</u>
Adult Baseball	1/5,000	0
Youth Baseball	1/5,000	0
Softball	1/2,500	1
Football/Soccer/Multi-Purpose	1/2,500	1
<u>COURTS</u>		
Basketball	1/1,500	2
Tennis	1/400	4
Volleyball	1/1,500	3
Shuffleboard	1/2,500	0
Horseshoe	1/2,500	0
Bocce Ball	1/2,500	0
<u>OUTDOOR AREAS</u>		
Picnic Shelters	1/1,000	3
Playgrounds	1/1,000	3
Multi-Purpose Trails	.25 miles/500	2.45 miles
<u>SPECIALIZED</u>		
Community Centers/ Recreation Centers	1/1,250	1
Swimming Pools	1/Community	0
Golf Course	N/A	N/A
Skateboard Park	1/Community	0
Fitness Center	N/A	N/A
Amphitheater	1/Community	1
Water Access	1/1,000	1

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH
CURRENT FACILITY DEMAND

Table 6.3 “Town of Wrightsville Beach Current Demand for Public Recreational Facilities” depicts the current demand in 2012 for public recreational facilities (i.e., ball fields, pools, courts, playground areas, etc.) that should be maintained and/or operated by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division based upon town standards.

Table 6.3 “Town of Wrightsville Beach Current Demand for Public Recreational Facilities Based on Standards”

Facility	Town Standard	Town of Wrightsville Beach 2,500 Residents in 2012
<u>FIELDS</u>		<u>CURRENT DEMAND FOR FACILITIES</u>
Adult Baseball	1/5,000	0
Youth Baseball	1/5,000	0
Softball	1/2,500	1
Football/Soccer/Multi-Purpose	1/2,500	1
<u>COURTS</u>		
Basketball	1/1,500	2
Tennis	1/400	6
Volleyball	1/1,500	2
Shuffleboard	1/2,500	1
Horseshoe	1/2,500	1
Bocce Ball	1/2,500	1
<u>OUTDOOR AREAS</u>		
Picnic Shelters	1/1,000	3
Playgrounds	1/1,000	3
Multi-Purpose Trails	.25 miles/500	1.25 miles
<u>SPECIALIZED</u>		
Community Centers/ Recreation Centers	1/1,250	2
Swimming Pools	1/Community	1
Golf Course	N/A	N/A
Skateboard Park	1/Community	1
Fitness Center	N/A	N/A
Amphitheater	1/Community	1
Water Access	1/1,000	3

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH
CURRENT FACILITY NEED

Table 6.4 “Town of Wrightsville Beach Current Need for Public Recreational Facilities” depicts the current need in 2012 for public recreational facilities (i.e., ball fields, pools, courts, playground areas, etc.) that should be maintained and/or operated by the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division based upon city standards identifying current demand and the existing public recreation facilities.

Table 6.4 “Town of Wrightsville Beach Current Need for Public Recreational Facilities”

Facility	Town Standard	Town of Wrightsville Beach 2,500 Residents in 2012
<u>FIELDS</u>		<u>CURRENT NEED FOR FACILITIES</u>
Adult Baseball	1/5,000	0
Youth Baseball	1/5,000	0
Softball	1/2,500	0
Football/Soccer/Multi-Purpose	1/2,500	0
<u>COURTS</u>		
Basketball	1/2,500	0
Tennis	1/400	2
Volleyball	1/1,500	0
Shuffleboard	1/2,500	1
Horseshoe	1/2,500	1
Bocce Ball	1/2,500	1
<u>OUTDOOR AREAS</u>		
Picnic Shelters	1/1,000	0
Playgrounds	1/1,000	0
Multi-Purpose Trails	.25 miles/500	0
<u>SPECIALIZED</u>		
Community Centers/ Recreation Centers	1/1,250	1
Swimming Pools	1/Community	1
Golf Course	N/A	N/A
Skateboard Park	1/Community	1
Fitness Center	N/A	N/A
Amphitheater	1/Community	0
Water Access	1/1,000	2

EVALUATION OF TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

CURRENT FACILITY NEED IN 2013

The assessment of public recreational facility standards against existing public recreational facilities maintained and/or operated by the Town of Wrightsville Beach reveals several current areas of deficiencies in many of the established public recreational facility categories. Utilizing the public recreational facility standards that were established specifically for the Town of Wrightsville Beach, there is a need for the following additional public recreational facilities:

- ✚ 2 Tennis Courts
- ✚ 1 Shuffleboard Court
- ✚ 1 Horseshoe Court
- ✚ 1 Bocce Ball Court
- ✚ 1 Recreation Center
- ✚ 1 Swimming Pool
- ✚ 1 Skateboard Park
- ✚ 2 Water Access Sites/Facilities





CHAPTER SEVEN: MASTER PLAN PROPOSALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department, Parks and Recreation Division has traditionally, historically and accurately seen its role as one of providing basic public parks, recreation and open space opportunities and experiences for the citizens of the Town of Wrightsville Beach. This accepted role is certainly one that the Department should continue, expand and enhance over the next five (5) years. Community input and a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the Department's current areas, facilities, services and programs reveal several deficiencies or "needs" in the Town of Wrightsville Beach's existing parks and recreation delivery system and resources. These deficiencies or "needs" can be satisfied through the long-range strategic planning process and the careful allocation and management of the Town of Wrightsville Beach's resources over the next five (5) years.

Although the Community and Citizen Input Public Meetings were not well attended and the responses to the 2012 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey contained less information than anticipated, the overall **Public Input and Needs Assessment**

portion of the master plan process revealed several interesting pieces of information concerning the parks, recreation and open space needs and issues facing the Town of Wrightsville Beach over the next five (5) years. **For example, the need in varying degrees for each of the following programs, services, areas and facilities was mentioned during all components of the Public Input and Needs Assessment process:**

- ✚ Acquisition, protection and preservation of open space and green space
- ✚ A comprehensive, safe, functional and usable bicycle, pedestrian and non-motorized vehicular transportation network/system to include increased and improved education of the residents of and visitors to the Town of Wrightsville Beach regarding bicycle and pedestrian movement and safety in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach
- ✚ A Skateboard Park
- ✚ A “Dog Park/Area”
- ✚ Redesign and improvement of the John Nesbitt Loop
- ✚ Continued physical improvement and enhancement of existing Town parks, areas and facilities
- ✚ Improved and increased beautification and landscaping of existing Town parks, areas and facilities, the central downtown business district and the entrance into the Town
- ✚ Improved and increased cooperation between the Town of Wrightsville Beach and other public, non-profit, commercial and private entities
- ✚ An expanded and improved Fran Russ Recreation Center and additional indoor recreation space

To a lesser degree, the need for each of the following programs, services, areas and facilities was mentioned during two (2) or more but not all components of the Public Input and Needs Assessment process:

- ✚ A Natatorium/Indoor Swimming Complex
- ✚ Improved and increased services for transient boaters
- ✚ Creation of a non-profit **“Friends of Parks, Recreation and Open Space Foundation”** to serve as a “fund-raising” and volunteer recruitment entity for the Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division

- ✚ Increased, enhanced and improved programs and services for youth and teenagers
- ✚ Increased and improved access to the waters in and surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach

Although there were over forty (40) specific diverse comments and suggestions regarding parks, recreation and open space programs, services, areas and facilities in the Town of Wrightsville Beach generated during the public input and needs assessment process, it is impractical to suppose or believe that all of these suggestions and recommendations can or should be targeted for acceptance and completion in this current updated 5-year Master Plan. It is, however, wise, feasible and practical to identify the most significant of those suggestions and recommendations and to develop a plan of action for their incorporation and completion. Several of the recommendations in this document have been carried over from the **Town of Wrightsville Beach 2007 – 2012 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan**. These include, but are not limited to, expansion and improvement of the Fran Russ Recreation Center; construction of an additional recreation center; development of the bicycle and pedestrian transportation network/system; improvements to the John Nesbitt Loop; and, construction of additional tennis courts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to facilitate and simplify this process, the needs have been categorized into five distinct (5) areas: **Land Acquisition; Area and Facility Development; Program and Service Development; Policy and Procedure Considerations;** and, **Personnel Considerations**. The recommendations for the **Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan** are:

Land Acquisition—2013 – 2018

This document recognizes there is very little available land that is undeveloped in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach. This problem is further compounded by the fact that what land is available is probably cost prohibitive making the acquisition of land for parks, recreation and open space in the Town of Wrightsville Beach difficult at best. However, it must not be ruled out without due regard, discussion and

analysis. With this in mind, this document recommends the Town of Wrightsville Beach acquire any available land in the central business district/main downtown section of the town suitable for parks, recreation and open space purposes. The Master Plan also recommends that the Town of Wrightsville Beach take a hard and aggressive look at existing town owned land such as the former fire station and other public entity owned land and determine if any of the existing Town of Wrightsville Beach owned land or other public entity owned land that is presently used for purposes other than public parks, recreation and open space is desirable and suitable as land for parks, recreation and open space. The other land acquisition recommendation is that the Town of Wrightsville Beach implements an aggressive initiative to acquire properties that become available that are affordable and/or offer specific advantages for parks, recreation and open space. Such specific advantages would include, but are not limited to, greenways, land adjacent to existing Town of Wrightsville Beach parks, recreation and open space areas and facilities; land offering the possibility of public access to the ocean, sound and estuarine waters surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach; and, land in areas of the Town of Wrightsville Beach presently without existing public parks and recreation amenities. This land acquisition program could be implemented either through direct purchase of land or through an aggressive agenda of land donation and the development of conservation easements.

Area and Facility Development—2013 – 2018

Area and facility development should again be a primary focus of the Town of Wrightsville Beach for the next 5 years. There is a need to continue to upgrade several of the existing areas and facilities and to develop additional new parks, recreation and open space areas and facilities. In line with this need, facility upgrade and development has already been completed and is still currently underway in several of the Town's existing park areas, such as the Wrightsville Beach Park, Wynn Plaza Park and the Greensboro Street Park. This and similar work that has already been scheduled in the Town's budget and long-range plan should continue and be completed.

Numerous suggestions and recommendations for further area and facility upgrades and development were received during the public information gathering process. These included, but were not limited to, general and specific requests such as visual beautification and enhancement of the existing town parks, the downtown central business district and the entrance into the Town of Wrightsville Beach; the construction of additional tennis courts; the expansion and improvement of the Fran Russ Recreation Center; the construction of an additional indoor recreation facility; the widening of the John Nesbitt Loop; the construction of a skateboard park; the development of a safe and comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network/system; the construction of a “dog park/area”; and, continued upgrading of the existing park amenities. When asked the open ended question in the Needs Assessment Survey *“In your opinion, what are the three most important new facilities that the town needs to provide”*, the top facilities were “Bike Paths/Trails/Lane”, “Skateboard Park”, “Recreation Center” and “Dog Park” (see page 50).

With this and all public input information in mind, nine (9) area and facility development needs and recommendations are specifically identified in this updated 5-year Master Plan that are deemed to be the most urgent and the most practical to implement during the period of this document. These “needs” and recommendations are not presented in any particular or priority order:

- ❖ The need and recommendation for the continued planning, implementation and initial development of a safe and comprehensive network/system of non-vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle transportation between and connecting public areas and facilities within the Town of Wrightsville Beach planning jurisdiction. This system/network would include speed bumps, marked pedestrian crossings, shuttle services, police enforcement, user education and enlightenment, sidewalks, biking paths, walking trails, pedestrian bridges, greenways and other pedestrian and non-vehicular corridors. This need was identified repeatedly during the needs assessment process by advisory board members, the general public and staff members.

- ❖ The need and recommendation to expand the existing Fran Russ Recreation Center to improve the delivery of current services and facilitate the provision of additional classes and meeting space.
- ❖ The need and recommendation to construct an additional indoor recreation facility/center
- ❖ The need and recommendation to construct two (2) additional lighted tennis courts at the Wrightsville Beach Park. The existing tennis courts are currently used to their fullest. Adding tennis courts will allow for increasing supervised and unsupervised participation in these activities. This could be accomplished through a redesign of the existing outdoor sand volleyball area—elimination of one of the three existing sand volleyball courts and adding two (2) new tennis courts.
- ❖ The need and recommendation to construct and operate a “Skateboard Park”
- ❖ The need and recommendation to construct and operate a “Dog Park”
- ❖ The need and recommendation to “reclaim” existing public water access points through proper and appropriate markings and identification of the sites for public use and to develop new public water access sites and facilities.
- ❖ The need and recommendation to light the existing tennis courts at the Wrightsville Beach Park. Fulfillment of this need will allow for better usage of the existing tennis courts as well as increased usage during the evening and dark hours.
- ❖ The need and recommendation to continue the upgrading and modernization of existing parks, areas and facilities such as:
 - Wrightsville Beach Park**—provide additional outdoor fitness and exercise equipment; construct a shuffleboard court area, a horseshoe court area and a bocce ball court area; and construct at least two (2) rain gardens/bio-retention areas within the park
 - John Nesbitt Loop**—widen the loop trail to at least 6 feet and resurface the trail where appropriate; install a system to spray a water mist at strategic locations along the length of the trail; improve the lighting of the trail; and, add fitness stations along the length of the loop where practical

Fran Russ Recreation Center—install a state of the art sound system and renovate and improve the facility interior to accommodate additional classes and meeting space

Wynn Plaza Waterfront Park—establish and construct a designated kayak/canoe/paddleboard launching dock/area to facility access to Banks Channel for non-motorized watercraft

Causeway Drive Park—add a gazebo and covered benches overlooking the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW); and, provide additional landscaping to include a rain garden

Greensboro Park—add another small piece of play equipment for 5 – 12 year olds and a water fountain

South Channel Drive Park—add landscaping to include a rain garden

Island Drive Park—add landscaping to include a rain garden

Kayak/Canoe/Paddleboard Trails/Routes—add trial/route markers and buoys to provide a comprehensive and identifiable system of water trails/routes in and surrounding the Town of Wrightsville Beach

Program and Service Development—2013 – 2018

In general, the needs assessment process identified a wide and varied range of programs and activities of interest to the citizens of Wrightsville Beach. The top twelve (12) recreational activities identified in the survey that citizens enjoyed are walking/running, biking, The Loop, the beach, boating, tennis, swimming, kayaking/paddleboarding, surfing, fishing, concerts/music and the Farmers' Market. The most desired new recreational activities identified in the survey were bike paths/trails/facilities, skateboard park and a dog park. The most important new health/wellness programs identified in the survey were yoga, exercise classes and bike lanes/paths/trails. Based upon this information and after a comprehensive assessment of the capabilities of the Town of Wrightsville Beach to provide various programs and services, the following programs are recommended to be addressed over the next 5 years:

- ✚ More emphasis should be placed upon aquatic and aquatic-related programs such as environmental education, kayaking, paddleboarding, sailing, boating,

surfing, swimming and fishing. Many of these programs could be offered by contracting with existing aquatic outfitters in the area and other commercial and private vendors.

- ✚ With the completion of the outdoor amphitheater new and expanded programs and services can be provided such as more outdoor concerts, plays, movies and holiday celebrations.
- ✚ Consideration should be given to the planning and implementation of more bicycle related programs and services in conjunction with the development of the bicycle and pedestrian non-vehicular transportation network.
- ✚ Programs emphasizing active living and fitness should be stressed. This would include the provision of more tennis and basketball related programs as well as classes such as yoga, nutrition, jogging, walking, weight training, other exercise programs and services, etc.
- ✚ Programs and services for youth and teens should be expanded to include a Youth/Teen Advisory Board.

Policy and Procedure Considerations—2013 – 2018

There are several areas of policy and procedure that need to be examined and evaluated in light of the recommendations contained in this Master Plan. Some of these policies and procedures are currently strategic parts of the standard operating procedures of the Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department. However, several of the policy and procedure recommendations delve into areas not presently an active part of the Town's operating procedures. Highlights of these policy and procedure considerations are summarized as follows:

- ◆ ***Partnerships***—The number and type of cooperative partnerships should be expanded and enhanced. Although the Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division is already involved in several significant partnership commitments that have provided valuable services to the citizens of Wrightsville Beach, there are still numerous groups, agencies and organizations within the Town's planning and jurisdiction sphere available and possibly willing to enter into additional and/or expanded partnerships with the Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department in the

provision and administration of parks and recreation programs, services areas, and facilities to the citizens of Wrightsville Beach. These partnerships would significantly increase the effectiveness and efficiency of Town resources and expand the scope of available parks and recreation programs and services. Available partners include, but are not limited to, the New Hanover County School System and Board of Education, the New Hanover County Cooperative Extension Service, Coastal Land Trust, Cape Fear River Watch, the New Hanover County Parks Department, UNC Wilmington, the Audubon Society, the North Carolina Nature Conservancy, other public entities operating in Wrightsville Beach and New Hanover County, and, other non-profit, private, commercial, service and civic organizations.

- ◆ ***Pedestrian and Non-Motorized Vehicular Transportation Network/System***—The Town of Wrightsville Beach needs to renew and expand its commitment to a comprehensive and safe pedestrian, bicycle and non-motorized vehicular network/system and continue to work closely with the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) to develop and implement this network/system in and around the Town of Wrightsville Beach.
- ◆ ***Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accessibility Compliance***—The 1990 passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) makes it imperative that the Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Division make a strong and comprehensive commitment to providing ADA accessibility to all citizens of Wrightsville Beach. The Department should continue to make ADA compliance and recreational inclusion a top administrative priority in the development and implementation of all programs, services, areas and facilities.



◆ ***Certification of Parks and Playground Equipment—***

Immediately and then on a regularly scheduled basis, the Town of Wrightsville Beach should contract with a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) to inspect all parks and playground equipment and areas under the maintenance and operation of the Town. This action will ensure that the Town's parks and playground equipment are in compliance with existing park and playground standards and serve as an additional protection against negligence lawsuits.

Personnel Considerations—2013 – 2018

The current organizational chart for the Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department is presented in **Appendix H**. The Division of Parks and Recreation is currently housed in the Planning and Parks Department. There is a Program Supervisor in the Parks and Recreation Division who answers directly to the Director of Planning and Parks. The Parks and Recreation Division also includes an Administrative Assistant, a Parks Maintenance Supervisor, a Crew Leader and a Parks Maintenance Worker. A Park Ranger answers directly to the Director of Planning and Parks as do the members of the Planning and Inspections Division.

The current organizational chart for the Town of Wrightsville Beach Planning and Parks Department seems inadequate to meet the present, latent and projected demand for parks, recreation and open space services and programs. Recommended changes and additions to the parks and recreation areas, facilities, programs and services due primarily to facility development, program development and increased maintenance responsibilities between 2013 – 2018 will require the following recommended changes to the existing composition and organization of the current Planning and Parks Department in order to afford the Town of Wrightsville Beach the ability and capability to accomplish the parks and recreation mission, goals and objectives in the future (**Appendix I**):

- ✚ Creating a separate and distinct Parks and Recreation Department
- ✚ Creating a full-time position of Director of Parks and Recreation by upgrading the current Program Supervisor position
- ✚ Creating and hiring a new full-time position of Recreation Specialist

- ✚ Changing the title of the existing Parks Maintenance Supervisor position to Parks and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor
- ✚ Changing the title of the existing Parks Maintenance Crew Leader position to Parks and Facilities Maintenance Crew Leader
- ✚ Changing the title of the existing Parks Maintenance Worker position to Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker
- ✚ Creating and hiring an additional new full-time position Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker
- ✚ Transferring the current Park Ranger position from the direct supervision of the Director of Planning and Parks to the direct supervision of the to be created position of Director of Parks and Recreation

After implementation, these recommended changes and additions would yield the following full-time staff positions within the Parks and Recreation Department:

- ✚ **Director of Parks and Recreation**
- ✚ **Recreation Specialist**
- ✚ **Administrative Assistant**
- ✚ **Parks and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor**
- ✚ **Parks and Facilities Maintenance Crew Leader**
- ✚ **Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker (2)**
- ✚ **Park Ranger**

The Department would still need to supplement and compliment these full-time positions with the necessary part-time and seasonal positions.





CHAPTER EIGHT: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* is grounded in an analysis and synthesis of current background information for the Town of Wrightsville Beach, an inventory and evaluation of the current parks, recreation and open space delivery system, an understanding of existing parks, recreation and open space standards and guidelines, and, the identification of participant needs, wants and interests.

The recommendations and proposals of the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* are designed to be planned and implemented over the next 5 year period utilizing revenues and funds from current appropriations, the annual Town operating budget, grants, private sources, tax revenues, gifts, donations, a bond issue, and/or, user fees and charges. The Master Plan also is contingent upon the Town's ability to enter into joint cooperative ventures with various complimentary public, private, commercial and quasi-public agencies and organizations currently operating in the Town of Wrightsville Beach and New Hanover County.

Land Acquisition—2013 – 2018—The land acquisition recommendations identified within the *Town of Wrightsville Beach 2013 – 2018 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan* do not require immediate implementation in order to accomplish the goals and objectives of the master plan. However, it is suggested that the Town of Wrightsville Beach begin an immediate process of identifying potential land suitable for parks, recreation and open space purposes and budget \$25,000 - \$50,000 per year in a capital improvements budget for this land acquisition purpose. The accumulated funds in this budgeted item would then be available for land acquisition purposes as the need arises in the future. Any future land acquisition could also be partially funded through Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access, Clean Water Trust Fund grants and other available grant funding through the state of North Carolina, private foundations/sources and the federal government.

Area and Facility Development—2013 – 2018—The specific details for the area and facility development recommendations should be worked out in a 5-Year Capital Improvements Project Budget for the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The Town of Wrightsville Beach can and should apply for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant funding for the recommendations regarding the improvement of the Fran Russ Recreation Center; the construction and development of a new recreation center; the lighting of the existing tennis courts at the Wrightsville Beach Park; the construction of the additional lighted tennis courts; the development and construction of the skateboard park; the development and construction of the “dog park/area”; and, the upgrading of the existing areas and facilities. The Town of Wrightsville Beach can and should also apply for Public Fishing Access Areas Grants from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Grants from the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Coastal Management. The funds from these sources could be utilized to develop access facilities to the creeks, sound and Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (AIWW) areas surrounding Wrightsville Beach. The non-vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle transportation network between and connecting public areas and facilities within the Wrightsville Beach

planning jurisdiction could be funded through bicycle transportation grants through the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the federal government.

Total project development cost estimates for each of the Area and Facility Development needs identified for 2013 – 2018 are:

Park Improvements \$75,000 – \$200,000

- On-Going Project

Non-Vehicular Transportation Network/System \$1.5 – \$3 million

- On-Going Project

Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access \$15,000 – \$75,000

- On-Going Project

Light Existing Tennis Courts \$50,000 – \$75,000

- Should be Completed by 2014

Improvements to the John Nesbitt Loop \$450,000 – \$500,000

- Should be Completed by 2015

Improvements to the Fran Russ Recreation Center \$50,000 – \$75,000

- Should be Completed by 2015

Construction of a Recreation Center \$2 – \$3 million

- Should be completed by 2016

Construction of New Lighted Tennis Courts (2) \$150,000 – \$175,000

- Should be Completed by 2017

Construction of Skateboard Park \$350,000 – \$400,000

- Should be Completed by 2018

Total Estimate for 2013 – 2018 Area and Facility Development \$4,640,000 - \$7,500,000



<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COMPLETION</u>	<u>COST</u>
Park Improvements: rain gardens, playground equipment, landscaping, dog park/area, exercise stations, docks, trail markers, etc.	On-Going Projects	\$75,000 – \$200,000
Non-Vehicular Transportation Network/System	On-Going Project	\$1.5 – \$3 million
Public Beach and Water Access	On-Going Project	\$15,000 – \$75,000
Lighting for Existing Tennis Courts	By Spring 2014	\$50,000 – \$75,000
Improvements to John Nesbitt Loop	By Summer 2015	\$450,000 – \$500,000
Improvements to Fran Russ Recreation Center	By Fall 2015	\$50,000 – \$75,000
Construction of New Recreation Center	By Fall 2016	\$2 – \$3 million
Construction of New Tennis Courts (2)	By Spring 2017	\$150,000 – \$175,000
Construction of Skateboard Park	By Spring 2018	\$350,000 – \$400,000



Program and Service Development—2013 – 2018—The additional programs and services should be offered by the Town of Wrightsville Beach only as a part of the normal operating budget and as staff, areas and facilities and financial resources allow. However, it must be recognized that the proposed recommendations for programs and services such as the additional classes for active living and fitness and for youth and teens to be offered at the Fran Russ Recreation Center and the new recreation center cannot be offered until these areas and facilities are either constructed, improved or a suitable alternative location secured. On the other hand, programs and services such as the increased emphasis on aquatic and aquatic-related activities and some bicycle related programs are not resource intensive and should be able to be accomplished with the existing staff, resources and facilities or contracted out for professional outfitters to provide.

Policy and Procedure Considerations—2013 – 2018

✚ **Partnerships**—The Town of Wrightsville Beach should continue existing partnerships and begin to create and enhance appropriate formal new partnerships with interested agencies and organizations such as the New Hanover County School System, the New Hanover County Parks Department, the New Hanover County Cooperative Extension Service, the Coastal Land Trust, Cape Fear River Watch, UNC Wilmington, the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, and other public entities and non-profit, service and civic organizations and private vendors in order to facilitate the delivery of recreation and leisure services in the Town of Wrightsville Beach. The Director of Parks and Recreation, when approved, and/or the Recreation Specialist should take the lead in this endeavor. These partnerships could and should be formed as soon as possible and where appropriate.



- ✚ ***Pedestrian and Non-Motorized Vehicular Transportation Network/System***—The Town of Wrightsville Beach has already made significant planning and design progress in this area. The town staff, under the lead of the Director of Parks and Recreation, should continue working with the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WMPO) on this project.



- ✚ ***Americans With Disabilities (ADA) Accessibility Compliance***—The Town of Wrightsville Beach should hire a competent certified, professional to conduct a comprehensive inventory and evaluation of all existing programs, services, areas and facilities in order to determine current ADA and recreational inclusion compliance. This inventory and evaluation should be completed during the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year. All future programs, services, areas and facilities should be designed, constructed and implemented according to recommended and acceptable ADA and recreational inclusion guidelines and standards.



- ✚ ***Certification of Parks and Playground Equipment***—The Town of Wrightsville Beach should contract immediately with a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) to perform a complete and detailed assessment of all parks, recreation and open space areas and facilities, particularly the playground equipment. A Town employee could even obtain the certification and complete the process. Once the initial assessment has been completed by no later than June 2014, re-assessments by a CPSI should be scheduled for every 2 years. This recommendation should not eliminate the need for parks maintenance staff to conduct daily, weekly, and monthly inspections and assessments of its own at Town parks and playgrounds.

Personnel Considerations—2013 – 2018—The creation of a separate and distinct Town of Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Department should occur immediately. The programs, services and functions performed by the parks and recreation staff and facilities are too complex and comprehensive to be provided under the current organizational breakdown. The creation of a Director of Parks and Recreation position within the newly created department should take place concurrent with the transformation from the present arrangement of a division within the Planning and Parks Department to a separate and distinct Parks and Recreation Department. This action should be implemented during the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year.

2013– 2018 Personnel Considerations Implementation Recommendations

◆ **2013 – 2014 Fiscal Year**

- Create a separate and distinct Parks and Recreation Department out of the existing Parks and Recreation Division within the Planning and Parks Department
- Upgrade the existing Program Supervisor position within the Parks and Recreation Division to the position of Director of Parks and Recreation in the newly created Parks and Recreation Department
- Change the title of the existing Parks Maintenance Supervisor position to Parks and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor
- Change the title of the existing Parks Maintenance Crew Leader position to Parks and Facilities Crew Leader
- Change the title of the existing Parks Maintenance Worker position to Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker
- Transfer the current Park Ranger position from the direct supervision of the Director of Planning and Parks to the direct supervision of the Director of Parks and Recreation

◆ **2014 – 2015**

- Create and hire the full-time position of Recreation Specialist
- Create and hire an additional full-time Parks and Facilities Maintenance Worker

External Grant Funding Opportunities

It is a well accepted fact of doing business that public parks and recreation agencies and organizations cannot survive under the current economic conditions without external grant funding. These grants may come from the state or federal government, quasi-governmental agencies, non-profit entities or from private foundations and organizations. The competition for these grants is enormous and formidable. Regardless of the source of the grant funding, the ability of a local government agency or organization to successfully secure these monies is vital and hangs on the local government's capability to present its case for securing the funding in the best light.

Grant-writing is both an art and a science. It requires creative ability to present the local government's needs and requests in the most advantageous manner and knowledge of specific grant writing requirements, policies and procedures. For this reason, successful grant-writing skills and abilities have become a requirement and a necessity for all local government operations. With this in mind, it is recommended the town address this need. The recommendation is that the town designates an employee to be the grant-writing authority for all town requests for external grant funding and train that individual for this purpose. Or, the town hires an outside consultant already trained in grant-writing to work with the town when preparing a grant request for external funding.

In response to shrinking federal assistance during the 1980s and 1990s, North Carolina established dedicated funding sources for recreation from sources such as bonds, real-estate transfer taxes, user fees, state sales taxes, income tax write-offs, and mineral severance taxes. North Carolina has taken major steps to provide on-going sources of park and conservation funds with the establishment of the Natural Heritage Trust Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. In addition, grant money is also available through the federally funded Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFTEA) [formerly known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)]. The North Carolina Department of Transportation administers the funds and the local government agency can use these funds for developing portions of any proposed greenway system. Local governments can also apply for assistance with pedestrian, bikeway and greenway

projects by applying for North Carolina Department of Transportation Enhancement Funds.

- ✚ **Natural Heritage Trust Fund (NHTF)**—The Natural Heritage Trust Fund (NHTF) was established in North Carolina in 1987. The fund provides supplemental funding to select state agencies for the acquisition and protection of important natural areas, to preserve the state’s ecological diversity and cultural heritage, and to inventory the natural heritage resources of the state.



- ✚ **Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF)**—The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) provides state parks and local governments with a reliable funding source for projects. The North Carolina General Assembly established the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund in July 1994 to fund improvements in the state’s park system, to fund grants for local governments and to increase the public’s access to the state’s beaches and coastal waters. The PARTF program provides dollar-for-dollar grants to local governments. Recipients use the grants to acquire land and/or to develop parks and recreational projects that serve the general public. A portion of the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund is the primary funding source for the Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access (PBCWA) Program. The PBCWA Program, administered by the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM), offers matching grants to local governments throughout North Carolina’s 20 coastal counties. The fund is fueled by money from property sold in North Carolina and is allocated in 3 ways: 65% to the state parks through the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation; 30% as dollar-for-dollar matching grants to local governments for park and recreation purposes; and, 5% for the Coastal and Estuarine Water Access Program.



- ✚ ***North Carolina Division of Coastal Management Public Beach and Coastal Waterfront Access Grants***—The North Carolina Division of Coastal Management awards more than \$1 million a year in matching grants to local governments for projects to improve pedestrian access to the state’s beaches and waterways. Local governments may use access grants to construct low-cost public access facilities, including parking areas, restrooms, dune crossovers and piers. Projects range in size from small, local access areas to regional access sites with amenities such as large parking lots, bathrooms and picnic shelters. Towns and counties may also use the grants to replace aging access facilities. In addition, local governments can use the funds to help acquire land for access sites or to revitalize urban waterfronts.



- ✚ ***North Carolina Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grants***—The North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and the Transportation Planning Branch created an annual matching grant program—the Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative—to encourage municipalities to develop comprehensive bicycle plans and pedestrian plans. This program was initiated in January 2004 and is administered through the North Carolina Department of Transportation.



- ✚ ***North Carolina Department of Transportation Enhancement Program—Federal Transportation Enhancement Fund***—The Federal Transportation Enhancement funding is administered by the Enhancement Unit and serves to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the Nation’s intermodal transportation system. Transportation Enhancement (TE) activities, awarded through the North Carolina Call for Projects process, must benefit the travelling public and help communities increase transportation choices and access,

enhance the built or natural environment and create a sense of place. Transportation Enhancement projects must have a relationship to surface transportation and encompass one of the following qualifying activities: bicycle and pedestrian facilities; bicycle and pedestrian safety; acquisition of scenic easements, scenic or historic sites; scenic or historic highway programs; landscaping and other scenic beautification; historic preservation; rehabilitation of historic transportation facilities; preservation of abandoned rail corridors; control or outdoor advertising; archaeological planning and research; environmental mitigation; or transportation museums.



✚ ***Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF)***—The 1996 North Carolina General Assembly created the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) “to clean up pollution in the state’s surface waters and to protect and conserve those waters that are not yet polluted.” State agencies, local governments or other political subdivisions of the state, and non-profit conservation organizations may apply for grants. Projects must “...specifically address water pollution problems and focus on upgrading surface waters, eliminating pollution and protecting and conserving unpolluted surface waters, including urban drinking water supplies.” The funds from the CWMTF can be used for acquisition of riparian properties, financing of innovative wastewater 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.



North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund

- ✚ ***The North Carolina Trails Program: Recreational Trails Program (RTP)***—The Recreational Trails Program is a \$1.3 million grant program funded by Congress with money from the federal gas taxes paid on fuel used by off-highway vehicles. This program’s intent is to meet the trail and trail-related recreational needs identified by the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Grant applicants must be able to contribute 20% of the project cost with cash or in-kind contributions. The program is dedicated to helping citizens, organizations and agencies plan, develop and manage all types of trails ranging from greenways and trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding to river trails and off-highway vehicle trails.



State trails program

- ✚ ***Cooperative Forestry Assistance Funds: Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program***—The Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Grant Program provides 50/50 matching grants to the States, and through the states to any unit of local government, educational institutions, non-profit 501 (c) (3) organizations and other tax-exempt organizations to provide technical assistance and services to individuals, groups, communities, governmental agencies and organizations with respect to the protection, improvement, management, establishment and utilization of trees and shrubs in urban areas, communities, and open spaces, for the improvement of the beauty and livability of the urban environment.



- ✚ ***Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)***—The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has historically been a primary funding source of the U.S. Department of Interior for outdoor recreation development and land acquisition by local governments and state agencies. In North Carolina, the program is administered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.



- ✚ ***Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA): A Legacy for Users***—This program provides funding for transportation related bicycle and pedestrian facilities. There is a Surface Transportation Program (STP) category, which allows cities and counties the option of using bridge and road funds for providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Enhancements can include bicycle and pedestrian facilities, rail corridor preservation, scenic and environmental transportation opportunities and improvements to historical transportation sites. Funds from this program could be used to establish corridor linkages between neighborhoods and park and recreational areas.



APPENDIX—A
POPULATION
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH
1960 – 2010

YEAR	WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH	PERCENT OF COUNTY POP.	NEW HANOVER COUNTY
1960	723	1.0%	71,742
1970	1,701	2.0%	82,996
1980	2,786	2.7%	102,779
1990	2,937	2.4%	120,284
2000	2,593	1.6%	160,327
2001*	2,604	1.6%	163,682
2005**	2,648	1.5%	180,358
2010	2,477	1.2%	202,667

Source: United States Census of Population and Housing 1970 to 2010

*North Carolina Data Center Municipal Population Estimate 2001

**North Carolina Data Center Municipal Population Estimate 2005

APPENDIX B

TOP 14 EMPLOYERS IN NEW HANOVER COUNTY (2010)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Company</i>	<i>Product/Service</i>	<i>Employees</i>
1	New Hanover Regional Medical Center	Hospital	4,738
2	New Hanover County School System	Education	3,666
3	Wal-Mart	Retail	2,592
4	GE Wilmington	Aviation	2,100
5	University of NC Wilmington	Higher Education	1,898
6	Brunswick County Schools	Education	1,723
7	PPD, Inc.	Pharmaceutical	1,500
8	New Hanover County	County Government	1,480
9	Verizon Wireless	Communications	1,346
10	Progress Energy	Electricity	1,070
11	Corning, Inc.	Optical Fiber	1,000
12	City of Wilmington	Government	981
13	Novant Medical/ Brunswick Community Hospital	Hospital	597
14	Cape Fear Community College	Education	541

Source: Greater Wilmington Area Chamber of Commerce

APPENDIX—C
APRIL 2010 POPULATION SUMMARY
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Total Population 2,477
Average Household Size 2.29*

Source: *North Carolina State Demographics, Persons Per Household
<http://demog.state.nc.us/>

APPENDIX—D
PERSONS BY AGE (2000 – 2010)
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Age Group	Wrightsville Beach 2000	Percent Total	Wrightsville Beach 2010	Percent Total	New Hanover County 2000	Percent Total	New Hanover County 2010	Percent Total
0 – 4	78	3.0%	63	2.5%	9,177	5.7%	11,724	5.8%
5 – 17	152	5.9%	248	10.0%	24,415	15.2%	28,689	14.1%
18 – 24	436	16.8%	490	19.8%	19,249	12.0%	25,345	12.5%
25 – 44	882	34.0%	674	27.2%	48,838	30.5%	56,393	27.8%
45 – 64	657	25.3%	651	26.3%	38,061	23.7%	52,424	25.9%
65+	388	15.0%	351	14.2%	20,567	12.8%	28,092	13.9%
Total	2,593	100%	2,477	100%	160,307	100%	202,667	100%

Source: United States Census Population and Housing 2000 and 2010

APPENDIX—E
RACIAL COMPOSITION (2000 – 2010)
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Race	Wrightsville Beach 2000	Percent Total	Wrightsville Beach 2010	Percent Total	New Hanover County 2000	Percent Total	New Hanover County 2010	Percent Total
Total	2,593	100%	2,477	100%	160,327	100%	202,667	100%
White	2,544	98.1%	2,425	97.9%	128,098	79.0%	160,289	79.0%
Black	7	0.3%	8	0.3%	27,203	20.0%	29,907	14.8%
Other	42	1.6%	44	1.8%	5,006	1.0%	12,471	6.2%

Source: NC State Data Center Municipal Population-Race 2000 and 2010

APPENDIX—F
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2000 – 2010)
TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

Education Completed	Wrightsville Beach 2010	Percent Total	New Hanover County 2010	Percent Total
Less than 9 th Grade	9	0.6%	4,168	3.2%
9 – 12 no Diploma	11	0.7%	9,656	7.3%
High School Graduate	76	4.7%	29,718	22.5%
College, No Degree	289	17.8%	28,500	21.6%
Associates Degree	170	10.5%	12,229	9.3%
Bachelors Degree	709	43.7%	31,979	24.2%
Graduate/Professional Degree	359	22.1%	15,694	11.9%
Total	1,623	100%	131,944	100%

Source: United States Census of Population and Housing 2010

APPENDIX—G

2012 PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY



**Town of Wrightsville Beach
Parks and Recreation
Needs Assessment Survey**



The Town of Wrightsville Beach Board of Aldermen, Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee, and Town staff are committed to maintaining and improving the quality of life for the citizens of Wrightsville Beach. Public recreation facilities and recreation programs are an important part of the Town's immediate and long-range planning efforts and we need your input. Please take a few moments to answer the following questions in this survey and return it to us in the enclosed postage paid envelope prior to February 10, 2012. The results will help Town officials and staff in their efforts to provide the best possible recreational opportunities for the citizens of Wrightsville Beach.

1. Do you reside in Wrightsville Beach: Full time Part time I don't reside in Wrightsville Beach
 I rent my home I own my home

2. If yes, how long have you lived in Wrightsville Beach? less than 3 Years 3 - 5 years
 5 - 10 years 10 - 15 years Over 15 years

3. What is your gender? Male Female What is your age? _____

4. Please indicate the number of individuals in your household other than yourself: _____

Please list their ages: _____

5. Please provide us with the information below (not required).

Name _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

6. Which of the following Wrightsville Beach recreational facilities or parks have members of your household visited or used in the last 12 months? (Check all that apply.)

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lees Nature Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Greensboro Street Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Island Drive Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer Field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Channel Park | <input type="checkbox"/> John Nesbitt Loop | <input type="checkbox"/> Wynn Plaza | <input type="checkbox"/> Softball Field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fran Russ Recreation Center | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball Courts | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Courts | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball Courts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wrightsville Beach Park Playground | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic Shelters | <input type="checkbox"/> I/we haven't used any of these facilities | |

7. How often have you or members of your household used or visited the above facilities in the past 12 months?
 Never (0) Rarely (1-5) Sometimes (6-10) Often (More than 10)

8. Which of the following Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation Department programs and activities have you or members of your household participated in within the last 12 months? (Check all that apply.)

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concerts in the Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Lessons | <input type="checkbox"/> Kids Night Out | <input type="checkbox"/> After School Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Movies in the Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Ladder | <input type="checkbox"/> Boot Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Camp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bark in the Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga | <input type="checkbox"/> Art Camp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers' Market | <input type="checkbox"/> Flag Football League | <input type="checkbox"/> Pilates | <input type="checkbox"/> Shag Lessons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kayak/Paddleboard Workshop | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball League | <input type="checkbox"/> Tone & Stretch | <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Lessons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lacrosse Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer Camp | <input type="checkbox"/> Low Impact Aerobics | <input type="checkbox"/> Cotillion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I/we haven't participated in any programs or activities offered by Wrightsville Beach Parks & Recreation. | | | |

9. How often have you or members of your household participated in the above activities in the past 12 months?
 Never (0) Rarely (1-5) Sometimes (6-10) Often (More than 10)

10. If you indicated in the previous questions that you Sometimes, Rarely, or Never use Wrightsville Beach recreation facilities or participate in recreation programs or activities offered by the Town, please indicate why:

11. Please list in order of preference the top 6 recreational activities enjoyed by members of your household either at Wrightsville Beach or elsewhere.

1) _____ 4) _____
2) _____ 5) _____
3) _____ 6) _____

12. In your opinion, what are the three most important new facilities that the town needs to provide:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 The Town does not need to provide any new facilities.
Would you support new facilities if they were funded through private sources or grants? Yes No
Would you support a property tax increase to provide for new facilities? Yes No

13. In your opinion, what are the three most important new recreational activities the town needs to provide:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 The Town does not need to provide any new recreational activities.
Would you support new activities if they were funded through private sources or grants? Yes No
Would you support a property tax increase to provide for new recreational activities? Yes No

14. In your opinion, what are the three most important health and wellness programs the town needs to provide:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
 The Town does not need to provide new health and wellness programs.
Would you support health/wellness programs if they were funded through private sources or grants? Yes No
Would you support a property tax increase to provide for health and wellness programs? Yes No

15. Did you complete and return the 2007 survey? Yes No

16. Please add any additional comments that you may have regarding Wrightsville Beach Parks and Recreation programs, recreational facilities, health and wellness programs, special events, and parks and recreation staff:

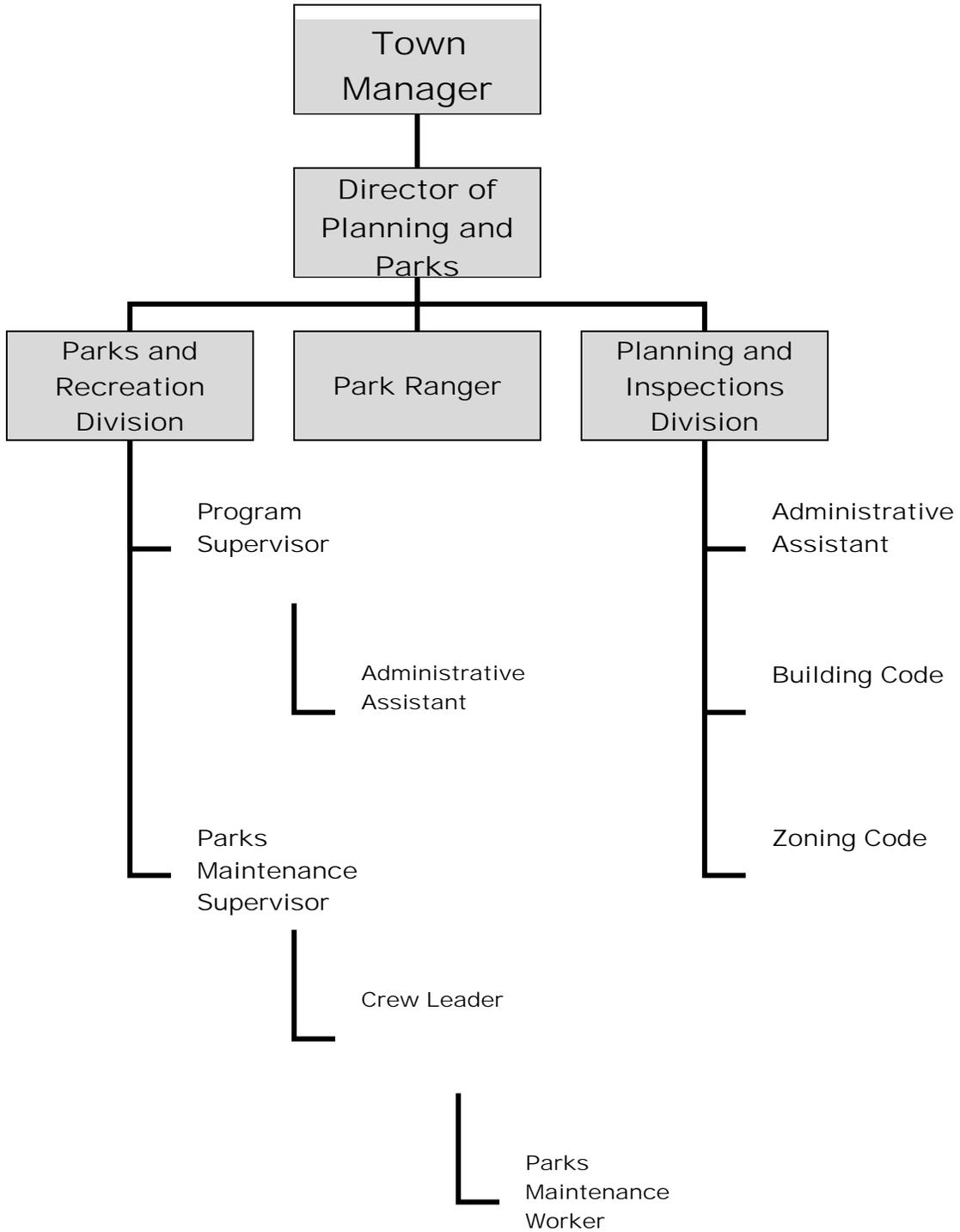
1/16/12

2602

APPENDIX—H

CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH—PLANNING & PARKS DEPARTMENT



APPENDIX I

PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

TOWN OF WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH—PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

