





01

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

Parks and recreation opportunities are essential quality-of-life amenities for the residents of the City of Lenoir. Developing a high-quality parks and recreation system requires thoughtful planning and a long-term commitment. Similarly, decisions about park amenities and recreational programs should be made within the context of a broader vision for the community, rather than in isolation. A cohesive vision for Lenoir's parks and recreation system must be established to ensure incremental and strategic implementation over time.

This Plan, in alignment with the City's overall Comprehensive Plan, serves as a guiding framework to achieve that vision and support the continued enhancement of parks and recreation offerings in Lenoir.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan:

- Identifies the implications of current community demographics and projected population growth as it relates to parks and recreation
- Analyzes the current state of the City's parks, recreation and open spaces

- Identifies parks and recreation deficiencies and needs
- Establishes goals, objectives and recommendations for the next five to 10 years
- Prioritizes improvements to the parks and recreation system
- Aids the City in seeking funding opportunities

This document should serve as a planning tool for City staff, elected and appointed officials, residents, and the private development community to understand the community's priorities and work toward long-term success. The Plan is designed to help coordinate local efforts in Lenoir and to foster collaboration with Caldwell County, area school districts, local organizations, and sports leagues.



BENEFITS OF PARKS

Access to quality parks and recreation is an important component of a high-quality community. Planning for a successful, equitable parks system ensures that all residents can experience these key benefits:

Overall Well-Being Benefits

- Contact with nature helps to improve overall well-being and quality of life
- Recreation provides multi-generational opportunities for mental, physical, social, and emotional stimulation

Health Benefits

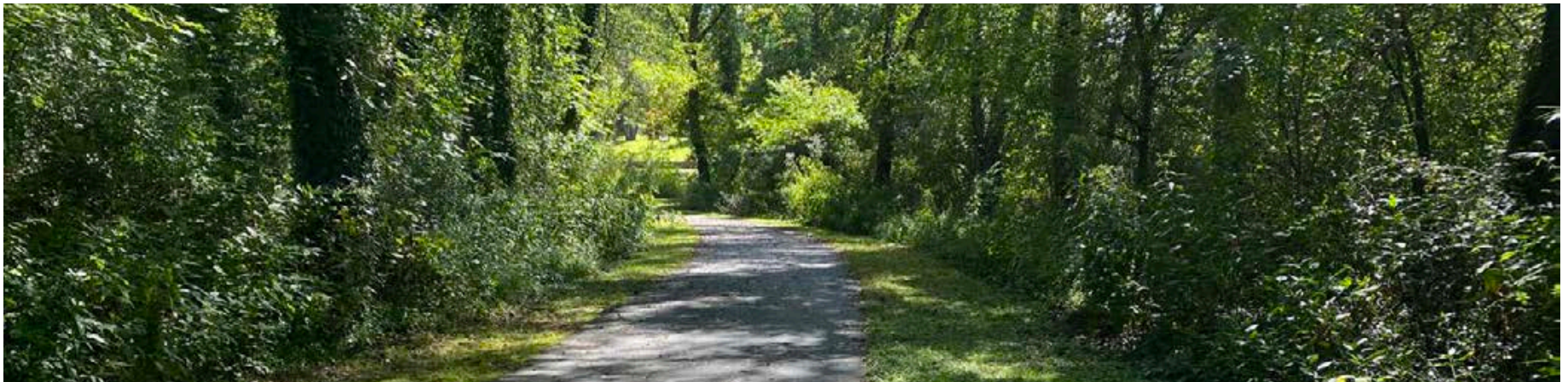
- Access to nature and recreation increases frequency of fitness and improves psychological health
- Play provides crucial developmental opportunities for children
- Physical activity helps to reduce obesity, depression, and many other health problems

Environmental Benefits

- Parkland helps to mitigate climate, air, and water pollution impacts
- Preserved open space protects vital habitat for plants and wildlife
- Parks foster environmental stewardship in citizens

Economic Benefits

- Parkland increases property values within close proximity
- Quality parks and recreation can attract new residents and businesses
- Unique park and recreation amenities can encourage tourism and associated economic benefits



PLANNING PROCESS & TIME FRAME

In 2024, the City of Lenoir commissioned Freese and Nichols, Inc (FNI) to develop a new Comprehensive Plan and Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This Plan's analysis, vision, goals, recommendations, and prioritization strategies were carefully crafted to serve as a guiding document for the development and enhancement of parks and recreation facilities and programs in Lenoir. In addition to the analysis of existing conditions presented in this Plan, the Plan is also informed by the assessment and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. This will help align the Plan with the broader vision and goals established in the Comprehensive Plan.

The planning process incorporated a wide range of public engagement activities to ensure community input played a central role in shaping the Plan. Engagement opportunities included one-on-one interviews, multiple stakeholder listening sessions, and a public survey conducted online. Comprehensive documentation of the public engagement process can be found in Appendix B: Parks and Recreation Public Input Summary.

This Plan is designed to address Lenoir's parks and recreation needs for the next five to 10 years. It is recommended that the Plan be periodically re-evaluated to confirm its relevance and alignment with evolving community priorities. Best practices are to update the Plan every five years or in response to significant developments or changes in the community that impact parks and recreation needs.

PLANNING AREA

The study area outlined in this Plan includes the entire city limits of Lenoir and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), as depicted on the map on the following page. Located in Caldwell County, Lenoir is strategically positioned in the foothills of North Carolina, offering connectivity to key regional hubs. Recent trends indicate a positive shift in population growth, reflecting Lenoir's increasing appeal as a desirable place to live, work, and recreate.

The City of Lenoir serves as the primary governmental entity responsible for providing parks and recreation facilities and programs to its residents. While the City will take the lead on implementation, the success of parks and recreation depends on the collective involvement of the entire community. Potential partners in implementation may include other governmental organizations, local businesses and industries, community groups, and the residents of Lenoir themselves.

Further details on the study area and community profile can be found in Chapter 1: Community Snapshot of the Comprehensive Plan.



Map 1. Parks and Recreation Planning Area

LENOIR PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Lenoir Parks and Recreation Department serves as the primary entity responsible for the planning, maintenance, and development of the City's parks, trails, and recreational facilities. In addition to providing spaces for leisure and recreation, the department plays a vital role in organizing community festivals, events, and a variety of recreational programs that enhance the quality of life for Lenoir residents.

The department is supported by a dedicated team of 14 full-time staff, including the Parks and Recreation Director, Administrative Assistant, Aquatics Director, two Center Directors, Assistant Director, Athletic Director, Aquatics Specialist, Assistant Aquatics Specialist, Front Desk Supervisor, Assistant Front Desk Supervisor, and three Custodians. In addition, the department is staffed by 14 part-time employees and up to 45 seasonal team members. This workforce ensures the smooth operation and upkeep of the City's facilities.

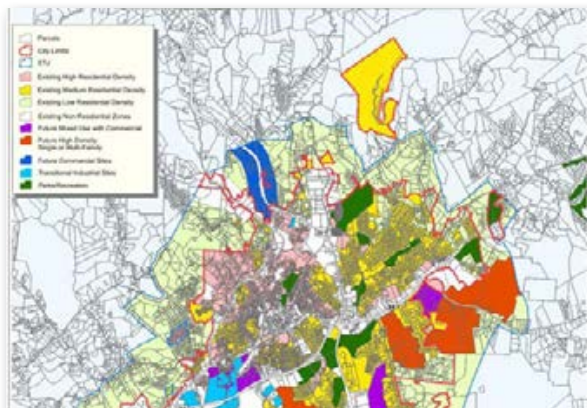
To supplement the department's efforts, the Public Works Department assists in maintaining specific parks and facilities, allowing for effective interdepartmental coordination. However, as Lenoir continues to develop new park facilities and expand its programming, the need for additional staffing has become evident to address growing operational and maintenance demands. With a shared commitment to enhancing parks and recreation, the City of Lenoir remains focused on creating a high-quality



RECENT PLANNING EFFORTS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2007)

The Lenoir Comprehensive Plan is a long-range planning document that guides future developments by outlining land use, transportation, and other policies. The plan was created by the Comprehensive Planning Committee with multiple public engagement opportunities. The plan includes Lenoir's Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and strategies for each land use type. It also discusses specific policies related to transportation, public services, economic development, natural and environmental resources, and historic and cultural resources.



Future Land Use Map in the Comprehensive Plan

COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN (2010)

The Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan aims to identify current and future needs in Lenoir and guide the prioritization of park upgrades, expansion, and land acquisition. Plan recommendations focus on two important components of Lenoir's park system -- recreation facilities and programming and greenway and trail systems. The City has worked to implement strategies that enhance local and regional greenway and trail system connectivity and make improvements to existing facilities to meet current and future needs.



Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

COMPREHENSIVE PEDESTRIAN PLAN (2012)

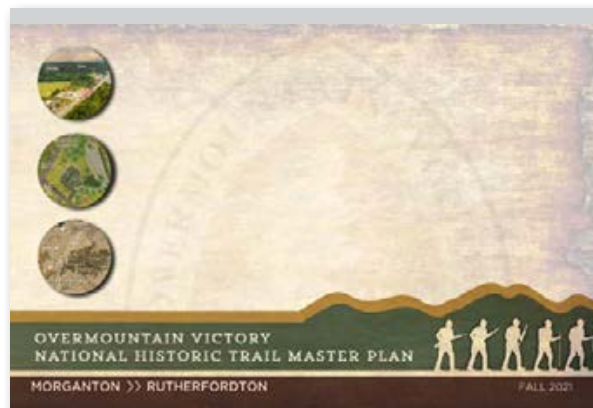
The Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan guides Lenoir's planning, design, financing, implementation, and maintenance of the proposed pedestrian system. The plan seeks to create a "safe, aesthetic, equitable, and well-connected pedestrian system" that enhances the overall quality of life. This plan is expected to increase walkability in Lenoir and improve the City's pedestrian network. A list of policy recommendations is provided, focusing on the pedestrian network, safety and health, crossing safety, traffic signals, and community strengthening. It also suggests implementing educational programs to increase public awareness.



Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

OVERMOUNTAIN VICTORY NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL LENOIR-TO-MORGANTON MASTER PLAN (2015)

The Master Plan outlines the details for creating a regional, multi-state system of trails following the route in which the Overmountain Men marched in 1780. The segment from Lenoir to Morganton is designed to be a multi-use walking path that follows the congressionally designated corridor. In Lenoir, the National Historic Trail will follow the alignment of the discontinued rail line. The City is partnering with Caldwell County and surrounding municipalities, as well as several organizations, to implement the plan.



Overmountain Victory Trail Master Plan

BICYCLE PLAN (2017)

Lenoir's Bicycle Plan was created based on the recommendation in the 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The plan envisions Lenoir as a place where residents and visitors can bike safely and conveniently on a connected and accessible bicycle network. An existing conditions assessment and multiple public engagement opportunities led to a list of recommendations to improve Lenoir's bicycle system. Recommendations focus on balancing the vision for on-street bike lanes and the demand for on-street parking. Twelve priority projects have been identified that could be built over the next 10 years. In addition to these priority projects, the plan also suggests the City implement various programs and policies to achieve its vision, such as adopting a Complete Streets policy, creating a Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Commission, and establishing a local Safe Routes to School program.



Bicycle Plan

DOWNTOWN LENOIR MASTER PLAN (2024)

The Downtown Lenoir Master Plan serves as a guide to the revitalization and redevelopment efforts in Downtown Lenoir for the next 10 years. The plan evaluates the existing built environment, demographic, and market conditions in downtown, in particular the area that includes historic Lenoir High School known as the Campus.. The plan recommends a number of policies and initiatives to revitalize the downtown area, with a focus on encouraging adaptive reuse and mixed-use developments, as well as community-oriented pavilions. The Campus is identified as a primary initiative for implementing the Downtown Plan. These strategies were created considering the unique characteristics of the four districts within Downtown and are intended to be implemented in phases.



Downtown Lenoir Master Plan

DEMOGRAPHICS AND GROWTH TRENDS

POPULATION

Lenoir houses a total population of 18,301 as per 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Lenoir's population has not seen any major increases since 2010, resulting in a stable population. Through demographic analysis, residents of Lenoir have a relatively even age distribution. 54.9% of residents are female and 45.1% are male.

Race and ethnicity are separate components that make individual groups unique. Race is based on biological factors, such as physical features or hair color, while ethnicity is based on cultural factors, such as language or traditions. The biggest racial group in Lenoir is "White," which accounts for 72% of the total population, followed by "Black or African American" at 14.1%. 12% of Lenoir residents identify themselves as "Hispanic or Latino".

Figure 1. Population Growth

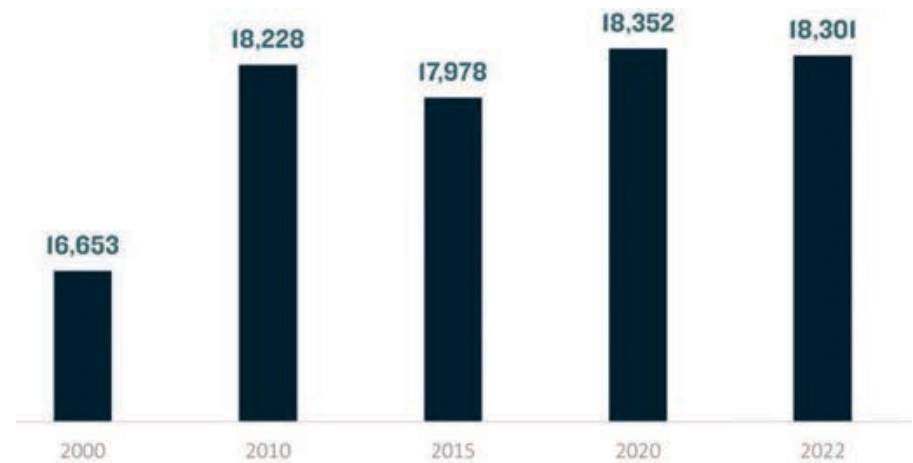


Figure 2. Race and Ethnicity

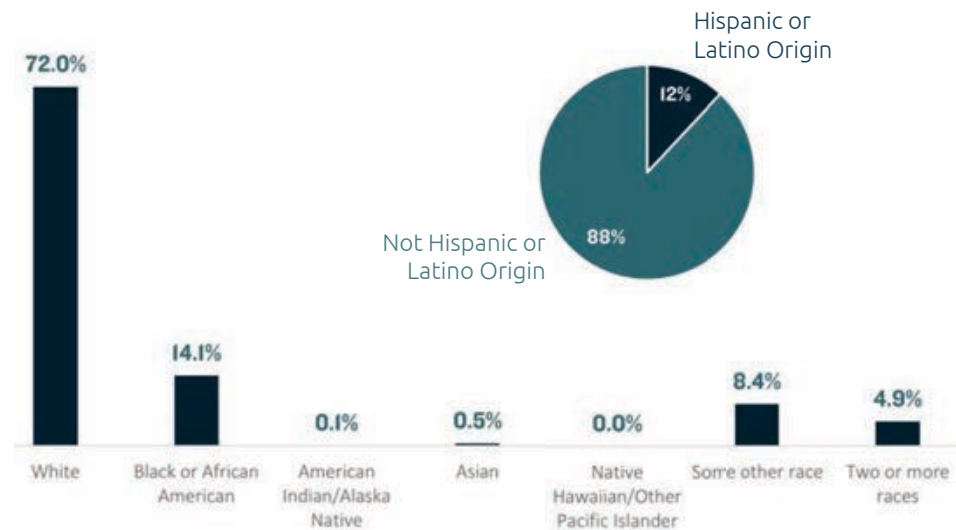
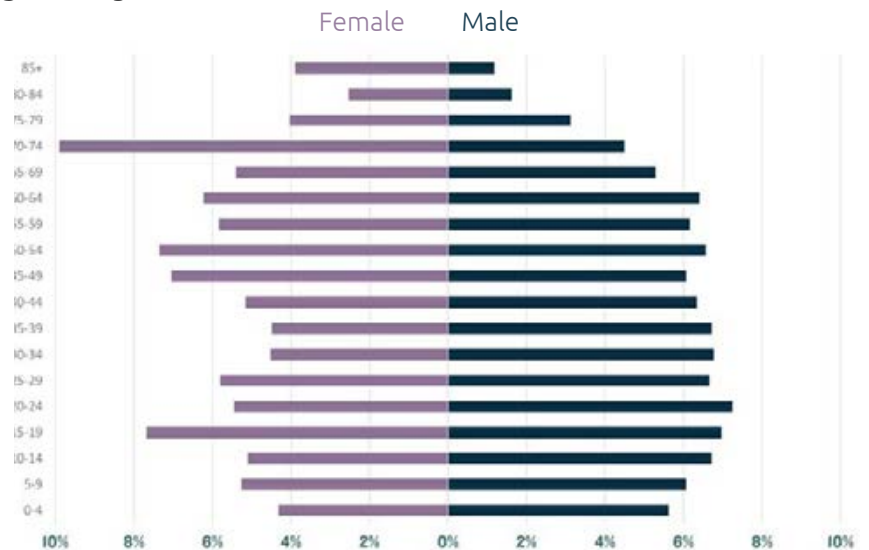


Figure 3. Age and Sex



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2022

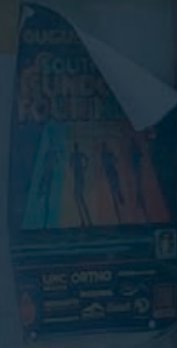


Learn Something New!
Learn with Us About Native Plants

Why

Native

Plants?



The background is a dark, moody photograph of a park. A dirt path leads into the distance, flanked by dense trees and foliage. A small, dark sign is visible on the left side of the path. The overall tone is dark and atmospheric.

02

**PARKS AND
FACILITY
INVENTORY**



PARKS CLASSIFICATION

Parks and open space systems include a variety of different types of parkland that meet the varying recreational needs in a community. Types vary by size, function, typical amenities, and service area. As the City grows and new park spaces are acquired and/or developed, an adopted classification system should be used to guide the development for each type of park.

POCKET PARKS

Pocket parks provide various recreational opportunities to a concentrated population within an immediate proximity (e.g., a playground and/or picnic area in a residential area). There are currently no pocket parks in Lenoir.

Typical Size: 1/4 to 2 acre

Service Area: 1/4-mile radius in immediate neighborhoods

Characteristics and Considerations: Pocket parks should be located within close proximity to medium/high density residential areas. They are often located at the street edge and should be safely accessible by pedestrians. These parks are often built by developers and can be operated and maintained by a homeowners' association, community organization, or the city.

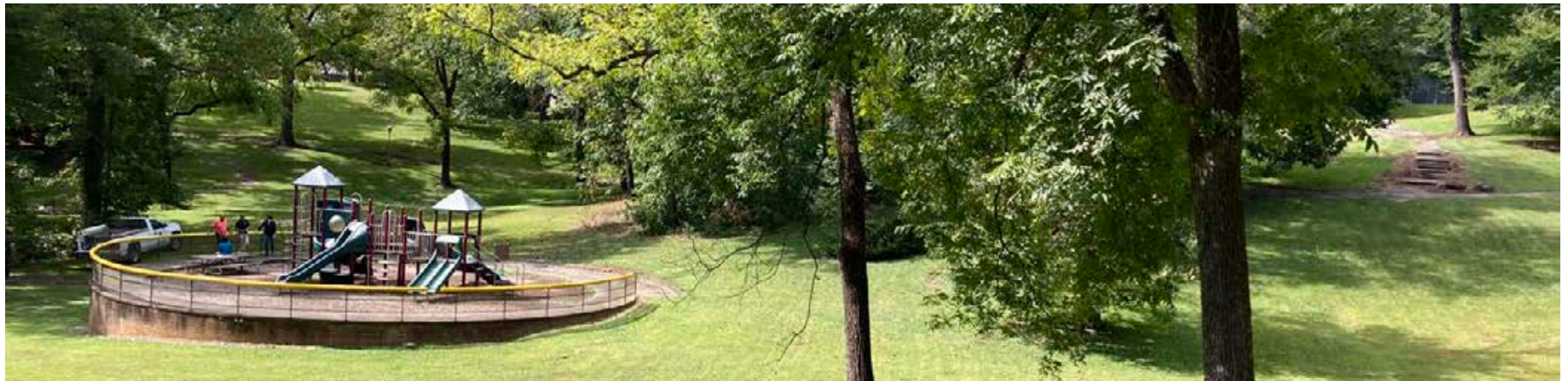
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks are the foundation of a well-balanced park system and provide the daily park experiences for residents. They serve as the social centers for residential districts in an active and passive capacity for a wide variety of age groups. J.E. Broyhill Park is a local example of a neighborhood park.

Typical Size: 2 to 10 acres

Service Area: 1/4- to 1/2-mile radius

Characteristics and Considerations: These parks should be located in the center of neighborhoods with good public access. At least one side of the park should front a residential street. Sites should drain properly and be suitable for multi-generational uses such as playgrounds, sports courts, trail access, and areas for family functions. Safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access is important via sidewalks and greenways.



COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks are larger in size and serve a broader population than neighborhood parks. They are intended to meet the recreational needs of larger portions of the city. Park development should protect desirable natural amenities and include active and passive activities for all ages. T.H. Broyhill Walking Park is a local example of a community park.

Typical Size: 10 to 100 acres

Service Area: 1- to 3-mile radius

Characteristics and Considerations: Whenever possible, these parks should be adjacent to desirable natural resources and have amenities such as athletic fields, pools, playgrounds, sports courts, picnic areas, and restrooms. Community parks should be connected to the greenway and trail networks and be conveniently accessed by cars. Park programming should include adequate space for off-street parking.



REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks are the largest type of park for a typical community's park system. The size varies depending on the purpose and character of the site. Regional parks provide recreational amenities for the entire community and even serve as a hub for surrounding communities. The Zacks Fork Mountain Biking Trail is a local example of a regional park.

Typical Size: Varies from less than 10 acres to several thousand acres

Service Area: Up to 50-mile radius, depending on site features

Characteristics and Considerations: Regional parks often help to protect and showcase valuable natural resources such as habitat preserves or bodies of water. These parks include a wide range of active and passive recreational opportunities and can be an economic generator by attracting sports tournaments or ecotourism or hosting large events. Typical amenities include destination playgrounds, athletic courts and fields, trail systems, water activities, unprogrammed open space, and preserved natural areas. These parks can be located almost anywhere in the community. They should be accessible by car and connected to trail networks.



GREENWAYS AND LINEAR PARKS

Greenways and linear parks are often located along linear natural (e.g., creeks) or man-made (e.g., utilities) features. These parks often connect two or more parks or points of interest in a city. They are also used to protect wildlife and natural processes or provide for floodways or stormwater drainage. Lenoir Greenway is an example of a linear park.

Typical Size: Varies based on surrounding environment

Service Area: Varies based on amenities

Characteristics and Considerations: Greenways and linear parks include amenities for walking, jogging, bicycling, and/or hiking. When property adjacent to creeks and floodplains is developed, floodplain property should be dedicated to the City. The City should not purchase floodplain property unless it provides an opportunity to preserve key natural resources and/or provide a link to another park or might prevent future property losses or damage due to flooding. The City should also be careful in accepting dedication of linear parks unless they provide trail links or useful recreation. Acquisition of linear parks, even if small in size, can burden maintenance budgets.



SPECIAL USE PARKS

Special use parks can have a wide range of uses. However, parks are designated as special use when the park facilities are oriented toward a single purpose. Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center is a local example of a special use park.

Typical Size: Varies

Service Area: Varies

Characteristics and Considerations: Special use parks serve varying user groups based on the programming. The location of the park within the community will vary based on available land and appropriate adjacent uses. Typical examples of special use parks include golf courses, skate parks, aquatic facilities, tennis complexes, ballfield complexes, nature centers, or historic sites. These parks can be operated and maintained by the City or a private enterprise.



OPEN SPACE OR NATURE PRESERVES

Open space or nature preserves typically refer to areas of land that are undeveloped, natural or minimally developed. These areas may include nature parks, nature preserves, meadows, forests, wetlands, riparian zones and other natural landscapes. Open spaces help preserve biodiversity, protect wildlife habitats and maintain ecological balance. They provide an environment for native flora and fauna to flourish, thus, contributing to the overall health and well-being of the ecosystem.

Typical Size: Varies

Service Area: Varies

Characteristics and Considerations: The location of these areas varies based on available land and appropriate adjacent uses. Typical amenities include natural trails, observation points, picnic areas, restrooms and parking. Other amenities that are sometimes present include educational and safety signage, visitor center, campgrounds, and recreational facilities such as fishing, non-motorized boating, wildlife viewing, birdwatching, nature play or exploration, outdoor classrooms, etc. Lighting should be limited so as to preserve the natural darkness to the maximum extent possible, as light has a profound impact on ecosystem function and wildlife. Depending on site programming, safety and security can sometimes be an issue due to low visibility. Measures should be taken to minimize this effect.



LENOIR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

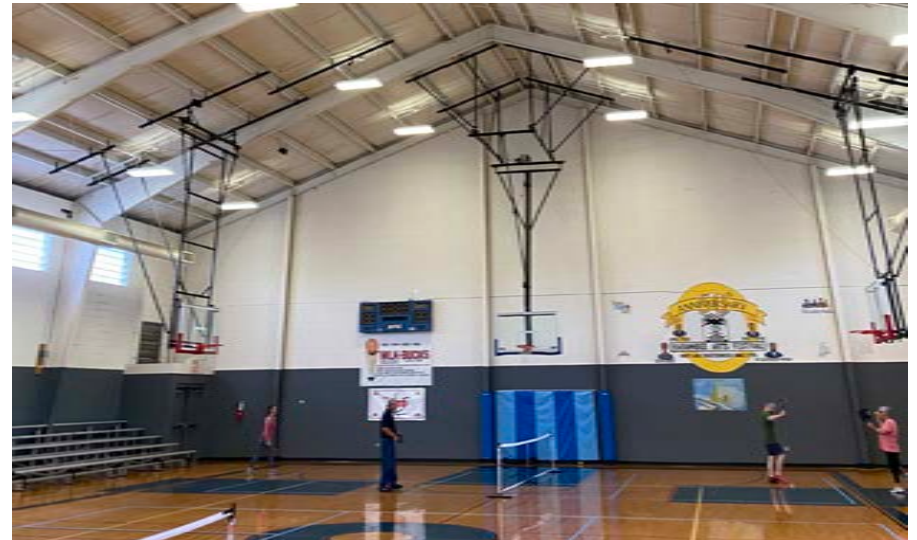
Lenoir's parks cover approximately 295 acres of land across 13 properties. The parks range from less than an acre to over 85 acres, and include a variety of park types. Parkland is primarily located in the central and northern parts of the City in a variety of settings, providing nearby access for residents in those areas.

The parks system includes a variety of active and passive recreational options. Active recreational activities include individual and group activities that often require specialized facilities, such as baseball, soccer, and tennis. Passive recreational activities include those that typically do not require special equipment or facilities such as hiking, birdwatching, and picnicking.

Some of the City's parks include recreation centers, such as Mulberry Recreation Center. Additionally, some of the parks remain largely undeveloped, such as Unity Park and Community Gardens, or have potential for further development, such as West End Community Park.

Since some of the parks are close to each other, there are opportunities to connect them through trails, greenways and sidewalks. There is also the opportunity to expand Lenoir's parkland using the City's undeveloped land and by working with developers to include park enhancements with future planned developments.

To ensure these spaces continue to meet the needs of the community, ongoing attention to park and facility maintenance is crucial. This includes addressing infrastructure needs, ensuring consistent and clear signage, and maintaining a high standard of care for park amenities to provide a safe, enjoyable, and accessible experience for all users.



Map 2. Lenoir Parks and Facilities Map

Figure 4. Parks and Recreation Inventory

#	Park Name	Address	Acreage	Classification	Active Recreation								
					Baseball Field	Softball Field	Standalone Backstop	Soccer Field	Football Field	Multi-Purpose Practice Field	Basketball Court	Tennis Court	
1	J.E. Broyhill Park	509 Ridge St. NW	8.0	Neighborhood							1		
2	Martin Luther King Jr. Center	313 Greenhaven Drive NW	7.0	Neighborhood		1				1	3	2	
3	West End Community Park	538 Willow St	3.8	Neighborhood							1		
4	Lenoir Optimist Park	701 Mulberry St	12.1	Community	2								
5	Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex	1050 Zacks Fork Rd	28.5	Community				9					
6	Mulberry Recreation Center	720 Mulberry Street SW	27.0	Community	5					1	3	2	
7	T.H. Broyhill Walking Park	945 Lakewood Cir SW	20.0	Community									
8	T. Henry Wilson Athletic Park	1010 Powell Rd NE	18.0	Community	3					2			
9	Unity Park & Community Gardens	1431 College Ave SW	6.1	Community									
10	Lenoir Greenway	710 Powell Rd	66.8	Linear									
11	Zacks Fork Mountain Biking Trail	1050 Zacks Fork Rd	85.5	Regional									
12	Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center	1031 Jim Barger Drive NE	5.8	Special Use									
13	Mack Cook Stadium, Gym & Auditorium at The Campus	1114 College Ave SW	6.4	Special Use				1			1		
Total			295.0		10	1	0	10	0	4	9	4	

	Active Recreation												Water Recreation		Passive Recreation						Miscellaneous		
	Volleyball Court - Sand	Volleyball Court - Indoor	Pickleball Court	Concession Stand (Y/N)	Skate Park	Disc Golf Course	Walking/Biking Trail (miles)	Fitness Equipment (Y/N)	Shuffle Board Courts	Batting Cages	Botanical Gardens	Golf Course (public)	Swimming Pool	Splash Pad	Dog Park	Playground	Table/Picnic Tables (Y/N)	BBQ Grill (Y/N)	Picnic Shelter/Pavilion	Amphitheater/Outdoor Event Space	Community Recreation Center	Restrooms (Y/N)	Parking (Y/N)
																1	Y	Y	1			Y	Y
		1	3	Y			0.5	Y	3							1	Y	Y	1		1	Y	Y
																1	Y	Y	1				
				Y			0.5			1						1	Y	Y	1			Y	Y
														1		1	Y		1			Y	Y
	1	1	7	Y	1		1									1	Y	Y	1	1	1	Y	Y
							0.5				1					1			1	1		Y	Y
						1	1																Y
																						Y	Y
							9.6																Y
							3																Y
				Y				Y					2				Y		1		1	Y	Y
				Y																1	1	Y	Y
	1	2	10	5	1	1	16.1	2	3	1	1	0	2	1	0	7	7	5	8	3	4	9	12

J.E. BROYHILL PARK

Location and Access

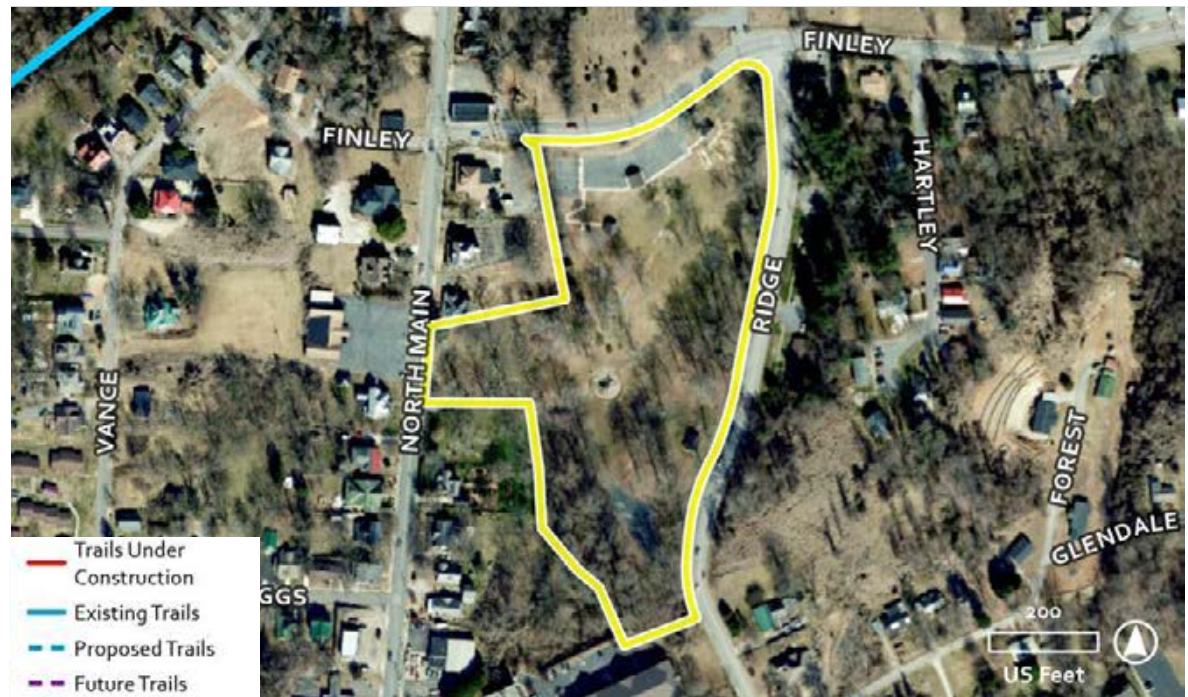
J. E. Broyhill Park is located just outside of downtown, making it convenient for residents and visitors. The park is full of lush trees and has a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere. Access to the park is easy, although there are major challenges with access throughout the park.

Existing Conditions

J. E. Broyhill Park has a basketball court, pavilions, and restrooms, making it a convenient gathering place. Sidewalks are in poor condition. Most of the park is very steep, making the majority of the open space unsuitable for traditional play amenities. The current playground is outdated and may require removal or replacement.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Enhance ADA accessibility throughout the park
- Address drainage issues to improve safety
- Redesign or replace playgrounds as needed
- Leverage topography for activities like disc golf or an amphitheater
- Explore development opportunities to increase accessibility and experiences



Map 3. J.E. Broyhill Park

About the Park

Park Type

Neighborhood Park

Park Size

9.4 AC

Park Location

509 Ridge St. NW

Park Features

Basketball Court, Gated Entrance, Grills, Open Space, Picnic Shelters, Picnic Tables, Restrooms, Playground, Walking Path



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CENTER

Location and Access

The Martin Luther King Jr. Center is located north of downtown. It offers accessible on-site parking and sidewalks, making it easy for visitors to attend events or activities.

Existing Conditions

The Martin Luther King Jr. Center provides excellent recreational and community spaces, including pickleball courts, basketball courts, weight room, softball field and a walking path. It is also rich in culture, with an art gallery and event space for gatherings. Google donated a computer lab to the center, which is regularly used. However, the property needs attention in some areas, like the flooring, which shows signs of wear and age.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Install new signage
- Renovate softball fields
- Develop outdoor courtyard space programming
- Perform general maintenance and refresh.
- Upgrade weight room equipment and add windows
- Replace flooring throughout
- Enhance landscaping, especially along the front
- Upgrade restrooms



Map 4. Martin Luther King Jr. Center

About the Park

Park Type

Neighborhood Park/ Recreation

Park Size

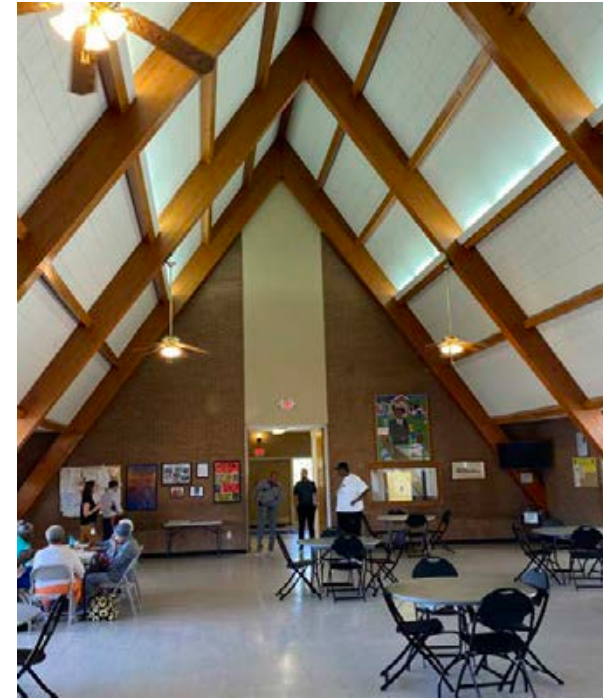
10 AC

Park Location

313 Greenhaven Drive NW

Park Features

Baseball Field, Basketball Courts, Kitchen, Computer Lab, Gymnasium, Playground, Shuffleboard Courts, Tennis Courts, Walking Trail, Weight Room



WEST END COMMUNITY PARK

Location and Access

West End Community Park is located at 216 Robbins Avenue NW. The primary access to the park is by foot. There is no designated parking lot for this park, making it difficult for visitors. ADA access is limited into and around the park.

Existing Conditions

The park has limited recreational elements and includes a basketball court, picnic pavilion, open space, and some scattered play equipment. The park's topography creates challenges for access and usability. There is limited lighting and numerous isolated spaces, which reduces user comfort.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Access and connected pathways
- Off-street parking
- New playground
- Picnic pavilion repairs
- Overall maintenance
- Increase street frontage presence
- New park design to better utilize spaces



Map 5. West End Community Park

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park

Park Size

3.2 AC

Park Location

216 Robbins Ave NW

Park Features

Basketball Court, Open Space, Picnic Pavilion, Play Equipment



LENOIR OPTIMIST PARK

Location and Access

Lenoir Optimist Park is located immediately adjacent to Mulberry Recreation Center on Mulberry Street SW. The park is easily accessible, with convenient parking adjacent to the main entrance.

Existing Conditions

Lenoir Optimist Park has a playground, two baseball fields, and paved trails. There is also a rental building for parties and events. The fields have lighting, helping to extend their usage into evening hours. The rental building is in need of repairs and overall renovation. The City has a maintenance facility at the rear of the park.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Improve the pedestrian connection to Mulberry Recreation Center
- Repair and renovate the rental building
- Add shade trees, especially around the playground
- Improve access to the creek
- Screen the City's maintenance facility



Map 6. Lenoir Optimist Park

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park

Park Size

12.1 AC

Park Location

701 Mulberry St, Lenoir

Park Features

Baseball / Softball Fields, Parking, Picnic Shelters, Playground, Restrooms, Rental Building, Walking Path



LENOIR ROTARY SOCCER COMPLEX

Location and Access

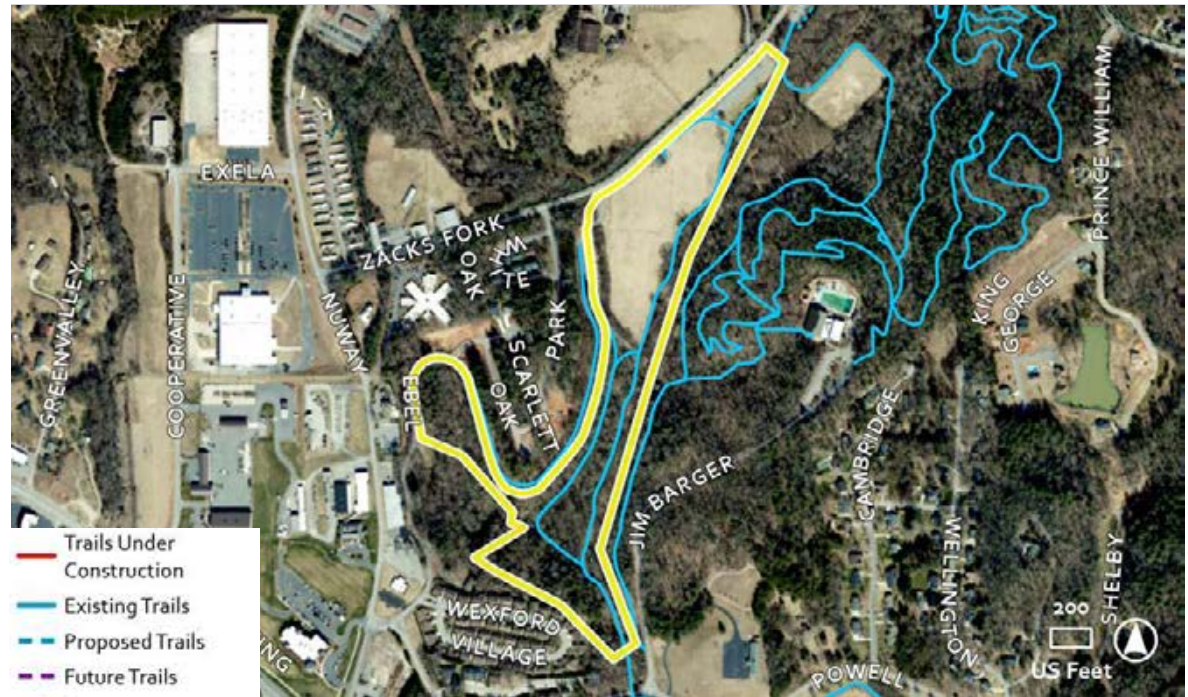
The Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex is accessed by vehicle along Zack's Fork Road and by the Lenoir Greenway. It has several off-street parking areas and backs up to the Lenoir Aquatic and Fitness Center.

Existing Conditions

This well-maintained complex features seven soccer fields. Additional facilities in the park include a newly built splash pad, restrooms, picnic tables, and an office for City staff. A foot bridge spans Zack's Fork Creek and provides access to the largest soccer field, which is tucked into the forest and a conservation property. The Lenoir Greenway also runs through the property.

Opportunities for Improvement

- General renovations to the restroom/office building
- Signage
- Shade trees
- Seating and picnic tables
- Creek access
- Better inclusion of the large soccer field
- Enjoyment of the forest and scenic beauty offered along Zack's Fork Creek
- Parking lot renovations (e.g., guide rail, shade trees, striping, wheel stops)



Map 7. Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park

Park Size

28.5 AC

Park Location

1050 Zacks Fork Rd, Lenoir

Park Features

Parking, Picnic Tables, Restrooms, Soccer Fields (7), Splash Pad, Greenway, Creek Access, Park Office



MULBERRY RECREATION CENTER

Location and Access

The Mulberry Recreation Center is located adjacent to Lenoir Optimist Park along Mulberry Street SW. Off-street parking is available and sidewalks provide easy access to adjacent areas.

Existing Conditions

Mulberry Recreation Center has various amenities, which include a gymnasium, arcade room, classroom spaces, kitchen, baseball fields, tee-ball fields, sand volleyball court, skate park, tennis courts, pickleball courts, picnic shelters, restrooms, walking trails, and open space. The building needs a general refresh, playground equipment needs to be replaced, and several portions of the property need general maintenance and repair.

Opportunities for Improvement

- New playground equipment
- Creek access
- Skate Park upgrades
- Shade trees
- Outdoor patio use
- General property refresh



Map 8. Mulberry Recreation Center

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park/ Recreation

Park Size

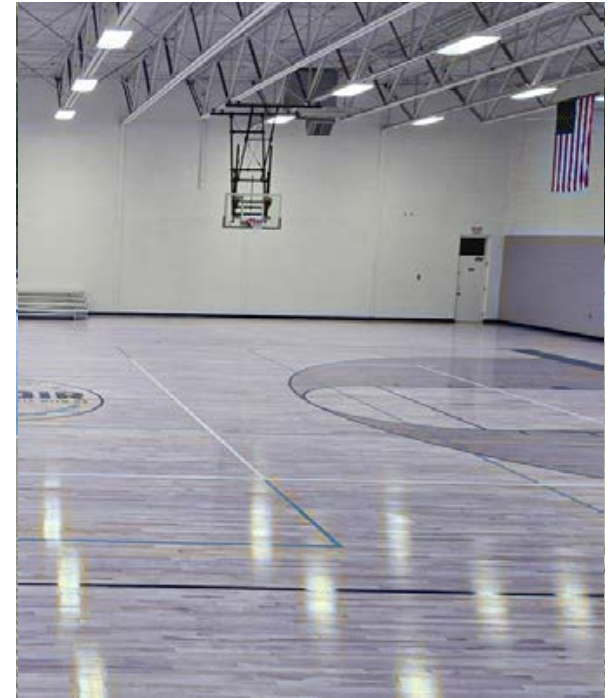
27 AC

Park Location

720 Mulberry Street SW, Lenoir

Park Features

Baseball Fields, Basketball Courts, Game Room, Kitchen, Meeting Rooms, Gymnasium, Playground, Pickleball Courts, Picnic Shelters, Restrooms, Sand Volleyball Court, Skate Park, Tee-Ball Fields, Tennis Courts



T.H. BROYHILL WALKING PARK

Location and Access

The T.H. Broyhill Walking Park is located near the center of Lenoir. This privately created, publicly owned park is a great place for walking and gathering. The park is accessed through a vehicle entrance and parking lot or a pedestrian connection to the adjacent neighborhood.

Existing Conditions

T.H. Broyhill Walking Park features a scenic walking path through a well-landscaped space that is dotted with benches and areas for passive enjoyment of the space. The park has an overlook deck by the water where ducks and turtles often appear. A Japanese-styled pavilion adds a unique architectural feature to the park, and a centrally located fountain serves as a focal point. Other existing elements are public restrooms and artistic sculptures in the park. ADA parking, failing retaining walls, and general maintenance show signs of needing attention.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Address ADA compliance issues to make the park inclusive
- General maintenance
- Invasive species control
- Signage
- Enhanced plantings and seasonal color



Map 9. T.H. Broyhill Walking Park

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park

Park Size

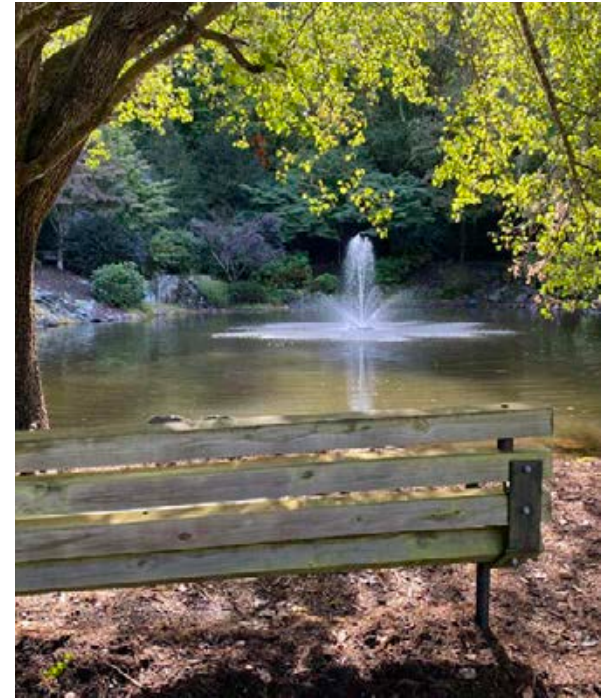
20 AC

Park Location

945 Lakewood Cir SW, Lenoir

Park Features

Botanical Gardens, Joe T. Ingram Nature Sanctuary, Observation Deck, Pavilion, Restrooms, Walking Path, Pond, Gated Entrance, Extensive Plantings



T. HENRY WILSON ATHLETIC PARK

Location and Access

T. Henry Wilson Athletic Park is located near the Greenway Trail. The park offers easy access for vehicular traffic and a paved off-street parking lot. Other than the Greenway, there are no pedestrian facilities to access the park.

Existing Conditions

The T. Henry Wilson Athletic Park consists of mostly general purpose playing fields, a walking path, and a small disc golf course. The park would benefit from overall general maintenance and some dead tree removal.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Shade trees
- Parking lot upgrades
- Picnic areas
- Walking path maintenance
- Field maintenance
- Tree removal and care
- Baseball backstop removal
- Soccer goal upgrades
- Signage



Map 10. T. Henry Wilson Athletic Park

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park

Park Size

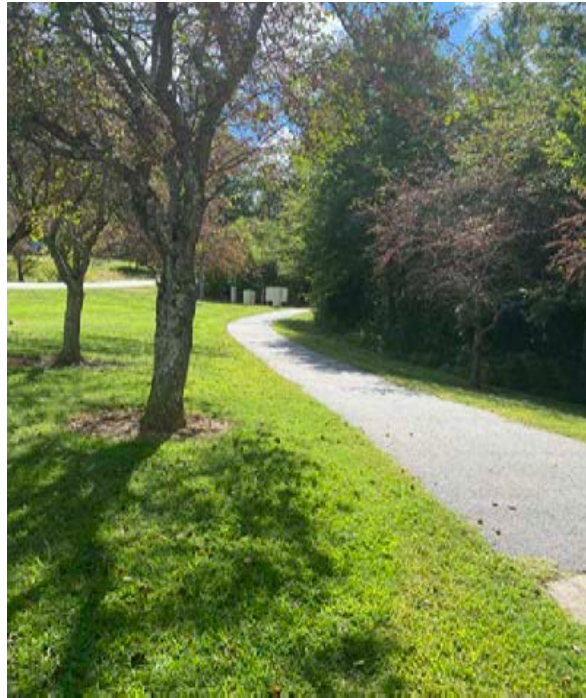
18 AC

Park Location

1010 Powell Rd NE, Lenoir

Park Features

Multi-purpose Fields, Disc Golf Course, Open Space, Paved Access to Lenoir Greenway, Soccer Field (Under18)



UNITY PARK & COMMUNITY GARDENS

Location and Access

Unity Park is a community garden that is located off College Avenue SW in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and downtown. The park has gravel off-street parking and limited pedestrian access.

Existing Conditions

Unity Park is a well-used community garden with both individual and community garden plots. There is also a small orchard with various kinds of fruit trees. A large rain cistern for irrigation, mulch and debris concrete bins, and a potting/training building are located on the property. ADA access and parking, as well as general access is lacking and needs to be addressed.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Parking lot improvements
- Access improvements into and around the park
- Permanent bathroom construction
- Signage
- Connection to the future Overmountain Victory Trail



Map 11. Unity Park & Community Gardens

About the Park

Park Type

Community Park

Park Size

6.7 AC

Park Location

1431 College Ave SW, Lenoir

Park Features

Community Garden Plots, Orchard, Potting Building



LENOIR GREENWAY

Location and Access

The Lenoir Greenway is a linear park that runs approximately 10 miles. The asphalt path runs along the floodplain, connecting various neighborhoods and recreational spaces. It has a small parking lot situated at the main entrance.

Existing Conditions

The Lenoir Greenway is known for its trails, which support both pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The Greenway parking area features include off-street parking, picnic tables, porta johns, and educational signage on native plants with name cards prepared by the master gardeners. Areas that need some attention are damaged map boards, an aging bridge structure, and drainage issues that affect the parking area.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Replace the damaged map boards for clear navigation
- Address the drainage issues and maintain the trail conditions
- Continue connecting to other neighborhoods, parks, and areas of interest to expand the Greenway network
- Add location markers along the Greenway
- Replace picnic tables
- Install permanent bathroom facility at entrance
- Develop additional trailheads at key access points



Map 12. Lenoir Greenway

About the Park

Park Type

Linear Park

Park Size

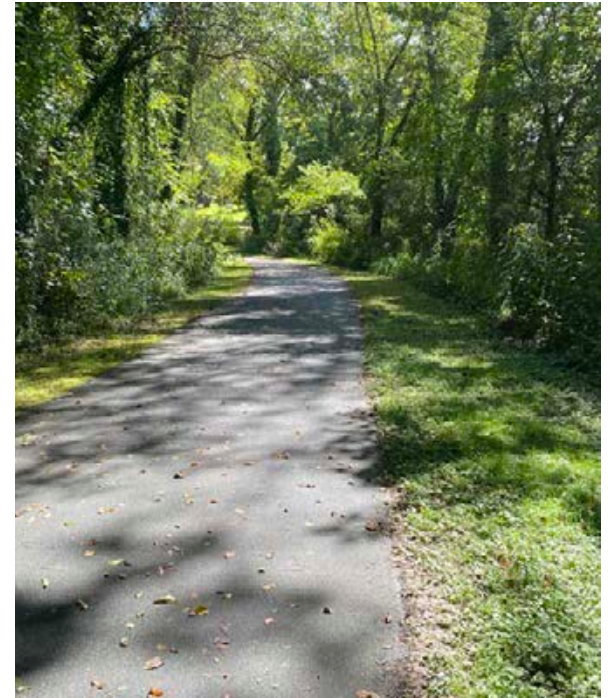
66.8 AC

Park Location

710 Powell Rd NE, Lenoir

Park Features

Greenway, Picnic Tables, Creek Access



ZACKS FORK MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL

Location and Access

Zacks Fork Mountain Bike Trail are located near the heart of Lenoir, offering convenient access for residents and visitors alike. The trails feature two main trailheads, both situated near the 3.25-mile mark, with easy connectivity via the access trail.

Existing Conditions

The Zacks Fork Mountain Bike Trail include 3.25 miles of intermediate trails and 0.25 miles of advanced trails. Amenities include a bike repair station located at the trail entrance and two benches along the route. Maintenance and upkeep of the trails are primarily volunteer-based, supported by the Northwest NC Mountain Bike Alliance.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Add restrooms and trash containers
- Expand trail amenities, such as shaded seating or water stations
- Increase trail signage for safety and navigation
- Explore potential funding to expand staffing or resources



Map 13. Zacks Fork Mountain Bike Trail

About the Park

Park Type

Mountain Bike Trails

Park Size

119.9 AC

Park Location

Lenoir Greenway, Lenoir

Park Features

3.5 miles of mountain bike trails, bike repair station and two benches along the route.



LENOIR AQUATIC & FITNESS CENTER

Location and Access

The Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center is adjacent to the Zack Fork Mountain Bike Trail and connected to the Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex by the Lenoir Greenway. It includes an indoor pool, an outdoor pool, and a fitness center with adequate parking.

Existing Conditions

The Aquatic Center features various amenities like an outdoor pool, an indoor pool, a pavilion, and a mezzanine space above the indoor pool to host parties. Overall, the facility is in need of maintenance and repairs to the air handling/dehumidifying system in the indoor pool area; general maintenance; outdoor pool deck concrete repairs; outdoor pool skimmer cover; cardio equipment location; and locker room improvements.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Install dehumidifier and air quality equipment for the indoor pool
- Add directional signage
- Upgrade the locker rooms
- Relocate the cardio equipment
- Replace outdated weight room equipment and wooden pavilion
- Overall refresh for more modern and maintained feel
- Increase outdoor pool seating
- Add new outdoor pool shade structure
- Repair outdoor pool concrete deck



Map 14. Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center

About the Park

Park Type

Special Use Park

Park Size

5.8 AC

Park Location

1031 Jim Barger Drive NE, Lenoir

Park Features

Party Area, Exercise Room, Indoor Pool & Water Slide, Locker Rooms, Outdoor Pool & Water Slide, Baby Pool, Picnic Shelters, Wooden Pavilion, Racquetball Courts, Weight Room



MACK COOK STADIUM AT THE CAMPUS

Location and Access

Mack Cook Stadium is part of the historic Lenoir High School, known as “The Campus.” Conveniently located near downtown with on-street parking.

Existing Conditions

The stadium is currently only used to host soccer games. Amenities include parking, restrooms and seating. This site presents a largely blank slate with significant opportunities to enhance visitor experience and improve accessibility.

Opportunities for Improvement

- Well maintained and accessible
- ADA access in and around the stadium
- Increase parking availability
- Expansion of the facility usage to host other events and activities
- Sidewalk repair along frontage
- Integration into The Campus as part of the property’s renovation and reuse



Map 15. Lenoir High School-Mack Cook Stadium

About the Park

Park Type

Special Use Park

Park Size

4.5 AC

Park Location

1120 College Ave SW, Lenoir

Park Features

Soccer Field, Stadium Seating



GYMNASIUM AND AUDITORIUM AT THE CAMPUS

Location and Access

The Campus is made up of several buildings and portions of the historic Lenoir High School, which has been closed as a school for years. This property is located in downtown, with easy access through a well-connected sidewalk system.

Existing Conditions

The gym and auditorium both need extensive repairs and renovations. The City is actively working on renovating the property to bring it back to a usable condition. The gym includes an indoor basketball court, bleacher seating, office space, and restrooms. The auditorium includes a small stage, stadium seating, and associated elements.

Opportunities for Improvement

- The gym needs significant work including, but not limited to, a new roof, windows, flooring, and lighting. In addition to the major renovation needs, the space needs a general refresh and painting.
- The auditorium needs a general refresh, new carpet, and new seating; however, overall the space is in decent shape for sitting vacant.



Map 16. The Campus- Mack Cook Stadium and Gymnasium/ Auditorium

About the Park

Park Type

Special Use Park

Park Size

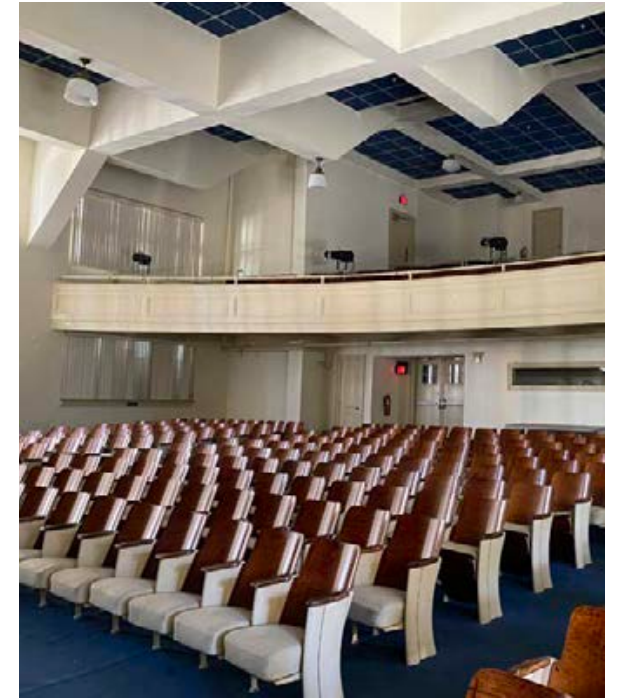
4.5 AC

Park Location

1120 College Ave SW, Lenoir

Park Features

Auditorium and Gym



LENOIR RECREATION

The City of Lenoir offers a variety of recreational programs and community events throughout the year. These activities engage residents of all ages and help strengthen community connections. Seasonal festivals and cultural events have seen steady participation in recent years. The primary locations for these events include the Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex and various city parks and recreational centers.

Youth athletics play a major role in Lenoir's recreation programs. Soccer, baseball, and basketball are among the most popular sports, with strong community participation. Expanding league options and improving facilities could help accommodate growing demand. In addition to sports, the city could introduce more non-athletic programs such as arts, music, and STEM activities to offer a wider range of opportunities for children and teens.

Currently, there are few city programs designed specifically for adults. Given the city's large and active adult population, expanding recreational options could generate strong community interest. This could include athletic programs such as adult sports leagues and fitness classes, as well as non-athletic options like wellness workshops, cultural events, and social programs.



Figure 5. Lenoir Recreational Programming

Event or Program Name*	Age Group				Location	Season	Registration Fee	Estimated Attendance				
	Age 12 and under	Age 13-18	Adults	Seniors				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Festivals/Events												
July 4th	X	X	X	X	Mulberry	Summer	\$0	N/A	2,000+	3,000+	5,000+	7,000+
Easter Egg Hunt	X				Mulberry	Fall	\$0	N/A	0	200+	300+	300+
NCAS-Event	X	X	X	X	Mulberry	Fall	\$0	N/A	0	0	0	900+
Summer Music Series	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Summer	\$0	N/A	400	500	900	1,500
Summer Movie Series	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Summer	\$0	N/A	20	50	50	20
Christmas Parade	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Winter	\$0	N/A	4,000+	5,000+	8,000+	
Leprechaun Leap 5K/10K Race	X	X	X	X	Greenway	Winter	\$25-\$45	N/A	0	80	122	236
Firecracker 5K/10K Race	X	X	X	X	Greenway	Summer	\$25-\$45	N/A	0	110	184	189
Run 4 Your Life 5K	X	X	X	X	Downtown Lenoir	Fall	\$25-\$35	N/A	N/A	N/A	129	N/A
Jump Street Drive Festival	X	X	X	X	MLK Jr. Center	Summer	\$0	N/A	300	400	450	500
Harambee Arts Festival	X	X	X	X	MLK Jr. Center	Summer	\$0	N/A	700	725	700	675
Recreational Programs												
JH Jones Jr. League Basketball	X				MLK Jr. Center	Summer	\$10	N/A	60	65	70	105
JH Jones Sr. League Basketball		X			MLK Jr. Center	Summer	\$10	N/A	60	70	75	105
MLK Cheerleading	X	X			MLK Jr. Center	Summer	\$10	N/A	N/A	80	80	70
Trunk or Treat	X	X			MLK Jr. Center	Fall	0	N/A	150	200	230	250

* City run or operated by other vendor on City property

Figure 5. Lenoir Recreational Programming (cont.)

Event or Program Name*	Age Group				Location	Season	Registration Fee	Estimated Attendance				
	Age 12 and under	Age 13-18	Adults	Seniors				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Santa Claus Toys	X	X			MLK Jr. Center	Winter	0	N/A	100	100	100	100
Black History Month	X	X	X	X	MLK Jr. Center	Winter	0	N/A	200	200	250	250
Thanksgiving Dinner	X	X	X	X	MLK Jr. Center	Winter	0	N/A	120	120	120	120
Turkey Tuesday	X	X	X	X	MLK Jr. Center	Winter	0	N/A	150	200	300	300
Christmas Dance	X	X	X	X	MLK Jr. Center	Winter	0	N/A	200	200	300	300
Basketball Camp	X	X			MLK Jr. Center	Summer	\$10	N/A	100	120	100	120
Water Aerobics			X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	862	1,718	2,133	1,149
Floor Aerobics			X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	311	625	460	322
Lap Swim	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	1,757	2,513	2,741	2,810
Rec Swim	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	1,741	2,787	5,810	9,135
Racquetball		X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	214	360	405	195
Weight Room		X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	1,691	3,543	3,754	2,241
High School Swim		X			Aquatic Fitness Center	Winter	Membership	N/A	154	1,678	1,908	876
Kayaking	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	Winter	Membership	N/A	0	89	92	104
Lenoir Makos	X	X			Aquatic Fitness Center	Summer	Membership	N/A	0	132	484	1,823
Birthday Parties	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	0	245	436	536

* City run or operated by other vendor on City property

Figure 5. Lenoir Recreational Programming (cont.)

Event or Program Name*	Age Group				Location	Season	Registration Fee	Estimated Attendance				
	Age 12 and under	Age 13-18	Adults	Seniors				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Swim Lessons	X				Aquatic Fitness Center	All	Membership	N/A	0	0	1,200	886
Special Olympics	X	X	X	X	Aquatic Fitness Center	Winter, Spring & Fall	Membership	N/A	0	52	70	115
BB/SS/TBALL	X	X			Mulberry Rec Center	Spring	\$25/\$50	N/A	100	158	86	107
Fall Baseball	X	X			Mulberry Rec Center	Fall	\$25/\$50	N/A	33	47	21	43
Youth Basketball	X	X			Mulberry Rec Center	Winter	\$25/\$50	N/A	147	130	167	
Adult Pickleball Tourney			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center	Fall	\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A	60	
Men's Basketball League			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$400	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	85
40 Over 3 on 3 Basketball			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$150	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	
Ping Pong Tournament			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	
Tennis Lessons	X	X	X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$25	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	22
Budget Pickleball Tourney			X	X	Mulberry Rec Center		\$10	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	74

* City run or operated by other vendor on City property



The background is a dark, blue-tinted photograph of a park. On the left, there is a wooden picnic shelter with a roof. In the background, several trees are visible, and a car is parked. The overall scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn.

03 NEEDS ASSESSMENT



NEEDS ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This plan uses a multifaceted analysis to help determine the parks and recreational needs of the Lenoir community. The needs assessment analyzes whether those needs are being met and what types of improvements or changes would be beneficial for Lenoir. Existing parks and recreation opportunities are analyzed in terms of public opinion, the location and quantity of parkland, the quantity of facilities within parks, and natural resources in the City.

The needs assessment includes three parts. The use of multiple assessment methods helps to establish an understanding of key parks and recreation needs and inform Plan recommendations to address those needs.

Demand-Based Assessment

The needs assessment starts with a demand-based assessment. This includes an analysis and summary of public feedback to identify what the community wants and expects from the parks and recreation system, and how this compares to its current state.

Standards-Based Assessment

The standards-based assessment then analyzes parkland acreage, location and amenities in comparison with the needs and location of the current population and future growth areas. This is used to determine an appropriate target level of service for the Lenoir community and identify surpluses or deficits.

Resource-Based Assessment

Lastly, the resource-based assessment evaluates Lenoir's existing physical, man-made, and natural resources to identify opportunities to leverage for public recreation benefit.



DEMAND-BASED ASSESSMENT

The demand-based assessment is a reflection of the community's needs, as expressed by residents during multiple public engagement opportunities. Community engagement included multiple Steering Committee meetings, stakeholder listening sessions, and an online public survey to gather input. The following pages present highlights from community input. It is important to remember that highlights are presenting varying opinions from Lenoir residents and/or park users and may differ between the various engagement opportunities and questions. Additional public engagement information, such as advertisements and complete survey questions, can be found in Appendix x, Parks and Recreation Supplemental Information.

Public Engagement:

Several hundred participants provided feedback during a series of engagement events that included parks and recreation activities and information. Participants were asked to consider the existing parks and recreation system and explain their thoughts and desires for change and/or improvements to the system as a whole. The following are key themes that were identified during these meetings, many of which were reiterated by multiple participants.

Desires:

- Expanded Trails and Greenways
- Indoor Recreation Center
- Skate Park
- Family-Friendly, Multi-Generational Spaces
- More Sports Facilities
- Space for Food Trucks and Events
- Dog Park
- Greater Diversity of Activities
- Wi-Fi in Parks
- Additional Picnic Areas
- Live/Work/Play Destinations

Issues/Concerns:

- Insufficient Lighting
- Accessibility Concerns
- Lack of Community Awareness
- Difficult to Locate Parks
- Maintenance of Existing Recreation Facilities

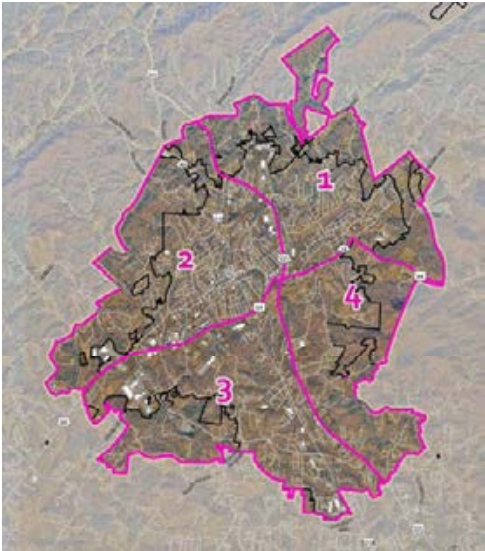
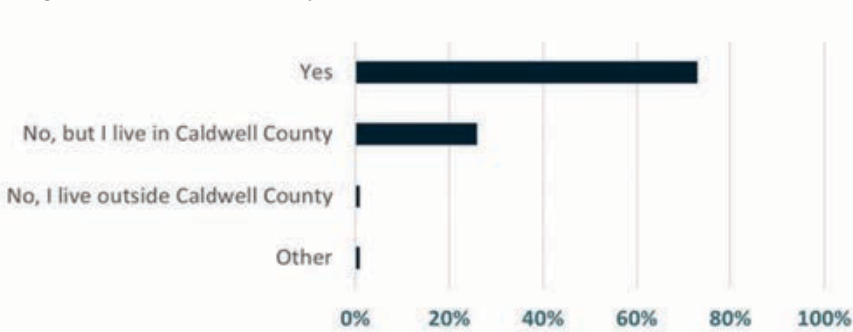


PUBLIC SURVEY

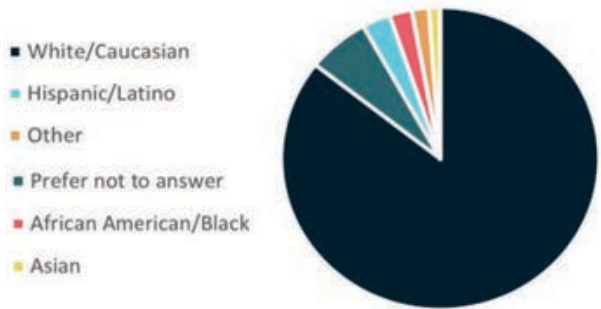
A 21-question public survey was conducted during the planning process to gather input from a wide range of Lenoir citizens and stakeholders. The survey was open from October 2024 to February 2025 and received 179 responses.

The majority of survey respondents (73%) are current residents of Lenoir, while (25%) live in Caldwell County. The largest number of respondents live in areas 1 and 2 on the map below, but every area had at least some representation in the survey results.

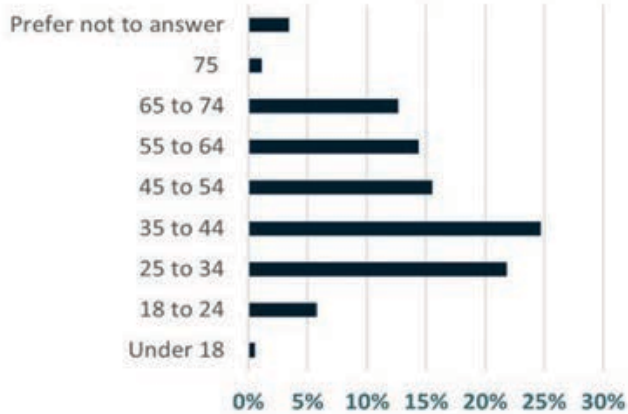
Are you a current resident of Lenoir?



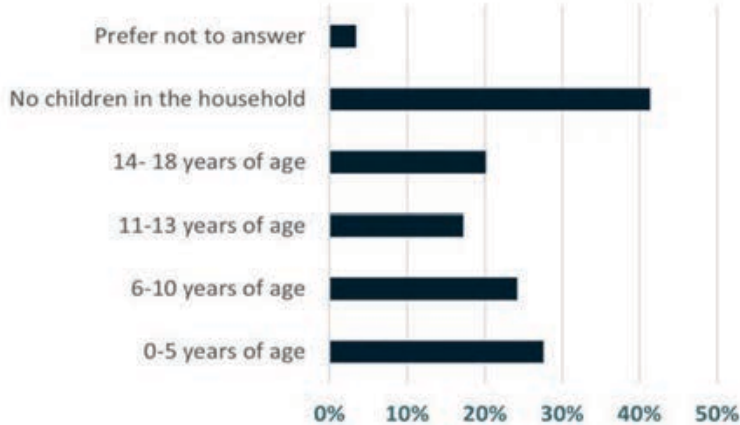
Which best describes your race/ethnicity?



What is your age?



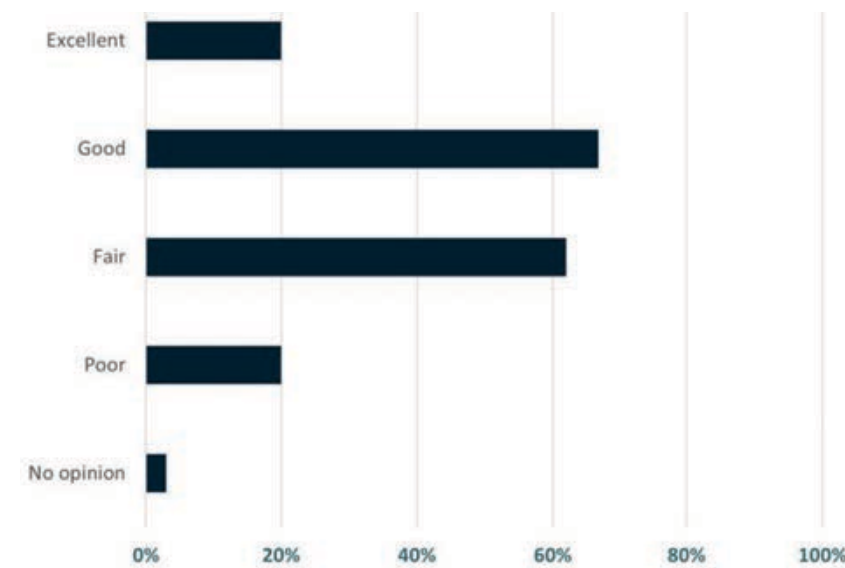
Which youth age groups are represented in your household?



Quality of Parks and Recreation Amenities

When asked to describe the quality of Lenoir's parks and recreation amenities, most respondents rated them as 'Good' or 'Fair.' While some considered them 'Excellent,' a smaller portion rated them as 'Poor,' suggesting opportunities for enhancements to better meet community needs.

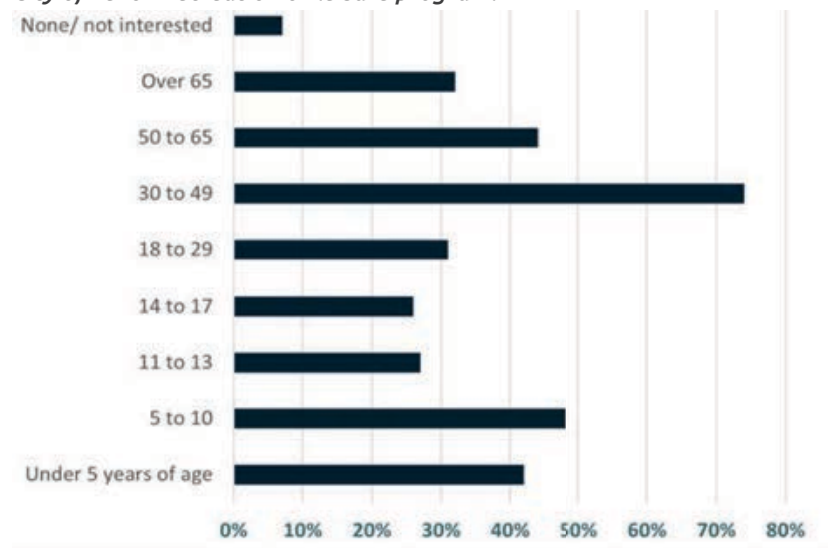
How would you rate the parks and recreational opportunities in the City of Lenoir?



Recreation Program Interests by Age Group

Survey respondents showed the highest interest in recreation or leisure programs for the 30-to-49 age group, suggesting that working-age adults and parents are the most engaged participants. Additionally, there is strong interest in programs for children under 10 and adults over 50, emphasizing the need for multigenerational offerings. Meanwhile, lower interest from young adults (18-29) and teenagers (14-17) may indicate a programming gap that could be addressed through targeted initiatives for these age groups.

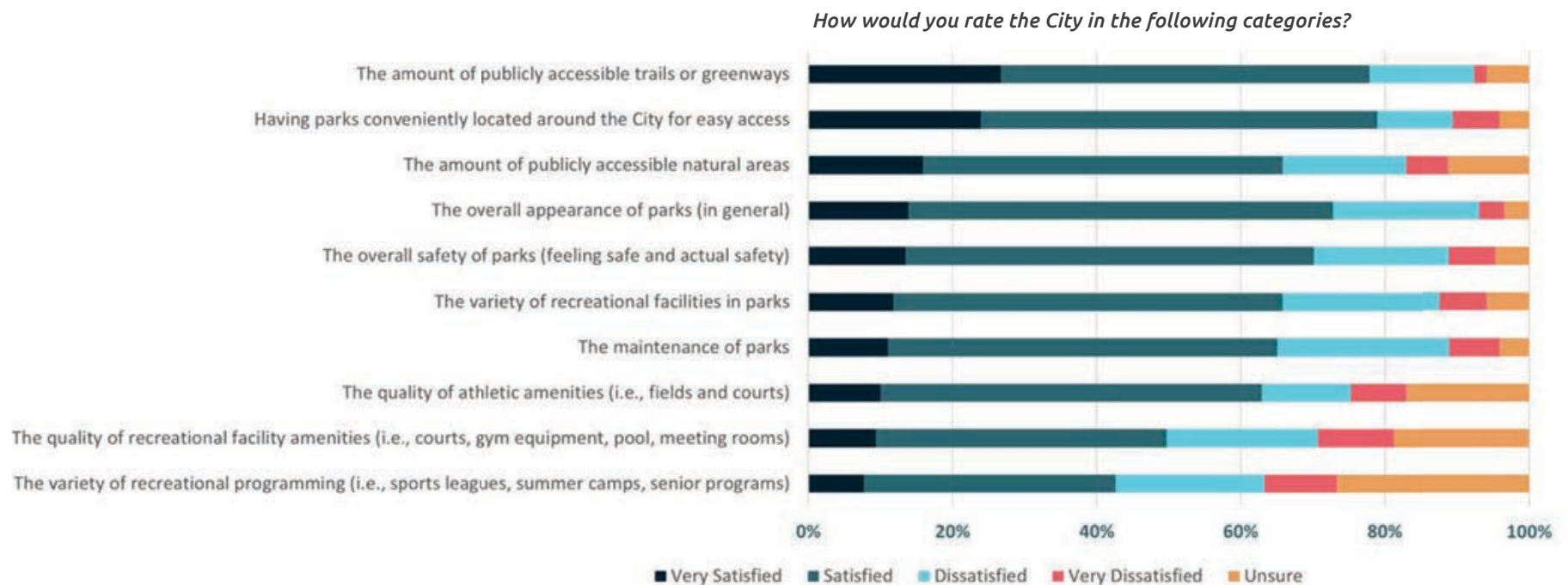
Which age groups in your household would be interested in participating in a City of Lenoir recreation or leisure program?



Community Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation

Survey respondents were generally satisfied with the City's parks and recreation amenities, especially regarding park maintenance, accessibility, and appearance. The highest satisfaction levels were for the availability of trails and greenways and the convenient location of parks.

However, lower satisfaction was reported for the variety of recreational programs and the quality of athletic and facility amenities (such as courts, gyms, and meeting rooms). These areas represent opportunities for improvement to increase community engagement and usage.

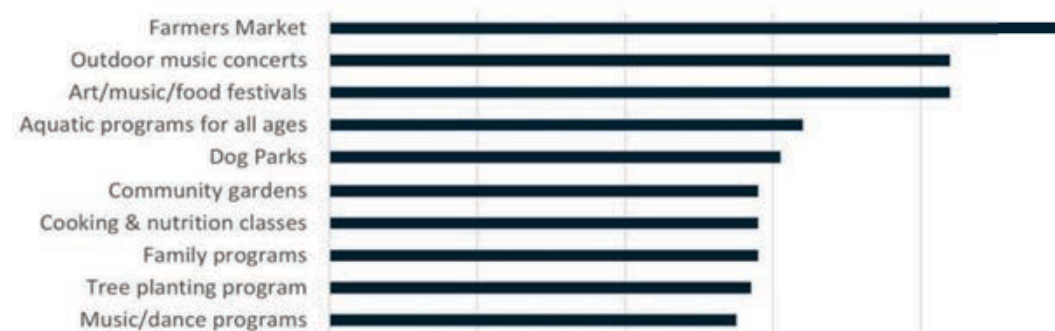


Community Interest in Recreation Programs

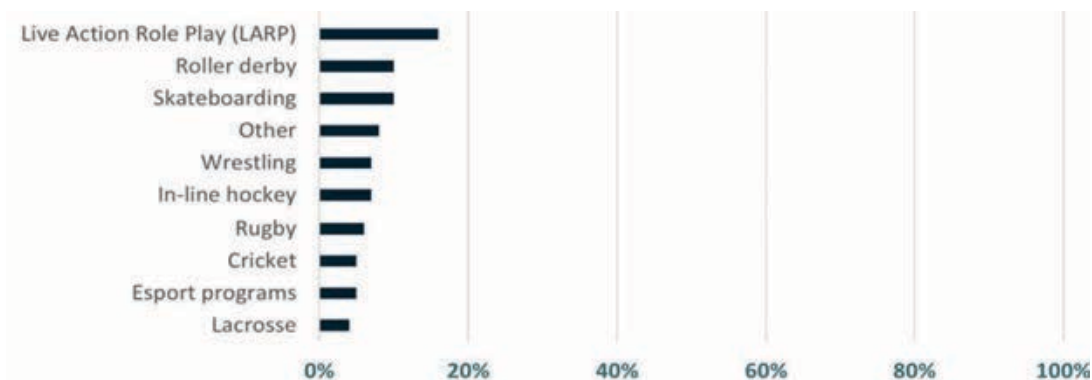
Out of the 51 program options, survey respondents expressed the highest level of interest in community-oriented events and festivals, multigenerational facilities and programs, and arts and cultural classes and programs. These preferences reflect a community inclination toward wellness, cultural enrichment, and outdoor activities.

Mid-level interest (not depicted) was observed for programs like fitness classes, guided nature walks, and swim lessons, indicating a consistent interest in both active and educational opportunities. On the other end of the spectrum, the bottom 10 programs included more specialized athletics and recreation programs. Overall, the results highlight a strong interest in inclusive, community focused, and wellness based programs.

*In which of these programs would you and your household members of any age be **MOST INTERESTED** in participating?*



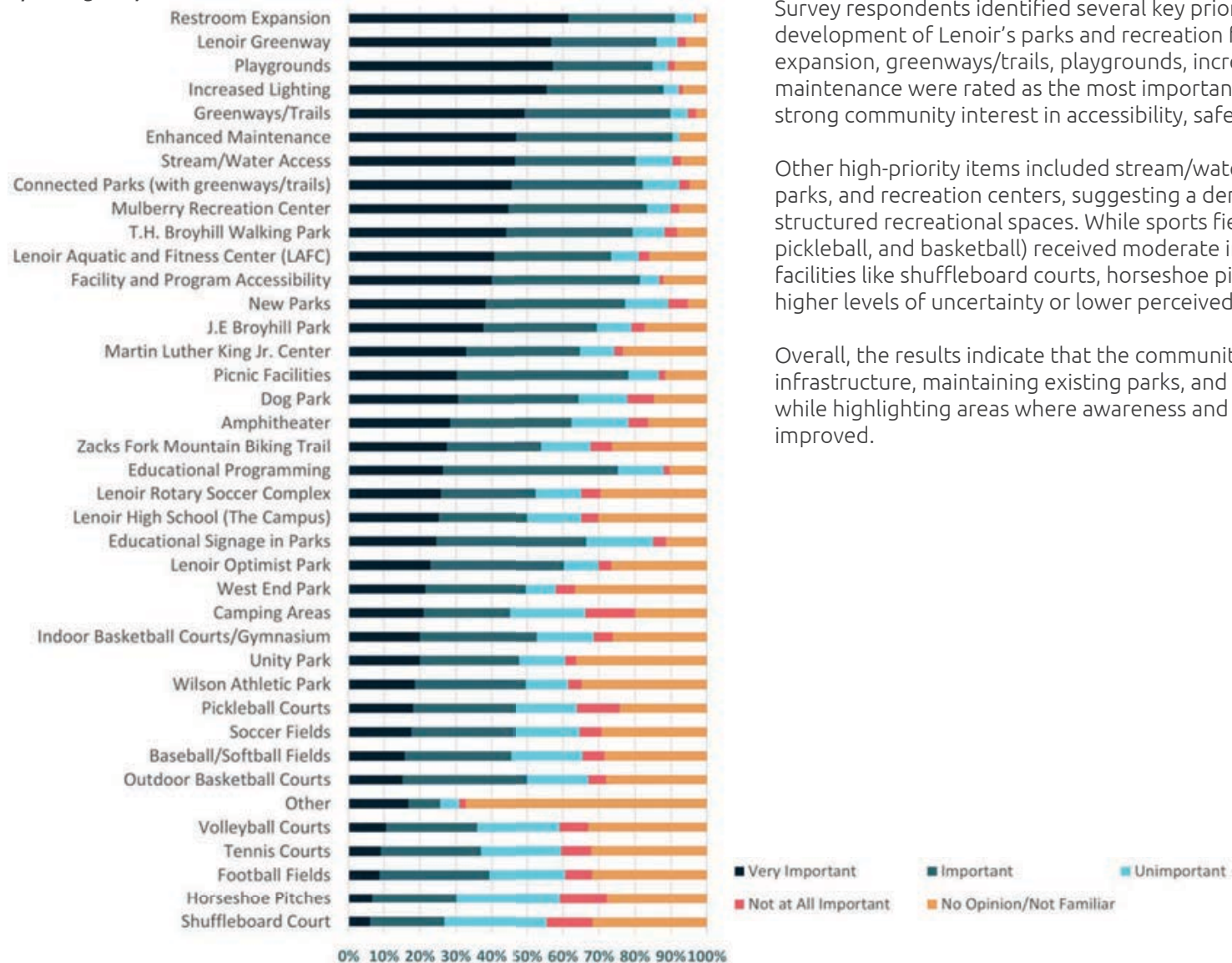
**Top 10 Most Preferred Programs*



**Bottom 10 Least Preferred Programs*

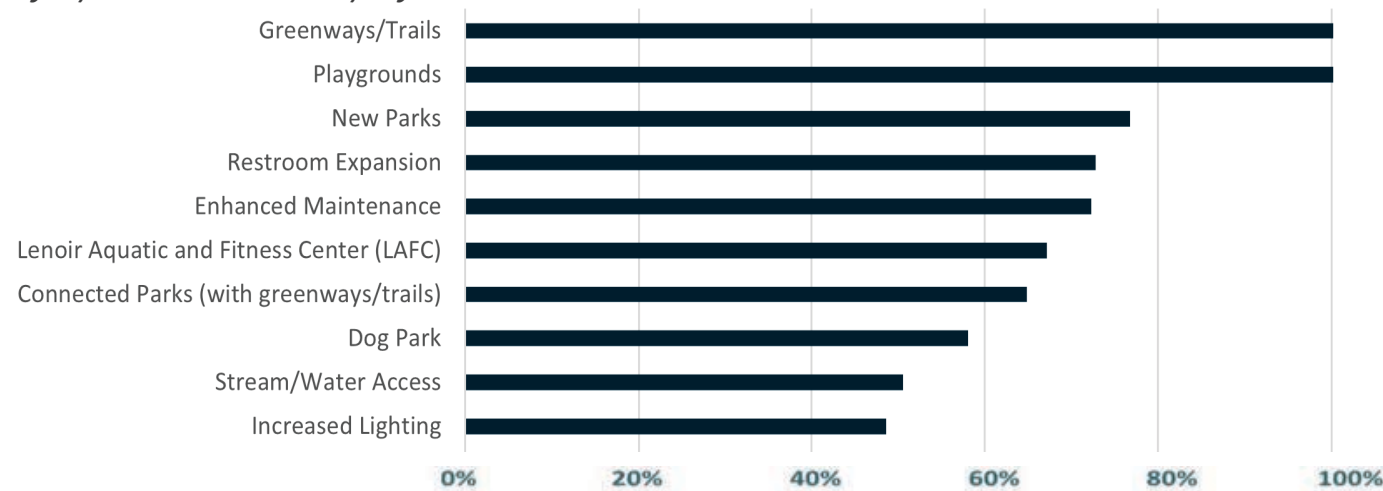
Priorities for Parks and Recreation Facility Improvements

The Lenoir Parks and Recreation Department is establishing priorities to direct future departmental actions. How important is it for Lenoir to consider adding or expanding the facilities listed below?



Top Priorities for Future Park Improvements

*Which **THREE** facilities/amenities above are the **MOST** important to you for the City to focus on within the next five years?*



** Top 50% Rated Facilities and Amenities*

Out of 54 facility and amenity options presented in the survey, about 50% the respondents prioritized an expanded greenways/trails network, playgrounds, developing new parks, and renovations to infrastructure at existing parks (e.g., restrooms, lighting). (See graph above for top-ranking options.) Many of these elements have received strong support in other questions as well, signaling a focus on connectivity, outdoor recreation, and well maintained public spaces.

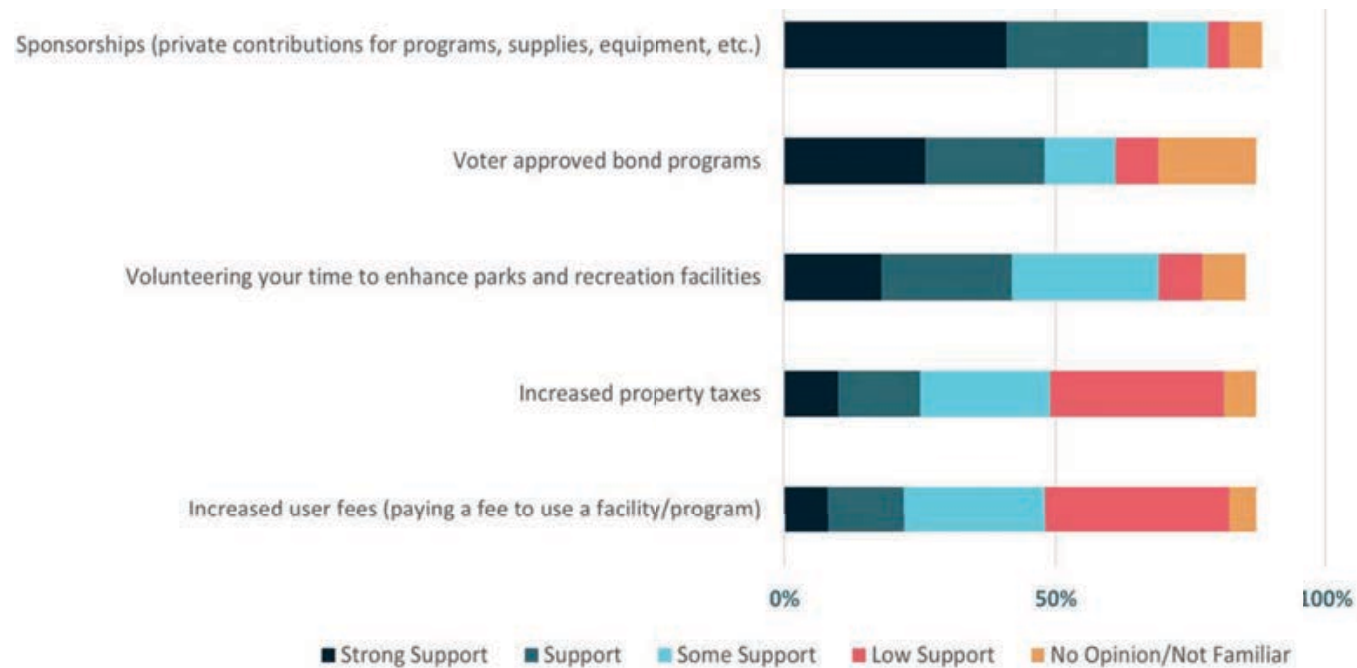
Amenities receiving less than 50% support (not depicted here) included more structured athletic facilities such as tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, and certain named parks. While these may still serve specific user groups, they appear to be lower priorities at this time.

Overall, the responses emphasize the importance of investing in recreational infrastructure, maintenance, and natural connections to create a more accessible and vibrant parks system for all residents.

Support for Funding Options to Maintain Parks and Amenities

The City may need additional funding and support to improve the parks and recreation system. When shown a variety of options, survey respondents expressed the strongest support for sponsorships and private contributions, followed closely by voter-approved bond programs. Volunteering time to enhance parks and recreation facilities also received broad support, indicating a community willing to contribute through service. In contrast, there was noticeably lower support for increased property taxes and user fees, both of which saw higher levels of opposition. Overall, the community favored funding strategies that minimize direct financial burdens on residents.

In order to develop and maintain the park and recreation facilities/amenities you have suggested, how strongly would you support EACH of the funding options listed below?



STANDARDS-BASED ASSESSMENT

The standards-based assessment analyzes parkland in terms of acreage, location, and number of park facilities. It identifies the current level of service and whether it is meeting the community's needs. Levels of service represent a specific acreage of parkland or number of facilities needed per given population.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) publishes their Agency Performance Review annually. It presents data and insight from over 1,000 parks and recreation agencies around the country. This information was referenced throughout the standards-based assessment as a baseline comparison.

Three types of standards were examined in this assessment: acreage, location, and facilities.

Acreage Level of Service

The acreage level of service defines the quantity of parkland acreage as a ratio to population. The results are expressed as park acreage per 1,000 residents. The analysis examines whether there is sufficient parkland for residents today and in the future.

Spatial Level of Service

The spatial level of service looks at the location and distribution of different park types to identify underserved areas and where new parks may be needed.

Facility Level of Service

The facility level of service defines the number of park facilities needed to meet the community's recreational needs. Standards are expressed as a ratio of facility per population size (e.g., one baseball field per 2,000 residents).



Acreage Level of Service

The City’s park system is composed of various park types that serve different recreational needs. Pocket parks, neighborhood parks, and community parks—collectively referred to as close-to-home parks—provide recreational opportunities for nearby residents. Regional parks serve a larger population, while greenways and linear parks offer passive recreation and connectivity throughout the community. Special use parks accommodate specific activities, such as sports complexes or other specialized recreational facilities.

As of 2025, the City has 295 acres of total parkland, with 130.5 acres designated as close-to-home parks and 164.5 acres allocated to regional, greenway, and special use parks. According to the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the median community with less than 20,000 people had 12.6 acres of parkland per 1000 residents. Lenoir’s current level of service is 16.1 acres per 1,000 residents, which is above the national median; however, the distribution of parkland among different park types is uneven, leading to shortages in some categories. (see Figure 5 on next page).

Based on the proposed target level of service, there are existing deficiencies in pocket and neighborhood parks. These deficiencies will grow by 2035 if no additional parkland is added. Community parks, however, exceed the 2025 and 2035 targets. Based on the large amount of community parkland, it is important that these areas are developed to best serve the community so as to help offset the impact of insufficient acreage in other categories.

By 2035, with a projected population of approximately 19,000 residents, the City’s recommended park acreage is 223.3 acres across all park classifications. The most pressing needs are in neighborhood parks and pocket parks, which should be prioritized, particularly in areas experiencing growth and new development. While the City has an extensive system of regional and special use parks, the addition of smaller, accessible parks with amenities such as playgrounds, basketball courts, and seating areas will help ensure a well-balanced mix of recreational opportunities for all residents.

Greenways and linear parks also play a critical role in enhancing connectivity between neighborhoods and parks. While there is no set standard for the

level of service for greenways, expanding these areas can improve access to parks, provide opportunities for walking and biking, and integrate natural open spaces into the community. If strategically located and developed, these corridors can further enhance the City’s park network and provide additional recreational opportunities.

Based on the NRPA 2024 Agency Performance Review, cities of similar size typically have between 6 and 20.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, with a median of 12.6 acres. While the city is currently above the median, efforts should focus on ensuring equitable distribution of parkland to meet community needs and enhance access to recreation for all residents.

National Recreation & Park Association 2024 Agency Review

Total Parkland per 1,000 Residents (communities under 20,000 people):

- Lower Quartile = 6.0 acres/1,000 people
- Median = 12.6 acres/1,000 people
- Upper Quartile = 20.9 acres/1,000 people

* Source: <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/research/2024-agency-performance-review.pdf>

Figure 5. Parkland Acreage Level of Service

Park Classification	Existing Level of Service (LOS)			Recommended Level of Service (2025)			Recommended Level of Service (2035)		
	Existing Acreage (2025)		Current LOS (based on 18,301 population)	Recommended Target LOS (2025 based on 18,301 population)		2025 Recommended Acreage	Surplus/Deficit Acreages (2025)	2035 Recommended Acreage (based on 19,000 pop.)	Surplus/Deficit Acreages (2035)
Close-to-Home Parks									
Pocket Parks	0	0.00	Ac/1,000 Residents	0.25	Ac/1,000 Residents	4.6	-4.6	4.8	-4.8
Neighborhood Parks	18.8	1.0	Ac/1,000 Residents	2	Ac/1,000 Residents	36.6	-17.8	38.0	-19.2
Community Parks	111.7	6.1	Ac/1,000 Residents	5	Ac/1,000 Residents	91.5	20.2	95.0	16.7
Close-to-Home Parks Subtotal	130.5	7.1	Ac/1,000 Residents	7.25	Ac/1,000 Residents	132.7	-2.2	137.8	-7.3
Other Parks									
Regional Parks	85.5	4.7	Ac/1,000 Residents	4.5	Ac/1,000 Residents	82.4	3.1	85.5	0.0
Greenways/Linear Parks	66.8	3.7	Ac/1,000 Residents	Varies		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Special Use Parks	12.2	0.7	Ac/1,000 Residents	Varies		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Parks Subtotal	164.5	9.0	Ac/1,000 Residents	Varies		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
All Park Types	295.0	16.1	Ac/1,000 Residents	11.75	Ac/1,000 Residents	215.0	80.0*	223.3	71.8*

*The bottom row includes all park types and an overall recommended level of service of 11.75 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The total 2025 and 2035 surplus and deficit calculations are based on all park types combined (e.g., 295.0 existing acres - 215.0 recommended acres in 2025 = 80.0 surplus acres).

Negative numbers indicate acreage deficits.

SPATIAL LEVEL OF SERVICE

Access to Neighborhood Parks

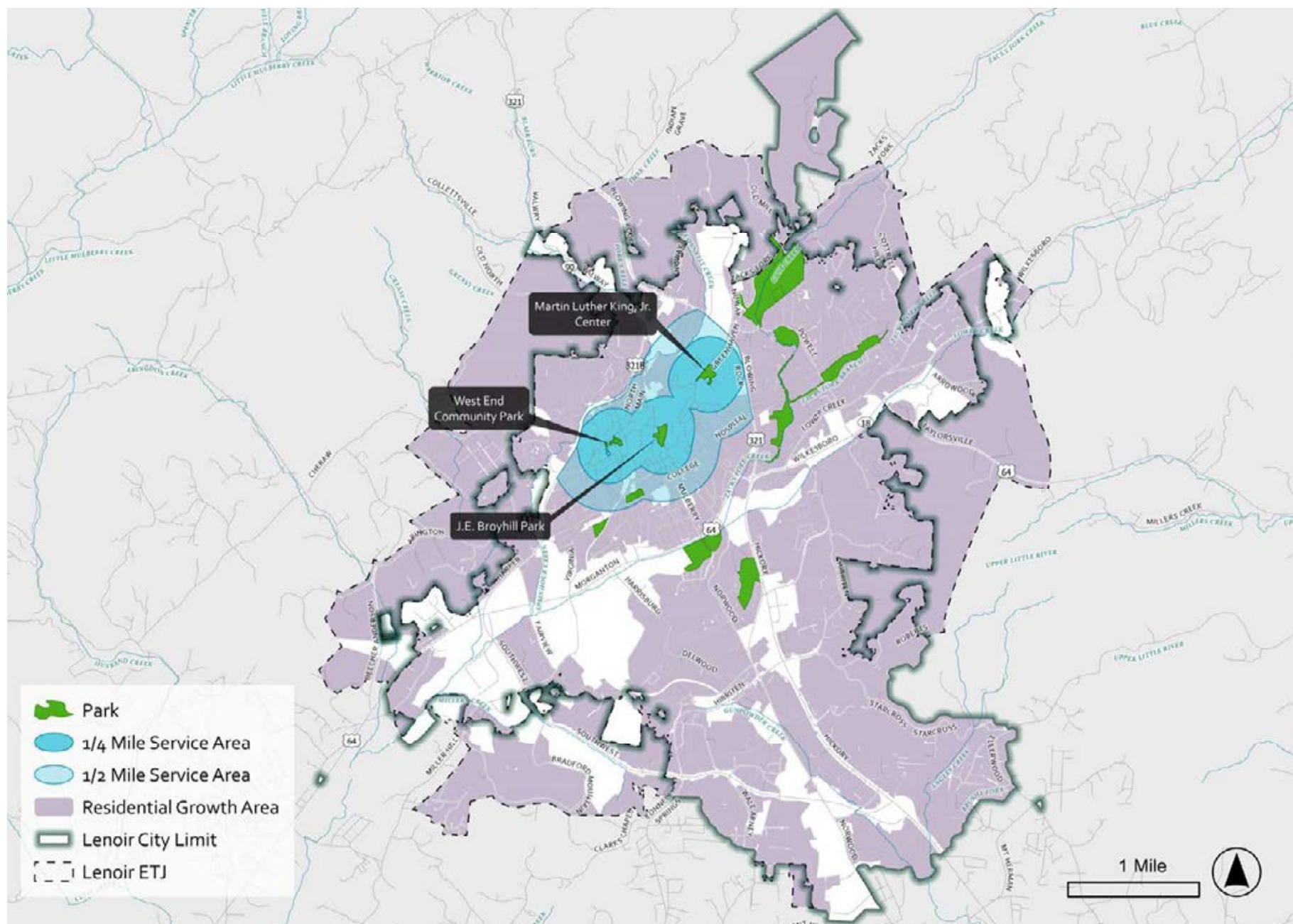
Pocket parks typically serve residents within a ¼-mile area, while neighborhood parks accommodate residents within a ¼-mile to ½-mile radius. These parks provide daily recreational opportunities and are often accessed by foot or bike. The ¼-mile service area equates to approximately a 5-minute walk, while the ½-mile radius corresponds to a 10-minute walk. To ensure accessibility, pocket and neighborhood parks should be located away from major roadways and should not require residents to cross busy streets or highways.

Map 17 illustrates the service areas of existing neighborhood parks in Lenoir. Service areas are clipped where major roadways, rivers, or other natural features create barriers that limit pedestrian access. The analysis indicates that while some areas in Lenoir benefit from nearby neighborhood parks, large portions of the City—particularly in residential growth areas—lack access to pocket and neighborhood parks.

Existing parks, such as West End Community Park, J.E. Broyhill Park, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center, provide valuable recreational amenities within their respective service areas. However, significant coverage gaps remain in several neighborhoods where residents do not have nearby walking/biking access to neighborhood parks. The City does have a variety of community parks that can serve as nearby residents' local park if appropriately programmed with amenities to serve daily recreation needs (i.e., playgrounds, basketball court, picnic areas, loop trail) and if residents can safely walk and/or bike to it within ½-mile.

As Lenoir continues to experience residential growth, priority should be given to adding new pocket and neighborhood parks in identified need areas are those areas within the growth area that are not currently serviced with appropriate parks.. Additionally, improvements to the sidewalk and trail network should focus on providing safe, walkable, and bikeable routes within a ½-mile distance of all existing parks, regardless of classification, to help ensure that all residents can conveniently access recreational opportunities.





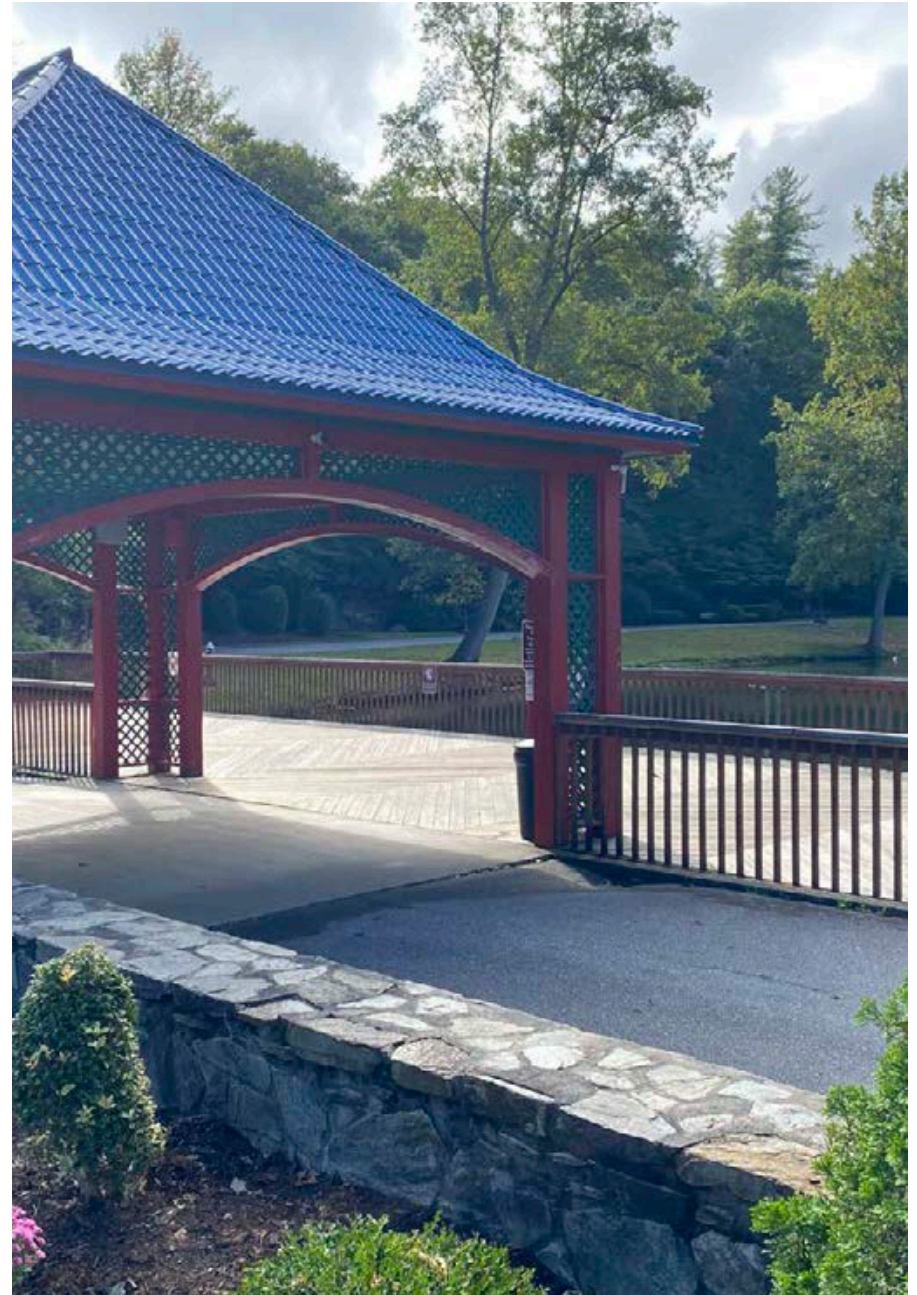
Map 17. Service Area of Neighborhood Parks

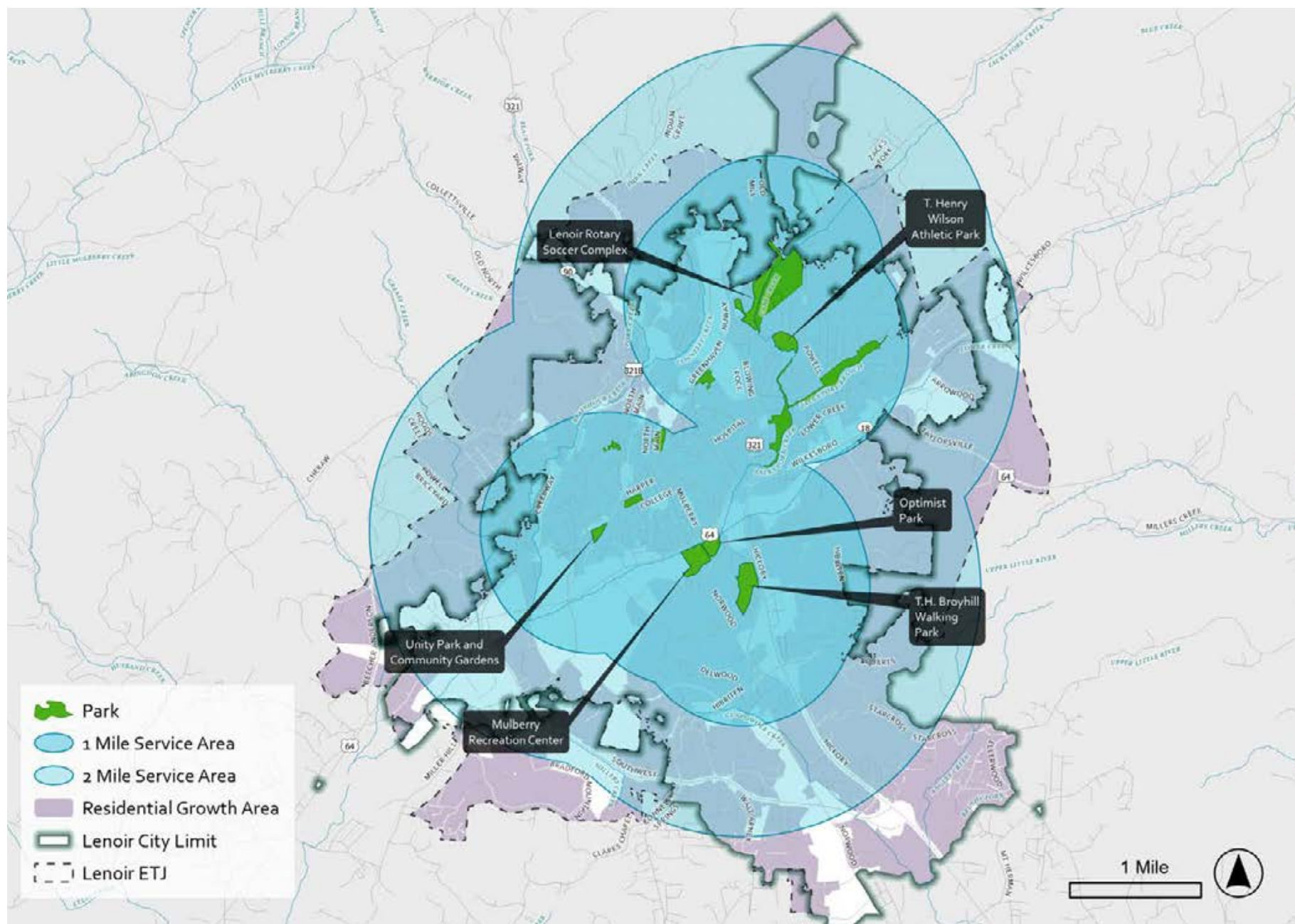
Access to Community Parks

Community parks are larger parks designed to serve multiple neighborhoods, offering a wider range of recreational amenities compared to neighborhood parks. These amenities often include playgrounds, picnic pavilions, athletic fields, basketball and tennis courts, trails, swimming pools, and splash pads. Since they provide more diverse recreational opportunities, residents are generally willing to drive to access these parks.

Map 18 illustrates a 1- to 2-mile service area around existing community parks in Lenoir, showing areas that benefit from proximity to these larger recreational spaces. While several parks serve a broad portion of the community, gaps remain on the periphery of the City and ETJ where residents lack access to a nearby community park.

Key parks such as Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex, T. Henry Wilson Athletic Park, Lenoir Optimist Park, T.H. Broyhill Walking Park, Unity Park, Community Gardens, and Mulberry Recreation Center provide important recreational amenities within their respective service areas. The vast majority of the community is within the 2-mile service area of existing community parks, with only a few portions of the City not meeting this threshold. When overlaid with residential growth areas, the southeastern and western portions of Lenoir show the greatest need for expanded community park services. As these areas continue to develop, the City should consider opportunities to establish new community parks or expand existing ones to provide equitable access to recreational facilities.





Map 18. Service Area of Community Parks

Access to Regional Parks

The Zacks Fork Mountain Bike Trail is the only regional park in Lenoir, with three miles of mountain bike trails winding throughout over 85 acres of woodlands. Due to its size and amenities, it has a large service area that includes the entirety of the City, and possibly the surrounding region. As the service area includes the entire City, it is not mapped in this Plan.



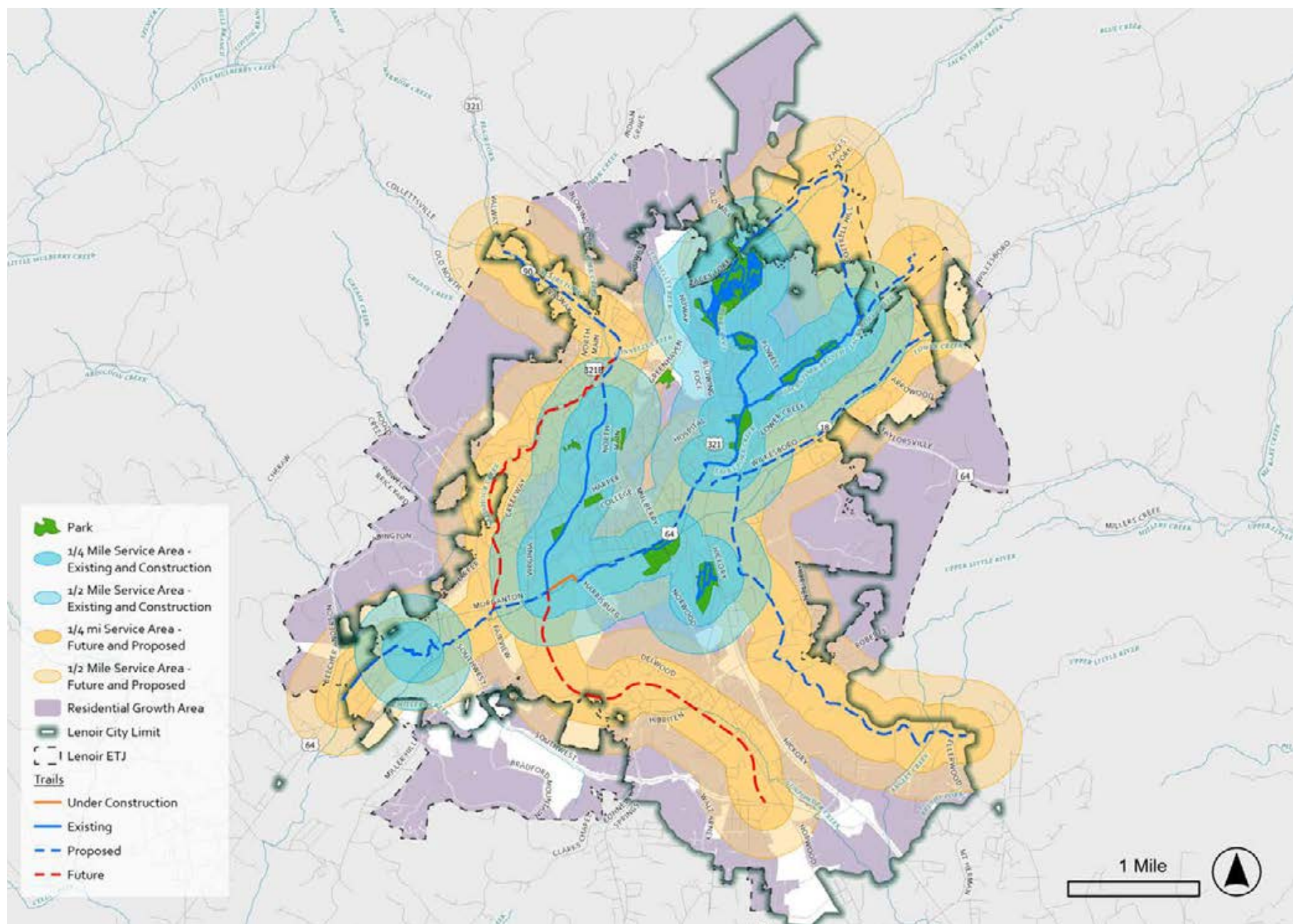
Access to Trails

Similar to pocket and neighborhood parks, trails are often accessed by foot or bike and serve as vital community connectors. As such, they typically share the same service area as pocket and neighborhood parks—approximately ¼- to ½-mile. Trails provide both recreational and transportation benefits, encouraging active lifestyles while linking parks, neighborhoods, and key destinations.

Map 19 illustrates existing, proposed, and future trail corridors across Lenoir, highlighting ¼-mile and ½-mile service areas to show the extent of current and planned access. Existing trails provide connectivity along natural corridors, such as greenways and floodplains, but gaps remain, particularly in residential growth areas where additional trails are needed to improve access.

Currently, trails are concentrated along key corridors. To enhance connectivity, future trail development should focus on linking residential areas, parks, and community destinations. Expanding the trail system in underserved areas will improve walkability and bikeability, providing residents with better access to outdoor and alternative transportation routes.

**Map 19 illustrates existing, proposed, and future trail corridors across Lenoir, highlighting ¼-mile and ½-mile service areas to show the extent of current and planned access. Future trails refer to the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT), a federally-led project outside City control, while proposed trails represent City-owned, built, and maintained projects.*



Map 19. Service Area of Trails

Facility Level of Service

In addition to evaluating parkland, it is important to assess the types of recreation facilities available to residents. The Facility Level of Service table provides an overview of existing facilities in Lenoir and compares them to recommended levels of service. The 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review provides comparison data for the prevalence for outdoor park and recreation facilities per population. The facility target levels of service were determined through a baseline comparison of the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review results for communities with less than 20,000 people. Targets were then tailored to Lenoir based on community input, goals, and an understanding of parkland and staffing opportunities and challenges. These targets help identify current gaps and future needs as the City grows.

Currently, Lenoir has deficiencies in several key facilities, including:

- Dog Park
- Playgrounds
- Splash Pad

Based on limited projected population growth, deficits are projected to remain the same in 2035.

To meet future needs, the city should prioritize adding a dog park, playgrounds, and a splash pad while also enhancing existing facilities to improve access and quality. Expanding trail connections and ensuring well-distributed recreation amenities across all neighborhoods will help provide equitable access to parks and facilities for all residents.

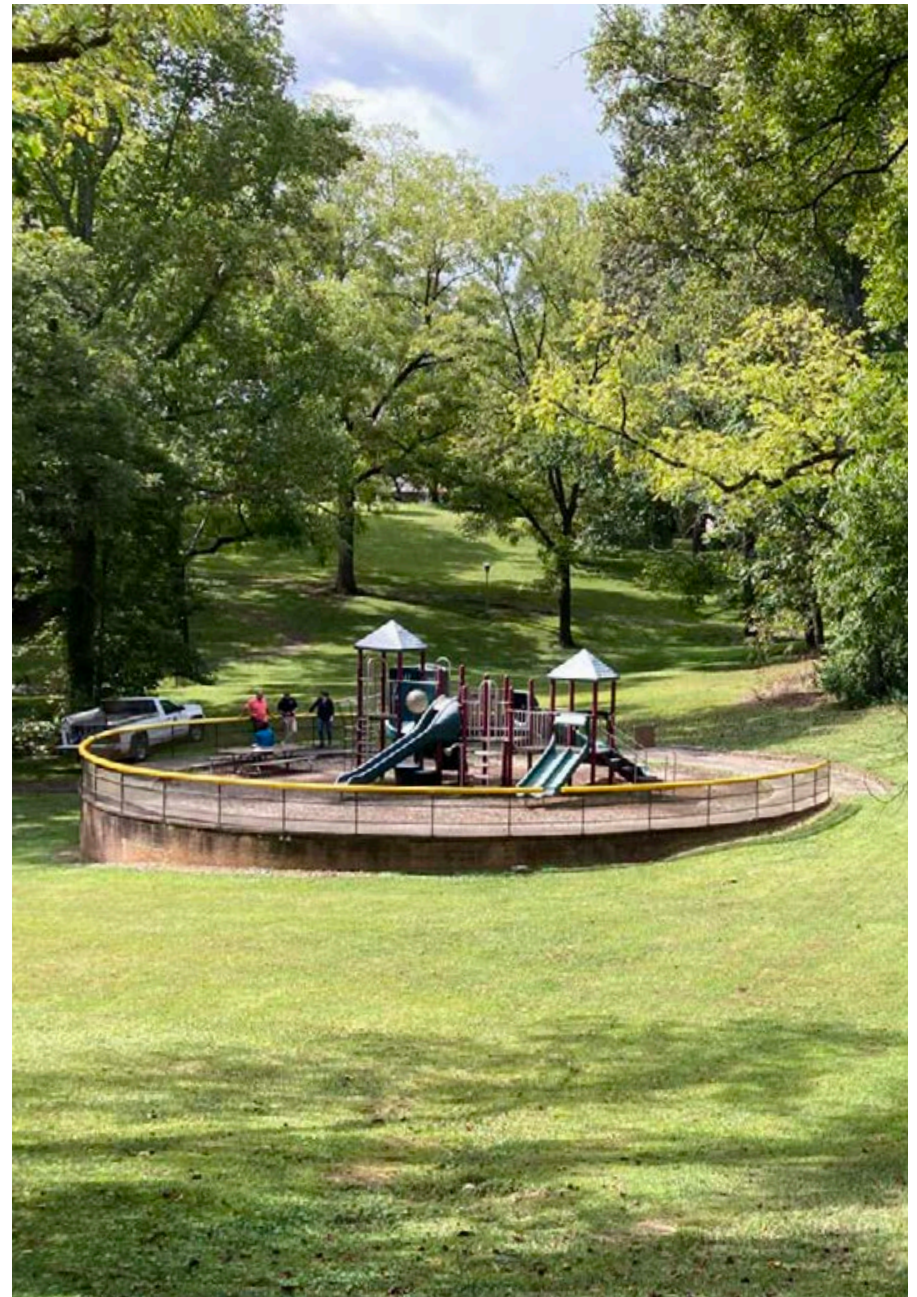


Figure 6. Facility Level of Service

		Current Available	Current LOS (1 Facility per # Residents)	Target LOS (Per Residents)	2025 Need (based on 18,301 pop.)	2025 Deficit or Surplus	2035 Need (based on 19,000 pop.)	2035 Deficit or Surplus	Cities less than 20,000**
Active	Baseball/Softball Fields	11	1,664	1 per 2,000	10	1	10	1	1 per 1,833
	Basketball Courts (indoor/outdoor)	9	2,033	1 per 4,000	5	4	5	4	1 per 4,366
	Disc Golf	1	18,301	1 per city	1	0	1	0	1 per 11,079
	Fitness Equipment	2	9,151	1 per city	1	1	1	1	1 per 8,233
	Rectangular Fields (soccer, football)	10	1,830	1 per 2,500	8	2	8	2	1 per 2,493
	Pickleball Courts	10	1,830	1 per 3,500	6	4	6	4	1 per 3,390
	Skate Park	1	18,301	1 per city	1	0	1	0	1 per 11,284
	Tennis Courts	4	4,575	1 per 5,000	4	0	4	0	1 per 3,074
	Trails (miles)*	16.1	1,137	1 per 1,500	12.2	3.9	12.7	3.4	Median 4.5 total miles
	Volleyball Courts (indoor/outdoor)	3	6,100	1 per 10,000	2	1	2	1	1 per 9,250
Passive	Amphitheater/Outdoor Event Space	3	6,100	1 per city	1	2	1	2	1 per 2,769
	Dog Park	0	0	1 per city	1	-1	1	-1	1 per 10,327
	Picnic Pavilions	8	2,288	1 per 3,000	7	1	7	1	
	Picnic Facilities (e.g., tables)	7	2,614	In all publicly accessed parks	In all publicly accessed parks	6	In all publicly accessed parks	6	
	Playgrounds	7	2,614	1 per 2,000	10	-3	10	-3	1 per 1,990
Aquatic	Swimming Pool/Aquatic Center	2	9,151	1 per city	1	1	1	1	Pool: 1 per 9,500 Center: 1 per 12,618
	Splash Pad	1	18,301	1 per 12,000	2	-1	2	-1	1 per 12,756
Misc.	Recreation Center	4	4,575	1 per 12,000	2	2	2	2	1 per 9,685
	Park Restrooms	9	2,033	Where feasible	Where feasible	Varies	Where feasible	Varies	

* Deficits based on currently developed currently developed trails

** Trends from 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review for cities less than 20,000 people

RESOURCE-BASED ASSESSMENT

The resource-based assessment is the third analysis for the needs assessment. This exercise recognizes key physical, man-made, or natural resources within the community that may provide potential recreational opportunities. These areas can either support active recreational pursuits or provide opportunities for passive enjoyment. The following areas have potential to be further leveraged for recreation or open space preservation.

Extend the Greenway in the Floodway

Lenoir's floodway presents a unique opportunity to expand its greenway system, transforming underutilized land into a scenic and functional recreational corridor. By leveraging the natural landscape, the City can enhance pedestrian and bike connectivity, reduce flood-related impacts, and create a more resilient, accessible public space. The greenway extension can serve as both an ecological buffer and a recreational destination, benefiting residents and visitors alike.

Enhancing Interaction with Nature

Existing amenities like the butterfly garden and master gardeners program already support environmental education and habitat preservation. Expanding trail connections to creeks, enhancing fishing access, and incorporating more interpretive signage can strengthen the City's relationship with nature while promoting conservation and outdoor engagement.

Maximize the Use of Existing Parks

Lenoir's existing parks serve as essential community gathering spaces, but many remain underutilized due to outdated amenities and limited programming. By enhancing facilities, introducing diverse activities, and promoting year-round engagement, the City can transform its parks into dynamic public spaces that serve a broader population. A focus on inclusivity and accessibility will help all residents benefit from these improvements.

Topography

Lenoir's natural topography presents both opportunities and challenges for park development and accessibility. J.E. Broyhill Park, situated on hilly terrain, poses difficulties for trail accessibility and requires strategic grading to improve walkability. Similarly, West End Community Park faces elevation changes that limit usability for residents with mobility challenges. Addressing these issues through ADA-compliant pathways and erosion control measures can enhance accessibility and create more welcoming spaces.



SUMMARY OF NEEDS

Through the needs assessment and public engagement process, the need for additional distribution of parkland, increased connectivity, new and improved facilities, and expanded recreational programs were identified.

Parkland Acreage and Development



- Additional close-to-home parks to address service area gaps in areas with residential growth.
- Maximizing the use of existing parks through upgrades and better amenities.

Park Facilities



- Addressing shortages in sports fields, and playgrounds.
- Adding a dog park to meet public demand.
- Expanding restrooms and picnic facilities for better visitor experience.
- Enhancing aquatic and fitness facilities to encourage year-round recreation.
- Maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities.

Parkland Access and Connectivity



- Improved sidewalks and trails for better walkability and bikeability.
- Connecting parks with greenways and safe pedestrian pathways.
- Expanding Lenoir Greenway to create a more accessible and continuous trail network.
- Prioritizing park additions in underserved neighborhoods.

Recreational Programs



- Expanding youth and senior programming to serve all age groups.
- Offering community events, including farmers' markets, concerts, and festivals.
- Introducing nature and fitness programs to promote active lifestyles.
- Supporting inclusive and adaptive recreation for diverse needs.





04 **RECOMMENDATIONS**



RECOMMENDATIONS

PARKS & RECREATION MISSION

The mission of the Lenoir Parks and Recreation Department is to provide high-quality recreational and leisure experiences that enhance the health, well-being, and quality of life for all residents and visitors. The Department is committed to exceptional customer service and the stewardship of public spaces.

PARKS & RECREATION VISION

Lenoir envisions a connected, inclusive, and vibrant parks and recreation system that celebrates its natural assets, promotes active lifestyles, and fosters a strong sense of community. The system will offer diverse recreation opportunities that meet the evolving needs of all ages and neighborhoods, while supporting environmental sustainability and equitable access.

SYSTEM-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish consistent park signage and branding to enhance recognition and accessibility.
- Ensure regular maintenance of park facilities and green spaces to provide a safe and enjoyable environment.
- Secure funding sources to support park development, upgrades, and ongoing operations.
- Foster partnerships with local organizations, businesses, and stakeholders to strengthen community engagement and resources.
- Encourage developer-driven park creation in new residential areas to integrate recreational spaces within growing communities.
- Explore the addition of hiking and walking trails on the property that contains the Lenoir Police shooting range.
- Obtain a public easement to facilitate access to Hibriten Mountain for recreational use.
- Explore opportunities for community gathering spaces in the Whitnel Neighborhood.



I: ESTABLISH CONSISTENT PARK SIGNAGE AND BRANDING TO ENHANCE RECOGNITION AND ACCESSIBILITY

1.1 Standardize park signage across all locations

- Design a unified signage system for park entrances, wayfinding, and facility rules.

1.2 Integrate City branding elements

- Use consistent logos, colors, and materials to reinforce Lenoir's identity.

2: ENSURE REGULAR MAINTENANCE OF PARK FACILITIES AND GREEN SPACES TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Develop a cyclical maintenance schedule

- Create and implement a routine plan for landscaping, safety checks, repairs, and seasonal upkeep.

2.2 Address deferred and priority repairs

- Prioritize improvements based on safety, ADA compliance, and community feedback.

2.3 Monitor and track maintenance using centralized tools

- Use software or reporting systems to track maintenance issues and completion timelines.

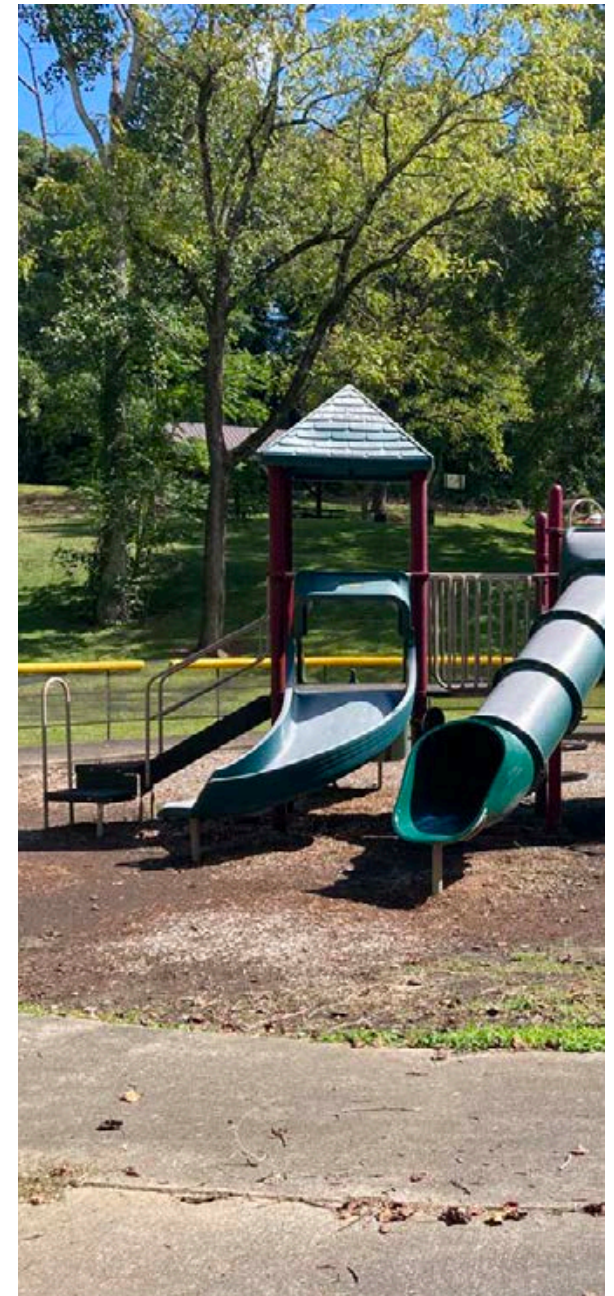
3: SECURE FUNDING SOURCES TO SUPPORT PARK DEVELOPMENT, UPGRADES, AND ONGOING OPERATIONS

3.1 Pursue public and private grant opportunities

- Apply for available state and federal grants.

3.2 Explore alternative funding strategies

- Consider bond issuance, sponsorships, and public-private partnerships.



4: FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND STAKEHOLDERS TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RESOURCES

4.1 Partner with schools, nonprofits, and civic groups

- Coordinate shared facility use, events, and programming.

4.2 Develop volunteer-based support networks

- Establish “Friends of the Park” or similar groups for cleanups and stewardship.

4.3 Facilitate ongoing stakeholder meetings

- Engage community leaders in regular check-ins to identify joint initiatives.

5: ENCOURAGE DEVELOPER-DRIVEN PARK CREATION IN NEW RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO INTEGRATE RECREATIONAL SPACES WITHIN GROWING COMMUNITIES

5.1 Provide design guidance for open space in new developments

- Require usable, accessible park spaces to be integrated into new residential developments.

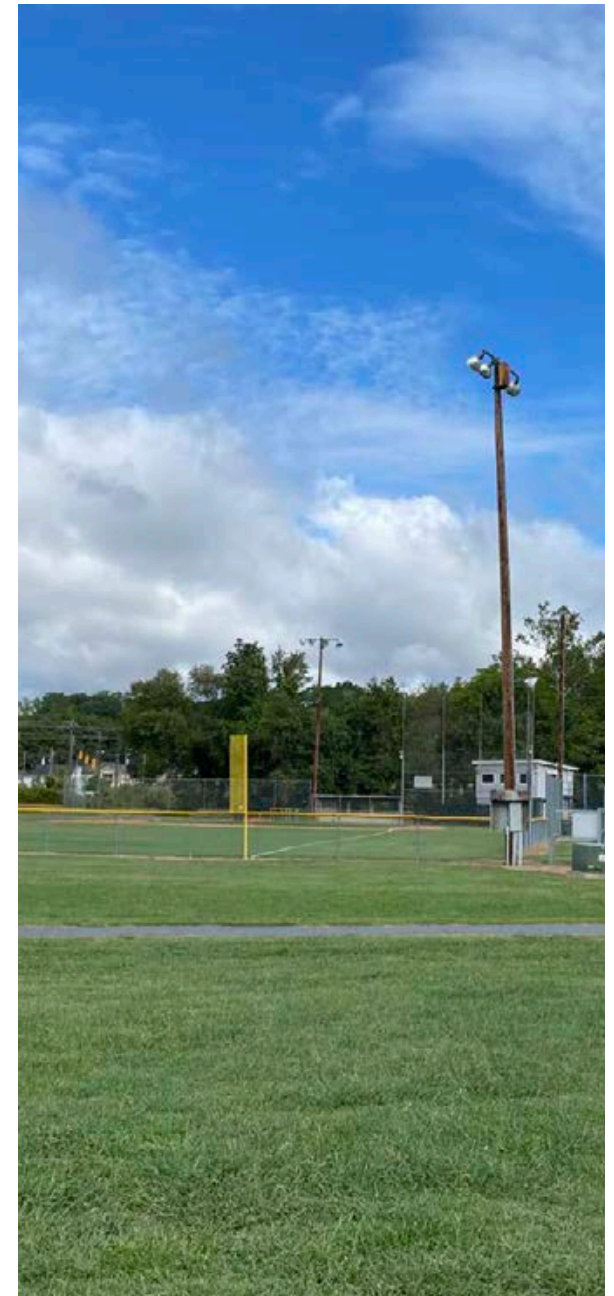
5.2 Prioritize growth areas for new park investments

- Focus on expanding access in underserved or newly developing parts of Lenoir.

6: EXPLORE THE ADDITION OF HIKING AND WALKING TRAILS ON THE PROPERTY THAT CONTAINS THE LENOIR POLICE SHOOTING RANGE

6.1 Assess feasibility of low-impact trails

- Study topography, safety, and compatibility with ongoing operations.



6.2 Design natural surface trails with interpretive features

- Offer passive recreation options like walking, birding, or nature observation.

7: OBTAIN A PUBLIC EASEMENT TO FACILITATE ACCESS TO HIBRITEN MOUNTAIN FOR RECREATIONAL USE

7.1 Identify partners and landowners for access coordination

- Pursue conversations with private landowners and trail organizations.

7.2 Secure easement funding and legal support

- Use available resources to formalize and record public access rights.

7.3 Incorporate access point into regional trail plans

- Design this trail connection to fit within broader greenbelt and connectivity goals.

8: EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES IN THE WHITNEL NEIGHBORHOOD

8.1 Explore opportunities to create community gathering spaces

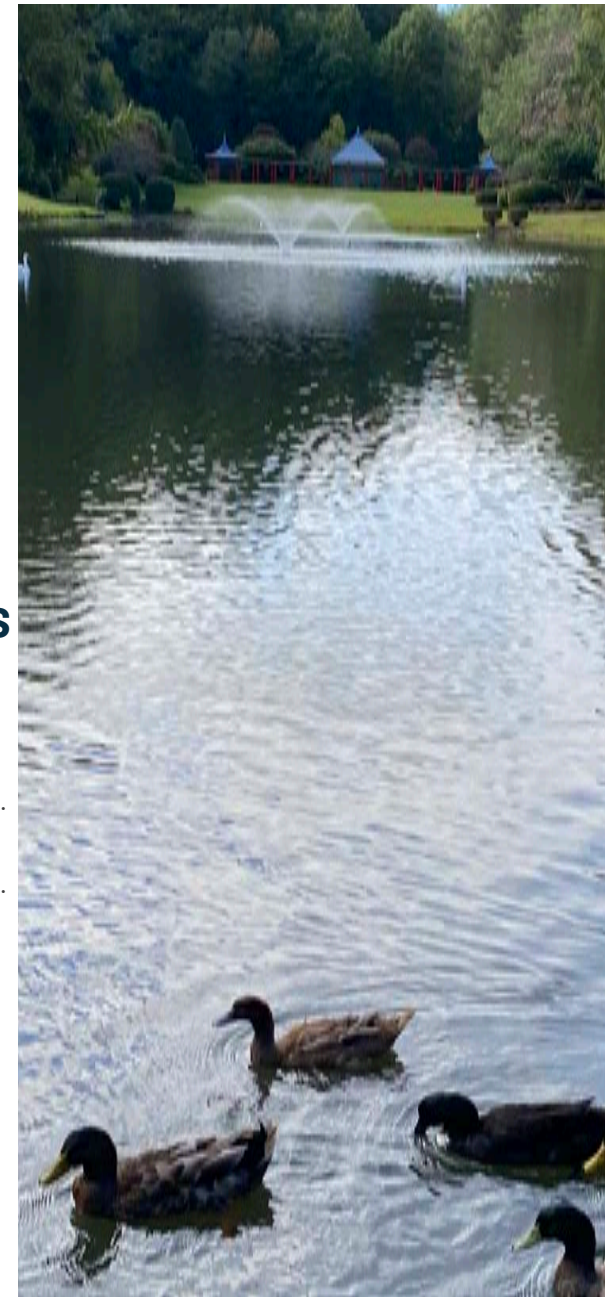
- Partner with the Church of the Resurrection to enable public use of their playground and pavilion.
- Partner with Whitnel Elementary School to create a space for public gathering.
- Work with developers to include open space in their residential developments for the community.
- Assess remainder property from road widening projects that may be suitable for open space.

8.2 Provide signage or support improvements as needed

- Assist with minor upgrades or wayfinding to welcome public users.

8.3 Promote as part of the larger park system

- Include in park maps, online listings, and public communication.



IMPLEMENTATION

High-Priority Needs

This Plan outlines the most urgent parks and recreation needs in Lenoir, based on public feedback, site assessments, and City staff priorities. These high-priority items reflect community expectations for improved access, safety, amenities, and quality of life. Focusing investment on these areas will help guide future park upgrades and increase the City’s competitiveness for grant funding.

New facilities needed based on community input	New facilities needed based on level of service	Upgraded facilities needed based on existing condition
1. Splash pad in the downtown area	1. Greenway extension	1. Overall maintenance
2. Dog park	2. Playgrounds	2. Bathroom renovations
3. Greenway extension	3. Dog park	3. Playground upgrades
4. Public restrooms	4. Splash pad	4. Lighting and safety features
5. Playgrounds	5. ADA accessibility improvements	5. Trail surface repairs
Top 6 Cumulative Facility Needs in Lenoir		
1. Overall maintenance – Prioritize safety, cleanliness, and general park upkeep. 2. Greenway extension – Expand trail connectivity Citywide to link parks, schools, and neighborhoods. 3. Playgrounds – Provide inclusive, shaded, and age-appropriate play equipment. 4. Bathrooms – Add and improve public restroom access across the park system. 5. Dog park – Designate a fenced, off-leash area with seating, water access, and waste stations. 6. Splash pad in the downtown area – Introduce a high-visibility, seasonal water feature for children and families.		

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

One of the most important elements of a parks and recreation master plan is having actionable recommendations that clearly outline the initial steps to being implementing the plan. The following implementation table provides individual actions that will help achieve the vision established by the community. The table is organized by specific parks that were assessed as part of this project. For each action, an associated time frame for implementation and potential cost ranges are identified to assist with planning and completing the action.

1 ACTION ITEMS

The action items include recommended strategies paired with corresponding action keys. They are developed based on assessments and community input across various topics outlined in this Plan. These action items represent practical strategies that the City can implement to achieve the vision set forth in this Plan.

1

Action #	Action Items

2 IMPLEMENTATION TIME FRAME

This Plan provides a phased approach to implementation to help the City identify achievable actions in the near future and distinguish them from long-term actions that might need extensive studies and preparation. The recommended actions are categorized into the following time frames.

2

Implementation Time Frame

Ongoing

Recommendations that are continuously being implemented or should be revisited regularly throughout the life of the recommendation or implementation of the Plan.

Short-Term (1-3 years)

Actions that are typically “low-hanging fruit” or easier to achieve because they do not require a large amount of capital.

Mid-Term (4-6 years)

Actions that may require more planning and capital than the short-term 3-year horizon.

Long-Term (7+ years)

Actions that generally need a large amount of capital, require significant planning and coordination for completion, or other steps must take place before implementation. In some cases, there may be opportunities to make some initial progress in the short- or mid-term.

3 POTENTIAL COST RANGE

Each action item is assigned a rough cost estimate using dollar signs to indicate scale. This helps the City prioritize actions based on available funding and anticipated expenses.

\$ – Minimal cost: typically covers maintenance, signage, or small-scale repairs

\$\$ – Moderate cost: may include minor infrastructure, equipment, or landscaping improvements

\$\$\$ – Significant cost: involves substantial upgrades such as new amenities, facilities, or trail extensions

\$\$\$\$ – Highest cost: complex, large-scale projects such as major park renovations, new construction, or multi-phase developments

Prioritized Action Plan			
#	Action Item	Initiation Time Frame	Potential Cost Range
Lenoir Optimist Park			
1	Use food trucks for concessions instead of permanent facilities.	Ongoing	\$
2	Renovate rental building, considering a patio instead of a deck to reduce maintenance needs.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
3	Provide public creek access for recreation.	Short-Term	\$
4	Add shade trees and lighting to improve comfort and safety.	Short-Term	\$\$
5	Explore renting the commercial kitchen to food truck operators.	Medium-Term	\$\$
6	Improve pedestrian connection to Mulberry Street.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
7	Screen the public works building with landscaping or fencing.	Medium-Term	\$
8	Install consistent entrance signage and adult workout equipment around the walking track.	Medium-Term	\$\$
9	Create a track around the baseball fields for additional walking opportunities.	Long-Term	\$\$
10	Add furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE) and enhance the parking lot with trees.	Long-Term	\$\$\$
T.H. Broyhill Walking Park			
1	Add colorful landscaping and replace trees with traditional Japanese species.	Ongoing	\$
2	Address general maintenance and replace retaining wall where needed.	Short-Term	\$\$
3	Establish a holiday light walk to attract seasonal visitors.	Short-Term	\$
4	Designate the park as an arboretum and manage invasive species.	Medium-Term	\$
5	Improve ADA access and entrance signage, and plant trees in the parking area.	Medium-Term	\$\$
T. Henry Wilson Athletic Park			
1	Complete maintenance tasks and add new shade trees.	Short-Term	\$
2	Install entrance signage and increase tree canopy in the parking lot.	Medium-Term	\$\$
3	Expand the disc golf course and construct new restrooms.	Long-Term	\$\$\$
Lenoir Rotary Soccer Complex			
1	Remove overgrown trees and provide creek access.	Short-Term	\$

Prioritized Action Plan			
#	Action Item	Initiation Time Frame	Potential Cost Range
2	Plant trees in the parking area for shade and aesthetics.	Medium-Term	\$\$
3	Add signage, seating, shade trees, and enhance cell service coverage.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
4	Better connect the large wooded field and improve its surface.	Long-Term	\$\$
J.E. Broyhill Park			
1	Open views from Ridge Street by removing selective vegetation.	Short-Term	\$
2	Improve entry points, lighting, general maintenance, and reimagine park layout for better use of space.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
3	Fix sidewalks and resolve ADA accessibility challenges.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
4	Relocate playground to the hilltop and connect park to fire department with streetscape upgrades.	Medium-Term/Long-Term	\$\$/\$\$\$
5	Explore new features like a ropes course or disc golf adapted to topography.	Long-Term	\$\$\$\$
Mack Cook Stadium			
1	Complete construction projects and connect to the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail greenway.	Short-Term	\$\$\$\$
2	Upgrade seating, access, parking, and drainage on College Avenue.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$\$
3	Explore new programming to maximize use, and add landscaping, signage, and FFE.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
Martin Luther King Jr. Center			
1	Determine future use of locker rooms currently used seasonally for homeless services.	Short-Term	\$
2	Enhance landscaping and replace shuffleboard courts with functional uses.	Short-Term	\$
3	Conduct general updates and consider adding windows in the weight room.	Medium-Term	\$\$
4	Update playground surfacing, open up field access, and repurpose the empty courtyard creatively.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
5	Perform bathroom repairs, shed removal, and improve entrance signage and storage.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
Lenoir Aquatic & Fitness Center			
1	Enhance air circulation to manage humidity and repair leaks in the outdoor pool.	Short-Term	\$\$\$

Prioritized Action Plan			
#	Action Item	Initiation Time Frame	Potential Cost Range
2	Add outdoor seating, update concrete surfacing, and maximize outdoor area usage.	Short-Term	\$\$
3	Resurface stained indoor pool and upgrade slippery pool deck.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$\$
4	Continue locker room renovations, replace broken equipment, and improve the fitness area.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
5	Increase natural light in the fitness room, improve signage, repaint, and redesign deck and overlook.	Long-Term	\$\$\$\$
6	Add trees in the parking lot and consider converting a portion to pedestrian use.	Long-Term	\$\$\$
Gym & Auditorium at The Campus			
1	Conduct general maintenance for the auditorium and full renovation of the gym.	Short-Term	\$\$\$\$
2	Upgrade the parking lot, add signage, landscaping, and new FFE.	Short-Term	\$\$\$
Unity Park & Community Gardens			
1	Enhance parking lot landscaping, surface, and ADA access.	Short-Term	\$\$
2	Connect to the OVT trail, expand garden infrastructure, and install a pollinator garden.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$
3	Add public art, seating, and relocate ADA entrance to a more accessible location.	Long-Term	\$\$\$\$
4	Control invasive species and install educational and entrance signage.	Long-Term	\$\$\$
West End Community Park			
1	Upgrade basketball courts, including new surfacing, backboards, and lighting.	Short-Term	\$\$
2	Completely redesign layout to cluster elements, increase street presence, and manage drainage.	Short-Term	\$\$\$
3	Construct sidewalks, repair picnic shelters, and enhance landscaping.	Short-Term	\$\$
4	Add signage, seating, full ADA access, and lighting across the park.	Medium-Term	\$\$\$

Prioritized Action Plan			
#	Action Item	Initiation Time Frame	Potential Cost Range
5	Add new playground.	Short-Term/ Long-Term	\$\$/\$\$\$
6	Repurpose old tennis courts.	Short-Term/ Long-Term	\$\$/\$\$\$
7	Add parking and remove unnecessary fencing along Willow Street.	Long-Term	\$\$