

# Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment



City of Hickory  
Parks and Recreation Department  
May 4, 2010



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## City of Hickory

### City Council

Rudy Wright, Mayor  
Brad Lail, Ward 1  
Bruce Meisner, Ward 2  
Danny Seaver, Ward 3  
Hank Guess, Ward 4  
Sally Fox, Ward 5  
Jill Patton, Ward 6

### Recreation and Parks Commission

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### Park Planner

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### Architect

Richard Grubbs, Perkins & Will

# Section One

## Inventory



*Glenn Hilton Park*

## Section One Inventory

The City of Hickory's Parks and Recreation Department offers the citizens of Hickory and the surrounding area a park system with a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. Through this diverse system of parks, citizens are offered a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities. In addition to the recreation opportunities, these valuable assets provide open space and environmental benefits to the rapidly urbanizing community.

This section provides a detailed inventory of the Department's parkland and recreational facilities. Inventorying these existing facilities is the first step in developing a plan for the future.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

## Civitan Park

Civitan Park features a picnic shelter, tennis courts, basketball court, lighted softball field, lighted football field, playground, and restrooms. No league play currently takes place at this park. The concrete surface of the outdoor basketball court is in need of repair. Current plans for the park call for the removal of the existing football field, and replacing it with a community garden.

- 1 Men's practice softball field (lighted)
- 1 Football field (lighted) (to be removed)
- 1 Basketball court
- 2 Tennis courts
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic shelter



## Cliff Teague Park

Developed in the 1970s, Cliff Teague Park includes a tennis court, playground equipment, an outdoor basketball court, horseshoe pits, and restrooms. The park is situated on two levels, with the tennis court and small parking lot on the upper level. Steps and a walking path connect both levels. The playground equipment was updated in 1999, and a new restroom facility was built in 2005. The tennis court is not in good condition. There is development potential for new trails; however, the existing asphalt paths are in need of repair.

- 1 Basketball court
- 1 Tennis court
- 2 Playgrounds
- Horseshoe pits
- Restrooms



## Fairbrook Optimist Park

Developed in the 1970s by the Fairbrook Optimist Club, this park was given to the City of Hickory in the 1980s when the club dissolved. Park facilities include a lighted softball field, small playground, restrooms, and a concession stand. The softball field was last used as a game field in 2007 for the girl's softball program. Currently, the outfield is used for youth tackle football practice. The playground's only piece of equipment is a single outdated slide. Park use has declined over the years, and the City is considering converting this park into Hickory's first dog park.

- 1 Men's softball field (lighted)
- 1 Playground
- 1 Restroom/Concession Building



## Hickory City Park

Hickory City Park was developed in the early 1970s using a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant. This park features a group picnic shelter, tennis courts, restrooms, and numerous walking and biking trails. The paved bikeway was constructed in 1995 using NCDOT funds and connects Hickory City Park with Geitner/Rotary Park. The parking lot was resurfaced in 2008. The tennis courts are severely cracked and are in need of total reconstruction. The restrooms connected to the picnic shelter are in poor condition as well.

- 8 Tennis courts (lighted)
- 1.5 mile paved bikeway
- Numerous mountain bike/walking trails
- Group picnic shelter w/restrooms



## Hickory Optimist Park

Hickory Optimist Park features a picnic shelter, tennis court, basketball court, youth baseball/softball field, playground, horseshoe pits, and concession building with restrooms. The youth baseball field was once used for girl's softball, but is now only used for practice. The concession building is in need of a new roof and the tennis court is in poor condition. New playground equipment was installed in 2000.

- 1 Youth baseball field (lighted)
- 1 Basketball court
- 1 Tennis court
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic shelter
- Concession building with restroom
- Horseshoe pits



## Jaycee Park

Developed using Land and Water Conservation Fund monies, this park includes a youth baseball field, playground, bathrooms, outdoor basketball court, and concession stand. The baseball field is used as a game field for the Junior League program (ages 13-14). The park building was constructed in the early 1940s and served as a polio hospital in 1944-45. It then housed the Parks and Recreation Department administration offices from 1965 to 2004. The building most recently served as the location for the SOS after-school program; however grant funding for the program ended in June 2009, so the building is currently unoccupied. Playground equipment upgrades have been completed since 1997.

- 1 Youth baseball field (lighted)
- 1 Basketball court



- 1 Batting cage
- 1 Playground
- 1 Park building
- Concession stand

## Southside Heights Park

Developed in the late 1970s, this park includes a group picnic shelter, outdoor basketball court, playground equipment, and a multi-purpose field. The field is not used for any organized play or practice. New playground equipment was installed in 2000. Separated from adjoining neighborhoods by a highway, this park is difficult to walk to and is therefore serving as a “drive-thru” park.

- 1 Multi-purpose field
- 1 Basketball court
- 1 Playground
- 1 Picnic shelter



## Taft Broome Park

Taft Broome Park features group picnic shelters, tennis courts, outdoor basketball courts, multi-purpose field with concession/restroom facilities, playground, putting green, horseshoe pits, outdoor swimming pool, Brown Penn Recreation Center, Ridgeview Recreation Center, and the Brown Penn Senior Citizens Center (see section on indoor recreation for more information on these buildings). In 2008, new parking lots and a concession/restroom building were constructed near the multi-purpose field. The swimming pool did not open for the 2009 swim season due to mechanical issues. For more information on this swimming pool, please see the section on swimming pools.

- 1 Multi-purpose field
- 2 Basketball courts (outdoor)
- 2 Tennis courts
- 2 Playgrounds
- 2 Picnic shelters
- 1 Concession/restroom building
- Horseshoe pits
- Swimming pool
- Brown Penn Recreation Center (ages 15 and under)
- Ridgeview Recreation Center (ages 16 and over)
- Brown Penn Senior Center
- 1 Community Garden



## West Hickory Park

West Hickory Park features an outdoor half basketball court, softball field, and outdoor swimming pool. The softball field has not been used for adult softball for fifteen years and was last used for girls softball games in the early 2000s. Currently the outfield is being used for youth tackle football practice. The softball field concession and restroom building is in poor condition. The scorebooth was rebuilt in the late 1990s. The swimming pool did not open for the 2009 season due to mechanical issues.

- 1 Men's softball field (lighted)
- 1/2 Basketball court
- 1 Playground
- 1 Swimming pool



## Westmont Recreation Center

Westmont Recreation Center includes an outdoor basketball court, tennis courts, shuffleboard courts, horseshoe pits, playground, and two buildings. Both buildings were originally built in the 1920s as part of the Westmont School and were closed in the 1970s. The City converted the gymnasium into the Westmont Recreation Center, and the cafeteria into the Westmont Senior Center. The senior center received a new roof in 2007, but the recreation center did not. The recreation center's floor was resurfaced in 2005 (see section on indoor recreation facilities for additional information).

- 1 Basketball court
- 2 Shuffleboard courts
- Horseshoe pits
- 1 Playground
- 2 Tennis courts
- Westmont Recreation Center
- Westmont Senior Center





# Community Parks

## Kiwanis Park

Kiwanis Park first opened in the late 1960s with expansions in 1986 and 1996. The park features group picnic shelters, a tennis court, an outdoor basketball court, playgrounds, youth baseball fields, batting cages, horseshoe pits, walking trail, concession buildings, and restrooms. The ballfields are used by the girls softball program, Mighty Mites (ages 7-8), Midget League (ages 9-10), and Little League (ages 11-12). The concession/restroom building at Field #1 is in need of renovation. The playground upgrades were complete in 2000.

- 3 Youth baseball fields
- 1 Youth softball field
- 1 Basketball court
- 1 Tennis court
- 1 Volleyball court (posts only)
- Horseshoe pits
- 2 Playgrounds
- 2 Group picnic shelters
- .27 Mile paved trail
- 2 Batting cages
- 2 Concession buildings
- 3 Restrooms

## Neill W. Clark Jr. Recreation Park

In 1986, the City of Hickory purchased the site of the former North State Academy, a private school that closed that same year. The school site was converted to a park featuring soccer fields, outdoor basketball courts, playground, horseshoe pits, shuffleboard courts, a classroom/community building, and a gymnasium. The acquisition of this property and conversion to a community park and indoor recreation facility provides a significant improvement to the park and recreation opportunities in the northern area of the City. The main building was built in the early 1960s and originally served as the classroom/cafeteria portion of the school. It now houses the ceramics program and a majority of the Department's instructional classes. The second building is a gym built in the 1970s and now operates as a recreation center. The gym does not have air conditioning and the floor needs replacement (see the section on indoor recreation facilities for additional information). The soccer fields are used as game and practice fields for the boys and girls soccer program. They also serve as game and practice fields for the youth lacrosse program.



- 4 Soccer fields (lighted)
- 2 Basketball courts
- Horseshoe pits
- 2 Shuffleboard courts
- Playground
- 1 Classroom building
- 1 Gymnasium

## Stanford Park

Stanford Park was originally developed in the 1960s, with a third softball field constructed in 1986. In 2001, the park closed for renovations and re-opened in December of 2003. The newly renovated park includes softball fields, concession/restroom building, outdoor basketball court, group picnic shelter, playgrounds, outdoor skate park, and the Highland Recreation Center (see section on indoor recreation facilities for additional information on this building). The softball fields are used as game fields for the adult softball program and are used for youth baseball and softball tournaments. The administration offices for the Hickory Parks and Recreation Department are located within the recreation center building.

3 Men's softball fields (lighted)

1 Basketball court

2 Playgrounds

1 Picnic shelter

Concession/restroom building

Recreation center (40,000 s.f.)

Skate park (12,000 s.f.)



# Regional Parks

## Geitner/Rotary Park

Originally the site of the former Catawba County Wildlife Club, the City of Hickory acquired and converted this property into a park in the late 1970s. Geitner/Rotary Park features an activity building, picnic shelter, gazebo, paved bikeway, boat launch ramp, fishing pier, and restrooms. The park provides direct water access to Lake Hickory. The boat docks and fishing pier were rebuilt approximately ten years ago. The boat ramp is extremely steep and in need of renovations. The activity building was built in 1971 and is currently used for rentals. The paved bikeway was constructed in 1995 using NCDOT monies and connects Geitner/Rotary Park to Hickory City Park.

Picnic shelter

1.5 Mile paved bikeway

Picnic shelter

Numerous walking and mountain bike trails

Boat ramp

2 Boat slips

Fishing Pier

Restrooms



## Glenn C. Hilton, Jr. Memorial Park

Hickory's most popular park, Hilton Park, is so heavily utilized that an off-duty police officer is required to direct traffic on the weekends during the summer months. Formerly the site of the City's wastewater treatment plant, the park opened in 1980 and used Land and Water Conservation Funds in its development. Facilities include picnic shelters, playground areas, restrooms, gazebo, walking trails, nature boardwalk with observation deck, 18 hole disc golf course, canoe launch, horseshoe pits, and a memorial garden. In 2005, eleven acres were purchased for use as a conservation buffer using Clean Water Management Trust Fund monies.

6 Playgrounds

5 Picnic shelters

Paved walking trails (lighted)

Unpaved walking trails

Wetlands nature boardwalk w/2 tier observation deck

Canoe launch

Boardwalk with fishing piers

Gazebo

18 hole disc golf course

Horseshoe pits

Memorial garden w/Gazebo

Restrooms



## Henry Fork River Regional Recreation Park

Home to the Catawba Valley Youth Soccer Association, this park contains 7 soccer fields that can be configured to a maximum of 13, depending upon the size needed for league or tournament play. Additional amenities include a group picnic shelter with a catering kitchen, Alpine Tower ropes course, playground areas, concession/restroom building, walking trails and a canoe launch. Henry Fork River Regional Recreation Park opened in 2001 and has completed two phases of development. The final phase of development for this park includes the construction of an outdoor amphitheatre.

- 7 Soccer fields (1 lighted)
- 2 Playgrounds
- 1 Picnic shelter w/kitchen and restrooms
- 1.14 miles of paved greenway trails
- Canoe launch
- Alpine Tower ropes course
- Restroom/concession building
- Amphitheatre (future)



## Winkler Park

Opened in 1993, Winkler Park features a picnic shelter with restroom, extensive playground areas, nature/walking trails, Winkler Museum, Winkler Family Home, Winkler Activity Center, and a professional baseball stadium, the L.P. Frans Stadium. The museum houses Winkler family artifacts and history. The 1872 family home has been restored and is available for tours. The activity center is a multi-use building available for rentals. The L.P. Frans Stadium is a 4,200 seat professional baseball stadium home to the Hickory Crawdads, Class A affiliate of the Texas Rangers.

- L.P. Frans Stadium (professional baseball stadium)
- 7 Playgrounds
- Picnic shelter with restroom
- Trails

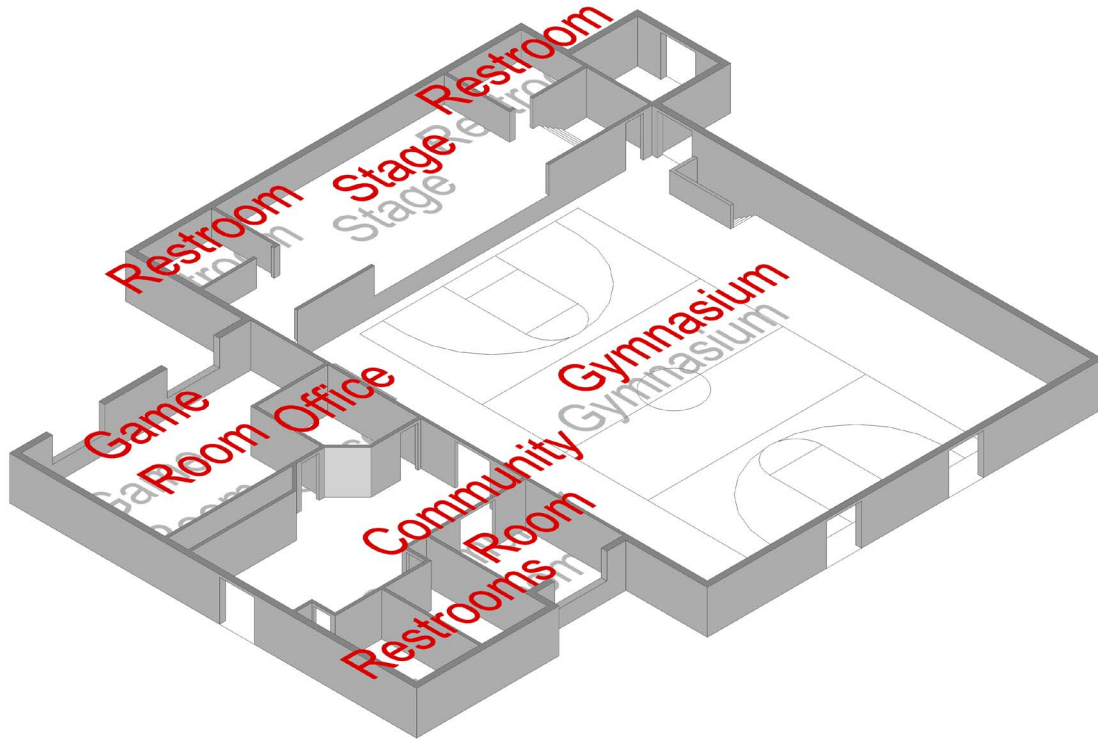


# BROWN PENN RECREATION CENTER

735 3rd Street SW Hickory NC 28602

## Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Friday 1:00pm - 9:00pm Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm



## Existing Conditions

The Brown Penn Recreation Center was originally built to be used as a high school gymnasium. The high school has been demolished.

The Center was constructed in the early 1940's. An addition was completed in the 1994 that added office space, a new entrance from the parking area, toilet room space, a game room and a community room. A new HVAC system was installed in 1994 and a new gym floor was installed in 2003.

The main activities in the building are on one level and is 9,000 sf. There is a lower level that houses mechanical equipment. It is a neighborhood Center and host programs designed to benefit teenagers.

The Center is built around the original gymnasium and includes an office for the program director, a multipurpose community room, a large game room.



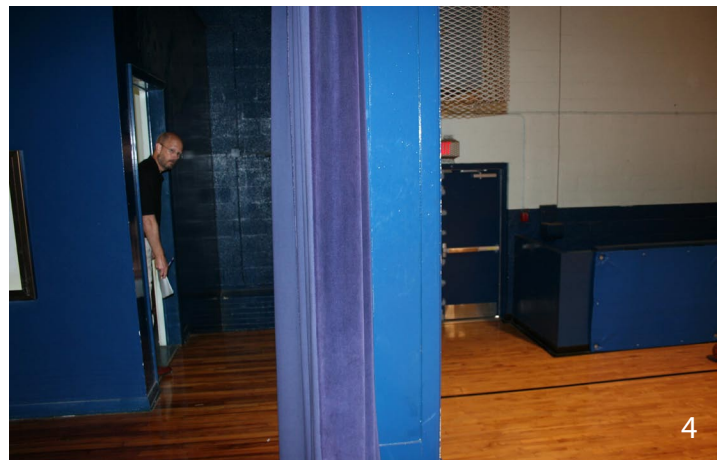
## Observations

- The Center is very close to the Ridgeview Recreation Center. While Brown Penn is oriented toward teens, many of the programs appear to be duplicated.
- Accessible access to the entrance does not appear to be possible. While there are accessible parking spaces the cross slope looks severe.
- The restrooms at both the main entrance and behind the gym are not accessible (see pictures 4 & 5).
- There are stairs that lead to the equipment room in the basement on each side of the gym space. These stairs have short walls to prevent falls. However, the stairs pose a hazard because the circulation in the gym is restricted (see picture 3).
- The roof system is 15 years old and may be toward the end of its service life.



## Recommendations

- Renovate the restrooms in the 1994 addition to make them accessible and meet the current building code.  
Estimated Cost: \$100,000
- Remove the stairs in the gym that lead to the mechanical basement. Add a new exterior entrance to the basement.  
Estimated Cost: \$50,000
- Add a wheelchair lift for access to the stage.  
Estimated Cost: \$15,000
- Add theatrical lighting on the stage.  
Estimated Cost: \$25,000
- Add guardrails and handrails to the steps that lead to the next door Senior Center.

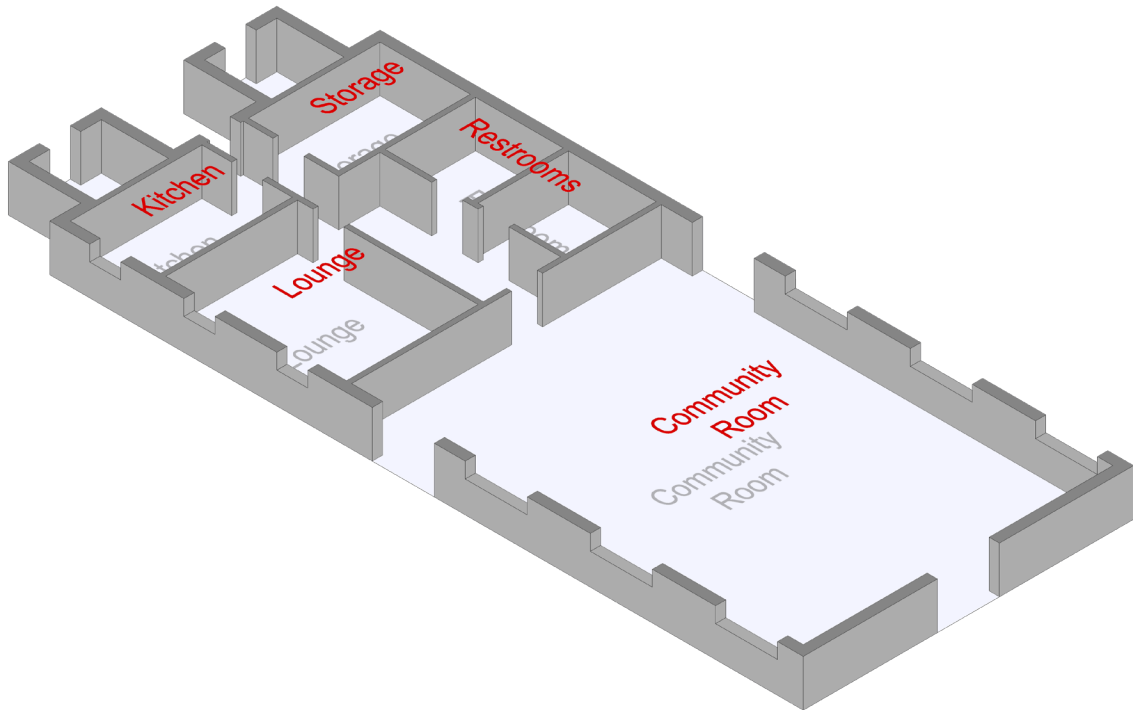


# BROWN PENN SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

735 3rd Street SW Hickory NC 28602

## Hours of Operation

Typically Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:00pm - 2:00pm Other times when special events are held



## Existing Conditions

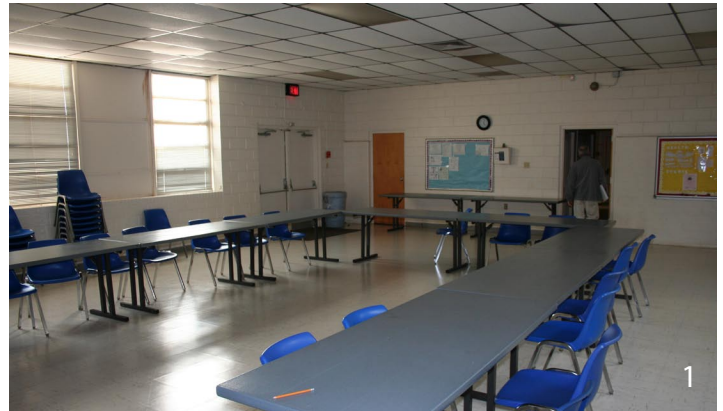
The Brown Penn Senior Citizens Recreation Center was originally built to be a high school cafeteria. The high school has been demolished. The building is adjacent to the Brown Penn Recreation Center.

The main activities in the building are on one level and is 2,560 sf.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Community Room
- Kitchen (Residential Type)
- Lounge

The Center provides programs and group activities for Seniors.



## Observations

- The Center is not accessible to the physically disabled. It does not have an accessible route from the parking area, the restrooms do not provide clearance for wheelchairs, the kitchen lacks accessible countertops and maneuvering room (*see pictures 2 & 3*).
- The lighting system is old and needs to be replaced.



## Recommendations

- Renovate the restrooms to make them accessible and meet the current building code. Additional floor area will be needed to make these improvements.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

- Improve two of the entrances to make them accessible. The current building code requires at least two accessible entrances.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000

- Improve the exterior walkways and adjacent parking area to provide an accessible route to the building and accessible parking spaces. In addition, add an accessible route to the Brown Penn Gymnasium.

Estimated Cost: \$75,000

- Renovate the kitchen to provide an accessible countertop, sink and storage.

Estimated Cost: \$10,000

- Inspect the roof to identify maintenance needs and repairs.

Estimated Cost: \$ 1,200 (Roof Inspection + Report)

- Energy Assessment: Engage consultant to assess mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and exterior envelope for potential energy savings and to provide a Life Cycle Cost Analysis for any recommended



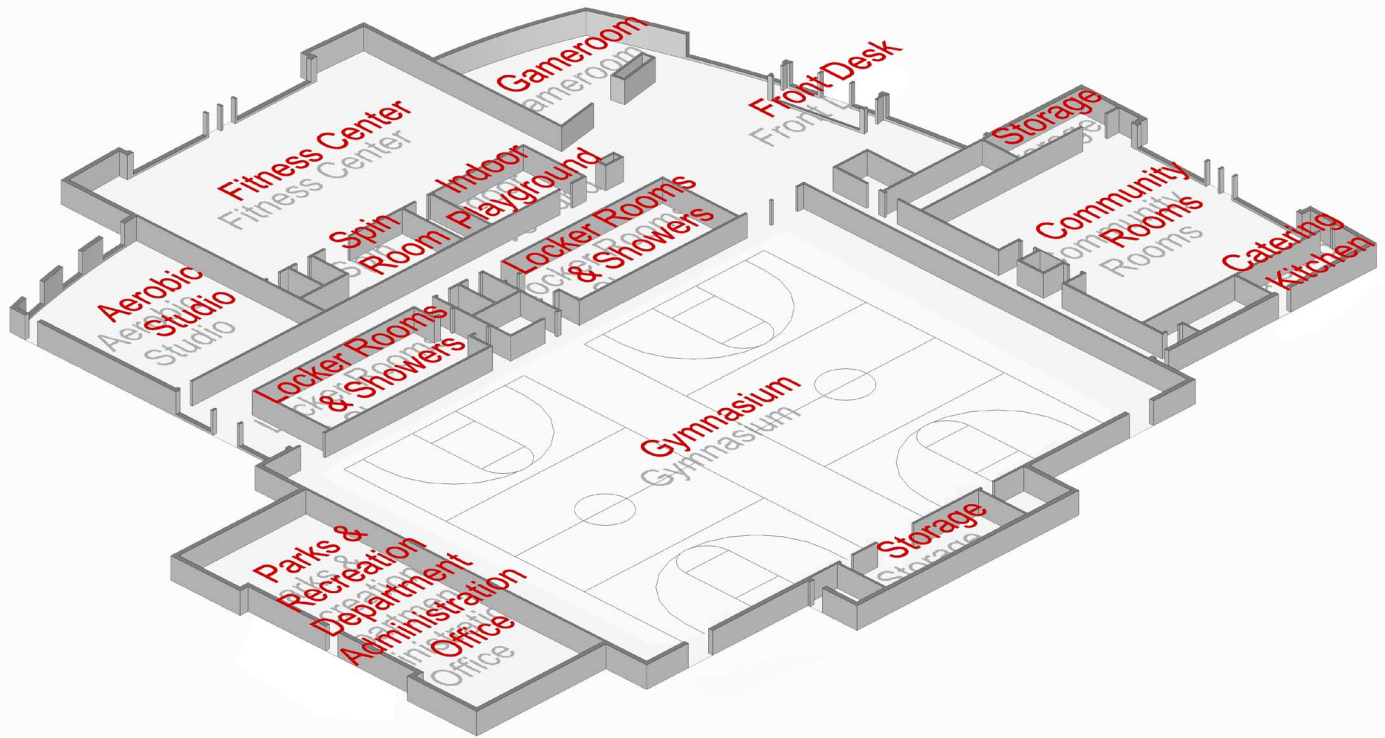


# HIGHLAND RECREATION CENTER

1451 8th Street Drive NE Hickory NC 28601

## Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday 5:30am - 9:00pm Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm



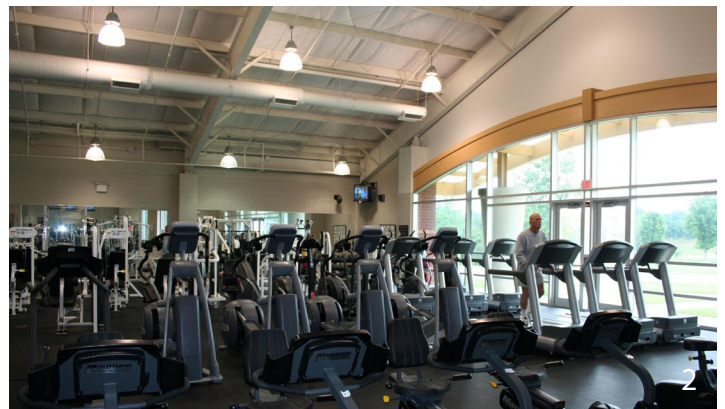
## Existing Conditions

The Highland Recreation Center opened in 2004. The building is on one level and is 40,250 sf. The Center is a regional destination for indoor recreation, fitness, and community activities.

The Center provides space for many popular recreation and fitness activities and includes a large multipurpose community room, and space for the Hickory Parks and Recreation Department Administrative Offices.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Gymnasium
  - Basketball
  - Volleyball
- Aerobic Studio
- Fitness Center
  - Treadmill



## Observations

- Controlled access to the Fitness Center is difficult to monitor (see picture 5).
- The security system is difficult to set for holiday schedules.
- The Indoor Playground has been hard to monitor (see picture 6).



## Recommendations

- Upgrade the security system to allow more flexibility and easier programming for holidays and days the Center is closed.

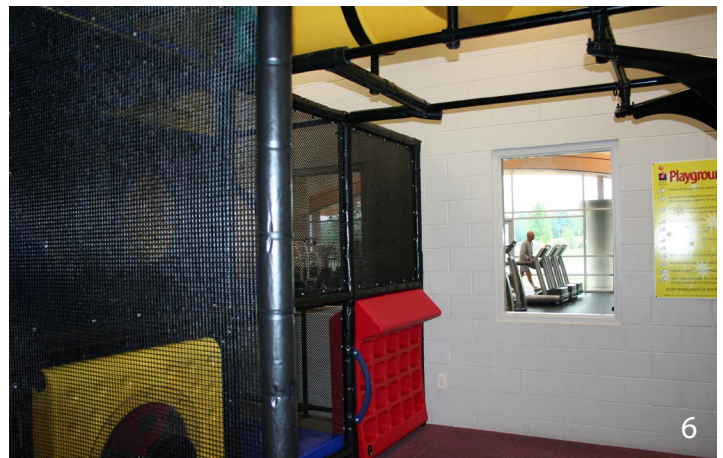
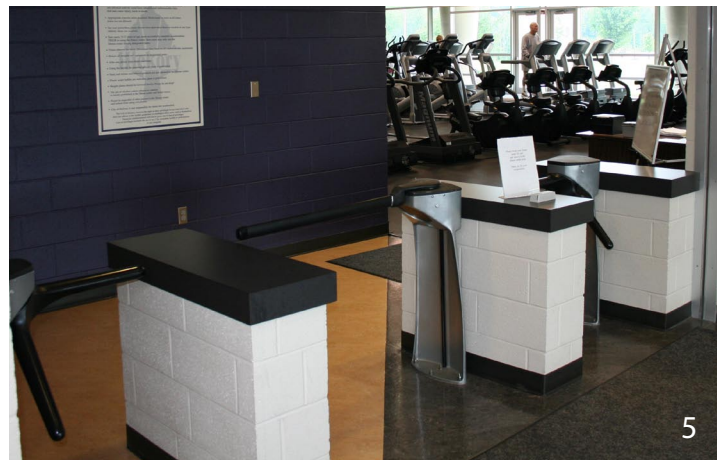
Estimated Cost: \$25,000.

- Inspect the roof to identify maintenance needs and repairs.

Estimated Cost: \$ 1,200 (Roof Inspection + Report)

- Energy Assessment: Engage consultant to assess mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and exterior envelope for potential energy savings and to provide a Life Cycle Cost Analysis for any recommended improvements.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000

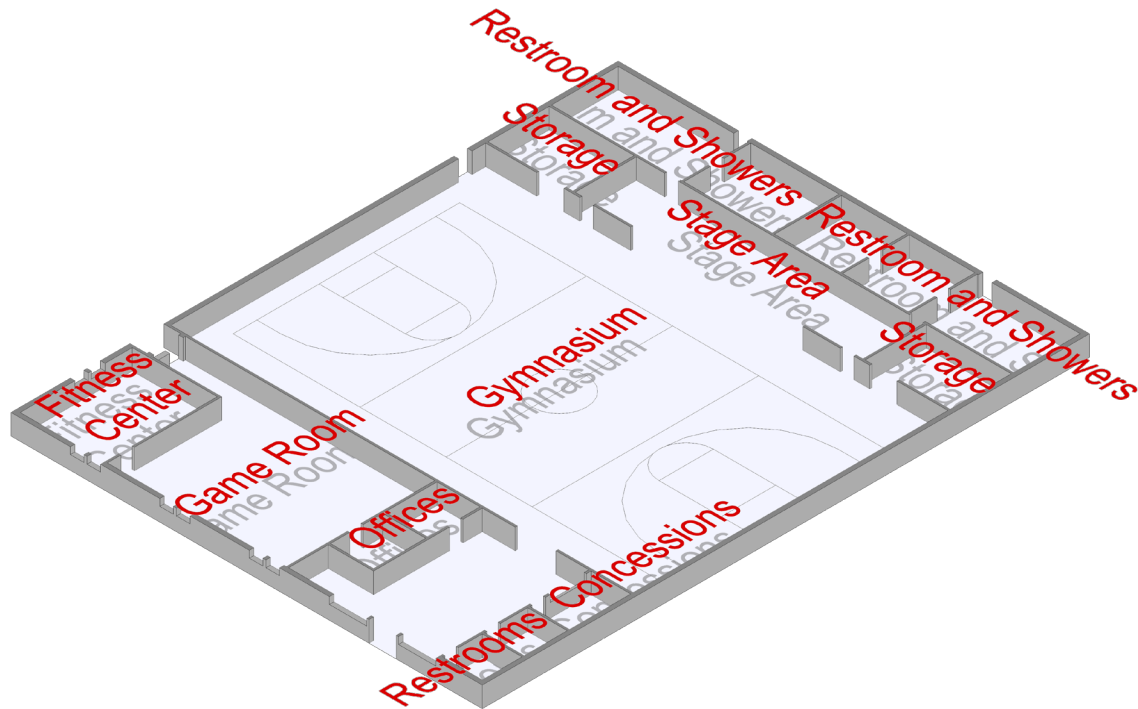


# NEILL CLARK GYM

3404 6th Street Drive NW Hickory NC 28601

Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Friday 1:00pm - 9:00pm Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm

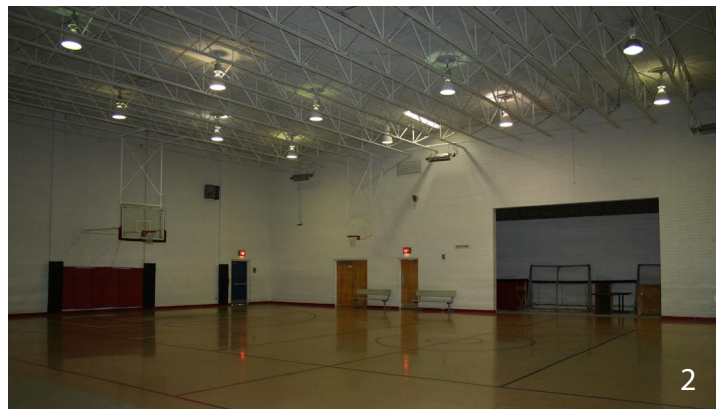


## Existing Conditions

The Neill Clark Gym was originally built as a library and gymnasium to support the main building of a small private school. The building is on one level and is 13,250 sf. The Center is a neighborhood destination for indoor recreation and fitness.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Gymnasium
  - Basketball
  - Indoor Soccer
  - Indoor Volleyball
- Fitness Center
  - Weight Training
- Game Room



## Observations

- The gym does not have air conditioning. Other spaces in the building are air conditioned.
- The exhaust fans in the ceiling of the gymnasium do not appear to be in use (see picture 3).
- Exit signs call out the restrooms as means of egress. This does not comply with current code. These signs would have to be removed and it would have to be evaluated whether additional exits would be required (see pictures 4 & 5).
- The restrooms at both the main entrance and behind the gym are not accessible.
- Needs new lighting in the gym. The interior lighting is scheduled to be replaced by Hickory P+R through a federal grant program.
- Gym floor covering needs to be replaced.
- No accessible access to facility from the parking lot nor main building (see picture 6).
- A new roof system was installed in 2004.



## Recommendations

- Renovate the restrooms to make them accessible and meet the current building code.

Estimated Cost: \$125,000

- Replace the gym floor covering.

Estimated Cost: \$75,000

- Repair the gym exhaust fans.

Estimated Cost: \$7,500

- Remove the exit signs on the toilets. The building code does not permit exiting through these toilets.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000

- Improve the side entrance to make it accessible. The current building code requires at least two accessible entrances. The front entrance is at grade and provides one of the accessible entrances.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500

- Improve the exterior walkways and adjacent parking area to provide an accessible route to the building and accessible parking spaces.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

- Energy Assessment: Engage consultant to assess mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and exterior envelope for potential energy savings and to provide



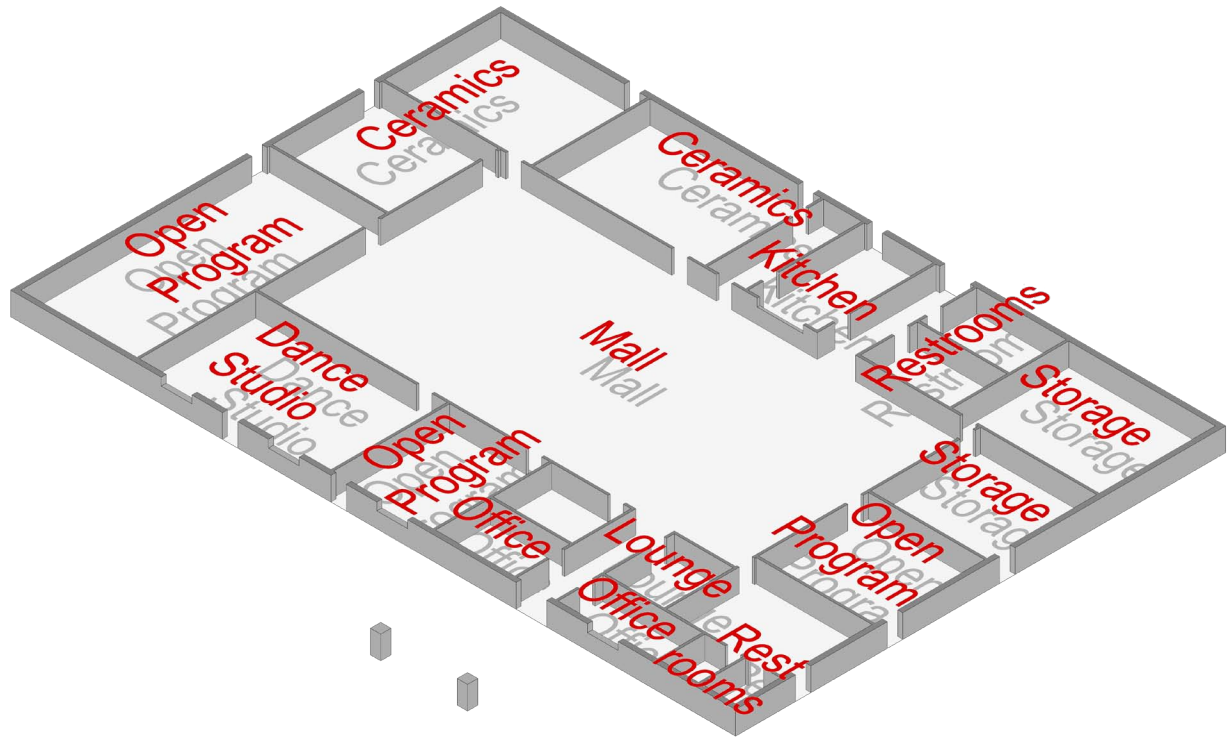
# NEILL CLARK MAIN

3404 6th Street Drive NW Hickory NC 28601

Hours of Operation

Monday - Thursday 1:00pm - 9:00pm

Friday 10:00am - 6:00pm



## Existing Conditions

The Neill Clark Main facility was originally built in the late 1960's as a small private school. The building is on one level and is 13,000 sf. The Center has multiple small program spaces, as well as, a large open area.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Community Room
- Ceramics Studio
- Dance Studio



The Center hosts for the following:

- Group Exercise
- Dance Classes

## Observations

- Many ballasts in the Mall were missing lens covers (see *picture 2*).
- There is no designated accessible parking.
- Rear entrance is not accessible (see *picture 3*).
- The interior lighting is scheduled to be replaced by Hickory P+R through a federal grant program.



## Recommendations

- Renovate the restrooms in the to make them accessible and meet the current building code. Additional floor space will be required.

Estimated Cost: \$75,000

- Improve the rear entrance to make it accessible. The current building code requires at least two accessible entrances. The front entrance is at grade and provides one of the accessible entrances.

Estimated Cost: \$2,500

- Improve the exterior walkways and adjacent parking area to provide an accessible route to the building and accessible parking spaces.

Estimated Cost: \$20,000

- Engage a roof consultant to inspect the roof to identify maintenance needs and repairs.

Estimated Cost: \$ 1,200 (Roof Inspection + Report)

- Energy Assessment: Engage consultant to assess mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and exterior envelope for potential energy savings and to provide a Life Cycle Cost Analysis for any recommended improvements.

Estimated Cost: \$3,500

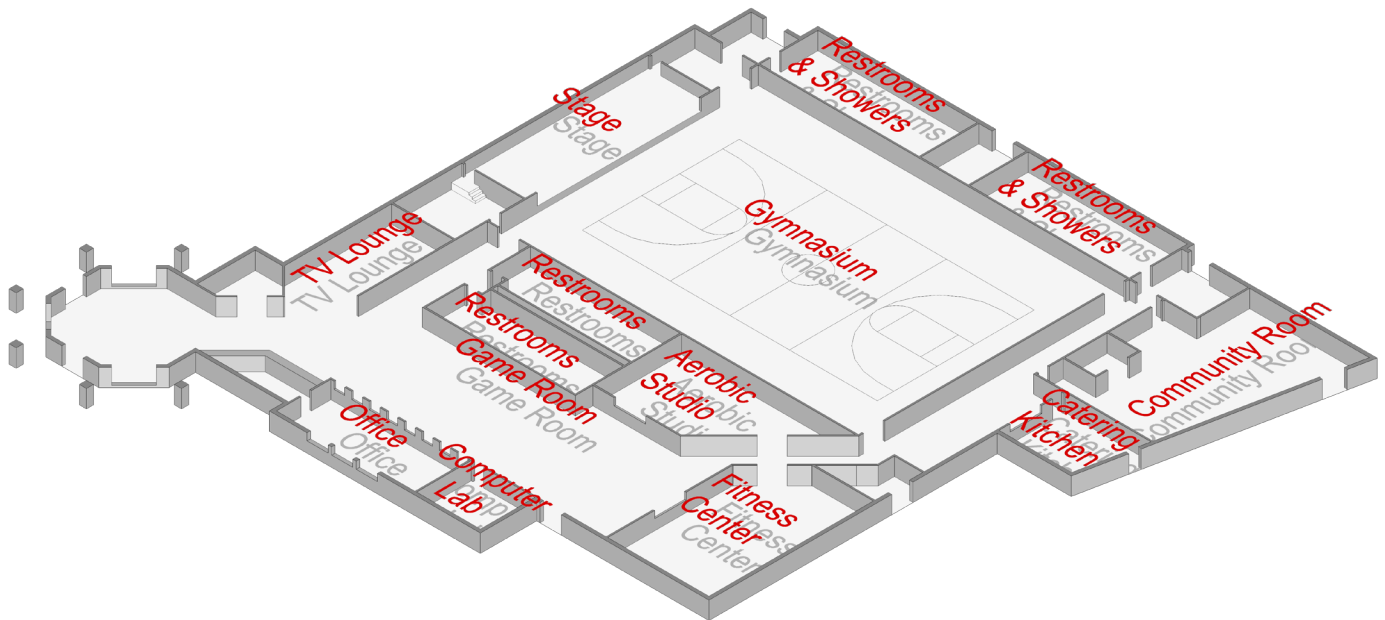


# RIDGEVIEW RECREATION CENTER

115 7th Avenue SW Hickory NC 28602

## Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday 1:00pm - 9:00pm Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm



## Existing Conditions

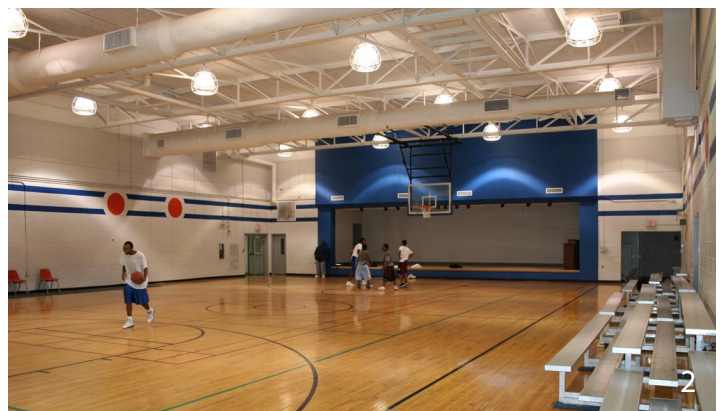
The Ridgeview Recreation Center was constructed in the early 1950's and an addition was completed in the 1960's. The Center was extensively renovated and remodeled in 2002.

The building is on one level and is 25,500 sf. The Center is a fitness and indoor recreation destination for the neighborhood.

The Center is built around the original gymnasium and includes an office for the program director, a multipurpose community room, a large game room, fitness center and aerobic studio, and catering kitchen.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Gymnasium
  - Basketball and Volleyball
- Aerobic Studio



- Fitness Center
  - Treadmill
  - Weight Training
- Game Room
- Community Room
- Outdoor Swimming Pool
- Shower and Locker Facilities
- TV Lounge

## Observations

- The commercial hood in the catering kitchen is not used.
- The gym floor has several areas that need repair.
- The Center is very close to the Brown Penn Recreation Center. While Brown Penn is oriented toward teens, many of the programs appear to be duplicated.

## Recommendations

- Replace the gym floor.
 

Estimated Cost: \$75,000
- Energy Assessment: Engage consultant to assess mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and exterior envelope for potential energy savings and to provide a Life Cycle Cost Analysis for any recommended improvements.

Estimated Cost: \$5,000



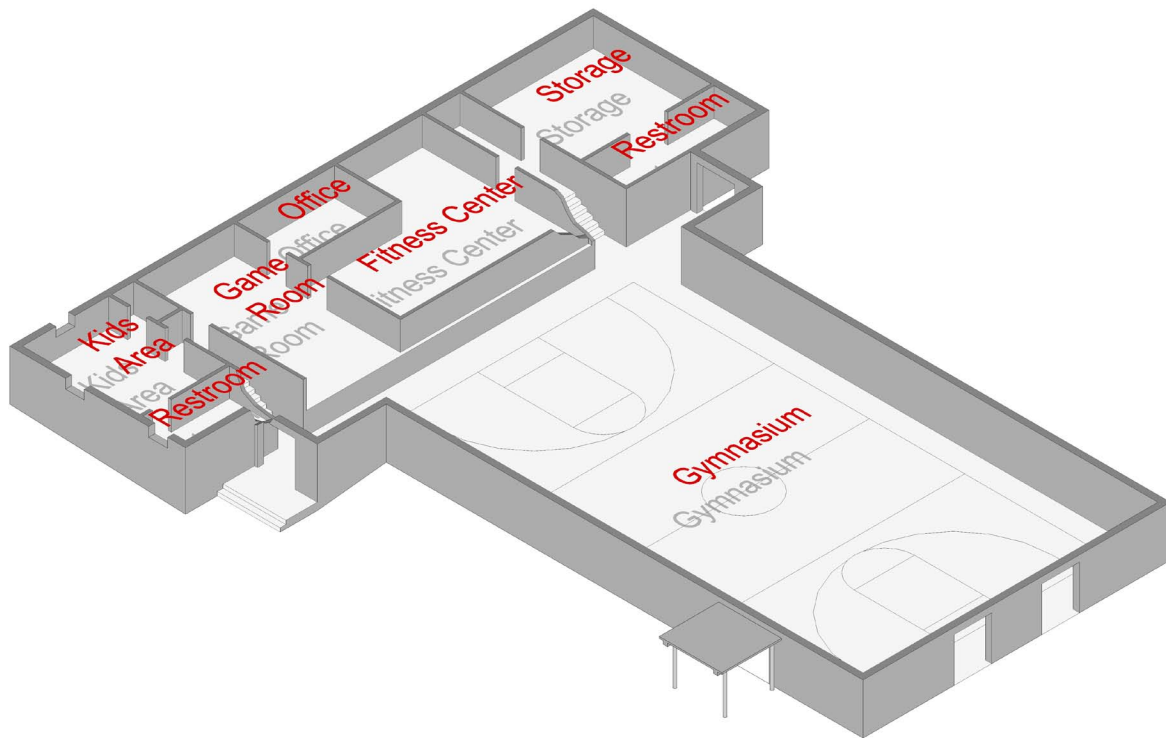


# WESTMONT RECREATION CENTER

1316 Main Avenue Drive NW Hickory NC 28601

## Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Friday 1:00pm - 9:00pm Saturday 10:00am - 6:00pm



## Existing Conditions

The Westmont Recreation Center was originally built as the gymnasium for Westmont School in the 1930's. Hickory P+R reopened the facility in the 1970's. The building is on one level and is 6,890 sf. The Center is a neighborhood destination for indoor recreation, fitness, and community activities.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Gymnasium
  - Basketball
  - Volleyball
- Fitness Center
  - Weight Training
- Game Room
- Kid's Room



## Observations

- Some entrances to facility are not accessible (see picture 2).
- No designated accessible parking.
- Access to half the building, including restrooms, are inaccessible (see picture 3).
- Observed structural crack in wall of gym that would need to be evaluated (see picture 4).



## Recommendations

- Renovate the restrooms to make them accessible and meet the current building code. Additional floor space will be required. It may prove to be more feasible to add an addition for the toilets.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000

- Add a wheelchair lift for access or ramp to the old stage level (now used for the fitness center , game room etc).

Estimated Cost: \$15,000 lift)

- Improve two of the entrances to make them accessible. The current building code requires at least two accessible entrances.

Estimated Cost: \$15,000

- Improve the exterior walkways and adjacent parking area to provide an accessible route to the building and accessible parking spaces.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

- Engage a roof consultant to inspect the roof to identify maintenance needs and repairs.

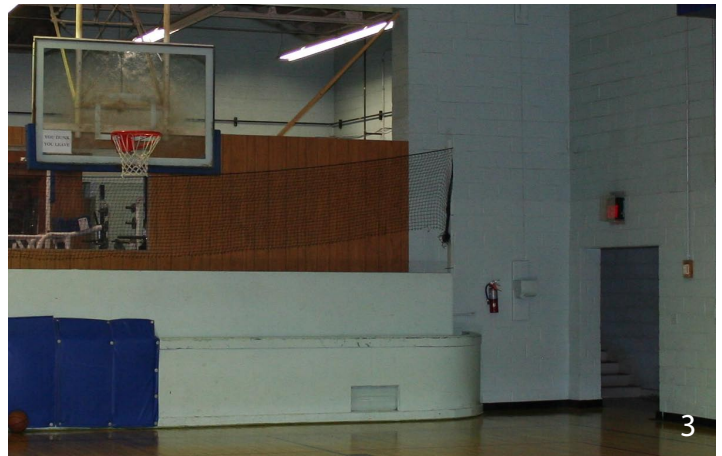
Estimated Cost: \$ 1,200 (Roof Inspection + Report)

- Engage a structural consultant to inspect the cracks in the exterior masonry walls.

Estimated Cost: \$ 2,000 (Inspection + Report)

- Energy Assessment: Engage consultant to assess mechanical equipment, electrical systems, and exterior envelope for potential energy savings and to provide a Life Cycle Cost Analysis for any recommended improvements.

Estimated Cost: \$3,500

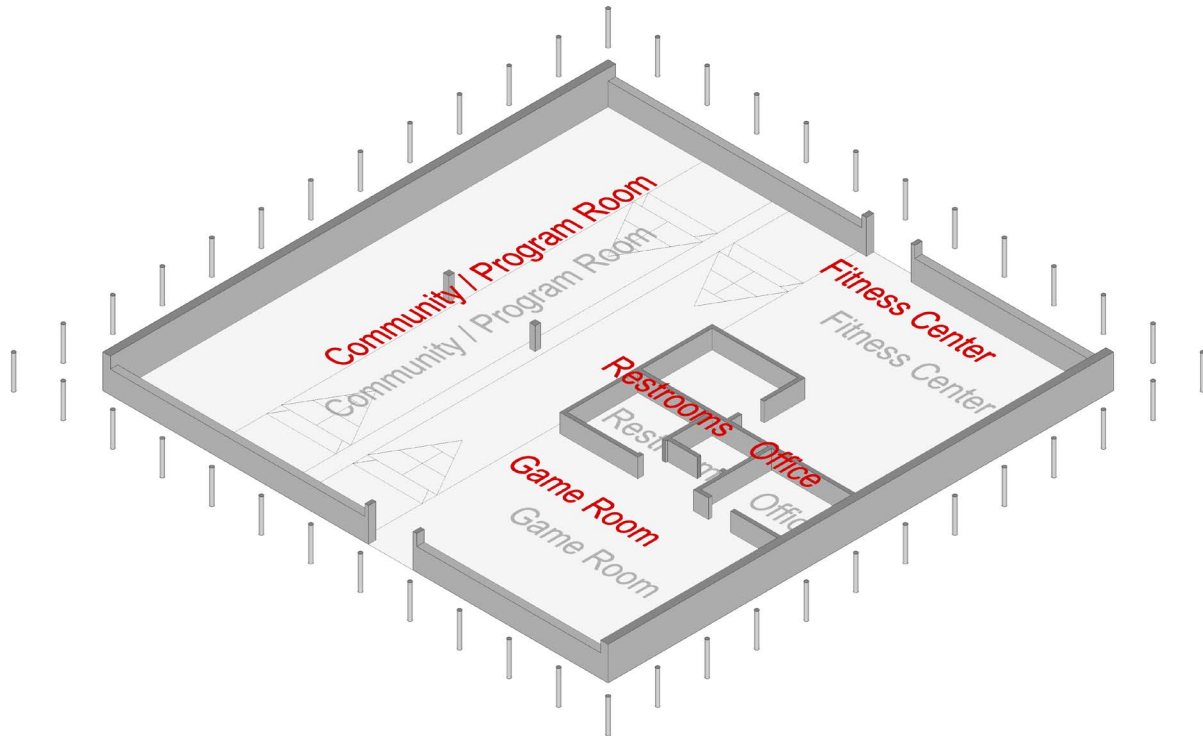


# WESTMONT SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

1316 Main Avenue Drive NW Hickory NC 28601

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm



## Existing Conditions

The Westmont Senior Citizens Center was originally built as the cafeteria for Westmont School in the 1930's. Hickory P+R reopened the facility in the 1970's. The building is on one level and is 4,624 sf. The Center is a neighborhood destination for indoor recreation, fitness, and community activities for seniors.

The following recreation and fitness opportunities are available:

- Fitness Center
  - Treadmills
  - Weight Training
- Community / Game Room
  - Billiards
  - Shuffleboard



## Observations

- No accessible route to the building from parking lot.
- No designated accessible parking.
- The number of restrooms does not meet current building code requirements - accessible facilities for each sex are required.

## Recommendations

- Renovate the restrooms for accessibility and compliance with current building codes.

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

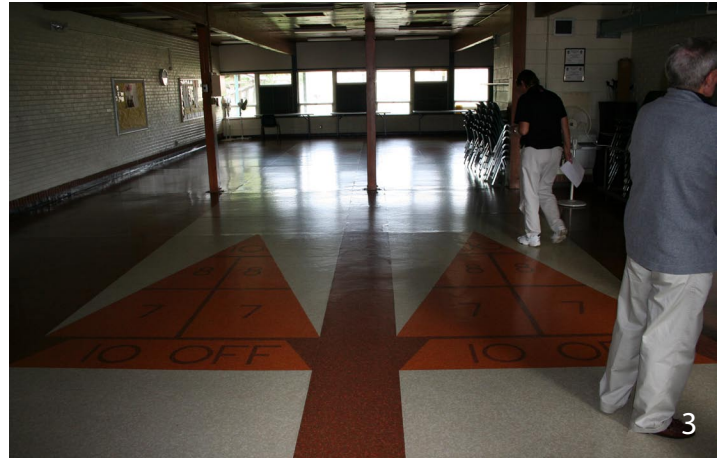
- Improve the exterior walkways and adjacent parking area to provide an accessible route to the building and accessible parking spaces.

Estimated Cost: \$150,000

- Engage a roof consultant to inspect the roof to identify maintenance needs and repairs.

Estimated Cost: \$ 1,200 (Roof Inspection + Report)

- Engage an environmental consultant to inspect the



Name	Acreage	Adult Baseball	Youth Baseball	Youth Softball	Men's Softball	Women's Softball	Batting Cages	Soccer	Football	Multi-purpose	Basketball	Tennis	Volleyball	Shuffleboard	Horseshoe	Playgrounds	Picnic Shelters	Trail/Greenway	Water Access	Amphitheatre	Camp Sites	Swimming Pool/Splash Pad	Dog Park	Skate Park	Restrooms/Concessions	Disc Golf	Ropes Course	Recreation Center	Gym	Senior Center			
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>																																	
Civitan Park	7.5			1	1				1		1	2				1	1							1 R/C									
Cliff Teague Park	8.1										1	1			Y	2								1 R									
Fairbrook Optimist	6.7				1											1								1 R/C									
Hickory City Park	15										8						1	1.50						1 R									
Hickory Optimist Park	6		1								1	1			Y	1	1							1 R/C									
Jaycee Park	5		1				1				1					7								1 R/C									
Southside Heights Park	12.7									1	1					1	1																
Taft Broome Park	9.6									1	2	2			Y	2	2					1		1 R/C			2		1				
West Hickory Park	5.6										0.5					1						1		1 R/C									
Westmont Recreation Center	3										1	2	2	2	Y	1										1		1					
Total Neighborhood Park Acreage	79.2	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	2	8.5	16	0	2	17	6	1.50	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	8	0	0	3	0	2			
<b>Community Parks</b>																																	
Kiwanis Park	16		3	1			2				1	1	1		Y	2	2	0.27						3R/2C									
Neill W. Clark Jr. Rec Park	22.73							4			2			2	Y	1											1	1					
Stanford Park	36.96										1					2	1	0.58					1	1 R/C			1						
Total Community Park Acreage	75.69	0	3	1	3	0	2	4	0	4	4	1	1	2	5	3	0.85	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	2	1	0				
<b>Regional Parks</b>																																	
Geitner/Rotary Park	96														Y	1	0.22	Y						1 R									
Glenn C. Hilton Jr. Memorial Park	70.5												1		Y	6	5	2.78	Y					1 R									
Henry Fork River Regional Rec Park	45							7							Y	2	1	1.10	Y				2										
Winkler Park	50	1													Y	7	1	0.28							1 R								
Total Regional Park Acreage	261.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	1	0	15	8	4.38	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1	1	1	0	0	0			

Name	Acreage	Adult Baseball	Youth Baseball	Youth Softball	Men's Softball	Women's Softball	Batting Cages	Soccer	Football	Multi-purpose	Basketball	Tennis	Volleyball	Shuffleboard	Horseshoe	Playgrounds	Picnic Shelters	Trail/Greenway	Water Access	Amphitheatre	Camp Sites	Swimming Pool/Splash Pad	Dog Park	Skate Park	Restrooms/Concessions	Disc Golf	Ropes Course	Recreation Center	Gym	Senior Center	
<b>Civic Parks/Gardens</b>																															
Carolina Park/Ivey Arboretum	4.6																														
Highland Park	2																														
McComb Park	2.5																														
Robinson Park	1.5																														
Shuford Gardens	0.9																														
Viewmont Park	0.3																														
<b>Total Civic Parks/Gardens Acreage</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>School Facilities</b>																															
Hickory High School Track																															
Old Grandview Middle School																															1
Old College Park Middle School																															1
Viewmont Elementary School																															1
Oakwood Elementary School																															1
Jenkins Elementary School																															1
Hickory High School *									1																						1
Northview Middle School *																															1
New Grandview Middle School *																															1
		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>428.19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6.73</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	
* These school facilities are utilized for special occasions only and their facilities are not reflected in the total number of facilities in this inventory.																															

Building	Square Footage	Gymnasium	Game Room	Community Room	Shower and Locker Facilities	Raised Stage	Kitchen	Lounge	Aerobic Studio	Fitness Center	Spin Room	Indoor Playground	Dance Studio	Ceramics Studio	Computer Lab	Outdoor Swimming Pool	Kid's Room
<b>Recreation Centers/Gymnasiums</b>																	
Brown Penn Recreation Center/ Gymnasium	9728	1	1	1		1											
Highland Recreation Center/Gymnasium	40250	1	1	1	Y		1		1	1	1	1					
Neill Clark Gymnasium	14000	1	1		Y					1							
Ridgeview Recreation Center/Gymnasium	25,500	1	1	1	Y	1	1	1	1	1					1	1	
Westmont Recreation Center/Gymnasium	6890	1	1							1							1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>96368</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Recreation Center w/out Gymnasium</b>																	
Neill Clark Main	13630			1			1	1					1	1			
Geitner Building	1273			1			1										
Winkler Activity Center	2046			1			1										
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16949</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Senior Citizens Center</b>																	
Brown Penn Senior Citizens Center	2560			1			1	1									
Westmont Senior Citizens Center	4624			1			1			1							
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7184</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>120501</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

# Existing Facilities

Parks and Recreation Department  
 Hickory, North Carolina  
 January 26, 2010

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS (1 MILE RADIUS)

- 1 CIVITAN PARK
- 2 CLIFF TEAGUE PARK
- 3 FAIRBROOK OPTIMIST PARK
- 4 HICKORY CITY PARK
- 5 HICKORY OPTIMIST PARK
- 6 JAYCEE PARK
- 7 SOUTHSIDE HEIGHTS PARK
- 8 TAFT BROOME PARK
- 9 WEST HICKORY PARK
- 10 WESTMONT RECREATION CENTER
- 11 ST. STEPHENS PARK (CATAWBA COUNTY)

## COMMUNITY PARKS (2.5 MILE RADIUS)

- 12 KIWANIS PARK
- 13 NEILL W. CLARK JR. RECREATION PARK
- 14 STANFORD PARK

## REGIONAL PARKS (5 MILE RADIUS)

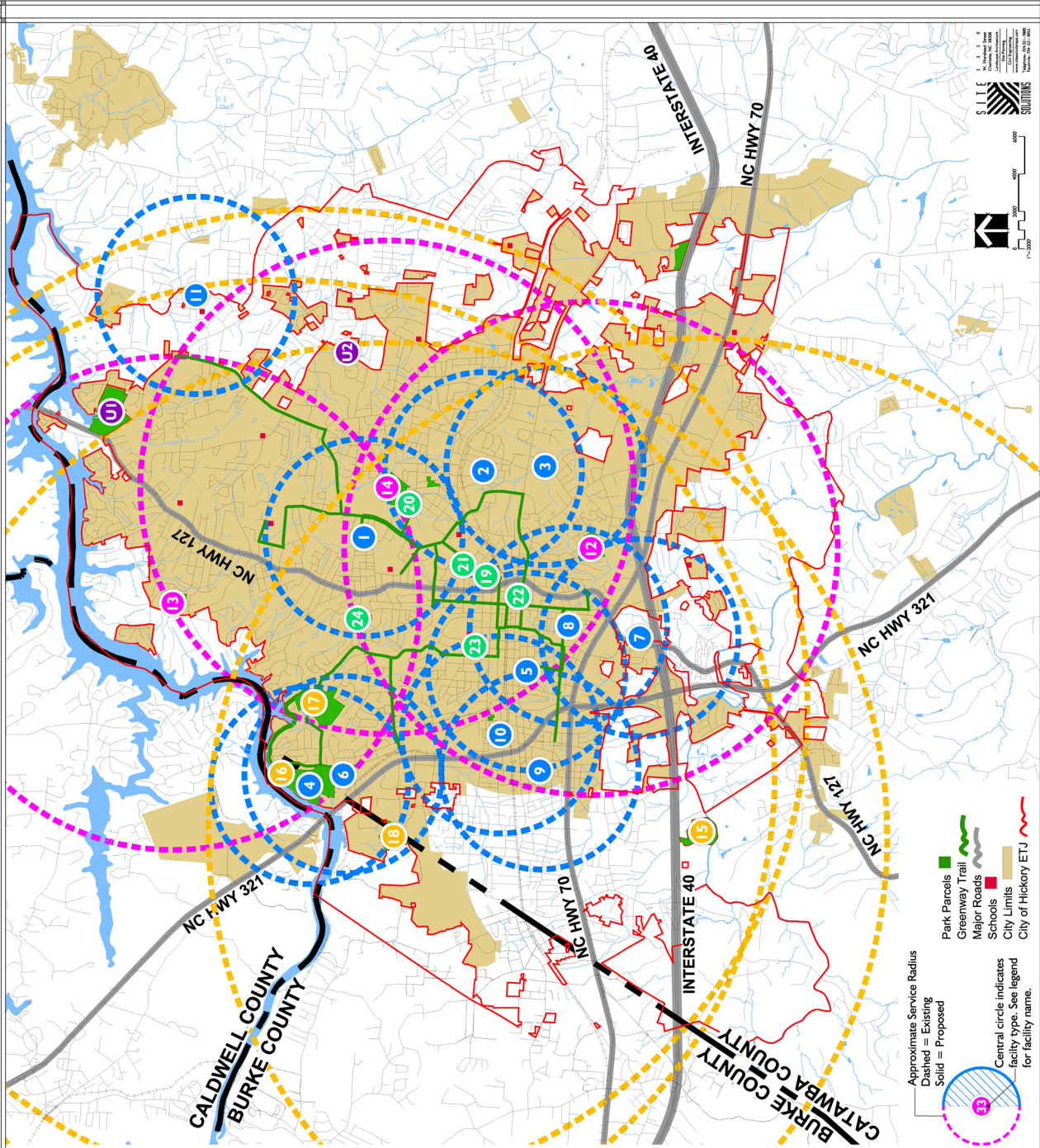
- 15 HENRY FORK RIVER REGIONAL RECREATION PARK
- 16 GEITNER / ROTARY PARK
- 17 GLENN C. HILTON JR. MEMORIAL PARK
- 18 WINKLER PARK

## GARDENS & CIVIC PARKS

- 19 CAROLINA PARK / VEY ARBORETUM
- 20 HIGHLAND PARK
- 21 MCCOMB PARK
- 22 ROBINSON PARK
- 23 SHUFORD GARDENS
- 24 VIEWMONT PARK

## UNDEVELOPED PARKS

- 25 CLONINGER MILL PARK
- 26 SANDY PINES PROPERTY



Approximate Service Radius  
 Dashed = Existing  
 Solid = Proposed

- Park Parcels
- Greenway/Trail
- Major Roads
- Schools
- City Limits
- City of Hickory ETJ

Central circle indicates facility type. See legend for facility name.

**SITE SOLUTIONS**  
 2000 S. W. 10th Street  
 Hickory, NC 28601  
 Phone: 704.325.1000  
 Fax: 704.325.1001  
 Website: www.site-solutions.com





# Existing Facilities: Neighborhood Parks

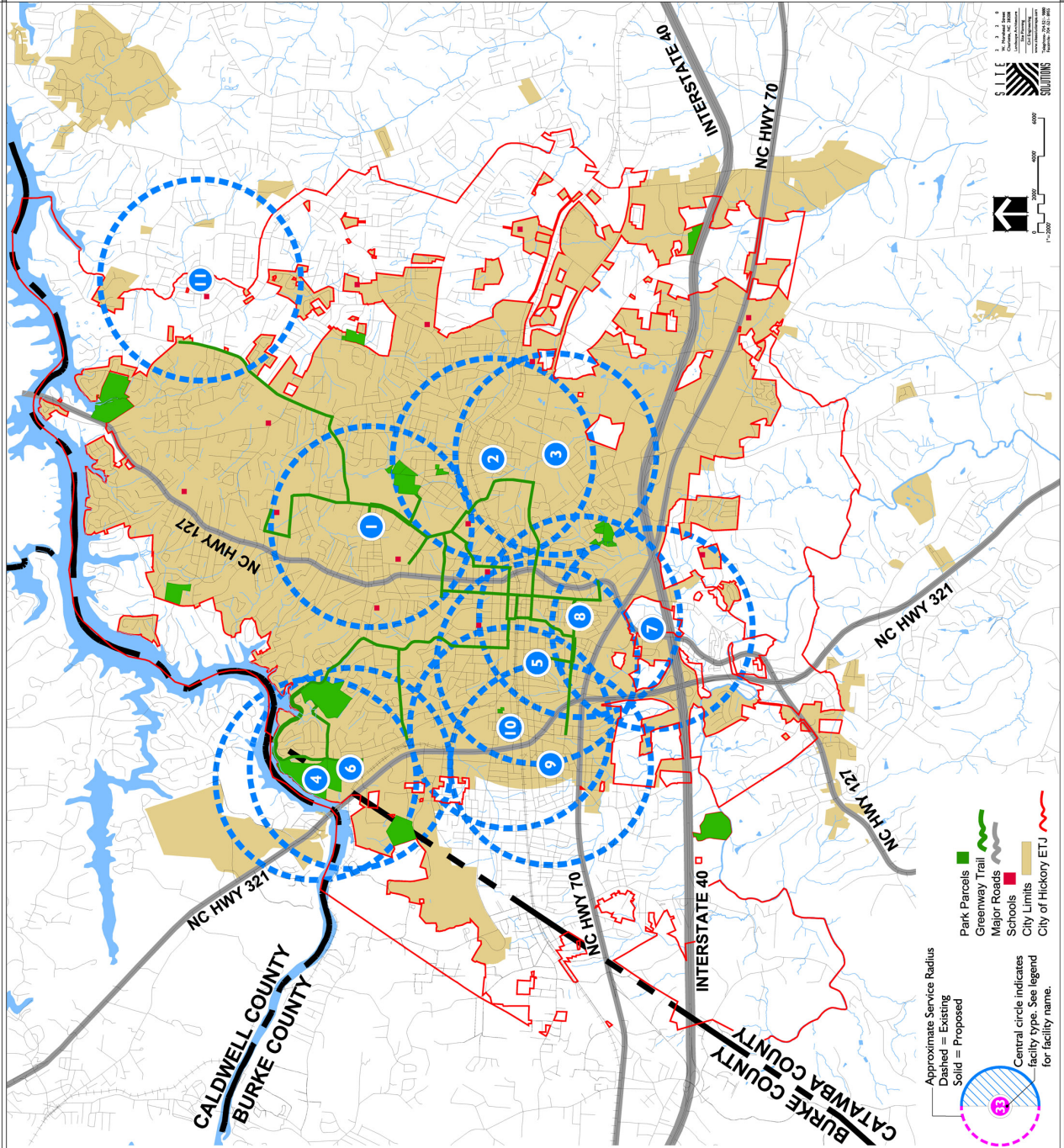
Parks and Recreation Department

Hickory, North Carolina

January 26, 2010

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS (1 MILE RADIUS)

- 1 CIVITAN PARK
- 2 CLIFF TEAGUE PARK
- 3 FAIRBROOK OPTIMIST PARK
- 4 HICKORY CITY PARK
- 5 HICKORY OPTIMIST PARK
- 6 JAYCEE PARK
- 7 SOUTHSIDE HEIGHTS PARK
- 8 TAFT BROOME PARK
- 9 WEST HICKORY PARK
- 10 WESTMONT RECREATION CENTER
- 11 ST. STEPHENS PARK (CATAWBA COUNTY)

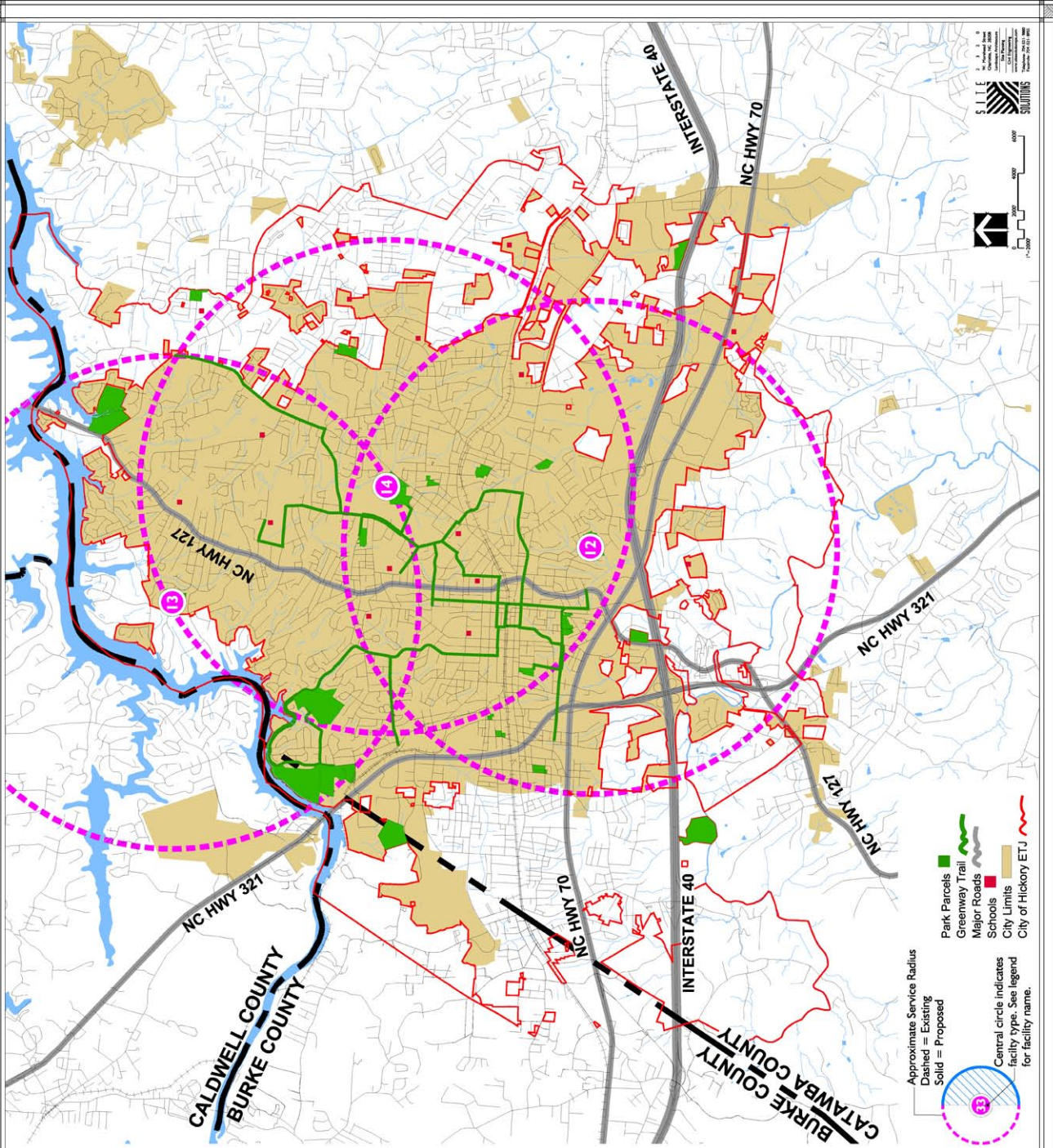


# Existing Facilities: Community Parks

Parks and Recreation Department  
Hickory, North Carolina  
January 26, 2010

## COMMUNITY PARKS (2.5 MILE RADIUS)

- 12 KIWANIS PARK
- 13 NEILL W. CLARK JR. RECREATION PARK
- 14 STANFORD PARK



SITE  
DATE: 01/26/10  
DRAWN BY: J. B. BROWN  
CHECKED BY: J. B. BROWN  
APPROVED BY: J. B. BROWN  
SCALE: 1" = 2000'  
PROJECT: HICKORY CITY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
DATE: 01/26/10



Approximate Service Radius  
Dashed = Existing  
Solid = Proposed

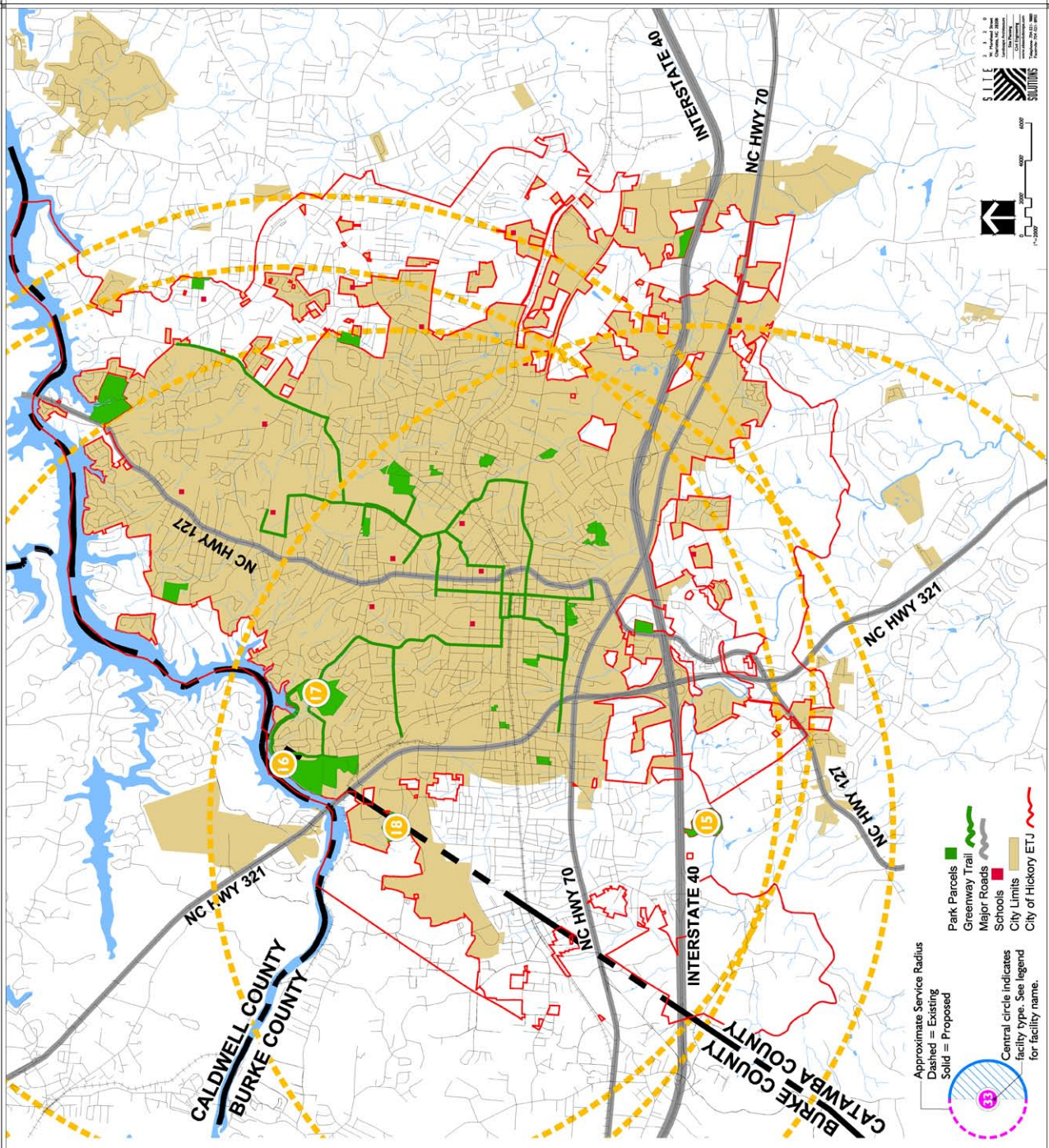
Central circle indicates facility type. See legend for facility name.

Park Parcels  
Greenway Trail  
Major Roads  
Schools  
City Limits  
City of Hickory ETJ

# Existing Facilities: Regional Parks







Parks and Recreation Department  
Hickory, North Carolina  
January 26, 2010

- REGIONAL PARKS (5 MILE RADIUS)**
-  HENRY FORK RIVER REGIONAL RECREATION PARK
  -  GETTNER / ROTARY PARK
  -  GLENN C. HILTON JR. MEMORIAL PARK
  -  WINKLER PARK



**Approximate Service Radius**  
 Dashed = Existing  
 Solid = Proposed

**Central circle indicates facility type. See legend for facility name.**

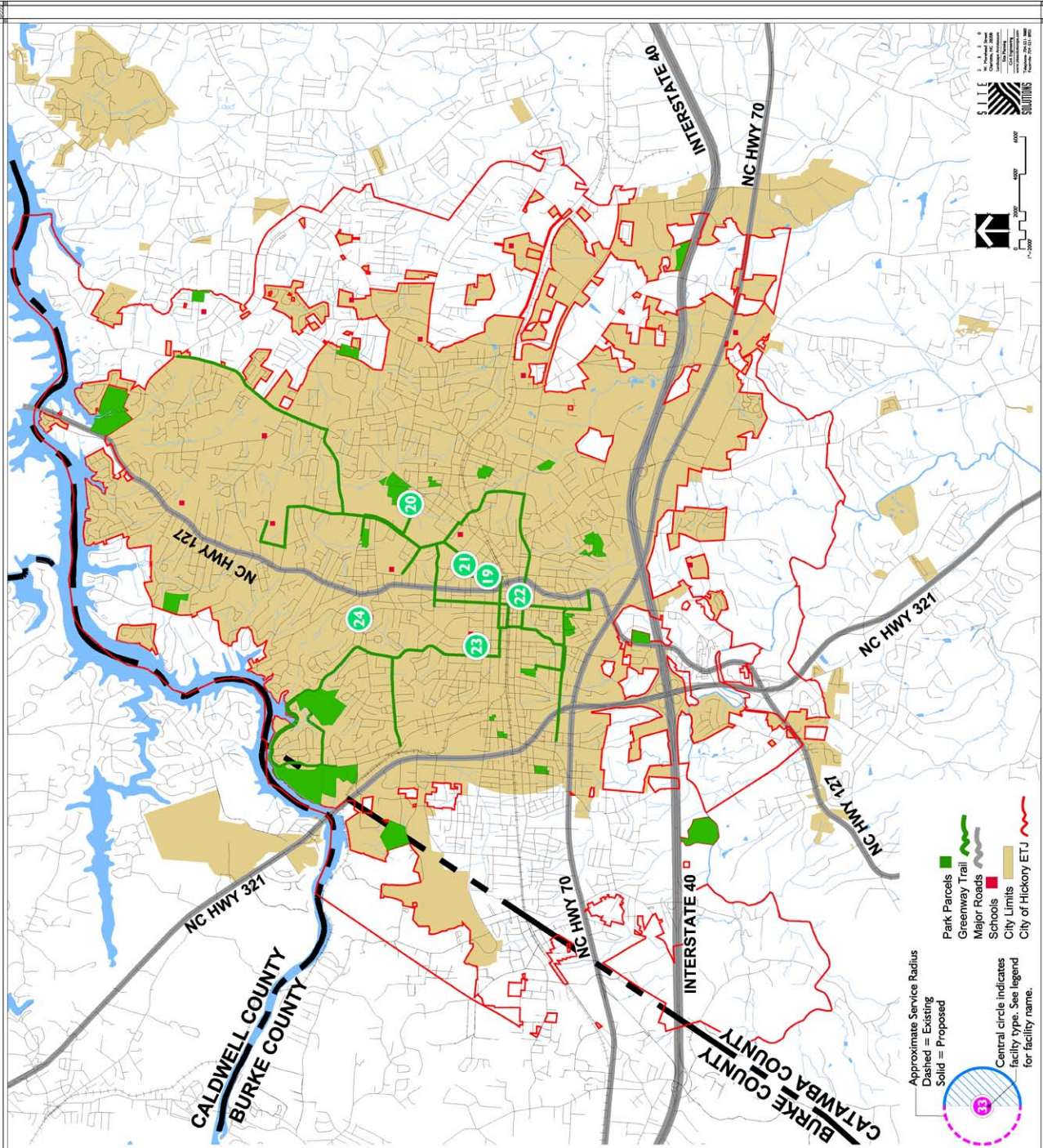
-  Park Parcels
-  Greenway Trail
-  Major Roads
-  Schools
-  City Limits
-  City of Hickory ETJ

# Existing Facilities: Gardens & Civic Parks

Parks and Recreation Department  
Hickory, North Carolina  
January 26, 2010

## GARDENS & CIVIC PARKS

- 19 CAROLINA PARK / IVEY ARBORETUM
- 20 HIGHLAND PARK
- 21 MCCOMB PARK
- 22 ROBINSON PARK
- 23 SHUFORD GARDENS
- 24 VIEWMONT PARK



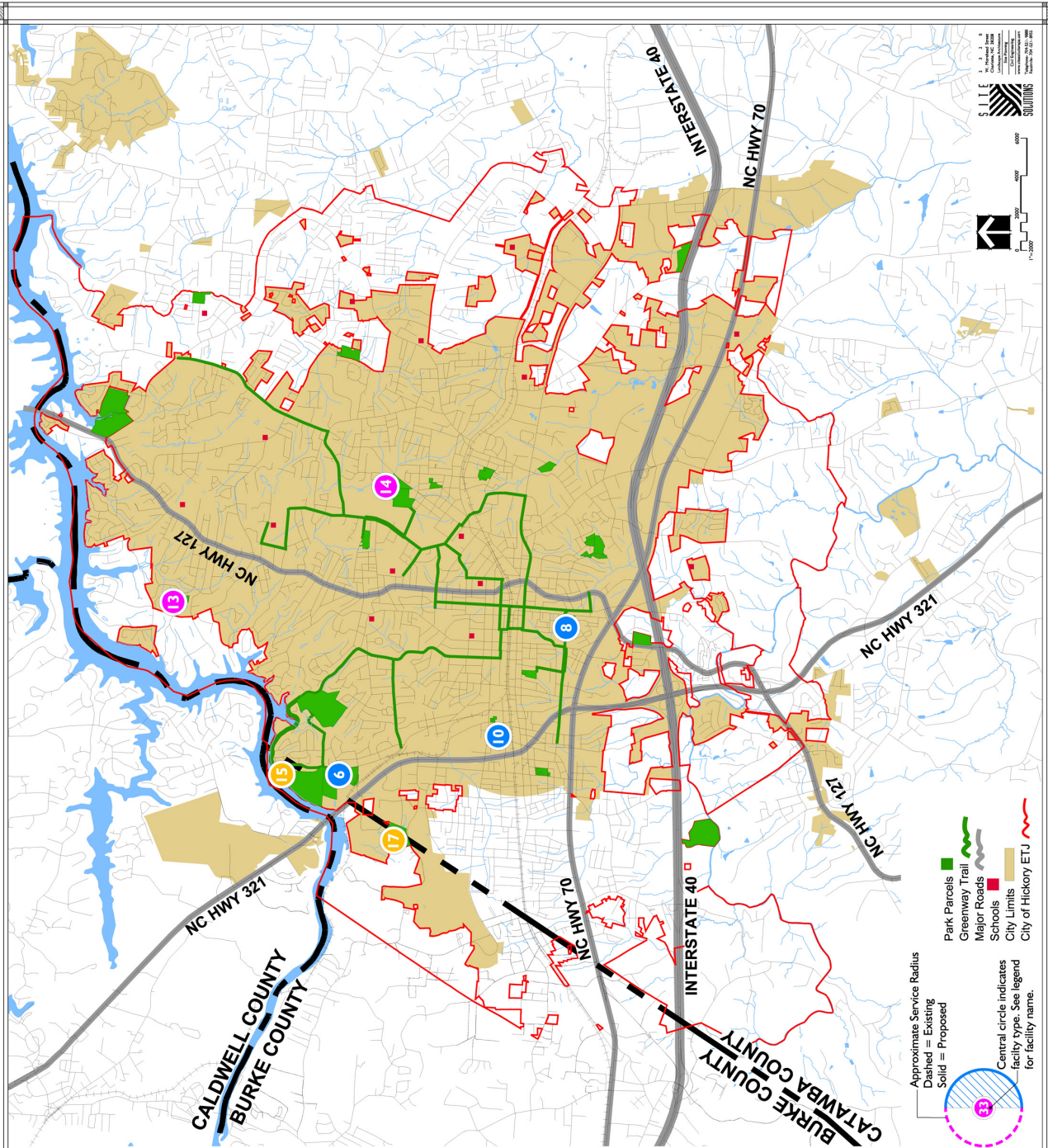


# Existing Buildings

Parks and Recreation Department  
 Hickory, North Carolina  
 January 26, 2010

## BUILDING LOCATIONS

- 6 JAYCEE PARK
  - JAYCEE CENTER
- 8 TAFT BROOME PARK
  - BROWN PENN RECREATION CENTER
  - BROWN PENN SENIOR CENTER
  - RIDGEVIEW RECREATION CENTER
- 10 WESTMONT RECREATION CENTER
  - WESTMONT RECREATION CENTER
  - WESTMONT SENIOR CENTER
- 12 NEILL W. CLARK JR. RECREATION PARK
  - NEILL CLARK GYM
  - NEILL CLARK MAIN
- 14 STANFORD PARK
  - HIGHLAND RECREATION CENTER
- 15 GEITNER / ROTARY PARK
  - GEITNER BUILDING
- 17 WINKLER PARK
  - WINKLER ACTIVITY CENTER



Approximate Service Radius  
 Dashed = Existing  
 Solid = Proposed

Park Parcels  
 Greenway Trail  
 Major Roads  
 Schools  
 City Limits  
 City of Hickory ETJ

Central circle indicates facility type. See legend for facility name.

Section Two  
Recreation Standards and Needs Assessment



*Playground at West Hickory Park*

## Section Two

# Recreation Standards and Needs Assessment

### Introduction

This section contains the analysis and assessment on which the recommendations of this Needs Assessment is based. It begins with a brief history of previous planning efforts conducted by the City of Hickory, and how the documents developed from these studies have shaped the current system. Next, we review how other communities are working to provide park and recreation facilities to their constituents, and national and state trends in park and recreation preferences. This review of previous planning studies and similar agencies is followed by a description of the park types that typically make up a park system. Using these park types as a backdrop, national and state standards are reviewed and used as a basis for establishing standards for park development for Hickory.

Standards quoted in this study are based on those proposed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR), and established in previous Master Plan studies. It should be noted that the NRPA, in its 1995 report “Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines”, determined there are no “national standards” for park development. Instead, the latest NRPA study recommends that each community is unique, and that standards reflecting



the local “uniqueness” should be established. With this understanding, this Needs Assessment uses a combination of local standards to evaluate the City’s current system and to establish goals to meet future growth.

This study looks at two types of park standards. The first analysis looks at total acreage of parkland within the system and how this acreage is broken into park types. From this study it is possible to see how Hickory’s existing parks compare with other communities, both in overall park acreage and park types within this overall acreage.

The second analysis looks at recreation activities and the facilities required to program these activities. By establishing a population-based standard for various recreation activities, this study establishes the type and quantity of facilities the Department should develop in the future.

The design standards used in this study were derived from previous plans, consultant recommendations, and input from the Recreation and Parks Department staff. The development of these standards is perhaps the most important step in this planning process.

## Previous Planning Efforts

### 1997 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The City completed its first park master plan in 1979. In 1997 the City went through a similar planning process to develop an updated comprehensive master plan. Much like the process undertaken for this planning effort, the 1997 plan included a detailed inventory of existing facilities, compared the City’s facilities with national standards for parks and recreation facilities, and from this comparison developed a needs assessment. The City’s population in 1997 was 32,000. The study projected the City’s 2010 population to be 41,500, slightly higher than today’s current population.

Recommendations found in the 1997 plan included:

- Development of a new recreation center at Stanford Park

- Expansion of Stanford Park into a district park
- Development of a district-serving outdoor pool at Stanford Park
- Renovations to Ridgeview Center
- New departmental offices
- Replacement of park maintenance offices
- Cooperative efforts by the local YMCA, school system, and county governments should be made to coordinate recreation programs
- Development of a regional soccer complex
- Expansion of passive recreation opportunities, including Cloninger Mill Park
- Development of two new neighborhood parks (including Sandy Pines)

A review of the recommendations in the 1997 plan finds that many of the specified park improvements/expansions have been completed.

### 2000 Sidewalk, Bikeway, Greenway, and Trail Master Plan (2005 Updated)

In 2005, the City updated its Master Plan for Sidewalks, Bikeways, Greenways, and Trails. The 2005 plan recognized the growing popularity and importance of walking, jogging, and biking. The 2005 plan identified a network of bikeways, greenways, and trails. In all, the 2005 plan identified 34 potential greenway projects with over 46 miles of greenways.



*The 1997 plan recommended the development of a regional soccer complex.*

## National and State Studies on Outdoor Recreation Demand

Surveys designed to determine the demand for outdoor recreation have been conducted on the Federal level by the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors, the State of North Carolina, and various other organizations and associations. The following summarizes their findings:



*Walking typically ranks high as an outdoor recreation activity.*

### President's Commission

The President's Commission Report indicated the following significant facts:

The top ten outdoor recreation activities nationwide are as follows:

Picnicking	Playing sports
Driving for pleasure	Fishing
Swimming	Attending sporting events
Sightseeing	Boating
Bicycling	Walking for pleasure

Activities rapidly growing in popularity include:

Canoeing	Sailing
Bicycling	Hiking/backpacking
Attending outdoor sports	Walking for pleasure
Camping, all types	Water skiing

The local levels (cities and counties) of the nation are providing 39% of the public recreation opportunities.

### North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Survey

The North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Survey provides an indication of the most popular outdoor recreation activities in the state. These activities include:

1. Walking for pleasure
2. Driving for pleasure
3. Viewing scenery
4. Beach activities
5. Visiting historical sites
6. Swimming
7. Visiting natural areas
8. Picnicking
9. Attending sports events
10. Visiting zoos



*Canoeing is an activity that is rapidly growing in popularity.*

### National Sporting Goods Association Survey

The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) conducts an annual study of sports participation. The survey lists the following top 30 activities per million participants. A participant is defined as someone seven years of age or older who participates in a sport more than once within a year for all sports except aerobic exercising, bicycle riding, exercise walking, exercising with equipment, running/jogging, step aerobics, weight lifting, and swimming. For these seven fitness sports, participation is defined as six times or more during the year. The following information reviews the findings for the past ten years.

## Ten-Year History of Selected Sports Participation

<b>Sport</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1998</b>
Aerobic Exercising	36.2	na	29.5	29.0	26.7	25.8
Archery (target)	na	na	5.3	4.2	4.5	4.8
Backpack/Wilderness Camp	13.0	13.3	17.3	14.8	15.4	14.6
Baseball	15.2	14.6	15.9	15.6	15.6	15.9
Basketball	29.7	26.7	27.8	28.9	27.1	29.4
Bicycle Riding	44.7	35.6	40.3	39.7	43.1	43.5
Billiards/Pool	31.7	31.8	34.2	33.1	32.5	32.3
Boating, Motor/Power	27.8	29.3	22.8	26.6	24.2	25.7
Bowling	49.5	44.8	43.8	42.4	43.1	40.1
Camping (vacation/overnight)	49.4	48.6	55.3	55.4	49.9	46.5
Canoeing	10.3	7.1	7.5	7.6	6.2	7.1
Cheerleading	2.9	3.8	3.8	na	na	3.1
Exercise Walking	96.6	87.5	84.7	82.2	81.3	77.6
Exercising with Equipment	63.0	52.4	52.2	46.8	44.8	46.1
Fishing	42.2	40.6	41.2	44.2	47.2	43.6
Football (tackle)	10.5	10.1	8.2	7.8	8.0	8.1
Football (touch)	na	na	9.6	10.3	9.8	10.8
Golf	25.6	24.4	24.5	27.1	26.4	27.5
Hiking	38.0	31.0	28.3	27.2	24.3	27.2
Hunting with Firearms	18.8	19.9	17.7	19.5	19.1	17.3
Hunting w/Bow & Arrow	6.2	5.9	5.8	4.6	4.7	5.6
In-line Roller Skating	9.3	10.5	11.7	18.8	21.8	27.0
Kayaking/Rafting	na	na	na	na	3.1	3.2
Mountain Biking (off road)	10.2	8.5	8.0	7.8	7.1	8.6
Muzzleloading	3.4	3.7	3.8	3.6	2.9	3.1
Paintball Games	6.7	8.0	9.4	6.9	5.3	na
Running/Jogging	35.9	28.8	24.7	24.7	22.8	22.5
Sailing	na	na	2.6	na	2.5	3.6
Skateboarding	9.8	9.7	10.3	9.7	9.1	5.8
Skiing (alpine)	6.5	6.4	5.9	7.4	7.4	7.7
Skiing (cross country)	1.6	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.3	2.6
Snowboarding	5.9	5.2	6.6	5.6	4.3	3.6
Soccer	15.5	14.0	13.3	13.7	12.9	13.2
Softball	12.8	12.4	12.5	13.6	14.0	15.6
Swimming	63.5	56.5	53.4	53.1	58.8	58.2
Yoga	16.0	na	na	na	na	na
Target Shooting	20.3	19.1	19.2	18.9	16.9	18.9
Tennis	12.6	10.4	9.6	11.0	10.0	11.2
Volleyball	12.2	11.1	10.8	11.5	12.3	14.8
Water Skiing	5.6	6.3	4.7	6.9	5.9	7.2
Weight Lifting	37.5	32.9	26.2	25.1	22.8	na
Workout at Club	39.3	34.9	31.8	28.9	24.1	26.5

SOURCE: National Sporting Goods Association, Mt Prospect, IL 60056

# Classifications For Parks, Open Space And Greenways

A comprehensive park system is made up of a variety of park types that range from very large regional parks (often encompassing hundreds of acres) to very small mini parks (sometimes less than one acre). The descriptions on the following pages define the parks that should make up a comprehensive park system. A variety of agencies (federal, state, county, and municipal) play a role in providing this system. Each agency takes responsibility for one or more park types. To understand the role of each agency, the make up of a comprehensive park and recreation system must be understood.

The following sheets describe the various park types:

## Regional Parks/Nature Preserves

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

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

Specific standards/criteria for developing regional parks are as follows:

Service Area:	Countywide
Acreage/Population Ratio:	5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	Sufficient area to encompass the resources to be preserved and managed. Typically a minimum of 100 acres; up to 1,000 acres.

### Typical Facilities:

Environmental Center	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Equestrian Center	Restrooms/Vending
Primitive Camping	Beach
Group Camping	Swimming
Recreational Vehicles Camping	Boating
Nature Trails	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks
Observation Deck	Parking
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Caretaker's House

Regional parks are typically provided by federal, state, or county agencies, but may also be provided by large municipal agencies.



Varies

Typical Regional Park

## Community Park

Community parks provide for the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community. A range of facilities is typically provided and may support tournament competition for athletic and league sports or passive recreation. These parks also present opportunities for nontraditional types of recreation. Fifty percent of the community park site should be developed for passive recreation. These relatively undisturbed areas may serve as buffers around the park and/or act as buffers between active facilities.

Community park sites should have varying topography and vegetation. Forested areas should have a variety of tree species. Cleared areas should be present for siting active recreational facilities. One or more natural water feature(s), such as a lake, river, or creek, are desirable in community parks. Parkland should be contiguous and strategically located in order to be accessible to all users within the neighborhoods it serves.

Development of these parks should be based upon the following standards:

Service Area:	.5 - 3 mile radius
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	15-50 acres

### Typical Facilities:

Recreation Center	Picnic Tables with Grills
Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Tennis Court (lighted)	Nature Trails
Baseball/Softball Fields (lighted)	Restroom/Concessions
Multipurpose Fields	Parking
Soccer Fields (lighted)	Playgrounds
Swimming Pool	Volleyball Courts
Amphitheater	Disc Golf
Observations Decks	Lakes
Picnic Shelters	Paddle Boat/Canoe Harbor
Picnic Shelters with Grills	Fishing Piers/Boat Docks

Fifty percent of the community park site should remain undeveloped for passive recreation/open space.

Specialty facilities may be added to or substituted for other facilities depending on community need or special site characteristics.

Development of community parks may fall within the responsibility of the municipality or the county agency.



Typical Community Park 15-50 Acres

## Neighborhood Park

Neighborhood parks provide the basic unit of the park system. These parks are usually located within walking distance of the area serviced and provide a variety of activities of interest to all age groups. While their small size requires intense development, fifty percent of each site should remain undisturbed to serve as a buffer between the park and adjacent land users.

The standards for neighborhood park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.5 to .75 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	2.5 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	5-10 acres

### Typical Facilities:

Playground	Picnic Shelters with Grills
Court Games	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
Informal Play Field	Benches or Bench Swings
Volleyball	50% of Site to Remain Undeveloped
Trails/Walkways	Parking (7-10 spaces)

Where municipal jurisdiction is available, neighborhood parks are typically developed by the municipality.





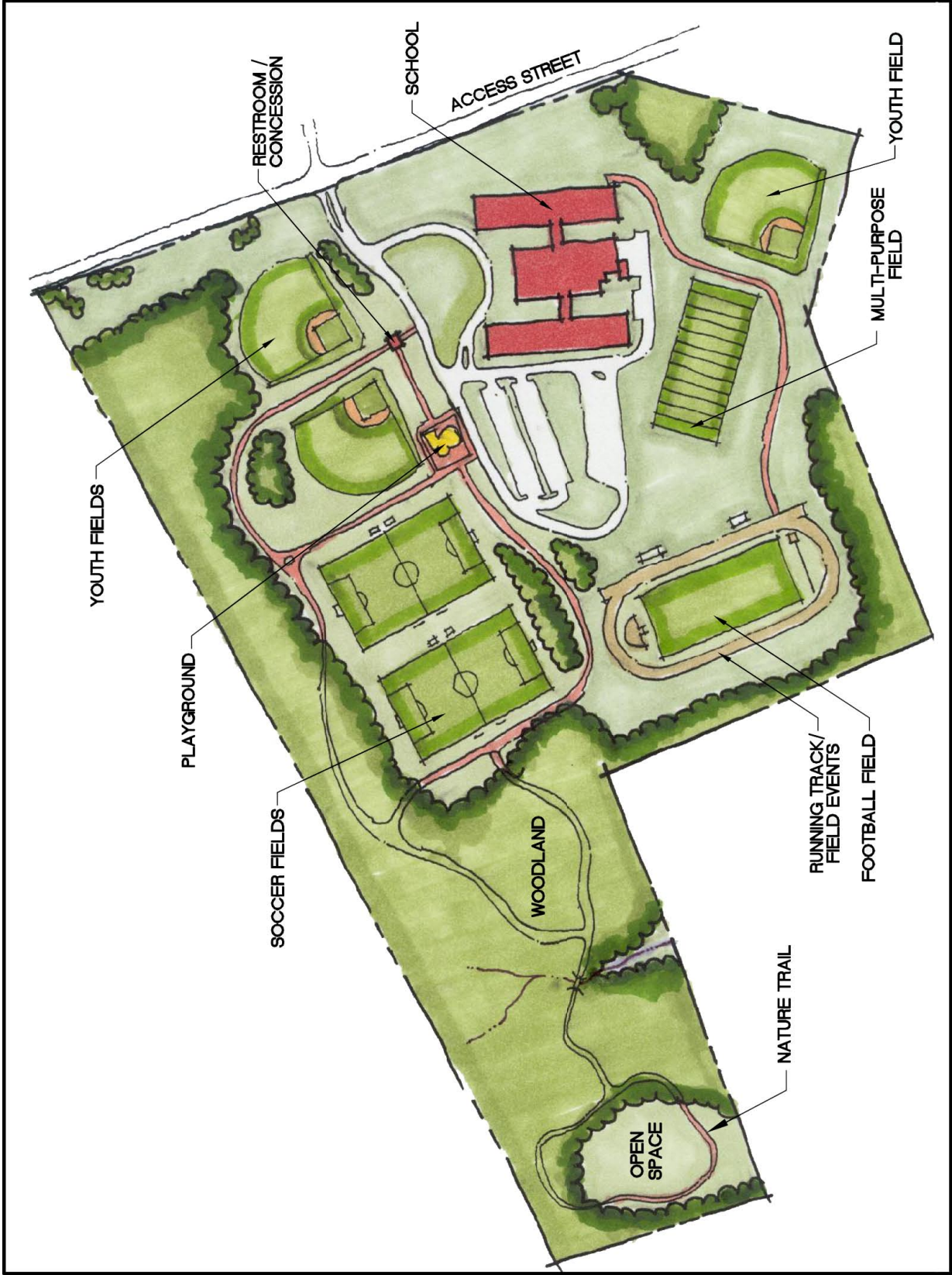
Typical Neighborhood Park 5 - 10 Acres

## School Park

The trend in public agencies is toward joint use. Through joint use both schools and parks benefit from shared use of facilities and valuable land resources. The school park concept maximizes the joint use objective and provides a planned facility that maximizes public funds. The school park concept typically varies depending on the school. The elementary/middle school provides the ideal setting for a neighborhood park, while the middle/high school follows the function of a community park or youth sports complex.

Service Area: Varies depending on school type and park type  
Desirable Size: Varies depending on school type and park type  
Typical Facilities: Varies depending on school type and park type

Development of school parks may fall within the responsibility of the municipality or the county agency.



± 50 Acres

# Typical School Park

## Mini Park

Mini parks are the smallest park classification. These parks are located within walking distance of the area serviced, and they provide limited recreational needs. Mini parks' small size requires intense development and allows little to no buffer between the park and adjacent land users is provided.

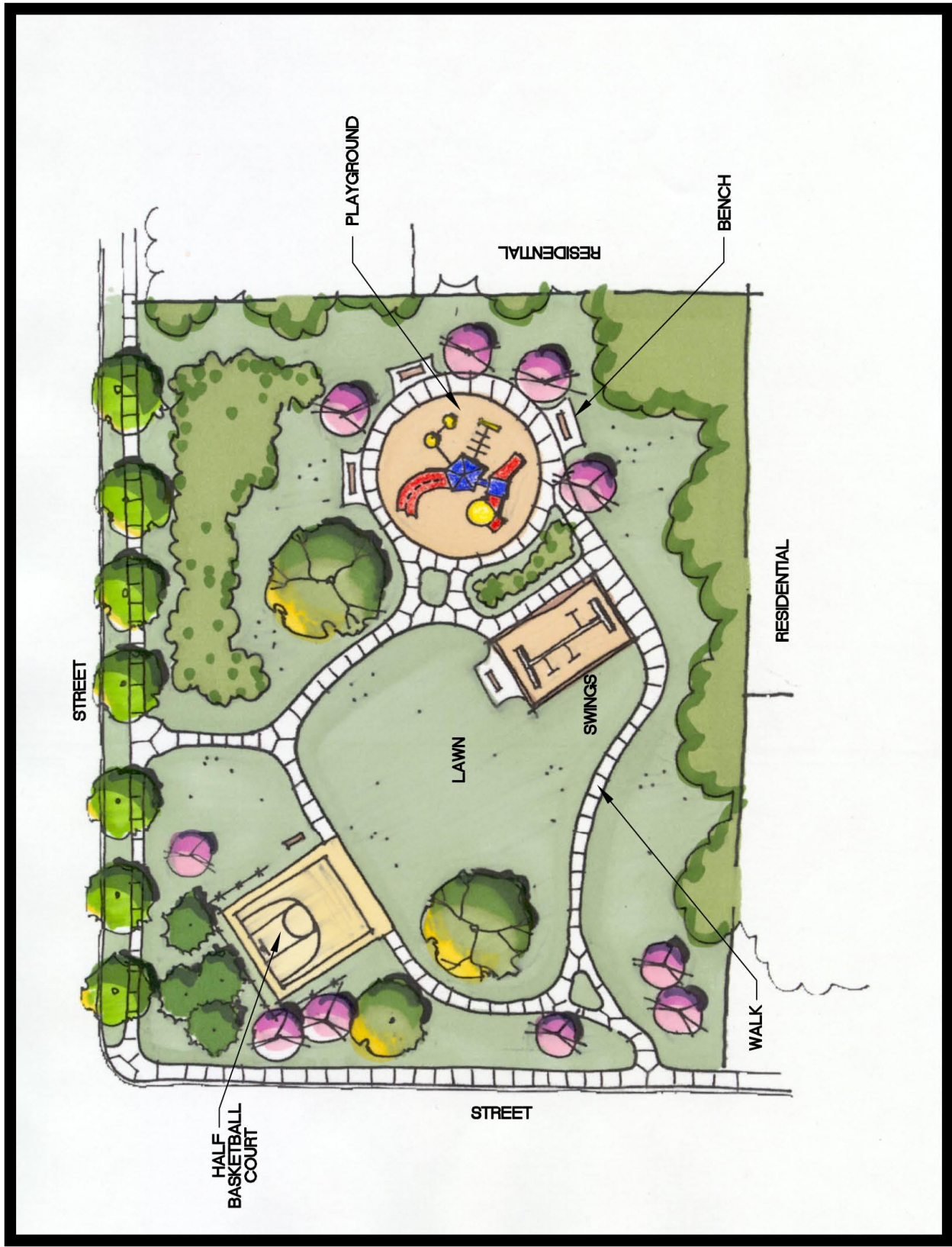
The standards for mini park development are as follows:

Service Area:	.25 mile radius to serve walk-in recreation needs of surrounding populations
Acreage/Population Ratio:	.25 acres per 1,000 persons
Typical Size:	1-4 acres

### Typical Facilities:

Playground	Picnic Tables with Grills (not under shelter)
½ Basketball Courts	Benches or Bench Swings
Open Play Area	Landscaped Public Use Area

Mini parks are typically found in very urban environments. Where municipal jurisdiction is available, mini parks are typically developed by the municipality. Many agencies in North Carolina choose not to develop mini parks, or substitute them with small civic gardens.



1-4 Acres

Typical Mini Park

## Greenways

Greenways provide an important component of the overall park system. They:

- Provide links between park components.
- Emphasize harmony with the natural environment.
- Provide safe pedestrian movement.
- Provide resource based outdoor recreational opportunities.
- Enhance adjacent property values.

Greenways are very similar to natural resource sites; the primary difference is the emphasis on pedestrian trails found in the greenway system.

Desirable Size: Greenways form corridors that vary considerably in length. Widths of these corridors vary as well, although a 50' width is generally considered a minimum.



# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The first step in establishing a park needs assessment for the City is to establish standards for park and facility development. These standards are based on a review of standards used by other agencies of similar size and a review of standards now (or currently) suggested by national and state associations.

## Park Needs

Table 2-1 provides information on standards used by other agencies/associations in the development of parks. The final two columns on this table reflect the local standards that were used as part of the City’s 1997 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the standards utilized in the development of this plan. Standards proposed for use in developing this plan are very similar to standards used in 1997.

Utilizing these standards, Table 2-2 illustrates the park acreage requirement for the City of Hickory Parks and Recreation Department service area. The acreage requirement is based on the population ratio method (acres of park land per 1,000 population) established for each park. The current population for the City is approximately 40,000 and the 2020 projected population is 50,000.

Based on this projected population, the Parks and Recreation Department will need to add approximately one hundred acres of additional developed parks over the planning period (2009-2020) as outlined in Table 2-2 Total “Park Sites and Acreage Needs Per Park Classification”. During that period, the City should develop the following additional parks:

- 2 Neighborhood Parks
- 1 Community Park

These facilities should be constructed in the northeast quadrant of the City, where there are few existing parks. The City currently owns land at Cloninger Mill and Sandy Pines which, when developed, will meet much of these future needs.

Section Three: Proposals and Recommendations

defines the City’s need for new parks in greater detail.

## Facility Needs

Minimum standards for recreational facilities (i.e., ballfields, courts, picnic shelters, etc.) proposed for the Department were developed in accordance with the industry guidelines established by the NRPA and the NCDENR and from input gained during meetings with the staff. These standards, identified in Table 2-3 “Standards for Public Facilities”, and discussed in greater detail in Section 3, are the minimum recreation facility standards that should be used in establishing a needs assessment for the city.

Based on these standards, the number of public facilities needed in the park system through the planning period (2009 to 2020), are identified in Table 2-4, “Current and Projected Facility Needs” and summarized below:

	Current	2020
Football Fields	1	2
Tennis Courts	-	2
Volleyball Courts	2	3
Shuffleboard Courts	-	1
Miles of Hiking Trails	13.25	18.75
Playgrounds	2	10
Picnic Shelters	-	3
Rec. Center w/Gym	-	-
Rec. Center w/out Gym	-	-
Swimming Pools	-	-
Sprayground	2	2
Miles for Bicycling Lanes	20	25
Stream/Blueway	8	10
Off-leash Dog Park	-	1
Disc Golf	-	1



Table 2-1  
 City of Hickory  
 Review of Agency Standards  
 Park Sites and Acreage Per Park Classification

Park Types	NRPA	Fayetteville	High Point	Cornelius	Archdale	Hickory 1997	Hickory 2009
<b>Mini Parks</b>	1-3 acres/Park (.25 acres/1,000)	.5-3 Acres/Park (.5 acres/1,000)	<5 Acres/Park (.25 acres/1,000)	1-3 Acres/Park (.25 acres/1,000)	(.25 acres/1,000)	N/A	N/A
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	7-15 acres/Park (2 acres/1,000)	7-15 Acres/Park (2.25 Acres/1,000)	5-15 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)	7-15 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1000)	(2.5 acres/1,000)	5-10 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1,000)	5-10 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1,000)
<b>Community Parks</b>	40-100 acres/Park (5 acres/1,000)	30-50 Acres/Park (1.25 Acres/1,000)	40-100 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)	30-50 Acres/Park (3 acres/1000)	(5 acres/1,000)	15-50 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)	15-50 Acres/Park (2.5 Acres/1,000)
<b>Regional Parks</b>	100-250 acres/Park (10 acres/1,000)	100-250 Acres/Park (3.25 Acres/1,000)	100-400 Acres/Park (20 Acres/1,000)	100-250 Acres/Park (10 acres/1,000)	(2.5 acres/1,000)	Varies (5 acres/1,000)	Varies (5 acres/1,000)



Table 2-2  
 City of Hickory  
 Total Park Sites and Acreage Needs Per Park Classification

Park Types	NRPA Guidelines	Hickory 2009 Standards	Current Population 40,000	2020 Population 50,000	Existing Parks # Sites Total Acreage	Park Needs Current Population 40,000	Park Needs 2020 Population 50,000
<b>Mini Parks</b>	1-3 acres/Park (.25 acres/1,000)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	7-15 acres/Park (2 acres/1,000)	5-10 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1,000)	100 acres 10 sites (10 acres each)	125 acres 12 sites (10 acres each)	79.2 acres 10 sites	Needs Met	2 sites needed
<b>Community Parks</b>	40-100 acres/Park (5 acres/1,000)	15-50 Acres/Park (2.5 acres/1,000)	100 acres 3 sites (30 acres each)	125 acres 4 sites (30 acres each)	75.69 acres 3 sites	1 site needed	1 site needed
<b>Regional Parks</b>	100-250 acres/Park (10 acres/1,000)	Varies (5 acres/1,000)	200 acres 3 sites	250 acres 3 sites	261.5 Acres 3 sites	Needs Met	Needs Met

**Table 2-3**  
**City of Hickory**  
**Standards for Public Park and Recreation Facilities**

The table below provides a listing of national, state, and local standards commonly used in the development of recreation facilities. The final two columns reflect standards recommended specifically for the City of Hickory.

	NRPA	NCDENR	Fayetteville-Cumberland	High Point	Rocky Mount	Greenville 2008	Hickory 1997	Hickory 2009
<b>Fields</b>								
Adult Baseball	1/12,000	1/5,000	1/15,000	1/15,000	1/12,000	1/20,000	1/15,000	1/30,000
Youth Baseball	1/10,000	1/10,000	1/6,500	1/6,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/3,000	1/ 10,000
Softball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/6,000	1/10,000
Football	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/5,000	1/20,000
Soccer	1/10,000	1/20,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/4,000	1/6,000	1/5,000	1/5,000
<b>Courts</b>								
Basketball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/6,000	1/1,000 Goal	1/5,000
Tennis	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/4,000	1/2,000	1/2,000	1/ 2,500	1/ 1,200	1/3,000
Volleyball	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/15,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000		1/10,000
Shuffleboard	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/15,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000		1/10,000
Horseshoe	1/5,000	1/5,000	1/15,000	1/10,000	1/5,000	1/10,000		1/10,000
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>								
Picnic Shelter	N/A	1/3,000	1/5,000	1/3,000	1/3,000	1/ 3,000	1/ 4,000	1/ 2,500
Playground Activities*	N/A	1/1,000	1/3,000	1/3,000*	1/2,500	1/1,000		1/1,200
<b>Trails</b>								
Hiking/Jogging	1/region	.4 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	.4 mile/1,000	1 mile/5,000	.25/1,000	1 mile/4,000	.5/1,000
<b>Specialized</b>								
Community Center/Recreation Center	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/20,000	1/50,000	N/A	1,500 SF /1,000	1,500 SF /1,000
Sprayground			1/50,000			1/25,000		1/25,000
Competition Pool						1/75,000		-
Golf Course	1/25,000	1/25,000	1/300,000	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/Community		N/A
Bicycling Lanes	N/A	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/1,000	1 mile/ 2,000		1 mile/2,000
Camping	N/A	2.5 sites /1,000	2.5 sites /1,000	N/A	2.5 sites /1,000	1 site /1,000		N/A
Archery Area	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/50,000	1/50,000		N/A
Amphitheatre						1/60,000		1/40,000
Neighborhood Performing Area						1/20,000		-
Stream/Lake Canoe Trails	N/A	.2 mile/1,000	.2 mile/1,000	.2 mile/1,000	.2 miles/1,000	.2 mile/1,000		.2 mile/1,000
Stream/Lake Access	N/A	1/10 miles	1/10 miles	1/10 miles	1/10 miles	1/5 miles		1/10 miles
Disc Golf	N/A	N/A	1/50,000			1/35,000		1/25,000
Skateboard Park	N/A	N/A	1/150,000			1/Community		1/Community
Off-leash Dog Area	N/A	N/A	1/50,000			1/30,000		1/30,000

Table 2-4  
City of Hickory  
Current and Projected Facility Needs

Utilizing the standards for facility development identified in Table 2-3, this table identifies facility needs (current and projected) for the City of Hickory.

	Hickory 2009	Existing Facilities**	Existing School Facilities	Current Demand 40,000	Current Need**	2020 Demand 50,000	Future Need**
<b>Fields</b>							
Adult Baseball	1/30,000*	1		1	-	1	-
Youth Baseball	1/ 10,000*	5		4	-	5	-
Softball	1/10,000*	6/1		4	-	5	-
Football	1/20,000*	1	1	2	1	3	2
Soccer	1/5,000	11		8	-	10	-
<b>Courts</b>							
Basketball	1/5,000*	12.5		8	-	10	-
Tennis	1/3,000*	17		13	-	17	-
Volleyball	1/10,000	2		4	2	5	3
Shuffleboard	1/10,000	4		4	-	5	1
Horseshoe	1/10,000	10		4	-	5	-
<b>Outdoor Areas</b>							
Picnic Shelter	1/ 2,500	17		16	-	20	3
Playground Activities	1/1,200	31		33	2	41	10
<b>Trails</b>							
Walking/Jogging	.5/1,000	6.75		20	13.25	25	18.75
<b>Indoor Facilities</b>							
Indoor Space Requirements	1,500 SF /1,000	117,182		60,000 SF	-	75,000 SF	-
Rec. Center w/Gym		96,368 SF					
Rec. Center w/out Gym		13,630 SF					
Gymnasium			7				
Senior Citizens		7,184 SF					
<b>Specialized</b>							
Sprayground	1/25,000	-		2	2	2	2
Bicycling Lanes	1 mile/2,000	-		20 miles	20 miles	25 miles	25 miles
Amphitheatre	1/40,000	-		1	-	1	-
Stream/Blueways	.2 mile/1,000	-		8	8	10	10
Stream/Lake Access	1/10 miles	3		1	-	1	-
Disc Golf	1/25,000	1		1	-	2	1
Skateboard Park	1/ Community	1		1	-	1	-
Off-leash Dog Area	1/30,000	1		1	-	2	1

\*\* Does not include school facilities.

Section Three  
Proposals and Recommendations



*Hickory Optimist Park*

## Section Three

# Proposal and Recommendations

### Introduction

The Hickory Parks and Recreation Department is one of North Carolina's oldest and finest departments. Its professional staff of recreation and park administrators oversee a park system that offers the citizens of Hickory over 400 acres of developed park land with a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities. Many improvements have been made to the City's park and recreation facilities since the completion of the City's 1997 Comprehensive Master Plan. Improvements have included outdoor facilities (Henry Fork River Regional Recreation Park) and indoor facilities ( Highland Recreation Center, renovations to Ridgeview Center, etc).

Today, the City of Hickory offers its citizens an outstanding variety of park and recreation facilities, and in many categories needs are met or exceeded. However, as noted in Chapter Two, there are a few areas where the City should focus future efforts. With over 400 acres of existing parks, the City offers its citizens adequate park land and open space; although there is a need for park development on the City's property at Cloninger Mill and Sandy Pines. Development of both of these sites will greatly expand park access in the City's northeast quadrant, where few parks currently exist.

The City of Hickory is not alone in the mission to provide parks and athletic facilities to the community. A number of other public and private agencies in the area are engaged in activities that impact the recreational needs of Hickory's citizens.

In addition to its classrooms, Hickory City Schools offer students a wide range of athletic facilities. The City currently has a very effective joint use agreement with Hickory City Schools on these athletic facilities. This relationship should be valued and protected to maximize use of public facilities and avoid duplication of facilities.

From a regional perspective, the City of Hickory is located at the intersection of three counties, Catawba, Burke, and Caldwell. These counties offer some park and recreation opportunities to their residents, but unfortunately their facilities and programs have limited impact on the City of Hickory's residents. The State of North Carolina, through its state parks, also provides two parks that are within a relatively easy driving distance of Hickory (South Mountain State Park, and Lake Norman State Park). These facilities provide natural passive recreation opportunities for the citizens of Hickory.

These governmental recreation providers offer the citizens of Hickory facilities and services that influence their demand for facilities and programs. Each of these agencies should be considered as the City of Hickory develops its proposals and recommendations for future parks. Likewise, each of these agencies should meet on a regular (semi-annual) basis to discuss park and recreation issues and share information about future initiatives.

Another major player with the mission of improving citizens' health and quality of life is the City's healthcare community. Hickory is fortunate to have two outstanding medical campuses, Catawba Valley Medical Center and Frye Regional Medical Center. The City should look for opportunities to partner with its hospitals in the promotion of healthy lifestyles.

Finally, the private sector also plays an important role in providing recreational opportunities throughout Hickory. Private entities are currently providing



*View of Clear Creek at South Mountains State Park. Photo courtesy of the NC State Park System.*

facilities including championship golf courses, numerous swim and tennis clubs, health clubs, Boys and Girls Clubs, and the YMCA. While most of these facilities are not available for free, they are meeting the recreational and fitness needs for many residents and reduce the demand for some public facilities. The private sector may also play a role in providing recreation facilities to residents through potential public/private ventures. Public agencies are linking with private vendors to provide recreation opportunities in many communities throughout North Carolina. Examples of public/private joint ventures may include health/fitness facilities, swim clubs, and RV camping facilities.

This plan addresses the need for providing parks with both passive and active recreation opportunities. "Passive recreation", such as walking, hiking, and picnicking, typically accommodates the need to preserve green space and allows people to experience nature first hand. "Active recreation" includes activities such as softball, baseball, soccer, and other physical (indoor and outdoor) activities. These types of recreational activities utilize facilities that are usually provided at sports complexes, community parks, recreation/community centers, and school sites.

To determine specific park and recreation recommendations for the City of Hickory, it is essential to clearly define how the City will interface with the other recreational providers in the community. This cooperative effort will eliminate duplication of facilities and services. The proposals and recommendations of this Needs Assessment are established based on what is anticipated each recreational provider will offer through the ten year planning period (2010 - 2020).

## Roles of Recreational Providers

### State of North Carolina

Two state parks (South Mountain State Park and Lake Norman State Park) are within a relatively short drive of Hickory. It is anticipated that the State of North Carolina will continue to maintain and operate all state parks within the region. The City, along with other nearby government agencies, should provide a unified message to the State on their interest to see these parks enhanced to their utmost potential. This may include the expansion of facilities and recreational opportunities. The State should continue to offer a variety of recreational facilities and programs on a regional basis. In addition, the State should be the provider of regional state parks that include opportunities for camping, fishing, biking, and special facilities of regional and statewide interest.

### Surrounding Park and Recreation Agencies

Catawba County operates several parks in the Hickory area (Riverbend, Bakers Mountain, and St. Stephens



*Catawba County' operates St. Stephens Park in Hickory.*

Parks). Burke County has a parks and recreation department, but offers no parks that immediately impact the citizens of Hickory. Caldwell County does not offer a parks and recreation department.

In addition to these county facilities/programs, several of the towns surrounding Hickory offer park and recreation opportunities to their citizens. Newton, Granite Falls, Hudson, and Lenoir all have parks and recreation departments.

While these neighboring departments have only limited impact on Hickory's citizens, all departments should strive to keep open communication between agencies to minimize duplication and look for opportunities to work together. This collaboration is particularly important in the development of greenways and trails.

### Hickory City Schools

#### Value of Joint-Use Agreements – Parks, Recreation and Schools

The Hickory Parks and Recreation Department has a tradition of collaborating with other agencies and organizations in the delivery of quality leisure experiences and the development and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The City also has a tradition of partnering with Hickory City Schools in the use and maintenance of outdoor facilities that serve the needs of both the schools and citizens as public park facilities.

The justification for the creation of joint use agreements is based on the premise that the majority of costs for developing and operating schools and recreation facilities come from the same source, local taxpayers. The development of duplicate facilities by those entities would constitute a waste of public funds. A shortage of affordable land and rapidly increasing construction costs are reasons enough for encouraging the efficient use of land and tax revenue. Combining resources allows for greater potential in the development of school and recreation facilities that neither entity is likely to afford if pursued independently. Other potential advantages of joint development and management include:

- The development of centralized public facilities usually requires less land than would be required

if the schools and the parks department were to develop separate facilities. The creation of a Capital Facilities Review Committee for Recreation and Parks would be a very positive step in helping to assure the coordination and cost-effectiveness of any new facilities.

- Centralized locations for city services (including schools and parks) allows for the convenience of all citizens, particularly parents, by facilitating their children’s participation in various education and recreation pursuits.
- Centralized school/park developments eliminate the duplication of maintenance functions and result in overall cost savings.
- Many of the outdoor areas and facilities needed for schools are also necessary for park and recreation services. Partnering in the development and management of facilities minimizes the duplication of land acquisition and development needs and represents an efficient use of public resources
- Joint developments are eligible for grants from the North Carolina Park and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF).
- School/Park partnerships encourage the development of positive after-school and weekend enrichment activities focused on the development of the “whole child”.
- Park systems usually have the resources for developing and maintaining higher quality sports fields than can be found in most school systems.

Joint use agreements between local park and recreation agencies and school systems are very prevalent across the country. Examples of school/park and recreation joint use agreements in North Carolina can be found in Cumberland, Scotland, Watauga, Wake, and New Hanover counties.

The City currently has an excellent joint use agreement in place with it’s school system. This is a very valuable document which allows the City use of school facilities. This document should be nurtured and protected.



### **Frye Regional Medical Center and Catawba Valley Medical Center**

The City of Hickory boasts two outstanding medical centers, Frye Regional Medical Center and Catawba Valley Medical Center. These hospitals provide Hickory and the surrounding region with outstanding health care. Recent studies on obesity and healthy lifestyles have made it apparent that a community’s health is linked to regular physical activity. Many of these activities are offered by the City’s Parks and Recreation Department.

With this shared mission of improving the community’s health, there are many opportunities where the Hospital and Recreation and Parks Department could work together to assist citizens in achieving a more active lifestyle.

### **Role of the City of Hickory**

The City of Hickory, through its Parks and Recreation Department, currently affords its citizens a variety of recreation opportunities with over twenty parks. These parks provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation. The offerings of the Department are varied. There is a nice balance between large parks (regional and community) and the smaller “walk-to parks” (neighborhood and civic). The City also offers an array of special use facilities in addition to these more traditional park types.



The majority of the City's parks are well designed and maintained, and are in relatively good condition. Several of the parks are older facilities and could be improved (both in appearance and function) by redesign and/or renovation. Likewise, the City owns several undeveloped parcels that need facility development if they are to reach their full park and recreation potential.

While the City's existing parks provide a solid foundation of recreation facilities and green space, there are a few areas where expansion and improvements are needed. This is especially important if Hickory is to keep pace with its rapid population growth and land development.

One of the most important roles the Parks and Recreation Department can play in the future of the community is the preservation of green space and the protection of riparian areas. Through the development of its greenway system, the City recognizes the importance of preserving green space in a rapidly urbanizing community and has developed a plan for developing a greenway system. Hickory's Parks and Recreation Department can preserve some of the valuable green space that is rapidly disappearing through the acquisition of land and/or conservation easements for the development of its greenways.

## **Park Proposal and Recommendations**

Through the planning process, the standards established in the 1997 Parks and Recreation Master Plan have been updated to reflect current community demand. These standards are defined in Section Two "Standards and Needs Assessment". With these standards as a backdrop, the following recommendations are made for future park development:

### **Regional Parks**

Regional parks are typically large, passive-oriented parks that highlight and utilize a unique natural feature in a community. Geitner Rotary Park is an example of a regional park. Located on Lake Hickory, this park contains over 96 acres of land and provides a variety of passive recreation opportunities. In

addition to Geitner Rotary Park, the Glenn C. Hilton Memorial Park provides a second regional facility for the preservation of open space, passive recreation and environmental education.



*Henry Fork River Regional Recreation Park provides a soccer complex for both league and tournament play.*

In addition to these two passive regional facilities, Hickory has two additional regional facilities that offer more structured recreational opportunities. Henry Fork River Regional Recreation Park, located in the southwest fringe of the City provides a regional soccer complex for both league and tournament play. Winkler Park, located in the southwest quadrant of the City, offers the City's largest play area and a community center for special events.

These four outstanding parks, along with the state parks found in easy driving distance, meet the City's need for regional parks.

### **Community Parks**

Community parks are perhaps the most important component of a municipal park and recreation system. These parks are typically large enough to provide valuable active recreation opportunities while allowing portions of the park to be left undeveloped for open space and passive recreation. Unfortunately, most of Hickory's community parks are relatively small and heavily programmed.

Currently the City of Hickory has three community parks, Kiwanis Park, Neill W. Clark Jr. Recreation

Park, and Stanford Park. Kiwanis and Stanford Parks are located within the City's central core and provide an important component of the City's park and recreation facilities. Neill W. Clark, Jr. Recreation Park is located in the northern area of the City where few public recreation facilities exist. This park plays a strategic role in providing recreation support to citizens in the northern part of the City. Hickory's community parks were developed under older NRPA standards that recommend these parks be 20 to 75 acres. This standard has resulted in the development of relatively small community parks. The current NRPA standard for community parks is 40 to 100 acres. This additional acreage allows for both active and passive recreation.

The national and state standards for development of community parks is five to ten acres per 1,000 population (see Table 2-1). The 1997 Master Plan established a criteria of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population for community parks. This needs assessment utilizes the same standard of development (2.5 acres per 1,000). Using this number, there is a current need for 25 acres of additional community park land in the city; by 2020 that need increases to 50 acres. At a size of  $\pm 50$  acres per park, this standard would indicate one additional community park is needed.

The City already has the land needed to meet this need for an additional community park at its Cloninger Mill site in the northeast portion of the city. This very

valuable parkland has been identified as a future park and a master plan for park development has already been prepared. The development of the Cloninger Mill site will allow the City's need for community parks to be met. The development of Cloninger Mill Park will be a very important step in meeting the park and recreation needs of Hickory's citizens.



*Civitan Park is one of ten neighborhood parks. Currently there is a need for two additional neighborhood parks in Hickory.*

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks play an important role in providing both active and passive recreation in a community. Usually in the 5 to 15 acre range, these parks are large enough to include both active and passive recreation opportunities, but small enough to allow for a wide geographical distribution.

The City has ten neighborhood parks, but still has some work to do in this area of neighborhood park development. The 1997 Parks and Recreation Master Plan established a standard for development of neighborhood parks of two and a half acres per 1,000 population (see Table 2-1).

Maintaining the 1997 criteria for neighborhood park development (2.5 acres/1,000 population) results in a current need for 125 acres of neighborhood park land by 2010. Assuming an average size of ten acres per park, would indicate a need for twelve neighborhood parks by 2020, or two additional neighborhood parks. Looking at a map of existing neighborhood parks, it is apparent that several neighborhood parks would be well served in the northeast quadrant of the city.



*The master plan for Cloninger Mill Park has already been completed.*

New neighborhood parks should be spaced throughout the city in areas currently not being served by a neighborhood park. Typically, neighborhood parks have a half mile service radius, locating them one mile apart. One obvious location for a new neighborhood park is the city land located in the Sandy Pines area. The City already has plans to develop a master plan for this site. St. Stephens Park, located just outside the City limits in the northeast quadrant of Hickory, could meet the need of a second neighborhood park.

### Mini Parks/Civic Parks/Gardens

Mini parks are the smallest of the park types. These parks typically range in size from one half to four acres and provide a limited range of activities (playground, picnic shelter, benches, etc.). There are six civic parks (Carolina Park/Ivey Arboretum, Highland Park, McComb Park, Robinson Park, Shuford Gardens, Viewmont Park) containing approximately five acres of parkland within the Hickory Parks and Recreation system.

Many municipal park agencies are placing less emphasis on mini parks because their small size limits their recreational use and these small parks are geographically dispersed requiring considerably more maintenance effort and cost than fewer, larger parks. The City's existing mini parks/civic parks/gardens appear to be adequate to meet the community's needs.

### Greenways

The most popular form of outdoor recreation in the nation is walking. Greenway trails are typically off-road trails that meander through neighborhoods and natural areas providing transportation corridors and recreational opportunities for walkers, joggers, roller bladers, and cyclists. The trail surface can either be natural or paved and is normally eight to ten feet in width. In addition to providing environmental protection and recreation opportunities, greenways can produce economic development. The North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation recently conducted a study on a bicycle trail constructed along the northern Outer Banks region. This study determined that a \$6.7 million investment in off-road



*Greenways provide a link between communities, schools, churches, businesses, parks, and other destinations.*

bike paths and shoulder improvements produced an estimated \$60 million annually in economic benefit. In addition, the study found that:

- Bicycle facilities in the area are an important factor to many tourists visiting the region.
- Investments in the bicycle facilities improved the safety of the area's transportation system.
- Bicycle activities include the benefits of health, fitness, quality of life, and the environment.

Greenways also offer a valuable alternative to automotive transportation. A greenway trail provides a linkage between communities, schools, churches, businesses, and parks.

In 2000 and 2005, the City developed a Master Plan for Sidewalks, Bikeways, Greenways, and Trails to identify corridors for development, establish a budget for land acquisition and construction, and create a plan of action (with schedule) for greenway development. This plan recommended greenway projects with one hundred miles of proposed greenways, sidewalks, and trails.

The implementation of this plan, and the construction of the initial phases of a greenway system, should be one of Hickory's highest park improvement priorities.

Recent development of the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT), which is a regional trail network that will eventually connect fifteen counties and over two million people, places an even greater perspective on

Hickory's greenways. The City should coordinate its greenway efforts with planners of the CTT to ensure the citizens of Hickory will one day be able to link to this regional trail.

Greenways should be developed in conjunction with other public entities in the area (Lenoir Rhyne University, Hickory City Schools, etc) to ensure they are coordinated with other planning efforts and that there is continuity between plans.

### **Bikeways**

The need for bikeable roads and the development of greenways for biking was well documented in the City's Sidewalk, Bikeway, Greenway, and Trail Plan. With the focus on healthy lifestyles, the environment, and alternative transportation, there is a great need to develop a city-wide bikeway. The Parks and Recreation Department should be engaged in this planning process.

The City should encourage the State to include bike lanes whenever roadway improvements are made or new roads constructed. This plan should also become part of the City's subdivision process, where developers are required to accommodate bicycle (and pedestrian) traffic in the roadway improvements they construct as part of the development process.



*The need for bikeable roads and the development of greenways was well documented in the City's Sidewalk, Bikeway, Greenway, and Trail Plan.*

The City should consider tapping into the federal government's SAFETEA program which funds non-vehicular transportation projects that encourage alternative means of transportation. These funds have been used to construct bike lanes and greenway trails in communities throughout North Carolina.

The development of a city-wide greenway, along with a city-wide bike plan would provide an important amenity that would benefit residents. As documented in the NCDOT study on bicycle facilities along the northern Outer Banks, the development of a bicycle/pedestrian trail system can also have a significant economic impact on a community.

### **Renovation/Expansion of Existing Parks**

While the focus of the previous recommendations has been on the development of new parks, there is also a need to improve/expand facilities at a number of the City's existing parks. As part of the ongoing planning and budgeting process, the City's Parks and Recreation Department annually establishes a list of capital improvement projects. This list of capital improvement needs is then used by the Department and elected officials to establish yearly capital improvement budgets. Many of the facilities identified below are already found in the City's capital improvement budget.

### **Facility Proposals and Recommendations**

Based on the previous recommendations on park development, the City of Hickory should construct several new parks, expand its greenway trails, and renovate several of its existing facilities by the year 2020. The improvements that will be made as part of these renovations and expansions will add many new facilities to the parks inventory. As it builds new facilities, the City should consider the list of facility needs established in Section Two and described in greater detail below:



### **Adult Baseball**

Over the past five to ten years, the popularity of adult baseball has waned. While most communities include adult baseball fields in their facilities, the sport does not carry the popularity it once held. The City's 1997 Master Plan recommended a standard of one field per 15,000 people for the development of adult baseball fields. It is recommended that this standard be decreased to one field per 30,000 people. Utilizing this standard of field development, the City will not have a need for additional adult baseball fields through 2020. Whenever possible, utilization of school facilities for adult baseball will allow the City to focus resources in other areas.

### **Youth Baseball**

Youth baseball is very popular in North Carolina. The 1997 Master Plan established an extremely aggressive criteria for the development of youth baseball fields (one field per 3,000). Based on this standard for youth baseball, the City exhibited a demand for this sport greater than that expressed in the national, state, and other similar municipal department standards. While it is apparent there is considerable demand for the sport, reducing the standard for field development should be considered. With this understanding, the standard for facility development of youth baseball fields has been set at one field per 10,000 people. This is still in keeping with the national and state standards (one field per 10,000). Utilizing this standard indicates there will not be a need for additional youth baseball fields through 2020.

### **Softball**

Men's adult softball has traditionally been a very popular sport in North Carolina, and NRPA and NCDENR standards (one field per 5,000 people)

reflect that popularity. While the sport is still popular, there has been some shift in demand of men's adult softball in the past few years. Based on a standard of one field per 10,000, the City does not have a need for additional fields.

It should also be noted that changes in demand have now placed additional emphasis on women's softball. The Department's athletic staff should be open to the possibility that future demand may warrant additional fields for women's and/or youth play.



### **Football**

Football's popularity has been influenced by the emergence of soccer and (most recently) lacrosse. With this understanding, the standard for development of football fields is one field for every 20,000 people within the service community. This standard results in a current demand for one football field. By 2020, there will be a need for one additional field. The need to build this additional field could be offset by the use of school facilities.



### **Soccer**

One of the fastest growing sports in America, soccer has surpassed the demand for football in this country. This needs assessment reflects this demand by establishing a standard of one field for every 5,000

people within the service population. This standard exceeds national and state standards significantly. With the development of the Henry Fork Regional Soccer Complex, there is no current need for any additional soccer fields.

As with other sports facilities, the City may consider lighting its soccer fields if demand warrants. Lighting fields doubles the effective use of the fields.

A final note on soccer. The demand for soccer fields will only continue in the future, and will be made more intense by the new interest in lacrosse. Played on a field very similar to a soccer field (they are slightly larger than soccer fields), lacrosse will increase in popularity and should be planned for as the City reviews its soccer field needs. The new sport should be taken into consideration since play for both sports can be programmed on similar fields. One method to accommodate the variety of field games (soccer, lacrosse, rugby, football) is to develop larger multi-use fields that can be used for play by a variety of field games.



### **Basketball**

Basketball is still an extremely popular sport in the United States. Played by a variety of ages, and increasingly by females, this sport can be played either indoors or out. The development of outdoor basketball courts cost considerably less than an indoor gymnasium. Currently the City provides twelve outdoor and five indoor gymnasiums (with multiple courts). Based on national and state standards of development of one basketball court per 5,000 people, Hickory has met its need for basketball courts.

Outdoor courts are relatively inexpensive to construct and do not require significant space in a park. They do require careful placement because activity around the court is often aggressive and male dominated and does not mix well with other youth activities.

See the section on community centers/gymnasiums for the community's needs of indoor courts.



### **Tennis**

Tennis has not experienced the same growth and interest as some of the nation's newer sports (soccer, lacrosse, etc.), but as the baby boomers move into their 50s and retirement, the demand for sports that keep people active without physical contact will increase.

Hickory currently maintains eight tennis courts at City Park, but there is a need for improvements to them. In addition to the courts at City Park, there are nine other courts scattered throughout Hickory. Utilizing a standard of facility development slightly less than the national and state standards (one court per 3,000 people), the need for tennis courts has been met through 2020.

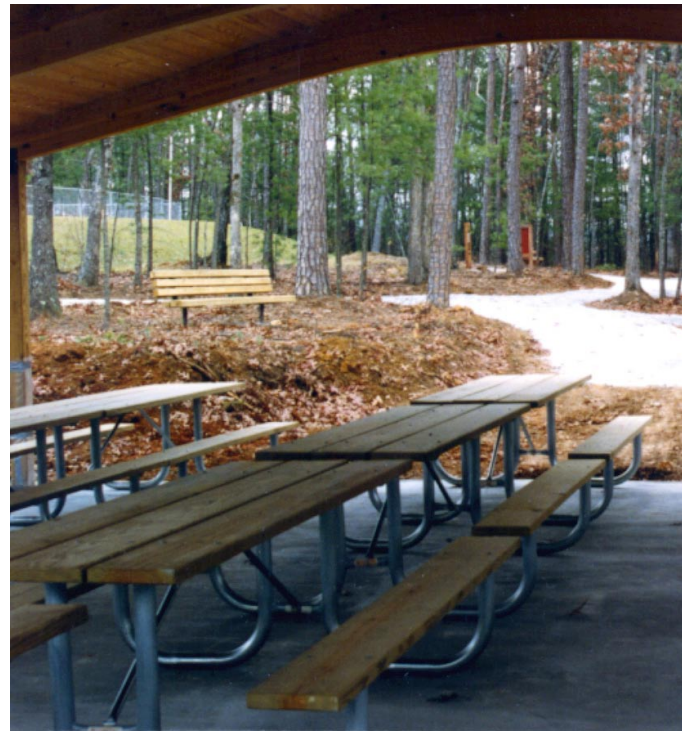
### **Volleyball**

The national and state standard for development of volleyball courts is one court per 5,000 people. Reducing this standard by half (one court per 10,000 people) would result in the need of several additional outdoor courts. Volleyball courts are relatively small and can easily be added to existing parks or included as part of any future parks.



### **Shuffleboard**

Like volleyball, there are only limited public shuffleboard courts in Hickory’s park system. This activity provides a recreational outlet and opportunities for social interaction, particularly in the elderly population. The City currently has two shuffleboard courts. While the national and state standard of one court per 5,000 people seems excessive, the development of some additional courts would provide an excellent activity for the community’s older population. Reducing the national and state standards by half (one court per 10,000 people) will result in a need for several of these game courts. Like volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts are easily added to existing parks.



### **Picnic Shelters**

Picnicking is an extremely popular activity, and can also result in revenue generation through shelter rentals. The City currently has seventeen shelters in its park system. Based on a standard of one shelter per 2,500 people, there is a need for several additional shelters. These shelters could be constructed at the City’s new parks (Cloninger Mill Park and Sandy Pines).



### **Horseshoes**

Horseshoes is a popular pastime for both young and old. The City offers horseshoes at several of its parks. Based on a development standard of one court per 10,000 (similar to the standard used for volleyball and shuffleboard), the City has adequate horseshoe courts through 2020.



### **Playgrounds**

The City has thirty-one playgrounds in its parks, but there is a need for several additional play areas. As new parks are developed, the City should look for locations for additional playgrounds. Larger parks may warrant more than one playground.

## **Pedestrian Trails**

Walking is the number one outdoor recreational activity in the United States. The development of walking trails should be a priority for future park development. As noted previously in this section, the City should work on implementation of its 2000 Sidewalks, Bikeways, Greenways, and Trails Master Plan. In addition to the greenway, a priority should be placed on walking trail development in all existing and future parks. A paved walking trail is an important component of all park types, and should be provided in all neighborhood and community parks as well as sports complexes.



## **Stream/Lake Canoe Trails/Access**

The Catawba River and Lake Hickory provides the City of Hickory with a wonderful opportunity to develop a blueway canoe trail similar to the greenways that have been started. This blueway stream system should include vehicular access/parking, canoe/kayak input areas, and designated canoe trails with maps and markers. The development of a blueway trail would provide a unique and valuable park facility for residents, and potentially provide a tourist destination with economic impact benefits.

## **Biking Trails**

As discussed earlier in this section, the City should expand opportunities for biking through the development of a greenway trail system, including paths suitable for biking in existing and future parks, and through encouraging NCDOT to develop roads with bike lanes or wider shoulders to accommodate bikers.



## **Amphitheatres/Neighborhood Performing Areas**

Currently the City does not have an amphitheatre, but one is planned for Henry Fork River Regional Park. This facility will provide a venue for city-wide concerts and special events. Any proposed master plan should include provisions for an amphitheatre facility that can accommodate and attract regional events and concerts. The promotion of such regional events can have significant economic impact for the City.

In addition to a large regional amphitheatre, the City should also make provisions for smaller, neighborhood gathering places for plays, small concerts, and other special events. These facilities would provide a small stage and space for gathering in a more informal manner.

## **Special Use Facilities**

### **Swimming Pools/Spraygrounds**

In May of 2009, the Catawba County Public Health Department (Environmental Health Division) notified the City of Hickory that neither George Ivey Memorial Pool or Ridgeview Pool could be opened for summer swim without major renovations and repairs. Based on tests completed by the Health Department, neither pool could pass a turnover rate of 4 times in 24 hours. Instead, the turnover rate for Ridgeview Pool was 2 times in 24 hours, while the turnover rate for George Ivey Memorial Pool was 1 time in 24 hours.

In addition to problems with turnover rate, the Health



Department also required the drains at both pools be replaced under the recently enacted Virginia Graeme Baker Pool Act.

Based on this report from the Health Department, the City conducted a preliminary cost estimate in early June to determine the cost of pool repairs/pump replacements. The cost of pump replacements alone was over \$55,000. This estimate did not include any pipe/circulation replacement or pool floor/wall replacement and renovations.

With the anticipated cost of the required improvements, the City decided not to open the pools for the 2009 swimming season until this Needs Assessment could be completed. As part of this Needs Assessment, a more detailed review of both swimming pools was conducted (see Appendix A). This assessment determined that significantly more renovations will be needed to both pools' plumbing and structural systems. Based on this more detailed assessment, the cost of pool renovations would be approximately \$250,000 for each pool. These repair estimates were made with the understanding that a total pool replacement could be accomplished for \$300,000 to \$400,000. Based on this new assessment, it became apparent that a simple pool renovation was not feasible, but instead a pool replacement was more realistic.

Faced with the high cost of pool replacement, as well as the anticipated cost of future operation, the City must consider the current and anticipated use these two pools receive. Parks and Recreation staff have carefully monitored pool use over the past six years. Based on this report (see Appendix B), swimming pool use has declined significantly since 2003.

In 2008 (the last year of operation), less than 3,000 people used the two swimming pools. Operational costs exceeded \$25,000. At that cost of use, Hickory spent over \$8 per person per visit for swimming; without allocating any capital cost for the facilities. Incorporating the anticipated capital cost of \$400,000 per pool for pool replacement would significantly increase the actual cost of providing swimming opportunities to a limited number of swimmers.

With this as a backdrop, the City must decide what

its future role in providing swimming opportunities and aquatics programs will be. Currently the citizens of Hickory are having their aquatics needs met at a number of private/institutional facilities. In addition to these privately run swim clubs (Lake Hickory Country Club, Catawba Country Club, etc), Lenoir Rhyne University and the YMCA offer pools and aquatic programs. With this abundance of private and semi-private opportunities and the declining attendance recorded at the City's two public swimming facilities, it appears the need for a municipal pool is marginal at best.

While the demand for public swimming does not warrant a large capital and operational cost of constructing a new pool, the City should be sensitive to the needs of those citizens that cannot afford to join a private swim facility and should consider making arrangement with the local YMCA to offer some form of public free swim or ensure special fee arrangements for those individuals and families that need financial assistance in order to learn water safety, enroll in swimming classes, or enjoy free swim.

In addition to supporting access of its underserved population to swimming facilities, the City should also consider the development of spraygrounds or splashpads as an alternative to constructing new swimming pools.

A relatively new trend in aquatic play, spraygrounds provide a water-based recreational activity without the operational cost associated with swimming pools. With today's technology, the City can provide



*The City should consider the development of spraygrounds instead of constructing new swimming pools.*

an exciting opportunity for families to enjoy a sun and water experience without the cost, headache, or liability of a swimming pool.

The City of Hickory should consider a more detailed study of the cost and opportunities of developing one or more sprayground facilities to meet summer water play needs.

### Community Centers/Gymnasiums

As noted in the inventory section, the City of Hickory has a number of excellent indoor recreation facilities that serve a variety of recreation needs. The inventory of indoor facilities includes five gymnasiums (Brown Penn, Ridgeview, Highland, Neill Clark, and Westmont), two senior citizen centers (Westmont and Brown Penn), and several special use meeting rooms (Geitner and Winkler). In addition to the currently programmed buildings, the City also owns the Jaycee Park building, the former administrative offices for the Parks and Recreation Department.

The current use, inventory of facilities, and general assessment of each of these buildings is provided in the inventory section of this document. In general, most of the City's indoor recreation facilities are in good condition and provide valuable programming opportunities to City (and non-city) residents. As noted in the inventory section, there are some minor building repair items needed on some of the older facilities. Likewise, there are some ADA issues with some of the older facilities that may need addressing in the future, but overall, most of the buildings are in good condition.

In an overall review of the City's indoor facilities and the programming/attendance that is taking place in those buildings, it is apparent that most of the facilities are well used and meeting citizen's indoor recreation needs. With that stated, there are several issues with regard to indoor facilities that warrant future consideration.

### Westmont Recreation Center

One of the Department's oldest facilities, Westmont Recreation Center is a facility inherited from the

school system. Constructed in an era prior to any consideration of universal access, the building is wrought with numerous ADA issues. Steps into the building, as well as steps separating the gymnasium from the meeting rooms and restrooms, will require major renovations to bring the building to current ADA requirements. Building size and layout limits program opportunities, and a building use census indicates that the facility is not meeting any significant recreational need. With the age of the building, major repairs (roof, HVAC, etc.) will become more expensive. The City should carefully consider the investment it places in this facility. At some point, Hickory should consider removing this building from the park and reusing this space for outdoor recreation opportunity (basketball courts, playground, shelters, sprayground, etc.).

### Geitner Building

The Geitner Community Room offers a unique opportunity for an indoor special events center directly on the lake. While the existing facility is a popular location for family reunions, receptions, etc., the building is dated and has ADA issues. A major renovation of this facility could provide the City with a unique lake retreat with the potential to provide significant revenues through rentals. While a detailed assessment of this building was beyond the scope of this planning effort, a closer look at this building should be considered in the future.



*Renovation of the Geitner Building could provide a unique lake retreat with the potential to generate revenue for the City.*

### Jaycee Park Building

The former offices of the Parks and Recreation Department, the building anchors one of the City's community parks. Unfortunately, the building's layout limits programming opportunities and lends itself to more office use than community center use.

With its central location in the park, selling the building is unlikely. Instead, the City may consider leasing the building for office or commercial use.

### Neill W. Clark, Jr. Recreation Park

As noted in previous sections of this report, Neill Clark, Jr. Recreation Park is one of the few recreation facilities offered in the northern section of the City. With this strategic location, both indoor and outdoor facilities are heavily used. While there are some ADA and functional improvements that are recommended for both buildings (See Section One: Inventory), overall these buildings are in relatively good condition and serve the community well.

### Golf Courses

There are several public golf courses available to the City of Hickory. With this availability of public courses, there is no demand for the City to provide a municipal golf course.



### Archery

Archery is a skill sport enjoyed by some, but based on the relatively low percentage of people who participate, development of an archery range is not recommended.

### Camping

With the relatively close proximity of state parks, development of municipal camping opportunities should not be a priority.

## Trends in Park and Recreation Facilities

The list of recreational activities developed for this Needs Assessment is based on national and state standards that have been used in park planning for decades. As noted earlier in this section, these standards are used as a point of reference, with the understanding that each community should develop a set that are unique to their specific needs.

One of the downsides of the national and state standards is that they are not updated often and fail to incorporate newer trends and activities. In the past decade, several new activities have been growing in popularity that should be included in future park development. These activities include:



### Skateboard Parks/Extreme Sports

Skateboarding has been popular for several decades. In the past decade, many communities have recognized its popularity and have tried to provide a safe and vandal resistant setting for this creative sport. The City recently completed a skateboard park at Highland Center. This facility is well maintained and receives a lot of use. It meets Hickory's needs for this sport.

## Disc Golf

The popularity of disc golf continues to rise. Currently, the City has a disc golf course at Glen C. Hilton Jr Memorial Park. A second course is planned for Cloninger Mill Park.



## Off-leash Dog Areas

One of the newest trends in park development, the off-leash dog areas (also known as dog parks), is a response to the nation's love of pets. Communities throughout North Carolina are now constructing dog parks.

Dog parks take many forms, but are primarily a place within a park where park users can bring their dogs to run, walk, and recreate. They usually include a fenced open area where dogs, accompanied by their owner, are allowed to run free. Often the off-leash dog area is divided into sections for large and small dogs.

The City is currently planning to open its first off-leash dog area at Fairbrook Optimist Park. The park has met with outstanding support.

## Park Facilities as Economic Developers

John L. Crompton, in his publication "Parks and Economic Development", determined there are four economic development benefits that a community may derive from park and recreation services. These benefits include:

- **Attracting Tourists:** The features and programs that attract tourism to a community include parks, beaches, historic sites, museums, special events and festivals, and athletic tournaments. The majority of these features are provided by public agencies (national, state, local park agencies, etc.).
- **Enhancing Real Estate Values:** Research shows people will pay more to live close to natural park areas. These higher property values result in owners paying higher property taxes, which in turn offsets some of the cost for the development parks and preservation of open space.
- **Attracting Business:** Quality of life issues influence where businesses locate. Parks, recreation, and open space are an important component of the quality of life equation. Good parks help cities attract and retain businesses.
- **Attracting Retirees:** A new growth industry for American communities is the retirement population. The decision to relocate by this segment of our population is primarily governed by climate and recreation opportunities. This segment of the population is extremely attractive to local governments because retirees are unlikely to have children enrolled in the local school system and therefore are less of a burden on the community's tax base.

The City of Hickory has traditionally placed a high value on parks and recreation programs and facilities that provide quality of life improvement. Geitner Rotary Park, Glenn C. Hilton Jr. Memorial Park, and the Highland Center each set a tone of community pride in public parks and reflect the priority the City places on public recreation and open space. Development of this needs assessment update is further evidence that the City recognizes the importance parks play in the quality of life.

Through these investments in parks over the years, City officials have ensured that Hickory provides the quality of life that helps attract new businesses, enhances real estate values, and provides an attractive option to the retirement community. The City and the Hickory Metro Convention and Visitor's Bureau also realize the importance of building and promoting tourism as a means of economic development. The



- Regional
- Local
- Beaches
- Theme parks

### **Recreation**

- Events and festivals
- Aquatic and coastal areas
- Outdoor recreation (e.g., camping, fishing, hunting)

### **Arenas**

- College sports
- Professional franchises
- Concerts and exhibitions

Convention and Visitor’s Bureau is already promoting sporting events in the Hickory region. Currently the Bureau is working to promote tournaments with regional draw in the following sports:

- Softball
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Basketball

There are many more opportunities for attracting economic impact to Hickory through tourism. John Crompton lists the following opportunities for tourist attractions:

### **Arts**

- Theaters
- Art Galleries
- Museums
- Performing groups, Music
- Concerts

### **Heritage Places**

- Ethnic cultural places
- Shrines/churches
- Historical sites and structures
- Educational institutions
- Industry factory tours

### **Parks**

- National
- State

Many of these activities and facilities are already found within the City. The majority of these potential tourism attractions are in the public realm or are a public/private venture.

The City of Hickory is already embracing economic development through tourism with its tournament level athletic facilities and its regional parks and golf courses. Further expansion of tourism could be realized in the areas trails, blueways and water access, and the expanded soccer facilities. The expansion of these facilities would provide additional local programming capabilities as well as provide tournament and special events opportunities with tourism and economic impact benefits.

The City should be open to new park facilities and activities that can provide tourism opportunities. Facilities with potential economic impact capabilities include:

- Zoo
- Arboretums
- Velodrome
- BMX track
- Ice skating/hockey
- Roller hockey
- Equestrian center

Greater study of these, and other tournament facilities, may be warranted.

Section Four  
Action Plan Implementation



*It is recommended that the City of Hickory build 3 new picnic shelters by the year 2020.*

## Section Four

# Action Plan Implementation

### Introduction

The City of Hickory’s Park and Recreation Needs Assessment is based upon a review of the community’s character and growth, an analysis of the existing park system, the identification of user needs, the development of recreation standards, and an adherence to stated proposals and recommendations. The plan is intended to be “action-oriented”, designed to provide a framework from which the City’s Parks and Recreation Department can enhance their parks and recreation system.

Instrumental to the implementation of this assessment is the identification of adequate funding for facility construction and park development. Finding adequate funding is particularly difficult in this time of economic downturn, but it should be remembered that this is a ten year plan. Economic conditions will likely improve during this planning period.

Implementing the recommendations made in this Needs Assessment will result in meeting the future needs for parks and recreation services, as well as preserving open space in the area. The City of Hickory should continue to establish annual budgets on projected capital improvements, staffing, operations and maintenance costs for the Department that not only meet current needs, but also allow acquisition and development for future needs. This action plan is designed to give the City and the Department a realistic approach to financing the proposals and recommendations of this Needs Assessment.

## **Operational Recommendations**

In addition to looking at future facility needs of the Department, this Needs Assessment must also address some of the operational issues that will face the Department in the coming decade. These issues relate to the manpower and organizational changes that will be required as the Department adds new parks/facilities and hundreds of acres of park land. Likewise, these recommendations address some of the critical operational issues the Department needs to identify as it works to become not only a bigger department, but a better department.

### **Staff Needs/Operational Cost**

The Needs Assessment has indicated that most of Hickory's park and recreation needs are currently being met. While there is a need for several new parks over the next ten years, these parks will not include indoor facilities or facilities that will require significant staff to program or operate. Instead, the proposed parks will primarily require some additional maintenance cost (ongoing and long term).

It should also be noted that some indoor facilities with gymnasiums (Neill W. Clark, Jr. Gymnasium, and Westmont Gymnasium) are not heavily used in the summer months. Operating hours in these facilities could be reduced during periods of low use, thus reducing staff hours and operational costs.

### **Greener Operation**

As the world's population expands and environmental

concerns over global warming, conservation of resources, and preservation of our fragile natural systems become more apparent, greater environmental responsibility by public and private agencies has become critical. As a government agency, particularly one that is involved with the management of public open space and the improvement of the public's health, the Parks and Recreation Department should make a sincere and concerted effort to minimize its environmental impact.

With this understanding, the Department should evaluate its maintenance and operational procedures with an intent to minimize waste and environmental impact. Where economically feasible, the Department should look to implement operational procedures that emphasize conservation, recycling, and sustainability. Likewise, as the Department looks to build new facilities, it should consider constructing facilities that minimize environmental impacts, conserve energy, and reuse building materials where possible.

As a starting point for this conversion to a "greener" operation, the Department should establish a committee of operation, maintenance, and construction stakeholders to study the options available and develop a plan for becoming "greener".

## **Key Funding/Revenue Sources**

The City's Parks and Recreation Department has strong public support for parks, programs, and services. Even with this support, innovative measures will be required if the City is to keep up with the needs of one of the fastest growing urban areas in the state. Hickory should seek to create a combination of revenue sources to meet the future needs of local residents. The following funding sources are provided to help the City evaluate funding options.

### **Revenue Plan**

Upon adoption of the Needs Assessment, the Department, with input from civic leaders, should consider the establishment of a revenue plan. A revenue plan incorporates all available funding resources in a community, prioritizes them, and puts each option into a funding strategy. In a revenue plan,



the following funding alternatives are evaluated for their appropriate use in funding capital improvements and programs:

### **General Tax Revenues**

General tax revenues traditionally provide the principle source of funds for general operations and maintenance of a municipal and county recreation and parks system. Recreation, as a public service, is scheduled along with health, public safety, schools, etc. in annual budgets established by the governing authority. Assessed valuation of real and personal property provides the framework for this major portion of the tax base. This tax base is then used to fund the majority of municipal services. If the City wishes to offer a park and recreation system that provides quality of life and health maintenance opportunities for the community, the level of funding for parks and recreation must be maintained or increased.

### **User Fees**

Recreation facilities such as game fields, courts, and boat/water areas are typically covered by a combination of general tax revenues and user fees. All park and recreation systems have different values in place for how they fund various portions of a recreation experience. Tax subsidies vary by activity and the City will need to determine the level of commitment expected under these values or principles.

User fees are currently offsetting maintenance costs and provide limited capital improvements. The Department may need to update its current revenue and pricing policy as part of an overall revenue plan based on the values and guiding funding principles of the area. The cost of additional facilities and operation of those facilities must be increasingly borne by the user through user fees. The City of Hickory has a number of significant revenue sources of this type. Fees from the Henry Fork Regional Soccer Complex and Highland Fitness Center provide significant income which is then reflected in the operation and expansion of these programs.

The City currently has a policy of allowing citizens to participate in programs for free if they cannot afford the fee for participation. While this is a well-meaning policy that should be continued, policy guidelines

should be developed to provide greater control over how this policy is administered.

### **General Obligation Bonds**

General tax revenue for parks and recreation are usually devoted to current operations and maintenance of existing facilities. General obligation bonds are often used to finance capital improvements in parks. The State of North Carolina gives municipal and county governments the authority to accomplish this borrowing of funds for parks and recreation through the issuance of bonds not to exceed the total cost of improvements (including land acquisition). For purposes of paying the debt service on the sale of these bonds, cities are often required to increase taxes through reevaluation or increases in the tax rate. Total bonding capacities for local government is limited for parks and recreation to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation.

The City of Hickory has not used this method of financing park improvements in the past. This method of financing is one avenue that can speed the development of park facilities. Through a well thought out and publicly presented bond campaign, voters would be given the opportunity to choose to support park improvements through the sale of bonds.

An added value of a governing agency's bonding authority and capacity is its ability to use those funds to leverage other funding opportunities. Bonding enables government agencies to utilize funds to match federal grant-in-aid monies or state funds. General obligation bonds are still the greatest source utilized to fund park projects in North Carolina.

### **Revenue Bonds**

Revenue bonds have become a popular funding method for financing high use specialty facilities like golf courses, aquatic centers, ice rinks, tennis centers, and complexes for softball and soccer. The user, and other revenue sources, then repay the bonds. This revenue source would only be of use to the City if they choose to change their tax subsidy policy for using this type of funding. The City most likely would not seek out this option.

### **Limited Option or Special Use Tax**

Limited option or special use taxes can be established in various ways. A municipality or county can establish the tax by determining the source, such as property valuation, real estate transfer taxes, or sales tax. This option will require legislative approval. Typically, special use taxes are structured on sales tax or transfer taxes and earmarked for a project need. A governing body can approve a tax that is identified or earmarked on property valuation; however, other sources may require state approval. The idea behind a special option or limited option tax is that the tax is identified or limited for a special purpose or projects and the duration can also be limited to accomplishing the projects. The City most likely would not seek this option.

### **Park Foundation (Partners for Parks)**

A park foundation can be instrumental in assisting the City in acquiring land, developing facilities, sponsoring programs, and buying equipment for the Department. Park foundations typically create five funding strategies for accessing money to build up their coffers. These include a foundation membership, individual gifts, grants from other recognized and national foundations, long term endowments, and a land trust for future acquisitions.

### **General Foundations**

Another source of revenue is the direct contribution of money from General Foundations within the state or nation. Foundation funds should be sought for both development and construction of facilities as well as providing programs. They should include general-purpose foundations that have relatively few restrictions, special program foundations for specific activities, and corporate foundations with few limitations and typically from local sources. The Trust for Public Land and NC Rails-Trail have been instrumental in providing financial and technical assistance for open space conservation and development of greenways in North Carolina. Another source of local assistance may be large corporations with foundations established to provide grants for public projects. Companies such as Bank of America, Wachovia, and Progress Energy, may have available funding through existing grant programs, or they may

be interested in creating a program or partnership for specific projects. The Department should actively pursue grants from foundation and trust sources on a regional and national level. Information on trusts and foundations can be found through the Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003-3076 (<http://foundationcenter.org/>) and the Non-Profit Gateway to Federal Government agencies (<http://www.usa.gov/index.shtml>).

### **Federal and State Assistance**

Federal funding sources are available to assist with financing Master Plan recommendations. One of the oldest park funding sources has been available from the U.S. Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Unfortunately, funding through this program has been sporadic over the past few years. Other potential federal funding sources are the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

The North Carolina General Assembly passed a bill in 1994 creating a consistent source of funds for parks and recreation in the state. The Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) provides money for capital improvements, repairs, renovations, and land acquisition in state and local parks. Revenues from the state's portion of the real estate deed transfer tax support the fund. Revenues vary from year to year, but have ranged from \$50-\$55 million annually. Of the funds allocated, 65% go to the state parks system, 30% provide matching grants to local governments, and the remaining 5% go to the Coastal and Estuarine Water Beach Access Program. The maximum matching grant is limited to \$500,000 for a single project. The PARTF system allows an agency to apply for a 50/50 cost-sharing grant to develop or acquire parkland and facilities. The City has received funding through this program in the past and should continue to apply for funds through this program on a regular basis.

Additionally, the State can fund projects such as bikeways and pedestrian walks through the federally funded SAFTEA [formerly known as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)]. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) administers the funds and the local

government agency can use these funds for developing portions of any proposed greenway system. Local communities can also apply for assistance with pedestrian, bikeway, and greenway projects by applying for “NCDOT Enhancement Funds.”

Another source of state administered funding is through the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF). These funds are set aside for the acquisition of riparian properties, financing of innovative wastewater management initiatives, stormwater mitigation and stream bank restoration projects, support for greenways, and some planning programs. The acquired or purchased property can be used for recreation while protecting valuable water resources from the affects of urban encroachment. Money from this grant is particularly applicable to the preservation of open space, greenway development, and water access.

## Earned Income Opportunities

The City of Hickory Parks and Recreation Department currently generates funds to offset operational and capital costs through developing earned income opportunities. The Department should be constantly exploring opportunities for generating income. Some of these opportunities include:

- Sponsorships from private businesses operating in the area. Sponsorships typically come in the form of product sponsors, event sponsors, program sponsors, cause-related sponsors, and in-kind sponsors. These sponsorships can also take the form of naming rights for a facility or program. When this avenue of earned income is used, sponsorship/naming agreements should include very specific details with regards to sponsorship cost, duration, use of promotional materials, etc.
- Based on the needs of the Department, grants from local foundations, state and federal agencies, or individuals are typically created by staff. Most grants take time to prepare and require coordination effort with other agencies or departments from within the community to create a quality submittal. Grants also require extensive tracking of expenditures and outcomes for attaining future funding.
- Partnerships are the new area of earned income in that many communities are seeking to share costs in providing services to the community. Many times the partners are two or more government agencies. This earned income requires both agencies to have common visions, values, and goals for the partnership to be successful. Typically, partnerships follow some of these general trends:
  - Church partnerships in providing neighborhood parks or recreation services.
  - Youth sports associations where volunteers help the Department in providing the service to the community for the sports that they represent.
  - Trail sponsors that adopt sections of trails for maintenance and cleanup.
  - Adopt-a-park partners that help maintain park lands. These sponsors are typically in the form of neighborhood associations and businesses that are in proximity to parks.
  - School partnerships where both partners invest in the development of facilities and programs based on shared use of facilities and staff. This investment may be financial, or may include other means of support.
  - Special event partners that assist with the development of community-wide events.
  - Program partners who assist each other in providing services to the community. The YMCA, YWCA, or schools working with the Recreation and Parks Department to co-sponsor programs is an example of this partnership.
- Park foundation development is another earned income opportunity that park systems have embraced to enhance their facilities and programs. Park foundations help seek individuals who wish to invest in the system by providing donations of land, cash, or in-kind related services. These donations can add value to the City.
- Advertising and licensing in programs, facilities, and events sponsored by the Department. This earned income allows the City to leverage highly exposed advertising space where businesses will pay a premium for the right to advertise.
- Volunteer development programs are a highly valued earned income opportunity the Department

can create through effective recruitment. Volunteers can create advocacy and bring down the cost of programs and services.

- Privatizing the development of facilities or services is an earned income opportunity that is used by communities when they are unable to control the cost of labor and are unable to find the needed capital to develop a recreational facility or a concession operation. This gives the government agency a management tool to create an asset or improve a service without tapping into their own resources. Facilities that are typically considered for privatization may include golf courses, marinas, camping/RV facilities, boat rentals, bike rentals, equipment rentals, and other forms of concessions.
- Marketing strategies are an important component in developing earned income opportunities. The City of Hickory should consider assessing program participants \$1 for development of a marketing budget that will provide promotional services, research, and reserve funds for the Department. These promotional activities improve awareness of the activities provided by the Department and assist in bringing more revenue to the system by filling programs and facilities.

## Methods for Acquisition and Development

In order to meet future park needs, administration and staff must be creative in the acquisition and development of new facilities. Through this creativity, the City should explore a wide range of options for acquiring and developing parks. Methods available for acquiring and developing parks recommended in the Master Plan include the following:

### Fee Simple Purchase

The outright purchase is perhaps the most widely used method of obtaining parkland. Fee simple purchase has the advantage of being relatively simple to administer and to explain to the general public to justify a particular public expenditure. Unfortunately, fee simple purchase often is the most expensive means of obtaining and utilizing a property.

### Fee Simple with Lease-Back or Resale

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

### Long -Term Option

A long-term option is frequently used when a property is considered to have potential future value though it is not desired or affordable to the Department at the time. Under the terms of a long-term option, the Department agrees with the landowner on a selling price for the property and a time period over which the Department has the right to exercise its option. The first benefit of this protective method is that the option stabilizes the escalating land cost and establishes land use for the property. Secondly, the Department/City does not have to expend large sums of money until the land is purchased. Thirdly, the purchase price of the land is established. The disadvantage of this method is that a price must be paid for every right given by the property owner. In this case, the cost of land use stabilization and a price commitment comes in the form of the cost of securing the option.

### First Right of Purchase

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

### Land Trust

The role and responsibility of a Land Trust is to acquire parkland and open space while maintaining a well-balanced system of park resources representing outstanding ecological, scenic, recreational, and historical features. A Land Trust is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit corporation made up of key knowledgeable

leaders in the area who represent a cross section of interest and experience in recreation, historic properties, conservation, preservation, land development, and environmental issues. Their goals and responsibilities are to work with landowners to acquire parkland for current and future generations. The individuals appointed to the Land Trust must have knowledge of land acquisition methods and tools used to entice land owners to sell, donate, provide easements, life estates, irrevocable trusts, or a combination of all. This includes seeking out a knowledgeable land acquisition attorney who is trained in these areas to provide the most efficient and effective processes to achieve the balance of types of land to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan.

### **Local Gifts**

A significant, and yet often untapped, source of funding acquisition and development of local park projects is through a well-organized local gifts program. Donations of land, money, or labor can have a meaningful impact on the development of the City's park system.

The most frequently used type of gift involves the giving of land to be used for a park. The timing of such a donation can correspond with a PARTF grant application, thereby providing all or a significant portion of the local matching requirement associated with this fund. A similar use of gifts involves donated labor or materials, which become part of an improvement project and help to reduce project costs. The value of the services or materials can, in some cases, also be used to match non-local grant funds.

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

readily available to the public.

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

### **Life Estate**

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

### **Easement**

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

### **Zoning/Subdivision Regulations**

Some communities in North Carolina have zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations that require a developer to donate a portion of the property they are developing to the government agency to be used for public park land. Through these regulations zoning

ordinances, subdivision regulation, and mandatory dedications may be utilized to create new parkland at no cost to the community. Regulations can require that land is dedicated and/or compensation made to the City for the development of parkland. Currently the City of Hickory's ordinances do not include provisions for the dedication of park land.

# Appendix A

## Mack Mcleod

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**From:** Miles Champion  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2009 4:52 PM  
**To:** Mack Mcleod; Eric Starnes  
**Cc:** Jimmy Wilson  
**Subject:** Public pools - recirculation rates

On 5/20/09 and 5/21/09, recirculation flow tests were conducted on the George Ivey Pool and Ridgeview Pool. The results are as follows:

George Ivey Pool: Actual flow rate = 72 gal/min  
Required flow rate to meet one turnover per 6 hours: 320 gal/min

Ridgeview Pool: Actual flow rate = 166 gal/min  
Required flow rate to meet one turnover per 6 hours: 389 gal/min

To correct the flow rates, larger pumps must be installed. George Ivey's pump has significantly deteriorated but will not meet the requirements if it was renewed. Ridgeview's pump is working correctly but is undersized. I will obtain cost estimates for your use in budgeting the upgrades.

Eric and Jimmy, thanks a bunch for all the work getting the tests set up and running. They went just as planned.  
--Miles

A.Miles Champion, Jr., P.E.  
Engineering Division  
Office 323-7416  
Cell 302-3757



PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

**George Ivey Pool and Ridgeview Pool Improvements**

**City of Hickory Parks and Recreation Department**

June 5, 2009

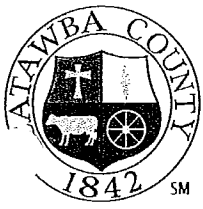
Phase 1 - Pressure test: Recirculation piping must be pressure tested prior to installing pumps to insure all external piping can withstand higher pressure and is leak-free. If leaks are detected in the recirculation piping system, then all underground piping from the building to the pool and through the pool walls must be replaced. **Cost estimate does not include replacement of any deficient recirculation piping.**

1.	Pressure test discharge piping	2,000
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Phase 2 – Recirculation pump replacement: Replacement of existing 7.5 hp recirculation pumps (one at each pool) with new 10 hp pumps to meet required circulation rate of (1) turn-over per (6) hours, including equipment, materials and labor. Installation of new starters and wiring. Replacement of main drains to meet current regulations.

2.	Mobilization	\$2,000
3.	Pump removal and replacement (2)	12,000
4.	Power wiring replacement	4,800
5.	Main drain removal/replacement (2)	20,000
6.	Misc. pipe fittings	1,000
7.	Replace pump inlet strainers	1,600
8.	Replace filter media	4,000
9.	Health Department plan review	600
	Subtotal	\$48,000
	Contingency	<u>\$7,200</u>
	<b>Total Estimated Project Cost</b>	<b>\$55,200</b>

Estimated delivery time for pumps is 4-6 weeks. Estimated delivery time for pump control panels is 2-3 weeks.



# CATAWBA COUNTY

P O Box 389 - Newton, North Carolina 28658 - (828) 465-8270 - Fax (828) 465-8276 - TDD (828) 465-8200  
Public Health – Environmental Health Division

May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Jimmy Wilson  
City of Hickory

Mr. Wilson,

This letter is to inform you that Ridgeview seasonal swimming pool located at 115 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. SW, Hickory will not be able to operate (receive a permit) until the turnover rate is at least 4 times within a 24 hr period and meets other usual standards. A test conducted at your pool by your group showed that the current turnover rate is about 2 times within 24 hrs. After speaking with Jim Hayes, Regional Environmental Health Supervisor, he stated that the pool must not operate until fixed since this department was notified about the issue. The reason why we will not permit the pool is due to the pool not turning over more than 4 times which could possibly affect the water quality of the pool. Once the pool is repaired to provide at least 4 times within 24hrs then you may turn in an application so that we can come out and inspect to issue a permit if applicable.

Also note that since your pool is a single main drain but greater than 12 inches, the drain cover will need to be changed by the next swimming season with the new ASME/ANSI A112.19.8-2007 or greater and still have the Stigl system still connected to the plumbing. Before installing the drain cover on the pool, we must physically see it and also once installed before the water is filled. You can also put in dual drains no less than 3 feet on center with the new required covers and do away with the Stingl System.

Please also remember that all other standards for permitting the pool must comply before issuing a permit.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me between 8am – 5pm.

Sincerely,

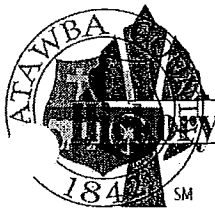
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Carpenter, R.S.".

Scott Carpenter, RS  
Environmental Health Supervisor  
100 A SW Blvd.  
PO Box 389  
Newton, NC 28658  
465-8258



*"Keeping the Spirit Alive Since 1842!"*





# CATAWBA COUNTY

P O Box 389 - Newton, North Carolina 28658 - (828) 465-8270 - Fax (828) 465-8276 - TDD (828) 465-8200  
Public Health – Environmental Health Division

May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Jimmy Wilson  
City of Hickory

Mr. Wilson,

This letter is to inform you that George Ivey Memorial seasonal swimming pool located at 830 16<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Hickory will not be able to operate (receive a permit) until the turnover rate is at least 4 times within a 24 hr period and meets other usual standards. A test conducted at your pool by your group showed that the current turnover rate is about 1 time within 24 hrs. After speaking with Jim Hayes, Regional Environmental Health Supervisor, he stated that the pool must not operate until fixed especially since it has had water quality issues in the past which caused your pool to be closed due to no chlorine registering on pool test kit. With the pool not turning over the required amount, this would possibly explain the little to no chlorine amounts in the pool in the afternoon during an inspection. Since this is a 6 point demerit on the pool inspection sheet and would result in a closure, we both feel that the pool should not be allowed to open until fixed.

Also note that since your pool is a single main drain but greater than 12 inches, the drain cover will need to be changed by the next swimming season with the new ASME/ANSI A112.19.8-2007 or greater. Before installing the drain cover on the pool, we must physically see it and also once installed before the water is filled.

Please also remember that all other standards for permitting the pool must comply before issuing a permit.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me between 8am – 5pm.

Sincerely,

Scott Carpenter, RS  
Environmental Health Supervisor  
100 A SW Blvd.  
PO Box 389  
Newton, NC 28658  
465-8258



*"Keeping the Spirit Alive Since 1842!"*



## Appendix B

## Hickory Parks and Recreation Pool Assessment

September 10, 2009 Pool Review

George Ivey Memorial Pool

### Pool Information (Current)\_

**Volume:** 118,215 Gals

**Turnover:** 24-26 Hours

**Flow:** ~82 GPM

**Filter Area:** 28.32 sq. ft at 2.8 ft/sec

**Skimmer Line:** 1.5" Schedule 40 (4)

Max Suction of 2" SCH 40 Pipe @ 6 ft/sec: 38 GPM

**Main Drain Line:** 6" Cast Iron

Max Suction of 6" Cast Iron Pipe (new) @ 6ft/sec: 488 GPM

**Estimated Age:** 50 plus years

### Pool Information (Recommended)

**Volume:** 118,215 Gals

**Turnover:** 6 Hours

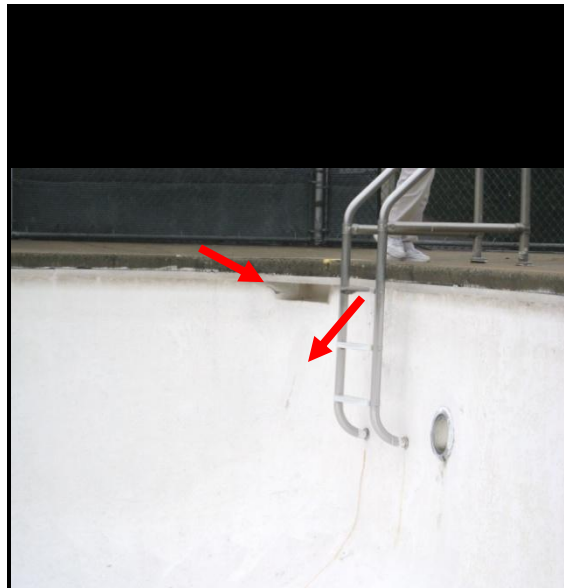
**Flow:** 329 GPM

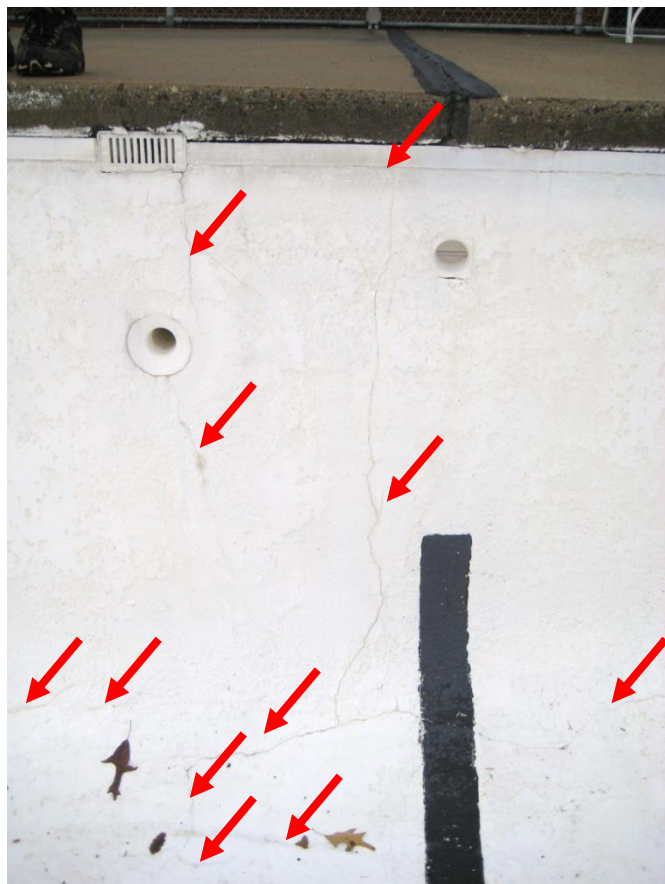
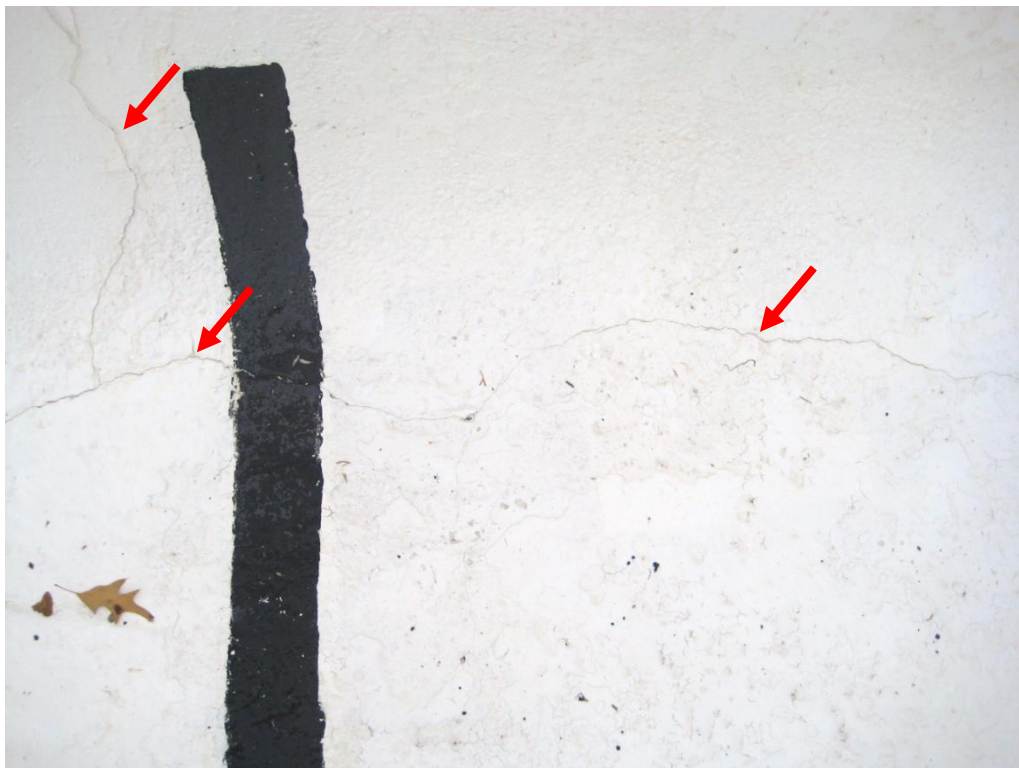
**Filter Area:** 27.36 sq. ft. at 12 ft/sec

**Skimmer Line:** Gutter system with gravity drop to surge tank or vacuum sand filter

**Main Drain Line:** Dual drain gravity system that meets all Federal, State, and Local codes

**Pool conditions:** The pool shell is showing signs of structural failure (locations defined by red arrows). Structural cracks are located in the corners and lateral cracks run the length of some cove transitions from pool wall to pool floor.





The pool floor in specific areas is settling at a faster rate and has caused a saddle in the middle of the pool (see photo below with red dashed box highlighting the area in question)



Due to the age of the pool and most of the plumbing, it is likely that the supply and return lines are cast iron. The cast iron piping has lost significant amount of flow due to corrosion build up inside the piping. The original pipe size was not adequately sized to allow the volume of water at safe velocities in order to meet State and Local Health Department Codes for a 6 hour or less turnover. Some repairs have been made and the repaired sections have been replaced with schedule 80 PVC. The pool currently has an estimated turnover rate of 24-26 hours under normal operational loads.

The four concrete skimmers are direct suction with a 2 inch supply to pump. The skimmers are also unequally balanced which prevents normal operation and limits surface skimming of the pool. The pool also has a single 6 inch cast iron direct suction main drain.



**Filtration:** The current pressure sand filters seem to be in good shape and can be salvaged for any future renovations.



**Chemical System:** The current saline system is functional but can't keep up with the free available chlorine demand during heavy loads. There is a secondary chlorination system that is a pressure system which can cause release of Chlorine gas when opened (marked with yellow arrow).



**Paddock Recommendation:** Due to age of the pool and the findings listed above, we have determined that the most effective course of action for the George Ivey Pool would be a complete renovation. The shell integrity is failing, the potential for leaks and structural failure are present. The filtration components including the return lines and supply lines are inadequately sized to meet the 6 hour or less turnover rate for State and Local Health Department Codes. The filters are in good working order and should be salvaged for any future renovations. The chemical treatment system is a safety hazard due potential release of chlorine gas from the pressure MA Chlorinators. The saline system is still operational and can be reused in future projects.

# Hickory Parks and Recreation

## Proposal for Repairs and Budget Numbers

October 22, 2009

### George Ivy Pool

#### Pool Shell Repairs

1. Remove the existing skimmers and skimmer plumbing
  - a. Perimeter saw cut two feet from pool edge vertically down through existing concrete deck, perimeter saw cut two feet on pool wall horizontally removing top portion of pool wall, and excavate area adjacent to pool removing all skimmer plumbing.
2. Replace newly excavated pool wall with Paddock perimeter gutter and re-plumb to existing pump room.
  - a. Grout area around newly installed Paddock gutter.
  - b. Caulk joint between the gutter and grout.
3. Replace floor of pool to bring the pool depth from 3 ft to zero entry and raise the deep end of the pool to 5 ft.
4. Replace single main drain with dual main drains. Remove and replace the existing plumbing from main drain to pump room.
  - a. Hand trim floor, compact, and place gravel
  - b. Dowel #4 rebar into the existing pool shell and retie structural steel.
  - c. Properly ground all steel components
  - d. Install new hydro static relief valve with hydro static relief tee's
  - e. Replace concrete with shotcrete to prevent shrinkage and possible leaks
  - f. Replace existing main drain line with new and penetrate through pump room wall
5. Hydro blast the painted pool finish, removing all paint and old marcite on pool walls.
  - a. Chip out any voids and repair minor structural cracks
6. Refinish/replace the pool finish with white marcite, break line tile, and depth markers.

#### Pump Room Repairs

1. Remove all equipment including pumps, filter, chemical feeder(s), chemical controllers, and all existing plumbing.

- a. Evaluate the existing filter conditions and determine if the filters can be reused for future project.
- 2. Replace filtration system to meet a 6 hour turnover for North Carolina State Pool Codes including pumps, filter, chemical feeder(s), chemical controllers, and all existing plumbing.

Budget Cost for renovating the existing Ridgeview Pool in order to meet state and local health codes.

Estimated cost (replacing filters):	\$295,000.00.....
Estimated cost (using existing filters):	\$285,000.00

**Exclusions:** This is not a complete scope of work and the budget numbers provided are strictly budgetary numbers and are not intended for final contract numbers. Please be advised that these numbers can elevate depending on delay and final start of project.

## Hickory Parks and Recreation Pool Assessment

September 10, 2009 Pool Review

Ridgeview Pool (Taft Broom Park)

### Pool Information (Current)\_

**Volume:** 123,120 Gals

**Turnover:** 13-15 Hours

**Flow:** ~157 GPM

**Filter Area:** N/A

**Skimmer Line:** 2" Schedule 80

Max Suction of 2" SCH 80 Pipe @ 6 ft/sec: 55.2 GPM

**Main Drain Line:** 4" Cast Iron

Max Suction of 4" Cast Iron Pipe (new) @ 6ft/sec: 215.4 GPM

**Estimated Age:** 50 plus years

### Pool Information (Recommended)

**Volume:** 123,120 Gals

**Turnover:** 6 Hours

**Flow:** 350GPM

**Filter Area:** 29.17 sq. ft. at 12 ft/sec

**Skimmer Line:** Gutter system with gravity drop to surge tank or vacuum sand filter

**Main Drain Line:** Dual drain gravity system that meets all Federal, State, and Local codes

**Pool conditions:** The pool shell is showing signs of structural failure (locations defined by red arrows). Structural cracks are located in all corners and lateral cracks run the length of all cove transitions from pool wall to pool floor. There is also past evidence of concrete failure with repairs.



Due to the age of the pool, and the age of most of the plumbing, it is likely that the supply and returns lines are cast iron. The cast iron piping has lost significant amount of flow due to corrosion build up inside the piping. The original pipe size was not adequately sized to allow the volume of water at safe velocities in order to meet State and Local Health Department Codes for a 6 hour or less turnover. Some repairs have been made and the repaired sections have been replaced with schedule 80 PVC. The pool currently has an estimated turnover rate of 13-15 hours under normal operational loads. The concrete gutter is gravity fed to a surge tank with a 2 inch supply line to the circulation pump. With a single 4 inch direct suction main drain, the pool has a suction hazard.



**Filtration:** The current pressure sand filter is a carbon steel Neptune Benson and shows evidence of internal corrosion. There are numerous small leaks where the tank wall has rusted through and has caused the tank to leak under operational pressure.



**Chemical System:** The current saline system is functional but can't keep up with the free available chlorine demand during heavy loads. There is a secondary chlorination system that is a pressure system which can cause the release of Chlorine gas when opened (marked with yellow arrow).

**Paddock Recommendation:** Due to age of the pool and the findings listed above we have determined that the most effective course of action for the Ridgeview Pool would be a complete renovation. The shell integrity is failing, and leaks and structural failure is imminent. The filtration components, including the return lines and supply lines are inadequately sized to meet the 6 hour or less turnover rate for State and Local Health Department Codes. The Filter is corroding, is inadequately sized, and therefore needs replacement. The chemical treatment system is a safety hazard due to the potential release of chlorine gas from the pressure MA Chlorinators. The saline system is still operational and can be reused in future projects.

# Hickory Parks and Recreation

## Proposal for Repairs and Budget Numbers

October 22, 2009

### Ridge View Pool

#### Pool Shell Repairs

1. Remove the existing skimmers and skimmer plumbing
  - a. Perimeter saw cut two feet from pool edge vertically down through existing concrete deck, perimeter saw cut two feet on pool wall horizontally removing top portion of pool wall, and excavate area adjacent to pool removing all skimmer plumbing.
2. Replace newly excavated pool wall with Paddock perimeter gutter and re-plumb to existing pump room.
  - a. Grout area around newly installed Paddock gutter.
  - b. Caulk joint between the gutter and grout.
3. Saw cut and remove the floor in the deep end adjacent to the single main drain. Extend the saw cut to the pool wall adjacent to the pump room and remove debris to expose existing cast iron plumbing.
4. Replace single main drain with dual main drains. Remove and replace the existing plumbing from main drain to pump room.
  - a. Dowel #4 rebar into the existing pool shell and retie structural steel.
  - b. Properly ground all steel components
  - c. Install new hydro static relief valve with hydro static relief tee's
  - d. Replace concrete with shotcrete to prevent shrinkage and possible leaks
  - e. Replace existing main drain line with new line and penetrate through pump room wall
5. Hydro blast the painted pool finish, removing all paint and old marcite.
  - a. Chip out any voids and repairing minor structural cracks
6. Refinish/replace the pool finish with white marcite, break line tile, and depth markers.

#### Pump Room Repairs

1. Remove all existing equipment including pumps, filter, chemical feeder(s), chemical controllers, and all existing plumbing.

2. Replace filtration system to meet a 6 hour turnover for North Carolina State Pool Codes including pumps, filter, chemical feeder(s), chemical controllers, and all existing plumbing.

Budget Cost for renovating the existing Ridgeview Pool in order to meet state and local health codes.

Estimated cost: \$252,000.00.....

**Exclusions:** This is not a complete scope of work and the budget numbers provided are strictly budgetary numbers are not intended for final contract numbers. Please be advised that these numbers can elevate depending on delay and final start of project.



# Appendix C

## Parks & Recreation Department

1451 8<sup>th</sup> Street Drive NE

Hickory, NC 28601

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### MEMORANDUM

To: Mack McLeod, Director  
Donna Andrews, Assistant Director  
Michele Wilkerson, Recreation Supervisor

From: Steve Jones, Senior Recreation Programmer

Date: August 22, 2008

Subject: 2008 Pool Report

The summer of 2008 was a much better summer than 2007. Our pools were fully staffed and both pools were open for the full season.

The staff that we had this summer was well qualified and performed their jobs well. One of our goals this summer was to provide swimming lessons to the public. We offered free lessons at both pools during the week of July 7 - 11. Although we only had about 12 children take advantage of these lessons, they were able to make a lot of progress.

The old chlorine tablet chlorinators were reinstalled at both pools to offer a supplemental chlorine system. The maintenance staff worked with the pool staff to try and insure that the salt chlorine generators were working as they should and were providing the correct amount of disinfectant.

#### Total Attendance

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Difference</u> (2007-2008)
George Ivey	3358	195	1767	+1572
Ridgeview	1009	903	1148	+245
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4367</b>	<b>1098</b>	<b>2915</b>	<b>+1817</b>

The George Ivey Pool saw a big decrease in attendance from 2006, but was up sharply from last year when a staffing shortage caused the pool to be open for only 7 days during the summer. This year's group total attendance was 872, in 2007 no groups used the pools. In 2006 the group total was 2040.

## Revenue

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Difference</u> (2007-2008)
George Ivey	\$4925	\$342	\$3254	+\$2912
Ridgeview	\$1474	\$1303	\$1986*	+\$683
Season Pass	\$310	\$0	\$50	+\$50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6709</b>	<b>\$1645</b>	<b>\$5290</b>	<b>+\$3645</b>

\*Includes \$121 billed to City of Refuge for user fees

## Salaries

The 2008 season lasted from June 14<sup>th</sup> to August 10<sup>th</sup>. The pools operated daily throughout the summer. The total of pool staff salaries for 2008 is \$18482. The 2007 total was \$9977 and the total for 2006 was \$21,043.

## Other expenses

Both Ridgeview and George Ivey Pools had large shade umbrellas installed as Capital Improvement Program items. The George Ivey bath house received a new roof.

Lifeguard shirts, shade umbrellas for the lifeguards and other supplies were purchased for \$351.

Pool paint, supplies and chemicals totaled \$5773.01.

<u>In Review</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Total Attendance	1098	2915	+1817
Total Revenue	\$1645	\$5290	+\$3645
Expenses (salaries, supplies, chemicals)	\$16027	\$25217	+\$9190

## FUTURE NEEDS

Areas on the bottoms of both pools are in poor shape. In the middle section of the Ridgeview Pool the bottom is cracked and large chunks have broken loose. The only demerits that the Ridgeview Pool received this year during its Health Inspection were for the broken areas on the bottom of the pool.

In the future, an additional shade umbrella for each pool as well as new deck furniture for both pools will be requested.

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