FINAL REPORT

Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Submitted to:

WAKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

February 2008

Submitted by:

Bucher, Willis & Ratliff Corporation

In Association with:

HadenStanziale
ETC/Leisure Vision, Inc.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A: PROJECT TEAM ..... A-I
Wake County Board of Commissioners ..... A-i
Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee ..... A-i
Core Planning Team ..... A-i
Consultant Team ..... A-i
B: DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION ..... B-I
C: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... C-I
Introduction ..... C-i
Citizen Preferences ..... C-ii
The Process ..... C-ii
Survey Results ..... C-ii
Summary of Key Survey Findings ..... C-ii
Goals and Action Strategies ..... C-iii
Goal #1 ..... C-iii
Goal #2 ..... C-iii
Goal #3 ..... C-iii
Goal #4 ..... C-iii
Goal #5 ..... C-iv
Goal #6 ..... C-iv
Goal #7 ..... C-iv
Existing Park Expansion and Future Park Acquisition and Development ..... C-iv
Operational Costs for Potential Future Projects ..... C-iv
D: VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS AND CORE SERVICE AREAS ..... D-I
Introduction ..... D-i
Wake County Government ..... D-i
Our Vision: a great place to live, work, learn and play ..... D-i
Our Mission: committed to collaboration, excellence ..... D-i
Wake County Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space ..... D-i
Mission Statement ..... D-i
Core Service Areas ..... D-i

CHAPTER 1: HISTORY 1-1
WHAT IS IMPORTANT ABOUT THE HISTORY OF WAKE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE? 1-1
1980 Plan 1-1
Overview 1-1
Outcomes 1-1
1986 Plan 1-1
Overview 1-1
Outcomes 1-1
1989 Plan 1-2
Overview 1-2
Outcomes 1-2
1998 Plan 1-2
Overview 1-2

Outcomes *1-2*
2003 Plan 1-2
Overview *1-2*
Outcomes *1-2*
Wake County Parks & Recreation Bonds 1-2
Summary of Historical Planning Documents 1-3

CHAPTER 2: CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT 2-1

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO INVOLVE CITIZENS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS? 2-1
Overview 2-1
The Seven Step Citizen Involvement Process 2-1
Step 1 – Key Stakeholder Interviews *2-1*
Step 2 – Progress Meetings with the Core Team and the Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee *2-2*
Step 3 – Meetings with Municipal Parks & Recreation Directors *2-2*
Step 4 – Citizen Survey *2-2*
Step 5 – Focus Groups *2-2*
Step 6 – Trail and Greenway Planning *2-2*
Step 7 – Report Meetings *2-2*
Key Issues 2-3
Rapid Growth *2-3*
Changing Demographics *2-3*
Funding *2-3*
Trail and Greenway System *2-3*
Marketing *2-3*
Active Recreation Versus Passive Recreation Demands *2-3*
Land Issues *2-3*

CHAPTER 3: DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS ANALYSIS 3-1

HOW DOES AN ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA HELP DEVELOP A PLAN? 3-1
Introduction 3-1
Population Estimate and Growth Projections 3-1
Population Distribution by Age 3-1
Population Distribution by Age 3-2
Overall Trends *3-2*
Median Age and Total Population *3-2*
Population Density 3-5
Income 3-5
Education 3-6
Application of Demographic Data and Environmental Conditions to Parks and Recreation Planning 3-6
Analysis of Climate *3-6*
Racial Composition *3-6*
Gender *3-7*
Age and Income *3-7*
Research by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Dr. John Crompton of Texas A & M University 3-7

CHAPTER 4: EXISTING PARKS AND PLANNING DOCUMENTS 4-1

WHAT DOES THE ANALYSIS OF PARK SYSTEMS AND EXISTING PLANNING DOCUMENTS TELL US? 4-1
Introduction 4-1
Relationship of Park Systems 4-1
Wake County Parks 4-1
State of North Carolina Parks 4-2
Relationship of Planning Documents 4-3
Wake County Consolidated Open Space Plan (COSP) 4-3
Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance (RLDO) 4-4
Municipal Master Plans 4-4
State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 4-5
Issues 4-5
North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan 4-6
Upper Neuse Clean Water Initiative (UNCWI) 4-6
Goals 4-6
Objectives 4-6
Issues to consider for the Wake County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update 4-6
Summary 4-7
Roles 4-7
County responsibilities 4-7
Municipal responsibilities 4-7
Parks, Trails, Greenways and Facility Opportunities 4-7
Planning Efforts 4-7

CHAPTER 5: PARK SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND PARK MAPPING 5-1

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF MAPPING AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE ANALYSIS OF THE PARK SYSTEM? 5-1
Introduction 5-1
Definitions 5-1
Open Space 5-1
Trails 5-1
Greenways 5-1
County Parks 5-1
School Parks 5-1
Future County Parks 5-3
Lake Myra County Park 5-4
Little River County Park 5-4
Southeast Wake County Park 5-4
Brady Jefcoat Property 5-4
Summary 5-15

CHAPTER 6: CITIZEN SURVEY 6-1

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPLETING A CITIZEN SURVEY? 6-1
Introduction 6-1
Overview of the Methodology 6-1
Selected Survey Results 6-1
Wake County Parks and Trails Visited Over the Past Year 6-2
Overall Physical Condition of All Facilities and Trails in Wake County Parks 6-3

Ways Respondents Learn About Activities *6-4*
Reasons that Prevent Respondent Households from Using Facilities and Programs More Often *6-5*
Open Space Options Respondent Households Would Support the Most *6-6*
Support for Wake County Concentrating on Large Regional Parks and Longer Trail Systems *6-7*
Support of Wake County Concentrating on Partnering with Cities and Towns *6-8*
Support of Wake County Concentrating on Partnering with Wake County Public School System, Cities, and Towns *6-9*
Areas Respondents Feel Are Most Important to Concentrate On *6-10*
Support for the Long Range Goal of Protecting 30% of Land Area *6-11*
Potential Benefits That Are Most Important to Respondent Households *6-12*
Potential Benefits Are Most Important to the Future of Wake County *6-13*
Prioritizing Resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division *6-14*
Summary of Key Findings 6-15

CHAPTER 7: GOALS AND ACTION STRATEGIES 7-1

WHAT ARE GOALS AND STRATEGIES? 7-1
Introduction 7-1
Goal #1 7-1
Strategy 1.1 ..... *7-1*
Strategy 1.2 ..... *7-2*
Goal #2 7-2
Strategy 2.1 ..... *7-2*
Strategy 2.2 ..... *7-3*
Strategy 2.3 ..... *7-3*
Goal #3 7-3
Strategy 3.1 ..... *7-3*
Strategy 3.2 ..... *7-3*
Strategy 3.3 ..... *7-4*
Strategy 3.4 ..... *7-4*
Strategy 3.5 ..... *7-4*
Strategy 3.6 ..... *7-4*
Strategy 3.7 ..... *7-4*
Strategy 3.8 ..... *7-4*
Goal #4 7-5
Strategy 4.1 ..... *7-5*
Strategy 4.2 ..... *7-5*
Goal #5 7-5
Strategy 5.1 ..... *7-5*
Strategy 5.2 ..... *7-6*
Goal #6 7-6
Strategy 6.1 ..... *7-6*
Strategy 6.2 ..... *7-6*
Goal #7 7-6
Strategy 7.1 ..... *7-6*
Strategy 7.2 ..... *7-6*
Strategy 7.3 ..... *7-6*
Strategies Matrix linked to Key Issues 7-7

CHAPTER 8: EXISTING AND FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT 8-1

WHAT WILL THE FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS BE AND WHAT WILL THEY COST? 8-1

Introduction 8-1

Future County Parks 8-2

Lake Myra County Park 8-3

Little River County Park 8-3

Southeast Wake County Park 8-4

Brady Jefcoat Property 8-4

Future Trails and Greenways 8-4

American Tobacco Trail South - 8-4

Swift Creek Greenway - 8-4

Neuse River Greenway - 8-4

Operational Costs for Potential Future Projects 8-5

LIST OF TABLES

Table C.1: Summary of Costs ..... C-iv
Table 1.1: Overview of Historical Wake County Planning Documents 1-3
Table 3.1: Percentage of College Graduates 3-6
Table 4.1: Wake County Parks and Opportunities 4-2
Table 4.2: Federal Lands and State Parks and Opportunities 4-3
Table 7.1: Future Protected Open Space 7-2
Table 7.2: Stakeholder Preferences for Important Initiatives 7-7
Table 8.1: Existing County Park Minor Repair & Improvements 8-1
Table 8.2: Community Use of Schools Program 8-1
Table 8.3: Existing County Park Master Planning 8-2
Table 8.4: Future County Park Projected Development Costs 8-3
Table 8.5: Summary of Costs 8-5

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Percentage Growth Comparison 3-1

APPENDICES

Appendix A ..... Focus Group Participants
Appendix B ..... Citizen Survey Executive Summary
Appendix C ..... Survey Instrument
Appendix D ..... Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance (RLDO) Critique
Appendix E ..... Park Inventory Worksheets
Appendix F ..... Other Plan Review

(*This Page Left Blank Intentionally*)

A: PROJECT TEAM

Wake County Board of Commissioners

Joe Bryan, Chairman
Betty Lou Ward, Vice Chair
Paul Coble
Lindy Brown
Kenn Gardner
Tony Gurley
Harold Webb

Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee

Sig Hutchinson, Chairman
Sherry Johnson
John Lane
Wilson Laney
Margaret Newbold
Larry Perry
Dennis Pitts
Jamie Ramsey
Sarah Robertson
Bill Simmons
Carlyle Teague

Core Planning Team

Wake County Parks, Recreation & Open Space
Wake County Facilities Design & Construction
Wake County Geographic Information Services
Wake County General Services Administration
Wake County Budget Management Services
Wake County Manager's Office
Wake County Public School System
North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission
City of Raleigh Parks & Recreation
Town of Wake Forest Parks & Recreation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Capital Area Soccer League
North Raleigh Athletic Association

Consultant Team

BWR, Kansas City, Missouri
HadenStanziale, Charlotte, North Carolina
ETC/Leisure Vision, Olathe, Kansas

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

B: DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

Wake County's parks and open spaces do more than provide recreational opportunities for our residents; they also represent a cultural identity and a natural legacy. It is the goal of our staff to provide well-maintained facilities, creative educational opportunities, and top-notch services that allow people to enjoy their outdoor experiences. This Master Plan is an analysis of where we are now, how we envision our parks and open spaces in the future, and what challenges and opportunities we face in implementing our vision.

The mission of Wake County's Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space is to acquire and maintain parks and natural areas that promote environmental and cultural resource stewardship and provide safe recreational and educational opportunities for all County citizens. Our Division operates seven park and trail facilities. Last year these facilities had a combined visitation of 914,278 patrons. Our core services include:

- Open Space - Lands that preserve natural resources, wildlife, and help provide clean air and drinking water. Open spaces help conserve Wake County's natural resources and provide a place for citizens to enjoy passive recreation like hiking.
- Recreation & Leisure - Facilities and amenities – trails, volleyball courts, boat rentals, picnic shelters, etc., that allow citizens to enjoy more active recreation.
- Environmental and Cultural Education – A wide variety of educational programs for all ages and interests that introduces citizens to the history and natural environments of Wake County.

Our parks offer many opportunities for recreation and exploration – exhilarating mountain biking, sailing across Lake Crabtree, picnicking with your family, horseback riding along the American Tobacco Trail, watching the waterwheel turn on the last remaining gristmill in Wake County, learning about the flora and fauna that call piedmont North Carolina home… something to meet almost every interest can be found minutes from home.

Our Open Space program, which strives to protect water quality through targeted land acquisition, has protected over 3,600 acres of land across Wake County. Our program has partnered with local municipalities, the state and local land trusts to reach toward our goal of conserving 30 percent of the total land of the county. At the present time, approximately 56,000 acres of public parks, open space and greenways are protected within Wake County.

The future also holds a number of challenges. Our County's population continues to grow at a rate of nearly 100 people per day and the demand on our facilities and programs is increasing. Our Division is acquiring land and beginning the process of planning additional County parks as well as investing in facility upgrades of our current facilities.

Within Wake County's geographic boundaries, parks and recreation services and facilities are provided by twelve municipal governments, the County, the State of North Carolina, the US Army Corps of Engineers and a host of private and non-profit organizations. This makes communication, coordination, collaboration, and planning essential to our future success. The Master Plan is a critical step to ensuring that we can reach our goals.

Wake County's vision is to be a great place to live, work, learn and play! This Master Plan positions the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space as a key pillar of this vision by reflecting who we are and where we want to go, and by defining the challenges and opportunities we face.

Christopher Snow, Director
Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

C: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

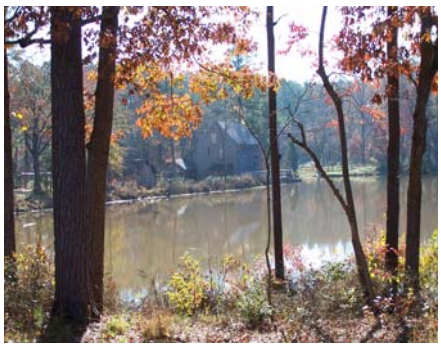
This 2007 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan follows previous plans completed in 1980, 1986, 1989, 1998 and 2003. The strategic initiatives included in each Plan advanced the parks and open space system to where it is today. The emphasis in this Plan is on:

- Continuation of the Division's core services including recreation and leisure, open space, and education at existing and new County parks;
- Continuation of the Division's role as a provider of large parks and as a facilitator and partner to the school system, municipalities and special interest groups who share common goals for land acquisition, environmental protection, trails, greenways and co-location of park/schools;
- The validation of the Division's primary role of protecting the environment by continued pursuit of the open space policies and strategies established by the Board of Commissioners;
- The importance of providing for an environmental stewardship program;
- The need to seek support for financing planned improvements to existing County parks and four potential new County parks;
- The value of leveraging resources by strengthening partnerships with municipalities, the school system and special interest groups who share common goals; and
- The very high priority of working with partners to facilitate the development of regional trails and greenways.

Citizen Preferences

The Process

Strategic initiatives in the Master Plan were based, to a large degree, on the preferences expressed by citizens and stakeholders in the seven step involvement process. That process included:



1. Key stakeholder interviews
2. Numerous meetings with the Core Team and the Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee
3. Meetings with Municipal Parks & Recreation Directors
4. A statistically valid citizen survey
5. Focus Groups relative to natural resources, trails, and active recreation
6. A workshop with trail and greenway experts
7. Public meetings to present the draft and final reports

Survey Results

Preferences expressed in the statistically valid citizen survey provide insights about the demand for new services and validation of the support for past accomplishments which should be considered as resources are allocated toward future park development and maintenance of existing parks. Key findings from the survey are detailed below:

Summary of Key Survey Findings

- Lake Crabtree County Park is the most heavily used park.
- The physical condition of the park system is rated high with 66% of respondents rating it as excellent or good.
- Marketing efforts need to be improved; for example, 25% of respondents do not know the locations of the County parks; however, this exceeds a national benchmark of 13%.
- Support for the acquisition of open space is very high with 90% of respondents being in favor of it.
- Walking and hiking trails are the highest rated new facilities that citizens want.
- Citizens want the County to expend its resources on large regional parks and longer trails, in fact, 76% expressed their support for this choice for resource allocation.
- Citizens want the County to partner with municipalities to acquire open space for environmental purposes; 84% are supportive of this endeavor.
- 78% of the respondents are supportive of the County's effort to partner with the school district, cities and towns to co-locate parks and facilities adjacent to schools.
- 78% of the respondents are supportive of the County's effort to protect 30% of its land area for environmental stewardship, water quality, large parks and trails.
- Personal benefits of the County providing parks, recreation and open space services include health and wellness.
- Citizens expressed a priority for improvements and maintenance to existing County Parks followed by the acquisition of new parkland and open space.

Goals and Action Strategies

Seven goals have been identified in the Master Plan to target the efforts needed for the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space to solidify its position in Wake County as an important partner in the efforts to protect the environment while simultaneously providing positive leisure experiences for citizens to enjoy. Listed below are the goals and selected strategies that are detailed in the body of the Master Plan:

Goal #1 – To position the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space (the Division) as a valued partner in the vision of Wake County

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Continue core services of open space, recreation and leisure, and education;
- Continue its role as a provider of large parks and as a facilitator and partner to the school system, municipalities and special interest groups who share common goals for land acquisition, environmental protection, trails, greenways and co-location of park/schools;
- Demonstrate initiative with internal County departments and external government agencies concerning land use plans, land acquisition, impact fees, and partnership opportunities;
- Assume a strong leadership role in coordinating the planning and development of the trail and greenway system among municipalities; and
- Organize a Visioning Workshop to seek key stakeholder consensus on the resources needed for the Plan's implementation.

Goal #2 – To maintain and enhance the core services of Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Protect the environment through acquisition and stewardship of open space;
- Provide facilities and amenities that allow citizens to enjoy recreational activities; and
- Provide cultural and environmental education programs that introduce citizens to the history and natural environments in Wake County.

Goal #3 – To be proactive with initiatives, that result in long-term sustainability of the Division and the environment

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Set funding targets for County park maintenance, improvement and development;
- Identify a funding source for future County parks;
- Modify the Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance;
- Analyze long term regional park lease agreements;
- Formalize all partnership and interagency agreements;
- Ensure adequate and qualified staff to sustain the level of service; and
- Acquire technology necessary to operate at the highest levels of efficiency.

Goal #4 – To market the benefits and services of the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Promote the environmental, health, social, and economic benefits, which result from its efforts; and
- Market the services provided by park facilities, programs, and events to a variety of audiences.

Goal #5 – To continue to serve the citizens of Wake County in our three core service areas and develop performance measures to track and report our success

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Create performance measures to gauge customer satisfaction, demand, and needs; and
- Create internal performance measures to address process requirements, such as registration, reservation, and facility assessments.

Goal #6 – To create a regional park land acquisition and development plan

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Collaborate with partners to identify land for future regional park development;
- Commit resources to a regional park system connected by trails and greenways in collaboration with partners;
- Develop master plans for current and future parks; and
- Develop a priority approach to land acquisition in recognition of the level of need, limited resources, availability, and the needs of municipalities.

Goal #7 – To participate in the planning and collaboration of municipal and regional trail and greenway plans

To accomplish this goal, the Division will:

- Facilitate workshops with municipalities, and trail and greenway experts to collaboratively review existing trail and greenway maps and plans;
- Become the repository for all trail and greenway plans and continuously update the corridors within the County, the connections to adjacent counties; and
- Use directives from the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission for the development of greenways to create habitats for wildlife, wildlife viewing opportunities, and walking trails.

Existing Park Expansion and Future Park Acquisition and Development

This Master Plan calls for the planning, expansion and improvements of several existing County parks and trails and the acquisition and development of new County parks. Those parks and trails and an opinion of their development costs are shown summarized in Table C.1.

Table C.1: Summary of Costs

Summary of Costs								
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total
Existing County Park Repair & Improv.	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$1,750,000
Community Use of Schools	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$6,200,000
Existing County Park Master Planning	$0	$37,500	$37,500	$25,000	$25,000	$80,000	$100,000	$305,000
Future County Park Projects	$0	$1,890,000	$4,620,000	$5,270,000	$4,735,000	$4,780,000	$675,000	$21,970,000
Totals	$1,050,000	$3,177,500	$5,707,500	$6,545,000	$5,810,000	$6,110,000	$1,825,000	$30,225,000

Operational Costs for Potential Future Projects

Operational costs associated with the four new County park facilities: Lake Myra, Little River, Southeast, and Brady Jefcoat, can only be projected based on current operational expenditures at existing County park facilities. The conceptual programs developed for each of the proposed facilities also impacts operational costs. The current operational figures at existing County parks vary based on the size of the facility and programs offered. The 2007 operational figures range from approximately $158,000 to $439,000. It can be expected that any new County park facilities will require similar operating funds.

Concluding Statements

1. The Master Plan identifies county park facilities, that when developed, achieve the level of parks and leisure services needed by Wake County.
2. The Division's core services of open space, recreation and leisure, and cultural and environmental education are on target.
3. There's an increasing need to collaborate and partner with municipalities in the provision of parks, recreation, trails and greenways throughout Wake County.
4. Existing Wake County park facilities are aging and will need higher levels of maintenance and renovation.
5. The opportunities to acquire and protect open space and parkland are decreasing as the County continues to develop and grow, thereby limiting the potential for expansion and achievement of the primary goal of protecting the environment.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

D: VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS AND CORE SERVICE AREAS

Introduction

Wake County Government and Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space are driven by a mission, and/or vision, which are detailed below.

Wake County Government

Our Vision: a great place to live, work, learn and play

Wake County will be a great place to live, work, learn and play. It will be a place where people are self-sufficient, enrich their lives, respect the environment, appreciate their heritage, participate in government, and plan for a better tomorrow.

Our Mission: committed to collaboration, excellence

To improve the economic, education, social well-being, and physical quality of the community, we are committed to collaboration, service excellence and embracing new approaches to more effectively meet the ever-changing needs of our customers.

Wake County Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Mission Statement

Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space shall acquire and maintain parks and natural areas that promote environmental and cultural resource stewardship and provide safe recreational and educational opportunities for all county citizens.

Core Service Areas

Based on its staff and facility capabilities, historical alignment with programs and services that are provided to citizens, and budget allocation for all Division resources, the core service areas have been established in Wake County as:

Open Space – lands that preserve natural resources, wildlife, and help provide clean air and drinking water. Open spaces help conserve Wake County's natural resources and provide a place for citizens to enjoy passive recreation like hiking.

Recreation and Leisure – facilities and amenities that allow citizens to enjoy more active recreation – trails, volleyball courts, boat rentals, picnic shelters, fishing, etc.

Environmental & Cultural Education – site based cultural and environmental education programs which introduce citizens to the history and natural environments in Wake County.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

CHAPTER 1: HISTORY

What is important about the history of Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space?

It is important to understand where Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space has been in order to learn where it needs to go in the future. Before 1980, there was no comprehensive Park System Master Plan for Wake County. In that year, the first plan was completed and has been revised five times since then. Through the implementation of that original plan and its revisions, the foundation for this plan was created.

1980 Plan

Overview

The 1980 Master Plan basically positioned the County as a Parks and Recreation provider. Prior to the development of the 1980 Plan, County staff had been providing technical assistance in two categories: a) municipal park plans in need of financial assistance from a federal program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); and, b) awarding of grants through the County's Grant-in-aid Program. It became apparent at this time that a formal master plan was needed to guide the future development of the County and to formally establish the County's role in parks and recreation so that resources would be allocated appropriately.

Outcomes

The 1980 Plan inventoried all parks in the County, including municipalities; it established standards based on guidelines developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA); recommended the role that the County should play in meeting the facility and acreage needs that were suggested in the NRPA Guidelines: and presented the concept of a future greenway plan which was later adopted by the Board of Commissioners in 1981.

A planning decision was made to divide the County into quadrants and locate a County park in each quadrant. Tracts of land held by public agencies or quasi-public agencies were given special consideration. This initiative led to Lake Crabtree County Park and the identification of Harris Lake County Park. It was also determined that the County would partner with schools to provide additional active recreation space to meet the District Park needs that include more active recreation opportunities in the unincorporated areas.

1986 Plan

Overview

The 1986 Plan was a revision of the 1980 Plan. It updated the population estimates; provided new facility and park acreage needs based on the population increases in accordance with NRPA Guidelines; and, the successes of the school/park partnership since 1980. The plan also identified further partnerships with public agencies in the development of County park facilities. Specifically, Blue Jay Point County Park was identified.

Outcomes

The 1986 Plan recommended spending the first 1985 County park bond of $4M on new County Parks, and articulated the need for linear parks and open space.

1989 Plan

Overview
The 1989 Plan was a revision of the 1986 Plan which updated the population figures; continued to outline the County's role in parks and recreation; and, some quantification of the value of the Division in County Government as a partial response to fiscal pressures that were occurring at that period of time.

Outcomes
The 1989 Plan resulted in recommendations to develop an Open Space Master Plan and targeted the Little River Reservoir as a future park in eastern Wake County. This decision positioned the Division to allocate future bond money on land acquisition in addition to the development of leased property. A subsequent master plan specific to school parks in 1992 and the 1989 master plan led to the 1993 bond.

1998 Plan

Overview
The 1998 Plan was a revision of the 1989 Plan. It updated the population estimates and facility needs.

Outcomes
Analysis of population estimates and facility needs resulted in the recognition that there was a deficit of active recreation in the County. Based on the facility deficit, it was decided to initiate, for the first time, a formal partnership with municipalities for the development of Athletic Complexes. The development of the athletic complexes was in addition to the on-going commitment to develop and manage County parks and school parks. Although the idea of partnering with municipalities to develop athletic complexes was favorably received by the Board of Commissioners, it did not advance due to fiscal implications and the decision that the provision of athletic complexes was better left to the municipalities.

2003 Plan

Overview
The 2003 Plan was a revision of the 1998 Plan. It was a broader plan than previous versions with more mention of partnerships, trails and facilities. The plan included a detailed inventory of parks and recreation facilities throughout Wake County.

Outcomes
Results of the 2003 Plan were recommendations for more cooperative efforts on planning with an emphasis on completion of the American Tobacco Trail; Yates Mill County Park; and land acquisition in southeast Wake County. These recommendations were implemented. A further recommendation of the need to partner with non-profits and municipalities on potential athletic complexes to meet the demand for active recreation has thus far not been a priority for the County.

Wake County Parks & Recreation Bonds

In 1985, Wake County successfully issued its first bond for parks and recreation facilities totaling $4 million. Proceeds from the bond went toward the development of the first Wake County Park at Lake Crabtree, and subsequently Blue Jay Point County Park. Development of these facilities helped establish a high standard for Wake County park facilities.

In 1993, Wake County issued its second successful bond for parks and recreation totaling $10 million. This referendum provided a significant amount of funding needed to move the school park program forward by aiding in the development of twelve (12) school parks across Wake County. In addition, proceeds went toward the development of Harris Lake County Park, Crowder District Park, and land acquisition for the future Little River County Park.

Since the late 1990's Wake County has developed one county park, Yates Mill County Park, through a combination of sources including private donations, the County's Major Facilities Trust Fund, and its seven year Capital Improvement Program. The American Tobacco Trail also benefited with funding proceeds from the County's Major Facilities Trust Fund, which was used as leverage toward federal transportation grant funding.

Several future county parks have been identified including Lake Myra County Park, Brady Jefcoat property, Little River County Park, and Southeast Wake County Park. Consideration needs to be given to the funding mechanisms for development of these facilities, including voter-approved bonds.

Summary of Historical Planning Documents

The table below is a brief synopsis of the historical planning documents in Wake County which began in 1980.

Table 1.1: Overview of Historical Wake County Planning Documents

PLANNING YEAR	PLANNING EMPHASIS
1980	▪ Established the County as a Park and Recreation provider ▪ Established standards ▪ Developed the Greenway Concept ▪ Developed the co-location concept with the school system ▪ Determined that a park would be located in each quadrant of the county ▪ Awarding of grants through grant-in-aid program
1985	▪ First Wake County bonds were issued in the amount of $4.0 Million to develop Lake Crabtree County Park and Blue Jay Point County Park
1989	▪ Articulated the need for linear parks and open space ▪ Allocated the expenditure of the $4 Million Park Bond
1993	▪ Second Wake County bonds were issued in the amount of $10.0 Million to advance the school park program, development of Harris Lake County Park and Crowder District Park and land acquisition for the future Little River County Park
1998	▪ Determined the need for an Open Space Master Plan ▪ Targeted the Little River Reservoir as a future County park ▪ The Little River park designation positioned the Division to allocate future bond money on land acquisition and the development of leased property

PLANNING YEAR	PLANNING EMPHASIS
2003	▪ Recommended completion of the American Tobacco Trail, Historic Yates Mill County Park and land acquisition in southeast Wake County ▪ Recommended a partnership effort with non-profits and municipalities on athletic complexes ▪ Recommended cooperative planning efforts

Coming in the Next Chapter…

Examine how the citizens of Wake County were involved in the creation of their own plan through a variety of citizen involvement venues.

CHAPTER 2: CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Why is it important to involve citizens in the planning process?

The citizens for whom plans are developed are an invaluable resource as their preferences are expressed during the planning process. Often, because they experience their community on a daily basis, they can provide insight to problems that may not otherwise be taken into account and offer ideas to improve the existing conditions that may not be presented by the consultant. Citizens are more receptive to a plan that considers their personal concerns; they know that it is not a static document that has been imposed upon them.

Overview

In order to develop a truly Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Wake County Staff determined that citizen input from County residents was necessary. The consulting team of BWR and ETC/Leisure Vision collaborated to develop and facilitate a seven step citizen involvement process which was designed to encourage public participation and to provide quality listening opportunities for the consultant as the needs and desires of citizens were expressed.

The Seven Step Citizen Involvement Process

The key parts of the seven step process included meetings with the Core Team and the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee; stakeholder interviews; a statistically valid citizen survey; and focus groups. The input from participants proved to be extremely vital in creating the "preferred future" for the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division. The outline of the process is detailed below:

Step 1 – Key Stakeholder Interviews
Key stakeholders were identified based on their use of county-owned facilities; knowledge of the history and management of the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space; political involvement; and partnerships. The list below represents those key stakeholders who were interviewed.

- Wake County Community Services Director
- Wake County Commissioners
- Wake County Manager
- Wake County Public School System
- Wake County Facilities Design & Construction
- Capital Area Soccer League
- Wake County Park, Recreation and Open Space Director
- Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee Chairperson
- City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Director
- Town of Cary Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Director

Step 2 – Progress Meetings with the Core Team and the Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee
Meetings were held with the Core Team and the Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee to identify key issues facing the County; to review and discuss the citizen survey results; and, to solicit their advice on the goals and action strategies contained in the Master Plan.

Step 3 – Meetings with Municipal Parks & Recreation Directors
Municipal Directors provided insights about key issues which were used to create the citizen survey and to identify goals that should be developed for consideration as master plan action strategies are drafted in the final master plan.

Step 4 – Citizen Survey
Following Step 3, BWR coordinated with ETC/Leisure Vision to create an effective citizen survey instrument. After the instrument was drafted by ETC/Leisure Vision, it was reviewed by the Core Team and County Staff prior to its distribution to randomly selected households throughout Wake County.

Step 5 – Focus Groups
When survey responses were received and the results were analyzed, BWR facilitated several focus groups to probe the deeper meaning of the survey results. Focus group topics included:

- Active Recreation
- Natural Resources
- Trails and Greenways

Municipal agencies, non-profit service providers, and advocates from a variety or organizations participated in the focus groups. A list of agencies and organizations that participated in the focus groups can be in found in Appendix A.

Step 6 – Trail and Greenway Planning
County staff and the consultant team facilitated a workshop with trail and greenway specialists to identify and map realistic corridors which connect city routes to the county, the county to regional trails and county parks, and facilities to trails.

Step 7 – Report Meetings
Draft and Final Report meetings were held in August and September 2007 to present the findings, goals and action strategies contained in the Master Plan.

Key Issues

Emerging from the Seven Step Citizen Involvement Process were eight key issues: a) clarification of what the County's role should be in the future; b) the impact of rapid growth; c) changing demographics and the need to understand the preferences based on age, gender, ethnicity, education and income; d) funding; e) the trail and greenway system; f) marketing; g) active versus passive demands of county resources; and, h) land issues. The eight issues are detailed below:

The County's Role – There is a need to confirm the County's role in parks and recreation for several reasons, including: the expansion of municipal boundaries into the unincorporated areas of the county; the increasing need for parks and recreation services; and the coordination of park and recreation facility development throughout the county and municipalities.

The County's role needs to be confirmed

Rapid Growth - Rapid growth results in the need for more services. More services require more land at a time when it is more difficult to acquire due to its cost and the competition with developers and other government agencies.

Changing Demographics – The County is growing rapidly, approximately 35,000 new citizens each year (98 new citizens per day of which 1/3 are born in the County and 2/3 move to the County from elsewhere). Rapid growth brings new people with new ideas and greater demand on existing facilities; greater demand for new facilities; and, preferences based on age, gender, income, ethnicity and education.

Funding

- Capital funding for the development of existing and future County parks is difficult to come by
- The division has recently undergone an internal staffing study, which indicates various needs at certain facilities
- Funding for schools consumes a large percentage of the county's budget

Trail and Greenway System – The trail and greenway system is incomplete and current greenway and trail development is uncoordinated throughout the county.

Marketing – The County's Division of Parks, Recreation & Open Space does not market and promote itself in a manner which results in citizen recognition for its efforts.

Active Recreation Versus Passive Recreation Demands – More competition for active recreation versus passive land uses; athletics versus other uses; and, what is the county's role in the acquisition, development and management of land/facilities for active uses.

Land Issues

- The RLDO (Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance) needs to be reviewed.
- Multiple governmental agencies competing for the same land; e.g. the school system and other municipal agencies and developers often have their eyes on the same properties due to the location and topography of the property.
- Land acquisition by the County in partnership with others; i.e. cities.
- There is a need for an open space stewardship program and a natural resource inventory.
- Five of the seven parks are on leased property. Need to plan for any changes to terms and conditions upon expiration of any lease arrangements.
- The need for more partners for future park development.
- What is the future of Harris Lake County Park with proposed increased lake levels associated with expansion of the nuclear power plant?

Coming in the Next Chapter…

A look at Wake County's population in terms of age, race, income, and education and application of this data to the citizens' park and recreation needs.

CHAPTER 3: DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

How does an analysis of demographic data help develop a plan?

While the citizen involvement process gives valuable information for citizen preferences, it does not provide a large enough cross-section of the population to make overall decisions for households of all ages, ethnicities, educational levels and incomes. This analysis gives the consultant a clearer picture of the composition of the County's population profile, and thus enhances the understanding of citizen needs and ultimately the recommendations for new or renovated facilities and services.

Introduction

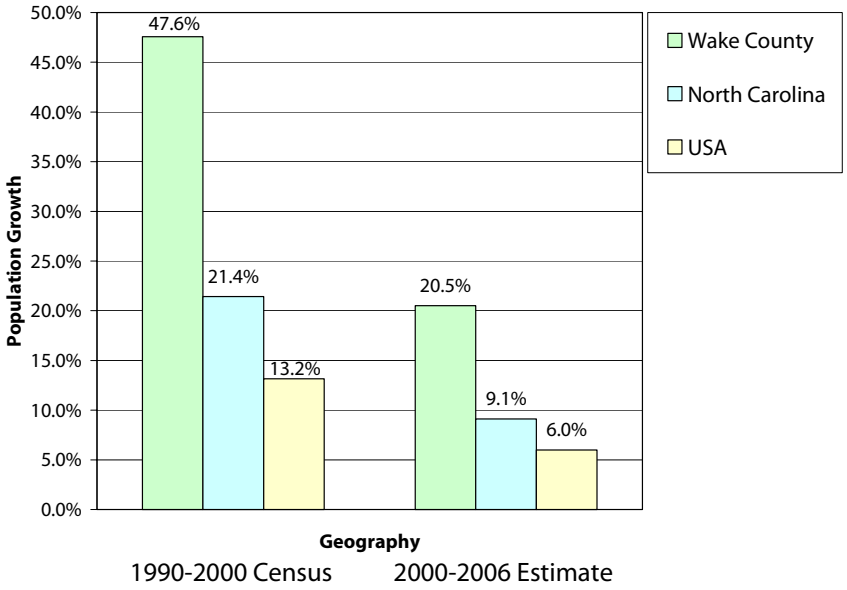
The analysis of demographic conditions is very important to the planning process as age, ethnicity, gender, income, and education are used to predict citizen preferences for programs and facilities that are most desirous for their use during leisure time. Of all demographic factors, age is the most important predictor of the program and facility preferences that citizens will have. Demographic data provided by Wake County is used in this chapter to identify program and facility tendencies, based on demographic traits, and to emphasize the thought processes that must be used by staff when decisions of this type are being considered for resource allocation.

Age is one of the most important predictors of the programs and facilities that citizens want

Population Estimate and Growth Projections

Wake County has been experiencing a sharp increase in population since the early 1990s. According to the U.S. Census Bureau its total population estimate as of July 1, 2006 was 785,990 people, up from 627,846 in 2000 and 423,380 in 1990. The County is already the second most populated county in North Carolina, and it is expected to gain an estimated 35,000 people each year for the next two years. Its rapid growth compared to the state of North Carolina and the nation is shown below in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Percentage Growth Comparison



Wake County's population is growing three times as fast as the nation and twice as fast as North Carolina

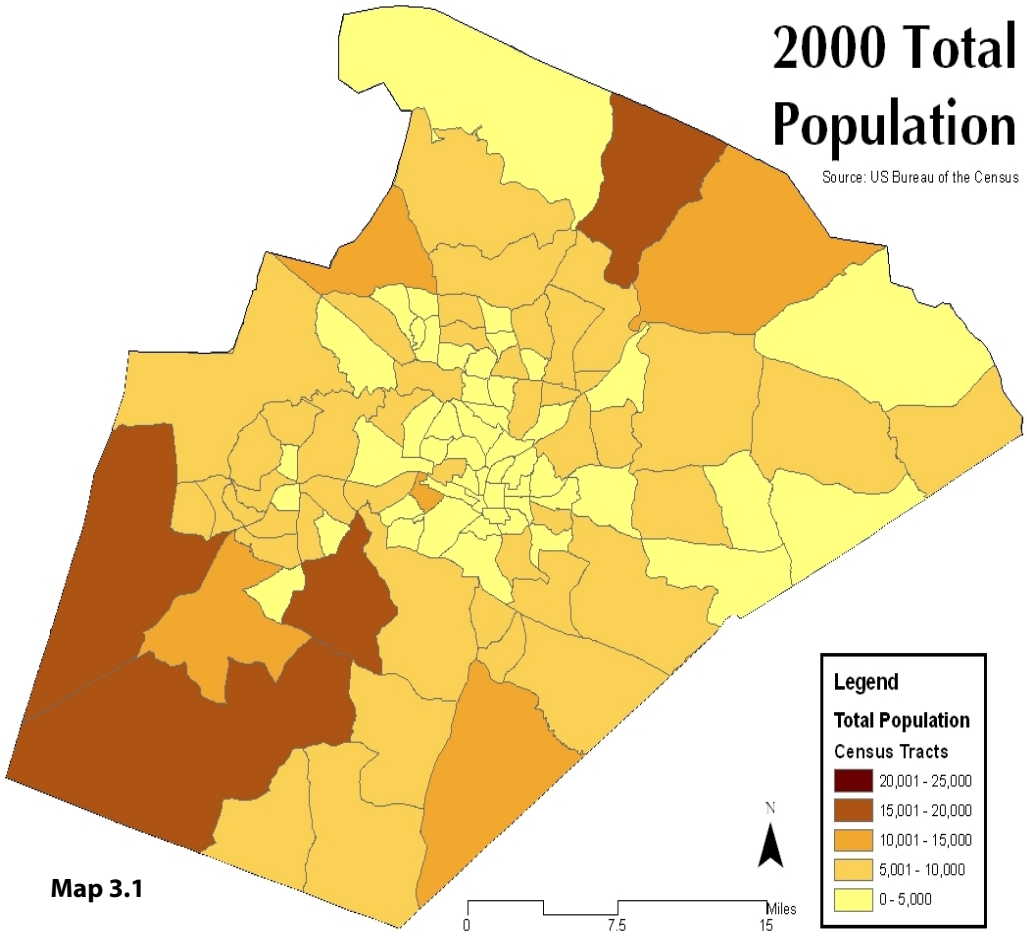
Population Distribution by Age

Overall Trends

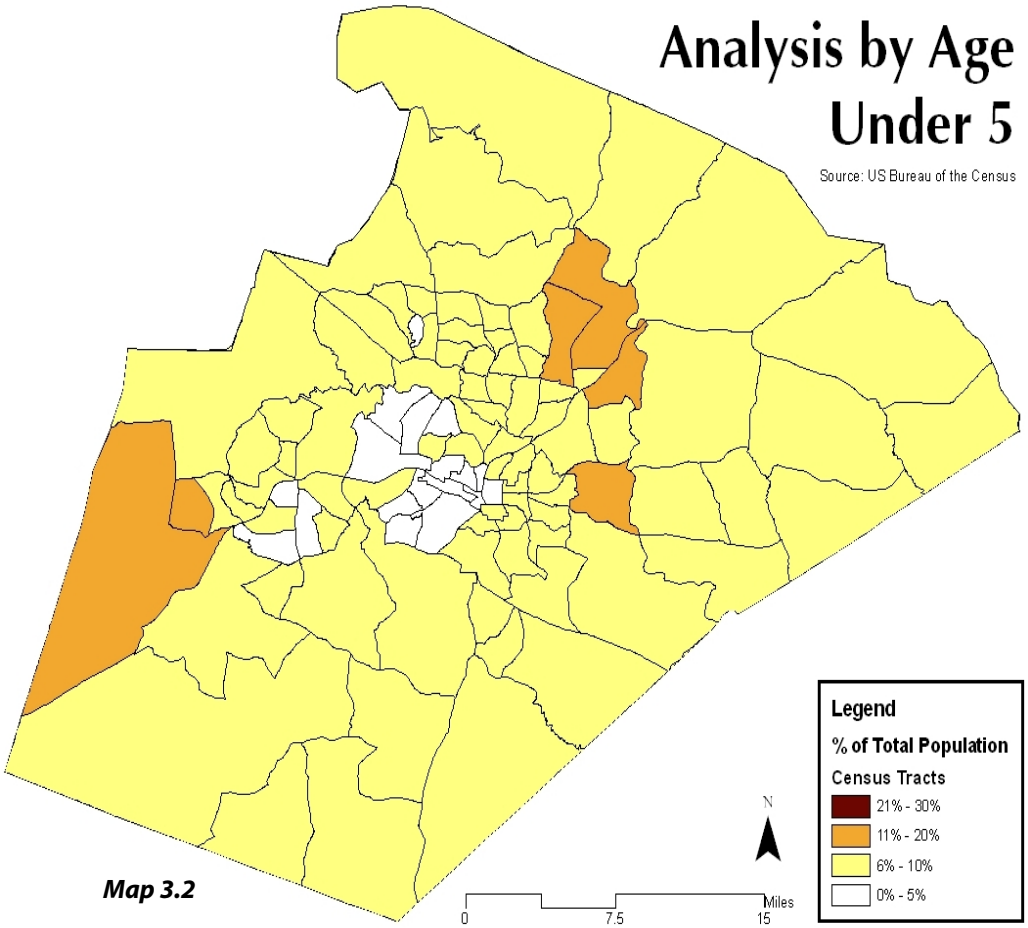
Wake County is comprised of twelve municipalities, eleven of which surround one urban center, which is Raleigh. The most notable pattern in the following Demographic Map Series is the relationship between population age and geographic location. The large suburban Census Tracts have a higher percentage of young people while those Tracts in the urban core of the County are more densely populated by older adults. (The Census Tract is the Unit of Analysis for all Demographic Maps). These urban Tracts have fewer people living in them than the larger, suburban Tracts that surround the city, as is evident from Map 3.1, the Total Population map. There is also a strong correlation between the density of a Tract's population and the age of that population. Thus, as the maps suggest, the general trend is the older population lives closer to the center of the County while the younger population is more dispersed in a ring around the outer suburbs of the County.

Median Age and Total Population

Wake County's median age was calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau to be 34.1 years, well below the national median age of 36.4 years. This is because of the population trends described above, specifically that the largest part of the population is suburban, which is comprised of the younger households in the County.

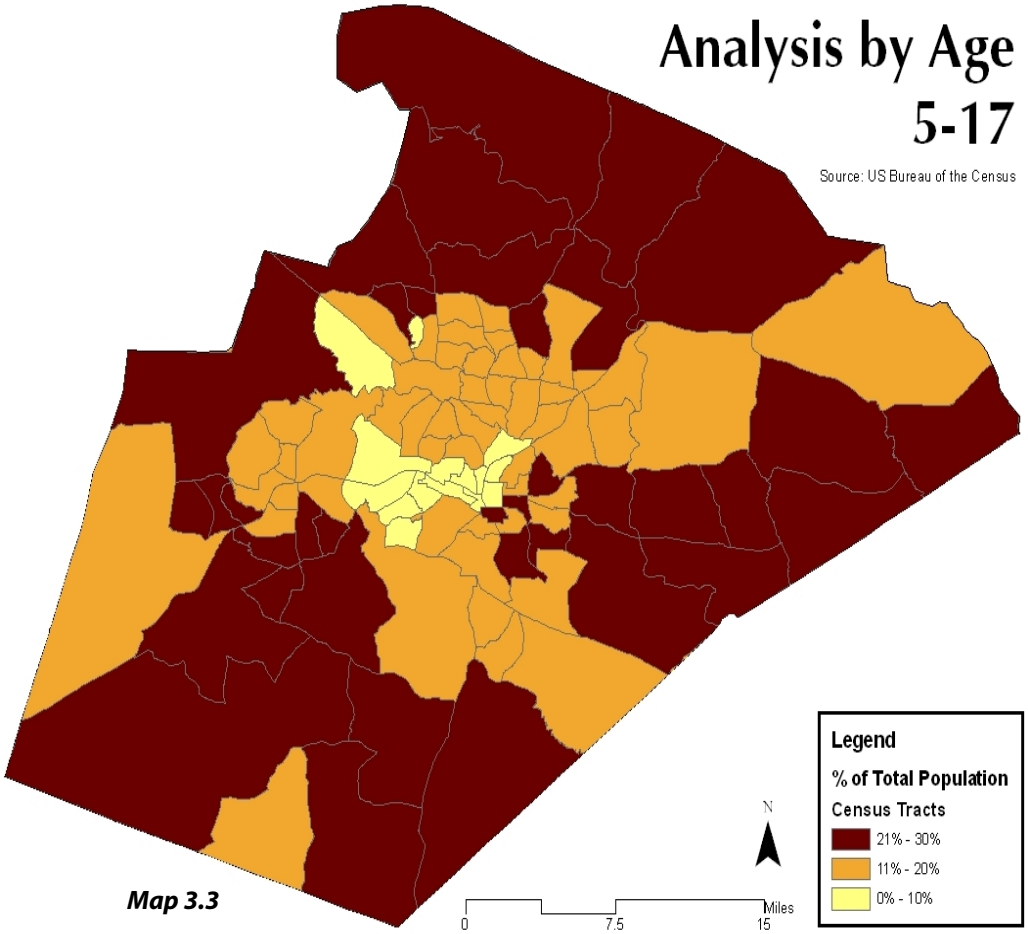


Map 3.1



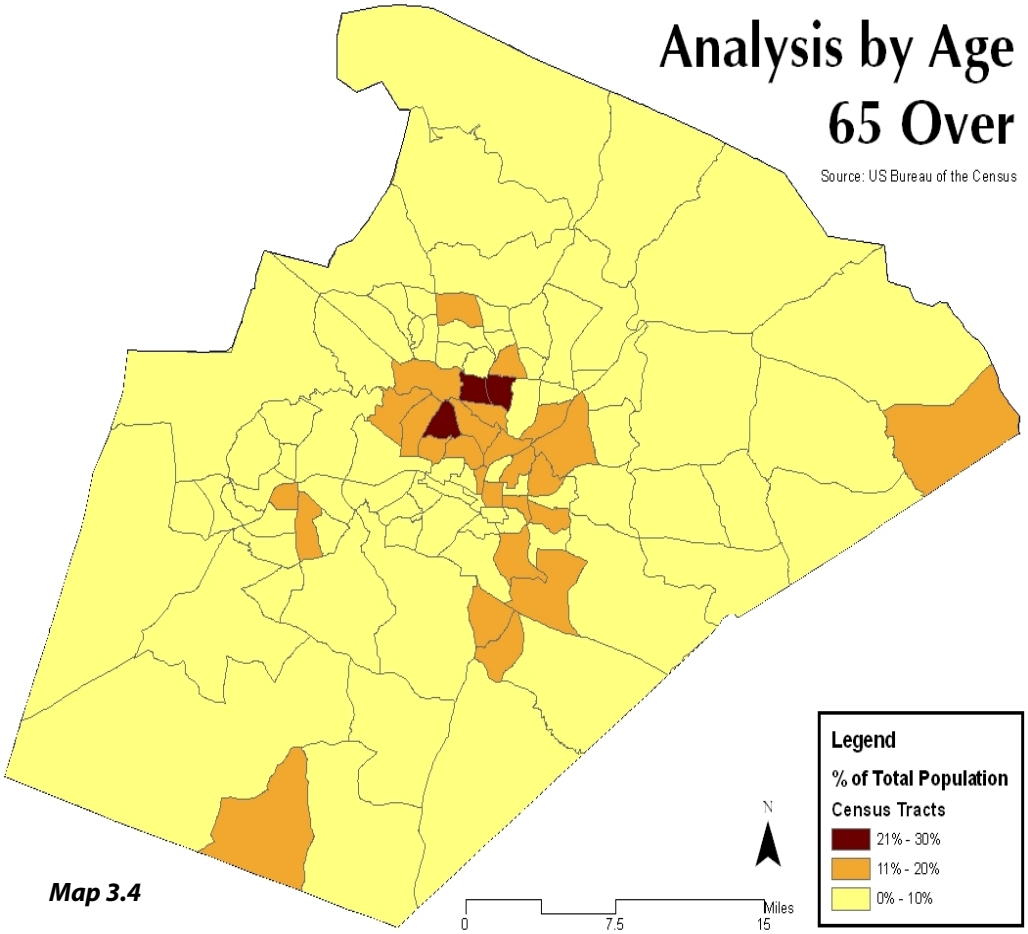
Map 3.2

Map 3.2, titled Analysis by Age – Under 5 shows that families with small children tend to live in the outskirts of Raleigh and its suburbs. These areas include population percentages of children under 5 that approach one out of five persons. Conversely, children under 5 years old comprise only 0%-5% of the population in several Census Tracts central to Raleigh as indicated in white on the map. Most other census Tracts in the suburban areas of the County shows a population make-up for this age cohort close to the Census 2000 national average, which is 6.8%.



Map 3.3

A stronger trend of suburbanization is evident within the 5-17 year old age cohort, which is shown by the dark brown in Map 3.3, Analysis by Age – 5-17. This trend is of slightly higher proportions than the Under 5 cohort in that 5-17 year olds make up less than 9% of the population in more Census Tracts in the central Raleigh area as depicted on the map in yellow.



Map 3.4

On the other side of the age spectrum, however, Map 3.4, which is titled Analysis by Age – 65 over, tells the opposite story. By a factor of three or four over rural areas, the senior population favors the urban environment of central Raleigh.

Population Density

It should be clarified that these Tracts in which the elderly population percentage is this high are those Tracts whose land area is smallest and that have the lowest overall population, while the reverse is true for the younger age cohorts—younger children tend to live in the largest Tracts with the highest populations, but whose population is less densely distributed. This type of population distribution by age is very typical of places across the United States with a significant central city that is surrounded by supporting suburbs and rural towns.

Income

The per capita income of Wake County determined in the U.S. Census 2005 estimates was $30,466, more than $8,000 above North Carolina's per capita income and $5,000 above the nation's. The median household income for the County was $57,284, again above the corresponding state and national median incomes. The County is also better than the state and nation with respect to persons living below the poverty line. Wake County's percentage is 10.3% (75,430), while 15.1% of North Carolina's population is below the line and 13.3% of the nation's population is.

Education

Wake County, as the state capital of North Carolina, has higher than average levels of education than North Carolina and the nation. The adult population with high school or higher degree is 91.4% for the County compared to 82.3% of the population of the state and 84.2% of the nation. Similarly, 48.2% of Wake County's adult population has obtained a Bachelor Degree or higher. 25.1%, or roughly one fourth, of the state's population has obtained the same and 27.2% of the nation's population has.

Table 3.1: Percentage of College Graduates

	Wake County	North Carolina	USA
% of College Graduates	48.2%	25.1%	27.2%

The percentage of college graduates in Wake County is 48.2% as shown above in Table 3.1. From a program planning perspective, the percentage of college graduates presents an opportunity for the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space to analyze what their preferences might be.

Research concludes that leisure services are selected, in part, based on one's educational achievements. The County should be aware of the choices that one will make for services, based on their educational level and corresponding higher income earning power and provide choices for services; for example:

- Offer services that are priced for those who do not earn a lot of money, but also, provide services that are priced for those who can afford to spend more on those services that are important to them.

Application of Demographic Data and Environmental Conditions to Parks and Recreation Planning

Analysis of Climate

The weather in Wake County is defined as moderate. The area's average annual rainfall is 44.7 inches per year, with an inconsistent annual snowfall of less than 2 inches per year. The average low temperature is 47 degrees, and the average high temperature is 73 degrees. The area enjoys long spring, summer and fall seasons, with relatively short winters. Highs can reach into the 90s during the peak of the summer and around freezing during the winter months.

Given, the moderate climate in the County, it is attractive for all weather activities. From a planning perspective, it is important to understand the typical indoor and outdoor preferences in a climate of this type.

Racial Composition

The racial composition of the County has not been provided, however, significant research has been completed nationally which gives valuable insights into the emphasis our park system and recreation program must provide when serving a diverse group. Those insights are as follows:

- There are more similarities in the leisure patterns of different ethnic subcultures than there are differences between them.

- Differences may reflect differences in income levels rather than differences in ethnic background.

Gender

In most communities, the female population is approximately 52% and the male population is approximately 48%. This is primarily because of the higher life expectancy among women as compared to men.

From a planning perspective, there are some trends which differentiate the female from the male user of parks and recreation services. Those differences are:

Females

- Women participate in fitness programs outside the home more than men do
- There is increased interest in opening traditional men's sports to women
- Women's and girls' sports are growing exponentially which is due, in part, to the increasing number of women's professional teams and media coverage
- Yoga and Tai Chi are two of the more popular activities selected by females in an indoor setting
- A greater percentage of females participate in exercise walking, exercising with equipment, swimming, aerobic exercising, workouts at a club, volleyball, ice/figure skating and kick boxing than do males
- Women are more likely to use exercise equipment that focuses on cardiovascular well-being

Males

- The fastest growing expenditure for sports-related activities by male teens is for adventure sports for skateboarding, in-line skating, BMX biking and cycling
- Participation in structured programs is decreasing and movement is toward individual activities
- Most popular activities, in order, include exercise walking, camping, exercising with equipment, swimming, bowling and fishing
- Men are more likely to use exercise equipment that stresses muscular development/toning

Age and Income

Age and income are the two best predictors of what one will choose to do in their leisure time. The median age in Wake County is 34.1. This compares nationally with a median age of 36.4.

From a planning perspective for parks and recreation services, it is helpful to analyze the preferences by citizens relative to both their age group and income bracket. This data can be evaluated by the information contained within this chapter to make informed decisions about what the citizen preferences might be.

Research by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Dr. John Crompton of Texas A & M University

Wake County can benefit from research within the State of Texas as presented by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Dr. John Crompton of Texas A & M University. Much of the research is relative to the kinds of services the County can offer in an outdoor setting.

- Age and income are best predictors of perceived constraints to use of outdoor recreation facilities away from home.

- Older adults are more likely to cite personal constraints (fear of crime, lack of companions and family members and/or self are in poor health) as factors which limit their use of outdoor recreation facilities.

- Younger adults were far more likely to cite information and access constraints (parks and outdoor recreation areas are too far away) and time constraints.

- Citizens with low incomes were more likely than those with high incomes to report that personal constraints, economic constraints and information and access constraints limited their use of outdoor recreation facilities.

- Time constraints were cited more by individuals with high incomes than individuals with low incomes for their limited use of outdoor recreation facilities.

- Single parent households have increased.

- Single parent households have lower incomes, less mobility and less free time than do two parent households.

- Single parent households will benefit from outdoor recreation opportunities that are close to home.

- We are competing with other leisure providers and must be aware of them and the consequences as follows:

    - Other providers include television and the media
    - Improve and expand opportunities to make advanced reservations so patrons can use time more precisely
    - Must provide shorter and more self-directed opportunities (ski areas, amusement parks and golf courses now provide half day tickets or nine hole rounds of golf)
    - Provide complete information concerning time requirements (trail maps include trail length and approximate time)

- Fear of crime and being attacked are real concerns

- Lighted park areas, easily accessible trails and visible rangers may contribute to the perception that parks are safe

- Older women feel more secure in groups and may be attracted to parks to participate in interpretive programs, walking clubs or other group related activities

- Older Adults
    - By 2030, 20% of the population is likely to be over age 65
    - Use of parks and participation in outdoor recreation tends to go down with age
    - We need to understand the needs and interests of an aging population and those factors that stymie participation in later life

Coming in the Next Chapter…

Reflect on the planning documents that have been developed by the County, the State and municipalities.

CHAPTER 4: EXISTING PARKS AND PLANNING DOCUMENTS

What does the analysis of park systems and existing planning documents tell us?

Analysis of the State, County, and Municipal Park Systems provides an opportunity to ensure that the roles of each are documented so that resource allocation is not duplicated. Analysis of existing planning documents developed by the County, the State and municipalities are a valuable resource to this planning process because they provide an opportunity to relate the County's planning effort with its partners.

Introduction

Citizens in Wake County are provided parks, programs, trails, greenways and facilities by its own Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space, State of North Carolina, twelve municipalities and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Each of these providers is also engaged in an active planning effort to position their agencies for resources which will be used to meet current and long term requirements and preferences for such things as protection of the environment (emphasis on water quality); connectivity from points of interest, residential areas, schools, churches, retail areas, municipal and county parks, etc.; and facilities such as pavilions, nature centers, botanical gardens, athletic fields, and trails.

To capture the relationship between the Wake County Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space and the other providers relative to existing park system opportunities and their planning efforts, this chapter has been developed.

Relationship of Park Systems

Wake County Parks

There are seven County Parks, five of which are leased and two are owned by the County. Overall, the County parks are of the highest quality with impressive maintenance regimes incorporated into their standard operations. The maintenance regimes allow the parks to maintain a high quality standard while serving large numbers of diverse users. While there is always room for improvement, generally speaking, the County is providing first-rate passive recreation opportunities for its citizens. Table 4.1 below details the County Parks, which are owned or leased and the opportunities provided at each.

Five of Wake County's seven parks are leased from other agencies

Table 4.1: Wake County Parks and Opportunities

PARK NAME	OWNERSHIP	OPPORTUNITIES
Lake Crabtree County Park	RDU Airport Authority Wake County	environmental education, picnicking, mountain biking, boating, playgrounds, hiking, volleyball, open play area, fishing
Blue Jay Point County Park	United States Government	environmental education, exhibits, playgrounds, picnicking, hiking and walking, open play areas, fishing
Historic Oak View County Park	Wake County	agricultural history, cultural education, exhibits, livestock and crop programs, gardens, walking, picnicking, fishing
Crowder District Park	Wake County	walking, picnicking, playgrounds, environmental education, volleyball, open play field
Harris Lake County Park	Progress Energy	picnicking, mountain biking, playground, environmental/cultural history education, fishing, hiking, walking, running, disc golf, open play area, canoeing, kayaking, group camping
American Tobacco Trail	United States Government, State of North Carolina Wake County Town of Cary	hiking, walking, running, bicycling, horseback riding, environmental/cultural history education
Historic Yates Mill County Park	State of North Carolina Wake County	cultural and environmental education, agricultural history, exhibits, native landscaping and best management practice demonstration areas, hiking, picnicking, fishing, limited boating
Cedar Fork District Park	Wake County – leased to the Town of Morrisville	soccer and multi-use play fields

State of North Carolina Parks

There is one state park (William B. Umstead), two state recreation areas (Falls Lake and Jordan Lake) and two state natural areas (Mitchell Mill and Hemlock Bluffs) in and around Wake County which comprise 88,000 acres. The parks and the opportunities provided at each site expand on the passive recreation opportunities provided by Wake County and are detailed below in the table.

Table 4.2: Federal Lands and State Parks and Opportunities

Park Name	Opportunities
Falls Lake State Recreation Area	Camping, fishing, boating, swimming, picnicking
William B. Umstead State Park	Camping, fishing, picnicking and boating
Mitchell Mill State Natural Area	Environmental education
Hemlock Bluffs State Natural Area	Environmental education
Jordan Lake State Recreation Area	Camping, fishing, boating, swimming and picnicking

Relationship of Planning Documents

Wake County Consolidated Open Space Plan (COSP)

Goals:

1. Protect and conserve county land and water for the health and well being of current residents and future generations.
2. Provide Wake County and its municipalities with the tools necessary to protect open space.

Objectives:

1. Protect a minimum of 30% of the county's land area, or roughly 165,000 acres, through acquisition, development regulations, and floodplain protection.
2. Establish a foundation for future growth and development that is both sustainable and economically viable.
3. Provide Wake County and its municipal partners with the tools necessary to protect open space.
4. Continue the methodology for selecting and prioritizing land for conservation and preservation.

Strategies:

1. Partner with each of the County's 12 municipal governments to support open space planning.
2. Support the municipalities through monetary grants to devise and adopt a local open space plan that focuses on protecting water resources, improving access to open space, park and greenway lands and linking municipal open space and greenway systems together **(*connectivity*)**.
3. Combine all municipal open space plans to form a county wide consolidated open space plan *(completed March 2003, revised September 2006)*.
4. Identify key parcels of land and corridors that should be acquired and protected as open space.
5. Recommend new regulatory programs that improve the protection of resources that safeguard public health, safety and welfare.
6. Establish a new program of land stewardship to manage open space resources.
7. Define recurring sources of revenue that support open space conservation.
8. Protect land that is already subject to flooding from rainstorm events (100 year flood plain).
9. Protect valued open space during the land development process.
10. Establish a land stewardship program in collaboration with the Soil and Water Conservation District, municipalities, state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations to keep pace with conservation efforts.
11. Engage citizens in a variety of forums to discuss and define the future of sustainable growth.
12. Pursue funding strategies as identified by the Wake County Blue Ribbon Committee:
    - *Apply for matching funds from federal, state and local municipal governments*
    - *Request matching funds from corporate and private donors*
    - *Conduct fund raising in partnership with philanthropic organizations*
    - *Use tools, such as Bargain Sale, to obtain open space at less than fair market value*

- *Work with Wake County Schools to partner on school and open space projects, maximizing the return on public dollars invested*
- *Provide more economic incentives for developers to conserve open space thereby reducing the demand on public funds*
- *Work with farmers and working land owners to conserve open space*

Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance (RLDO)

The RLDO requires a developer to dedicate or pay a fee equivalent to 1/35th of an acre per lot. In other words, for a 35 lot subdivision, with one acre lots, a developer would need to dedicate an acre of land or pay a fee equivalent to the pre-developed value of the acre.

An analysis of the current May 20, 2002 Ordinance reveals that it is patterned from similar ordinances crafted for municipal parks and recreation agencies assessing a fee for the development of neighborhood services. Because of recent Supreme Court decisions that give municipal ordinances their standing, it is important that Wake County review its current ordinance.

It is recommended therefore that the following be implemented.

- Recommend that Wake County, through its Planning Department, review the current ordinance relative to Supreme Court decisions for possible revision or replacement.
- Consult an expert on the writing of a County ordinance that is supportable by current law and specific to Wake County.
- Create a fee formula supportable by actual Wake County conditions such as cost of development, expected population growth, future open space demand compared to the current documented demand.
- Include language specific to regional parks, county wide trails and greenways, and possible cooperative purchases or developments in cooperation with the adjacent municipalities.
- Include language to require periodic reviews of how the fee is calculated; i.e. once every three years.
- Cash in lieu of options should include the type and quality of land that will be accepted and that land offers are subject to approval of suitability.
- Service areas may need to be created to establish where fee may be used so that it is used in proportion to the demand that created the need.
- Use fees collected under the current ordinance in partnership with municipalities in close proximity to the source of the fee.

Municipal Master Plans

Overriding themes of the municipal master plans are detailed below:

- Significant county wide growth is occurring
- Municipalities highly value the school/park relationship with the County
- Municipalities value the County's role in:
  - School/park agreement assistance
  - Financial support
  - Open space acquisition assistance
  - Program and facility provisions from County Parks
- Would like the County to:
  - Play a greater role in small town park planning efforts
  - Assist smaller municipalities from a financial perspective

Potential County Issues that municipalities are concerned with:

- Growth
  - Growth is occurring at a rapid rate county-wide possibly requiring cross municipality/county wide planning efforts to guide and direct county wide connectivity issues.
- Current "boom" in school facility development
  - County may need to continuously assess their role in the Community Use of Schools program.
- County/municipal land relationship changing with growth (i.e. annexation, corporate limits expansion etc).
- Demographics may be shifting in a manner that requires an assessment of programming and facility needs.

Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Role (as viewed by municipalities):

- Continue with current county park programming & facilities
- School Parks
- Land acquisition
- Connectivity planning

State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identified five key issues. These issues surfaced during a series of public meetings held throughout the state.

Issues

1. Improved Outdoor Recreational Services — The need to provide improved outdoor recreational services to meet the needs of a growing and changing population including some highlights: adequate staffing, addressing deteriorating facilities, greater public accessibility, expanded protection of natural resources.

2. Conservation of Natural Resources — The need to conserve and protect important natural resources and open spaces in a rapidly developing state. Recognition of dwindling open space for future resources.

3. Funding — The need to ensure a stable and adequate source of funding to provide for the outdoor recreation needs of current and future generations. Reviews some of the statewide funding mechanisms including: Natural Heritage Trust Fund, Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Clean Water Management Trust Fund.

4. Partnerships — The need to create effective partnerships between all parties interested in outdoor recreation so they may pursue common interests more effectively. Encourage partnerships between government agencies and entities, public/private, and non-profit/public.

5. The State Parks System — The need to improve the North Carolina state parks system.

North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan

The North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan is a conservation blueprint for agencies, organizations, industries, and academics across the state to advance the sound management of our fish and wildlife resources into the future. The document identifies critical fish and wildlife resources and priority conservation needs associated with these resources.

North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan has five core goals:

1. to improve understanding of the species diversity in North Carolina and enhance our ability to make conservation or management decisions for all species,

2. to conserve and enhance habitats and the communities they support,

3. to foster partnerships and cooperative efforts among natural resource agencies, organizations, academia and private industry,

4. to support educational efforts to improve understanding of wildlife resources among the general public and conservation stakeholders, and

5. to support and improve existing regulations and programs aimed at conserving habitats and communities.

The Wildlife Action Plan identifies several implementation strategies that are related to Wake County's Parks and Open Space properties. These implementation strategies can guide future partnerships between Wake County and the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, and include:

- Cooperating on Land Protection and Management;
- Improving opportunities for Wildlife-related Recreation and Public Education; and
- Partnering on Site Evaluations and other Data Collection efforts.

Several strategies supporting these goals are relative to Wake County's parks and open space properties including: Land Protection and Management, Public Education, Wildlife-related Recreation and Data Collection.

Upper Neuse Clean Water Initiative (UNCWI)

Goals

1. Prioritize and protect those lands most critical for the long-term safety and health of all drinking water supplies for the communities in the Upper Neuse River Basin.

Objectives

1. Development of a comprehensive conservation plan.
2. Outreach to landowners, local governments and the public.
3. Land protection based on priorities outlined in the conservation plan.

Issues to consider for the Wake County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update

1. How can Wake County Parks and Recreation partner on the initiative especially with regard to protecting Falls Lake and the Little River Reservoir?

2. A component of the Master Plan Update can identify strategies for partnering with and supporting the Initiative's Land Acquisition Program.

Summary

Roles

The State of North Carolina has taken a position on the role that Federal, State, County and Cities should assume as they strive to provide parks, trails, greenways, programs and facilities for their citizens. The authors of this report are in agreement with the position that the State of North Carolina has taken as described below:

County responsibilities

Counties generally provide the resource-based and locally oriented outdoor recreational areas that are not large enough to be managed feasibly at the state or federal levels, or which do not have resources of statewide or national significance. Such areas constitute an invaluable part of the overall outdoor recreational effort in North Carolina and are indispensable to well-balanced statewide outdoor recreation. This is consistent with the role that Wake County has defined for itself since the inception of the Division.

Generally, counties provide large, resource-based parks

Municipal responsibilities

Because of population densities and the lack of large open-space areas, most municipal recreation systems tend to concentrate their efforts on providing services involving more intensive user-oriented facilities that require relatively little space in proportion to the use accommodated. Typical municipal outdoor recreational facilities include playgrounds, swimming pools, ball fields, tennis courts and picnic areas.

Although most municipal programs do not typically provide resource-based outdoor recreational facilities, municipalities do play a vital role in providing facility-dependent recreational opportunities in North Carolina. ***The role of Municipal programs will likely grow in importance as increased public emphasis is placed on recreation closer to home.*** Since municipal recreation agencies are closest to the populace, they are usually the first to feel the pressures to establish programs that meet the demands of residents.

Parks, Trails, Greenways and Facility Opportunities

Analysis of the parks, trails, greenways and facilities provided by County, Federal, State and Municipalities concludes that the State and Wake County do a good job of providing large regional recreation opportunities focusing on recreation that can be enjoyed by all demographic groups. While passive in nature the recreation opportunities help support the ability to explore the natural ecosystems and learn about the cultural and environmental history of Wake County.

There is an overwhelming emphasis on greenways and trails – Citizen Survey

Planning Efforts

Analysis of the planning efforts by Wake County, the State of North Carolina, the municipalities and the Upper Neuse River Clean Water Initiative concludes that there is a concerted effort on creating partnerships between multiple agencies to identify the fragile open space areas and promote stewardship towards protection, conservation and preservation of valuable land resources within Wake County. Regarding the RLDO, the ordinance will need to be modified to meet practical standards for Wake County.

Municipalities and advocates continue to have an overwhelming focus on creating linkages throughout the county and between the municipalities via multi-use trail and greenway systems, yet another vehicle of land stewardship in the region.

Coming in the Next Chapter…

See what the Wake County parks and greenway system looks like on a series of twelve maps.

CHAPTER 5: PARK SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND PARK MAPPING

What is the value of mapping and how does it relate to the analysis of the park system?

The application of contemporary mapping technology allows us to combine information from many sources into a common database that can be manipulated to give new or different views of the data to facilitate discussions and improve our understanding of the needs of the community.

Introduction

The County Park System has been evaluated by the consultant team. Overall, the County parks are of the highest quality with impressive maintenance regimes incorporated into their standard operations. The maintenance regimes allow the parks to maintain a high quality standard while serving large numbers of diverse users. While there is always room for improvement, generally speaking, the County is providing first-rate passive recreation opportunities across Wake County. Citizens have recognized the high standard of care by evaluating the system in the citizen survey with a rating of either excellent or good at 91% as compared to the national benchmark of 83%.

To further evaluate the park system, the consultant prepared a series of twelve maps and definitions of key recreation terms used with them. Those definitions and twelve maps are described in this chapter.

Definitions

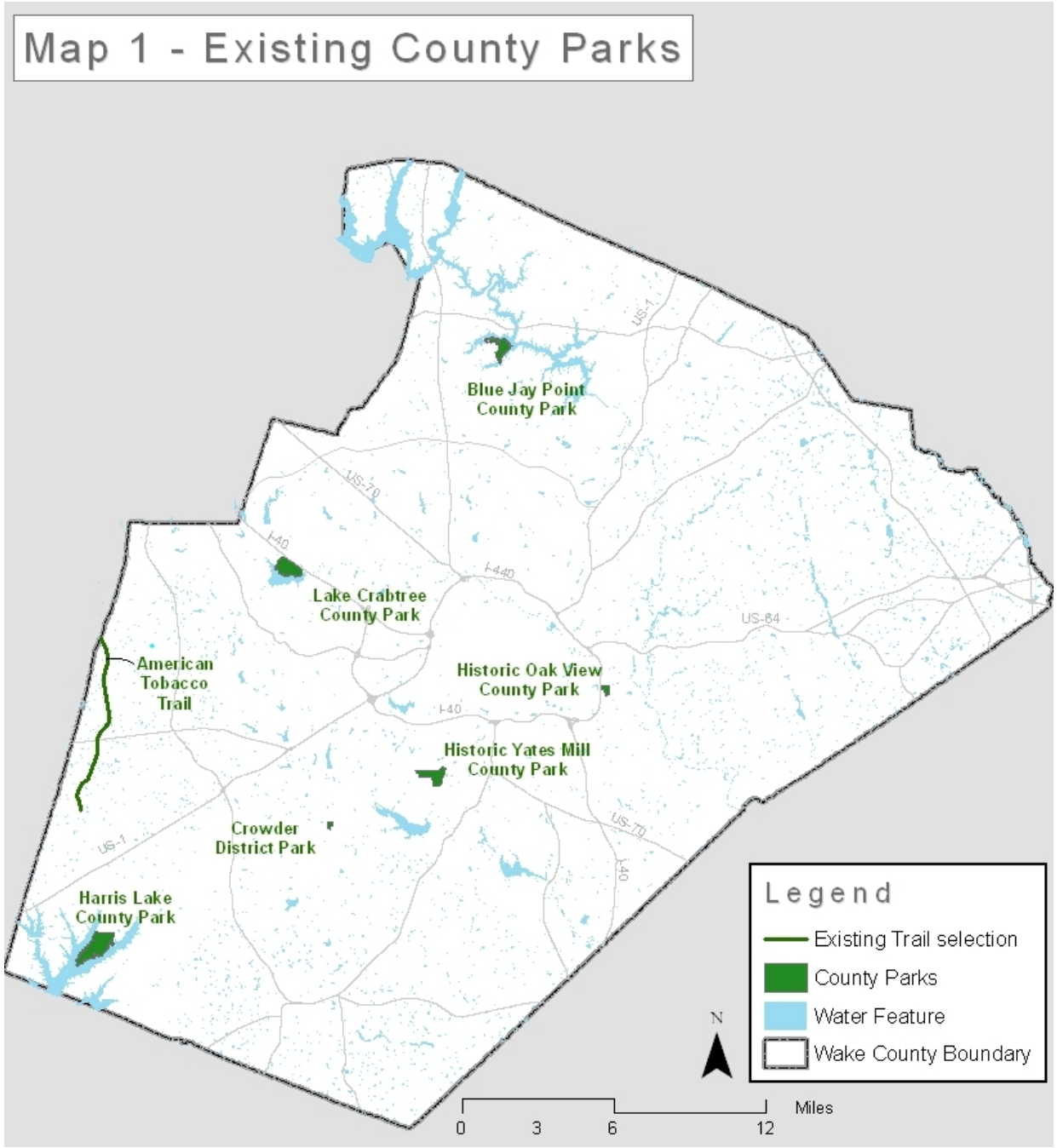
Open Space – As defined by the National Recreation and Park Association, open space is land which has been set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes and open space. Although natural resource areas are resource rather than user based, they can provide some passive recreational opportunities. Most notable are nature viewing and study. They can also function as greenways. ***The most important outcome from the set aside of open space is the protection of water quality (***Natural habitats and aquatic recreational activities are greatly affected by the quality of the water in the environment. Planning agencies across the country are continually trying to find new ways to handle storm water runoff and air pollution so that harmful pollutants are prevented from entering rivers and lakes).

Trails – Trails can be categorized as either park trails or connector trails. Park trails are generally contained within one park area. Connector trails serve a different purpose; they run between parks and other recreation facilities, thus connecting them and creating a system that is accessible from many different points.

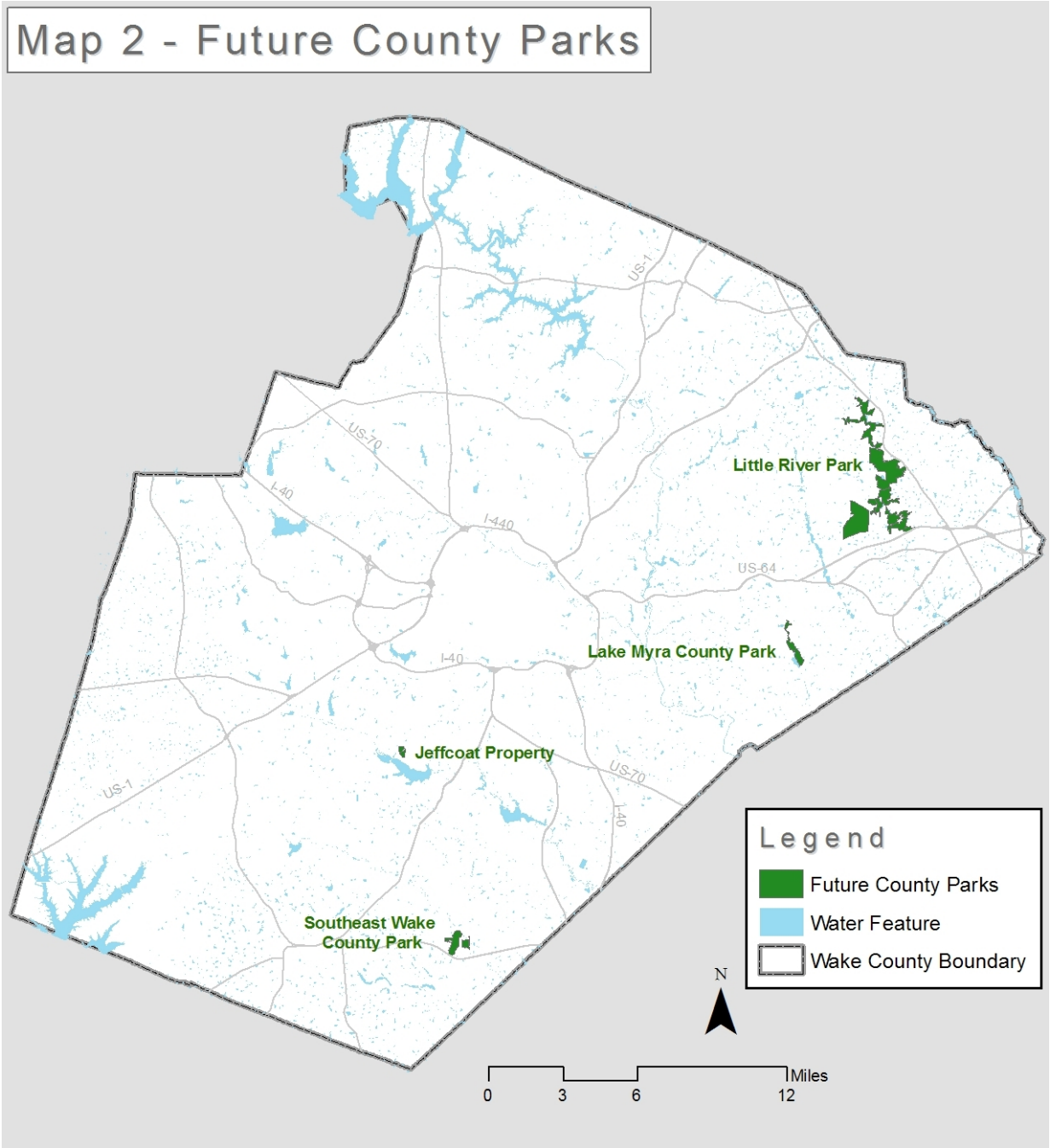
Greenways – Similar to trails in that they connect parks; greenways normally exist parallel to other resources in the environment, such as rivers and boulevards.

County Parks – County Parks are considered as regional parks. County parks are larger and have more amenities than district level parks and will attract users for longer periods of time due to their size and features. They may also be conservation areas and un-programmed space.

School Parks – School Parks are partnerships between Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) and Wake County Public Schools. These partnerships allow school campuses to be improved by including recreational amenities that exceed the requirements of the schools' regular program. These improvements include picnic shelters, trails, athletic fields, and playgrounds that provide the community with valuable recreational amenities.



This is the base map of the existing Wake County Park System. It shows the locations of the County parks within the context of the County boundaries. County parks are moderately concentrated in the western half of the County, leaving the southern and eastern portions of the County underserved. A description of each existing County park can be found in Appendix E.



Future County Parks

Over the past decade, Wake County has been identifying and acquiring land for future county parks. Four key locations have been identified including: Southeast Wake County Park, situated along Middle Creek in southeast Wake County; the Jefcoat property located just north of Lake Wheeler; Lake Myra County Park on Poole Road located adjacent to the 100 acre Lake Myra in eastern Wake County; and Little River County Park just north of Zebulon and adjacent to the future Little River Reservoir. These four facilities, shown above, will improve the service levels to the southern and eastern parts of Wake County.

Lake Myra County Park

Over the past year, Wake County, in partnership with the Triangle Land Conservancy and Trust for Public Land, has acquired a 125-acre tract adjacent to the historic Lake Myra for a future Wake County Park. The acquisition is part a larger priority preservation area of the Mark's Creek watershed in an effort to protect and preserve water quality and wildlife habitat, conserve unique natural areas, and to retain scenic and historical values.

The future County Park will overlook the 100-acre Lake Myra situated in eastern Wake County. The site will provide opportunities for trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, fishing, open space preservation, and environmental education. Adjacent to the park is a planned elementary school scheduled to open in 2009. The adjacency of the park to the school will provide outreach opportunities for environmental education and interpretation.

Little River County Park

In the mid 1980's, the Little River in eastern Wake County was identified as a future source of drinking water for that area of the County. During the early phases of planning, it was suggested that parkland be acquired in addition to land for the proposed reservoir. The 1993 parks bond allocated $2 million toward acquisition of land for a future County Park at the planned Little River Reservoir.

Since 1993, the County has assembled approximately 250 acres with several key acquisitions remaining. In addition to the parkland, the County is acquiring and preserving a 100' buffer adjacent to the permanent pool elevation of the planned reservoir. This buffer will accommodate a publicly accessible trail that will circle the 2,000-acre reservoir.

The County is also considering jointly acquiring with the City of Raleigh a 623-acre parcel in close proximity to the reservoir. This parcel, if acquired, may also present opportunities for development of County Park facilities with publicly accessible connections to the reservoir.

The future County Park will provide opportunities for open play, active play, hiking, biking, picnicking, boating, fishing, and environmental education. The trail circling the reservoir has the potential to serve as a spine to a larger network of trails and greenways in eastern Wake County.

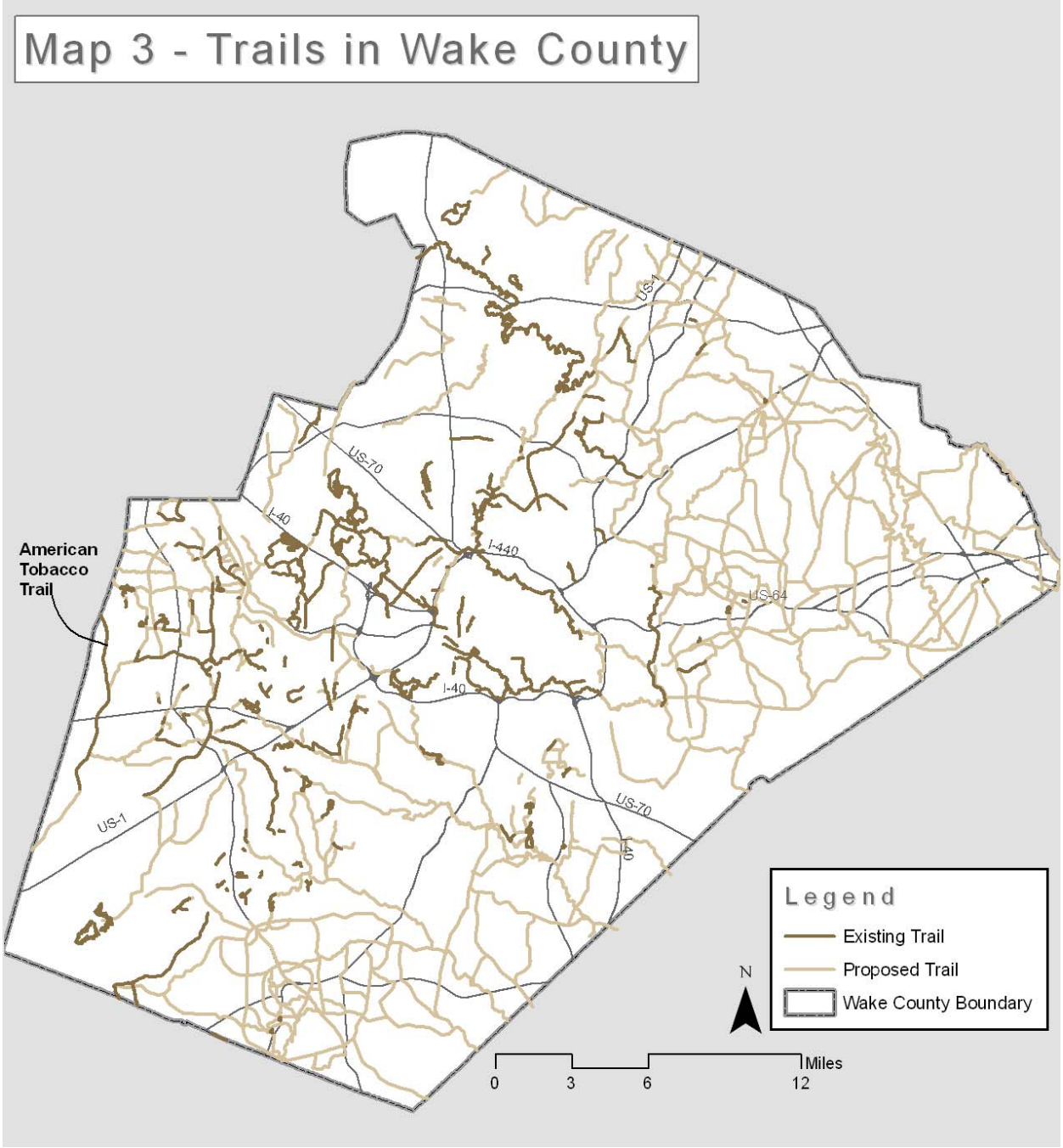
Southeast Wake County Park

The 2003 Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified an unmet and predicted need for County Park facilities and services in southeastern Wake County. In FY04, the County allocated the capital funds to begin the acquisition of land in that part of the County for a County Park. The identified park site is along Middle Creek in an area of unique topography, with significant wetlands and wildlife habitat.

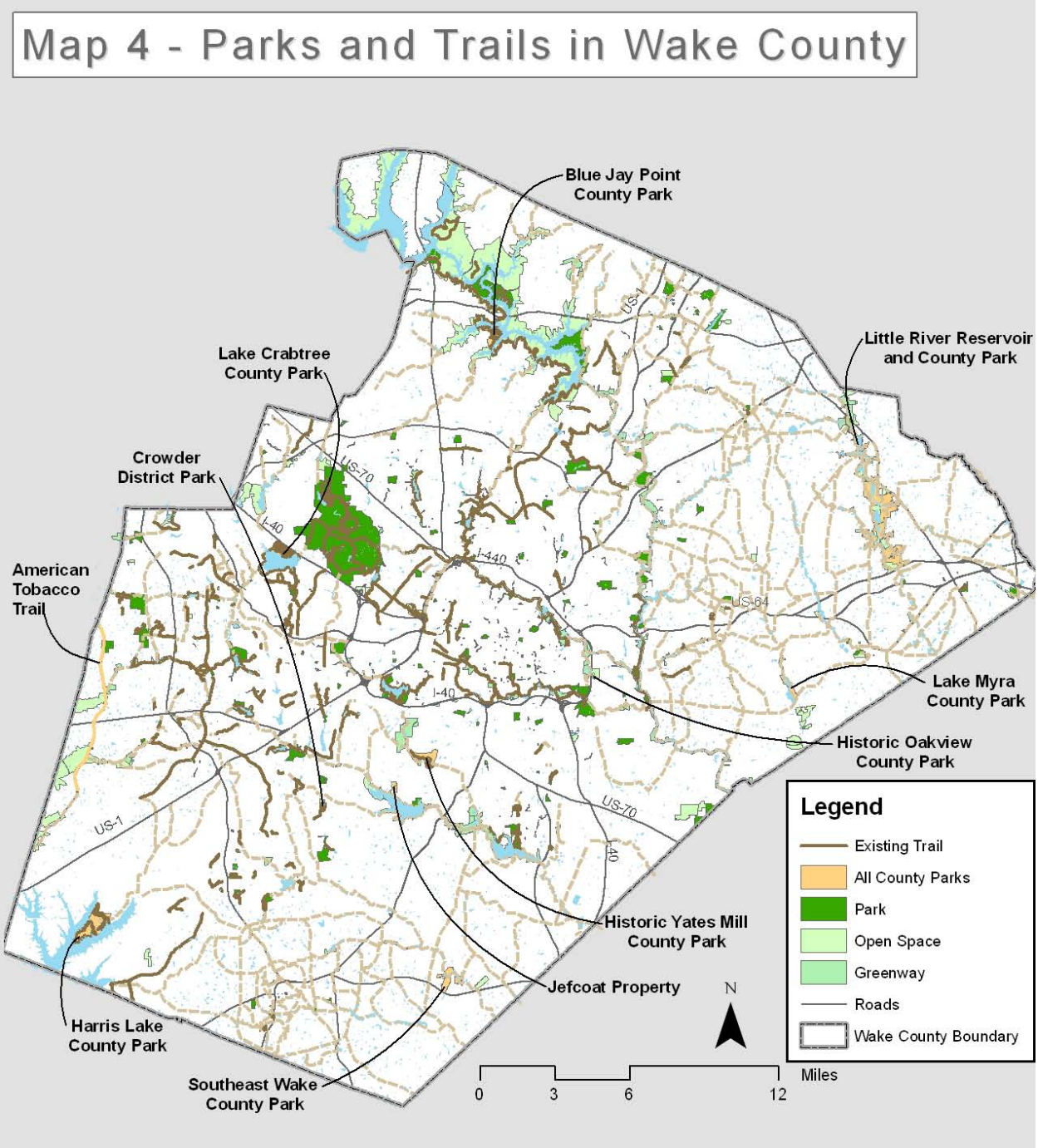
Since 2004, the County has acquired multiple tracts totaling 235 acres for the park. Several potential acquisitions remain that would increase the size approximately 100 acres. Opportunities for the park development include trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, restrooms, open play areas, open space preservation, environmental education center, and overnight lodge. There are also opportunities for active recreation through municipal partnerships.

Brady Jefcoat Property

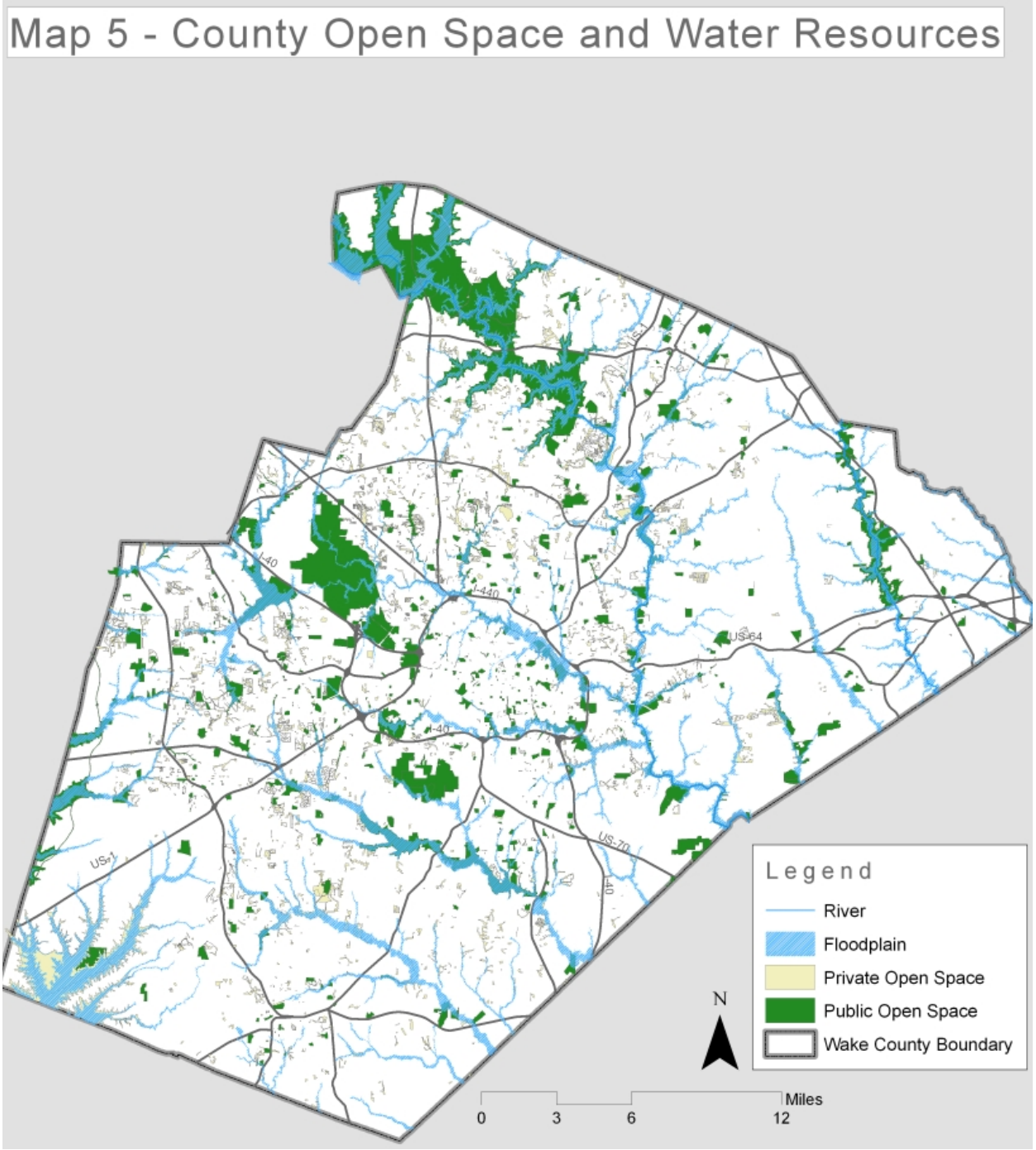
In 2005, Wake County acquired a 55-acre tract just north of Lake Wheeler along Penny Road. The current landowner (who maintains a life estate) donated half of the tract and the County purchased the balance. The site will provide typical County Park opportunities including picnic shelters, playgrounds, trails, restrooms, fishing, open space preservation, and environmental education. The site also lends itself to playfields for active recreation, which could be developed through various partnerships.



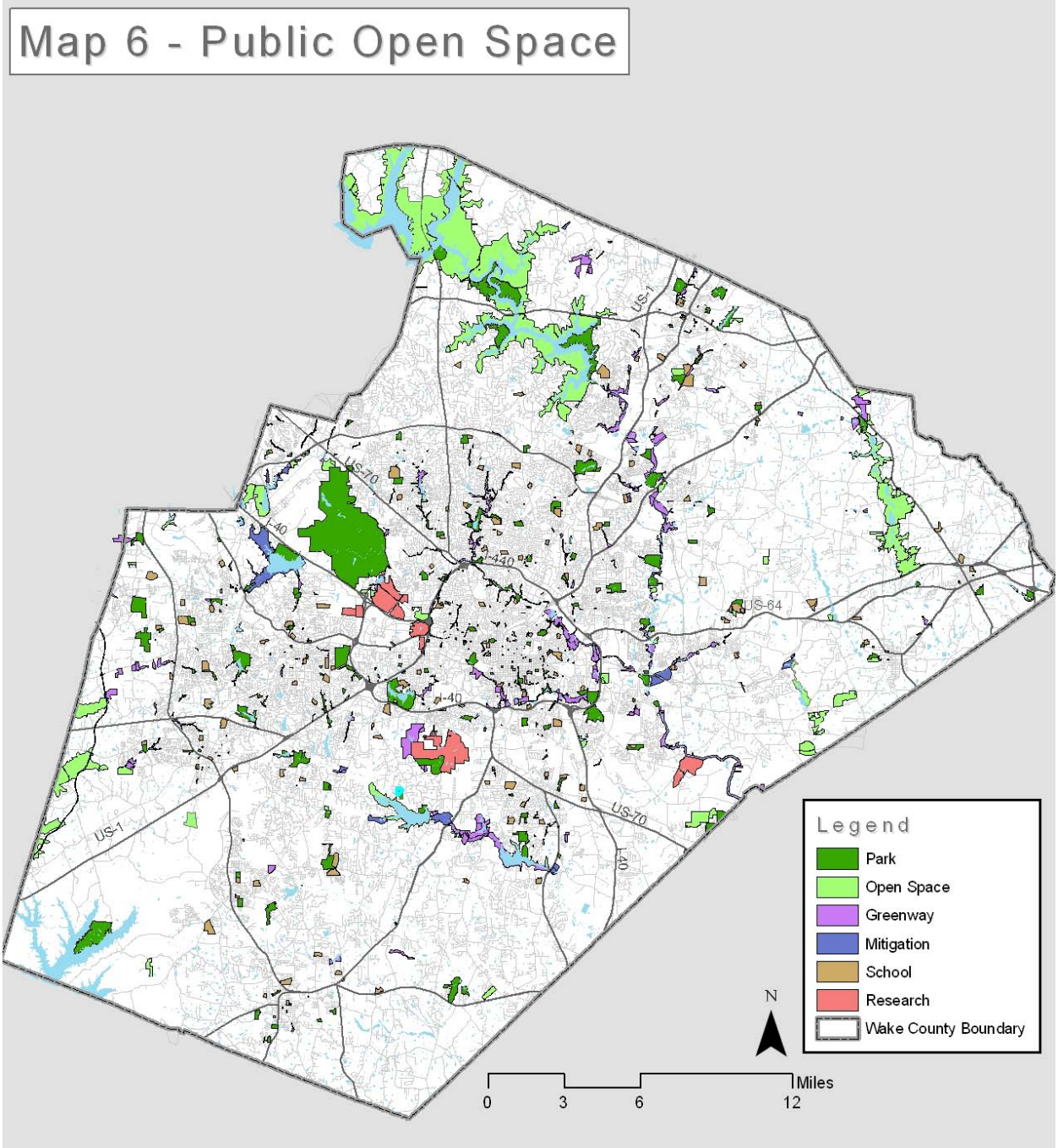
The map above is a compilation of municipal greenway plans within the boundary of Wake County. Wake County currently operates only one regional trail, the American Tobacco Trail, which is a 6.5-mile multi-use trail and former rail corridor in western Wake County. Wake County also anticipates additional regional trails including the Swift Creek Greenway and Neuse River Greenway, both in partnership with municipalities. One recommendation of this master plan is that the County will assume a stronger leadership role in the coordination, planning and development of the trail and greenway systems between municipalities.



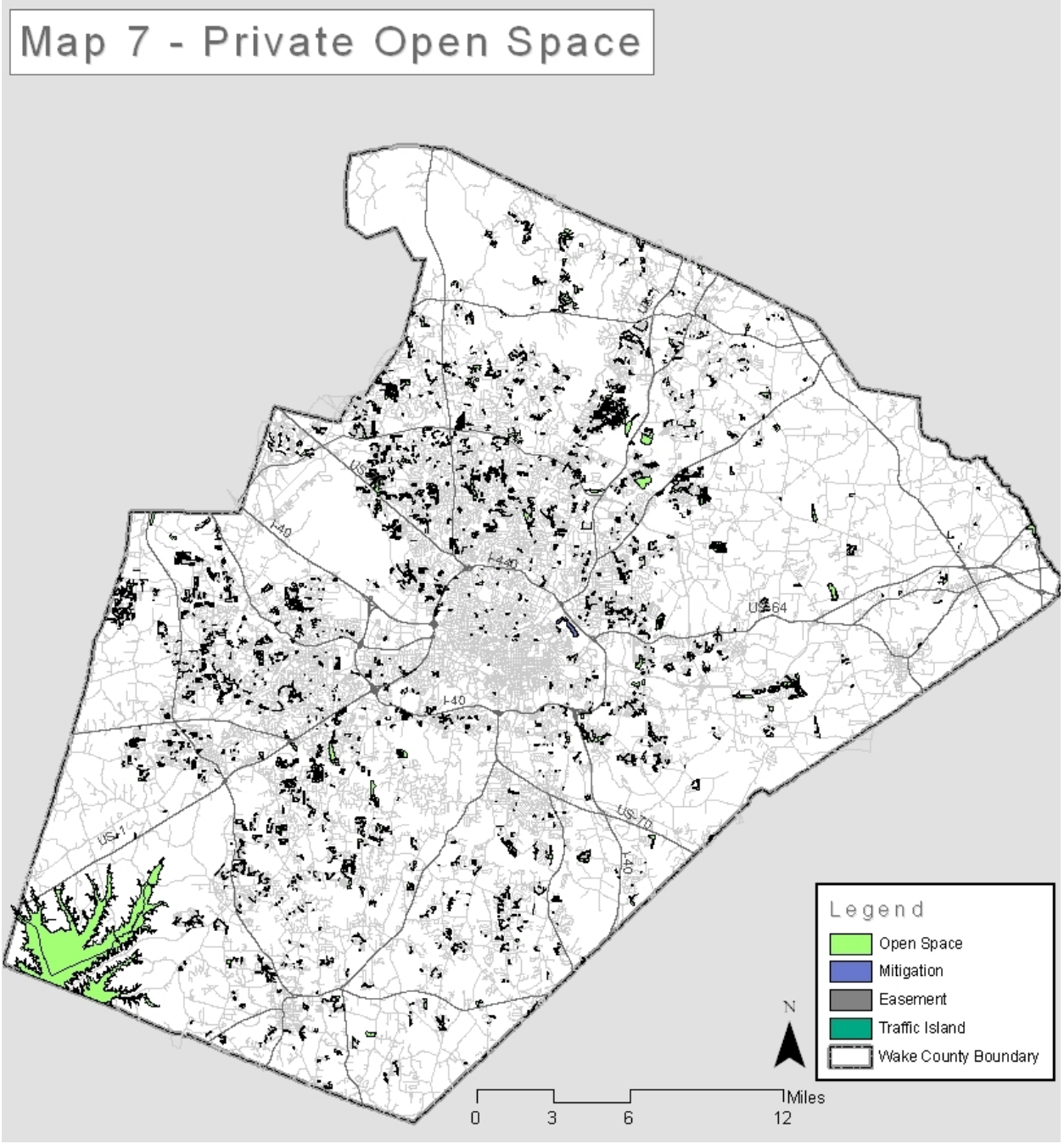
This map is a combination of the previous three maps, but with the addition of all other publicly owned land in the County. This map also qualifies the parks as maintained parks, open space, or greenways. There are several places in the County that noticeably lack park facilities: eastern Wake County including the areas of Knightdale and Wendell, southern Wake County in the Fuquay Varina Area, and northeast Wake County east of Wake Forest.



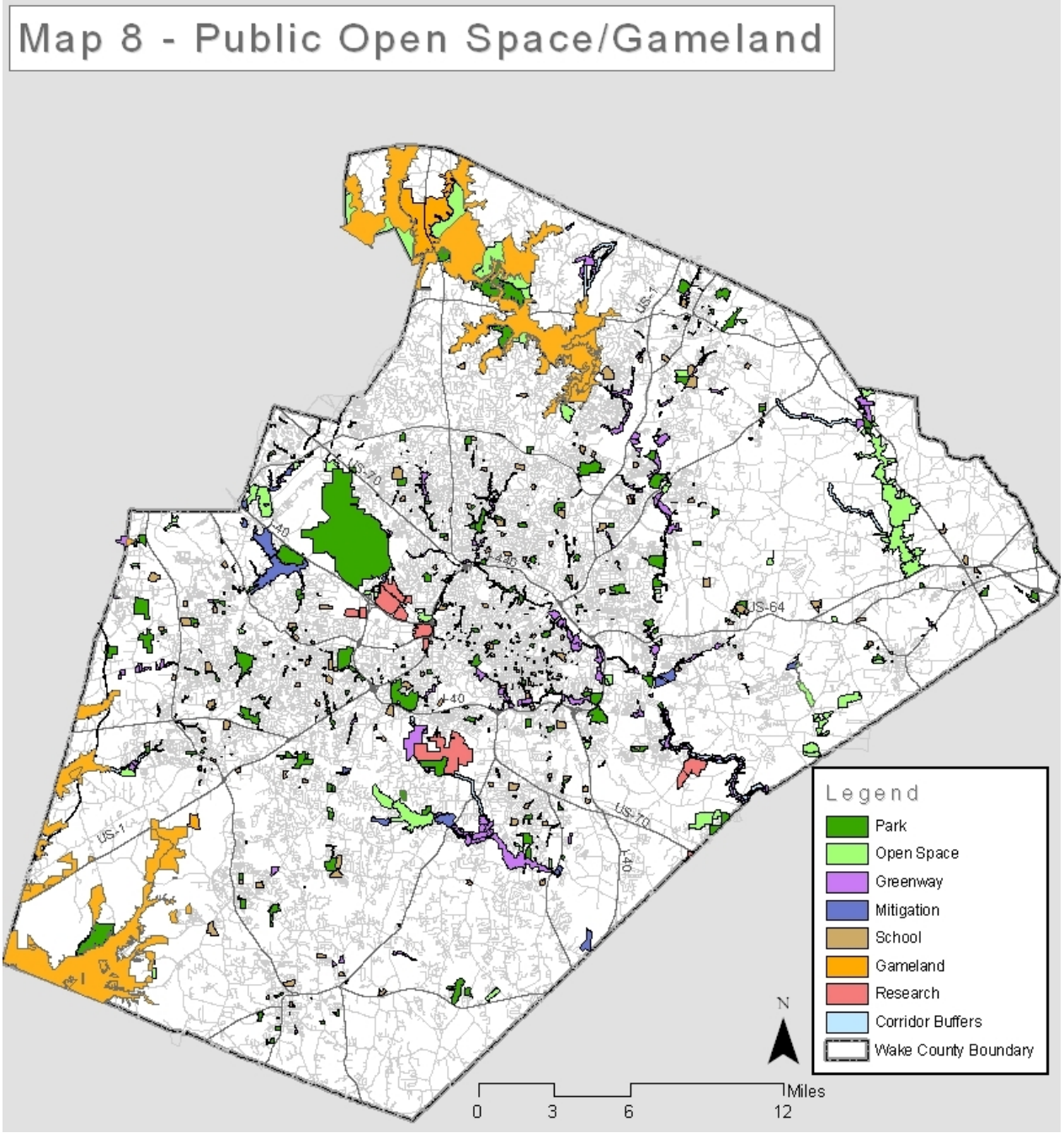
This map is similar to the previous one in that all publicly owned land is shown, but it also shows all of the natural water resources within the County and how they relate to the open space. The presence of greenway opportunities along water corridors in the County becomes very evident in this map. In addition to this are numerous light brown parcels, which represent the County's privately owned open space.



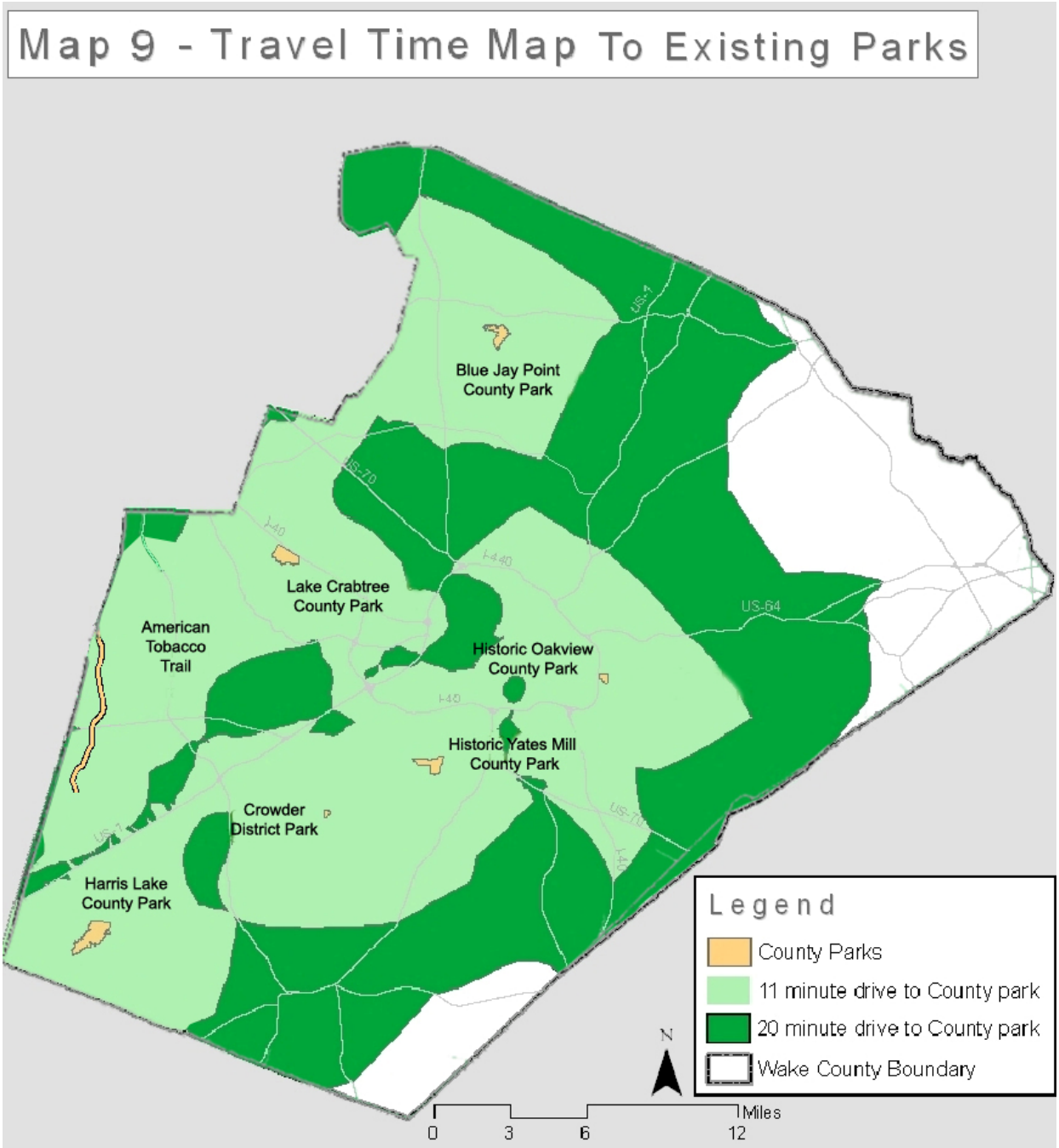
With twelve municipalities in Wake County, there are a significant number of schools to consider in this plan. This map shows the locations of those schools using the brown color and their proximity to public open space. Virtually all schools in the County are served by at least one park within a five minute walk.



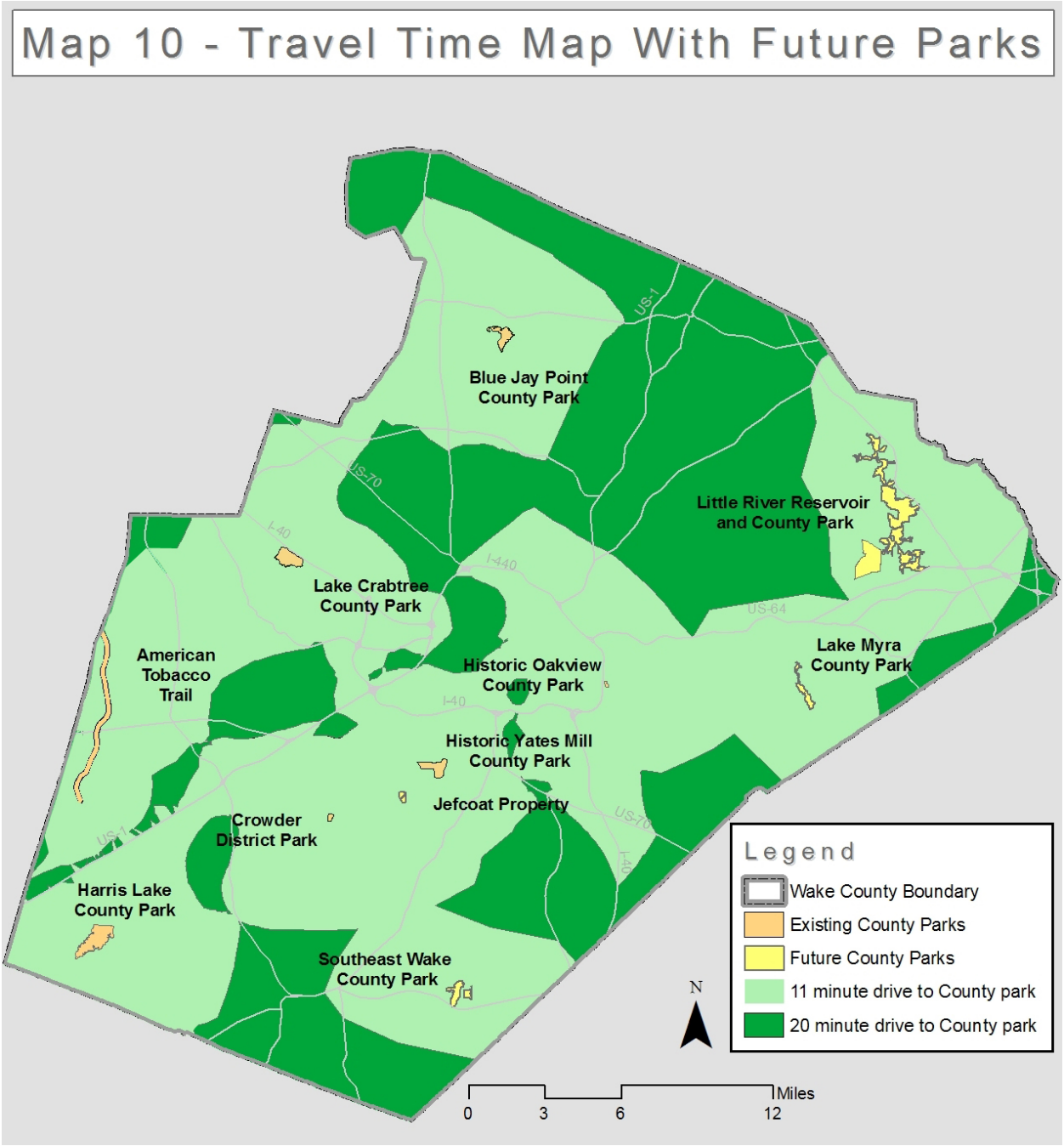
In addition to the public open space in Wake County, there is also a fair amount of privately owned open space, which means that the parkland is provided by a not-for-profit organization, business, or individual. This is a map that locates all open space owned by other providers in the County. Of all twelve municipalities, Raleigh has the lowest per capita acreage of this type of open space.



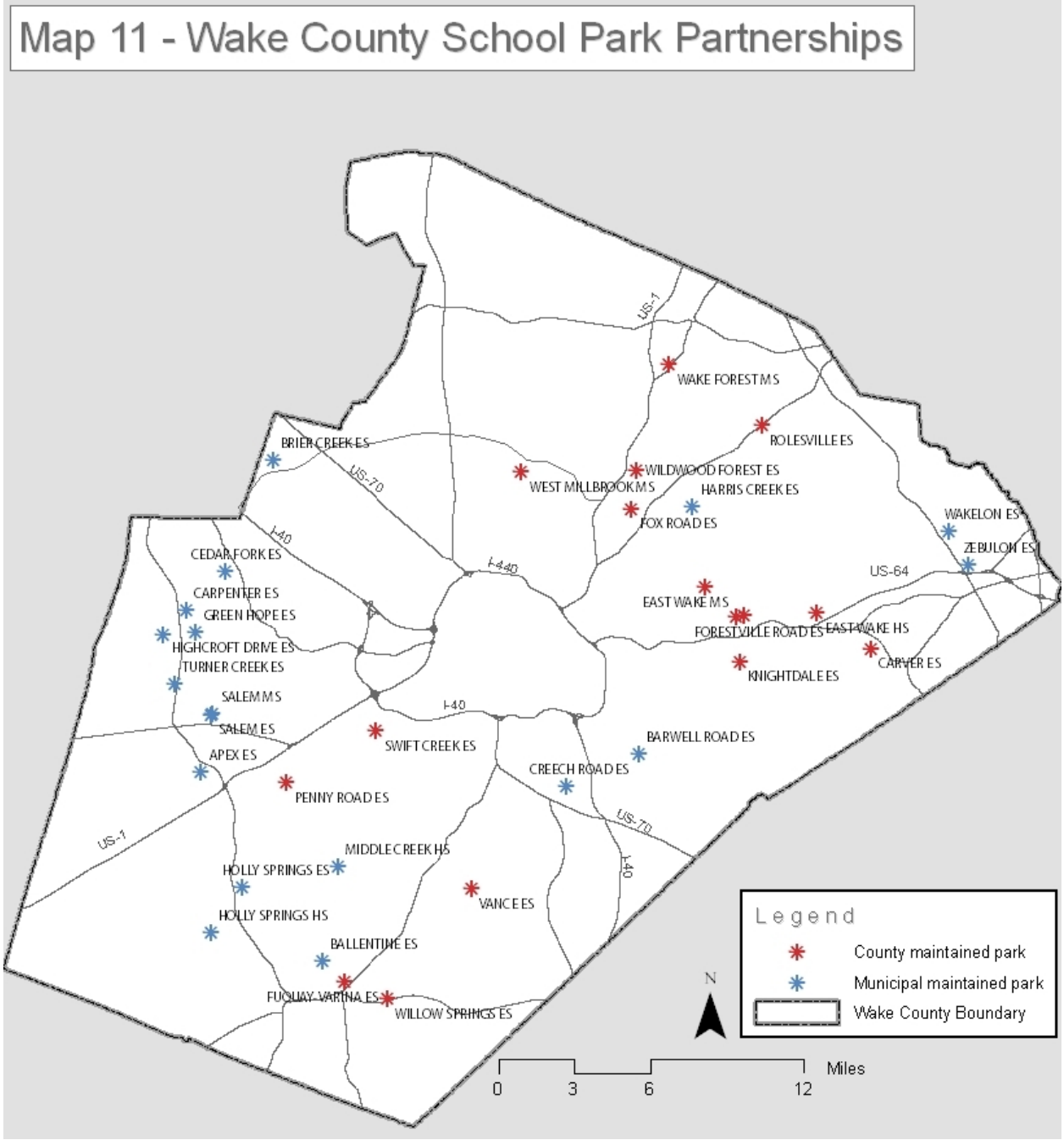
Certain portions of open space in Wake County are designated and managed by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources commission for hunting purposes. This map shows those publicly owned areas in the orange color. Public hunting in Wake County is almost entirely confined to the two largest open spaces, in the southern end of the County around Harris Lake County Park (Progress Energy) and at the northwestern corner surrounding Falls Lake (US Army Corps of Engineers).



Citizens of Wake County responded in the survey that they would be willing to travel about eleven minutes to the County park nearest them. On this map the seven existing County parks are shown and their respective eleven minute service areas are highlighted in light green.



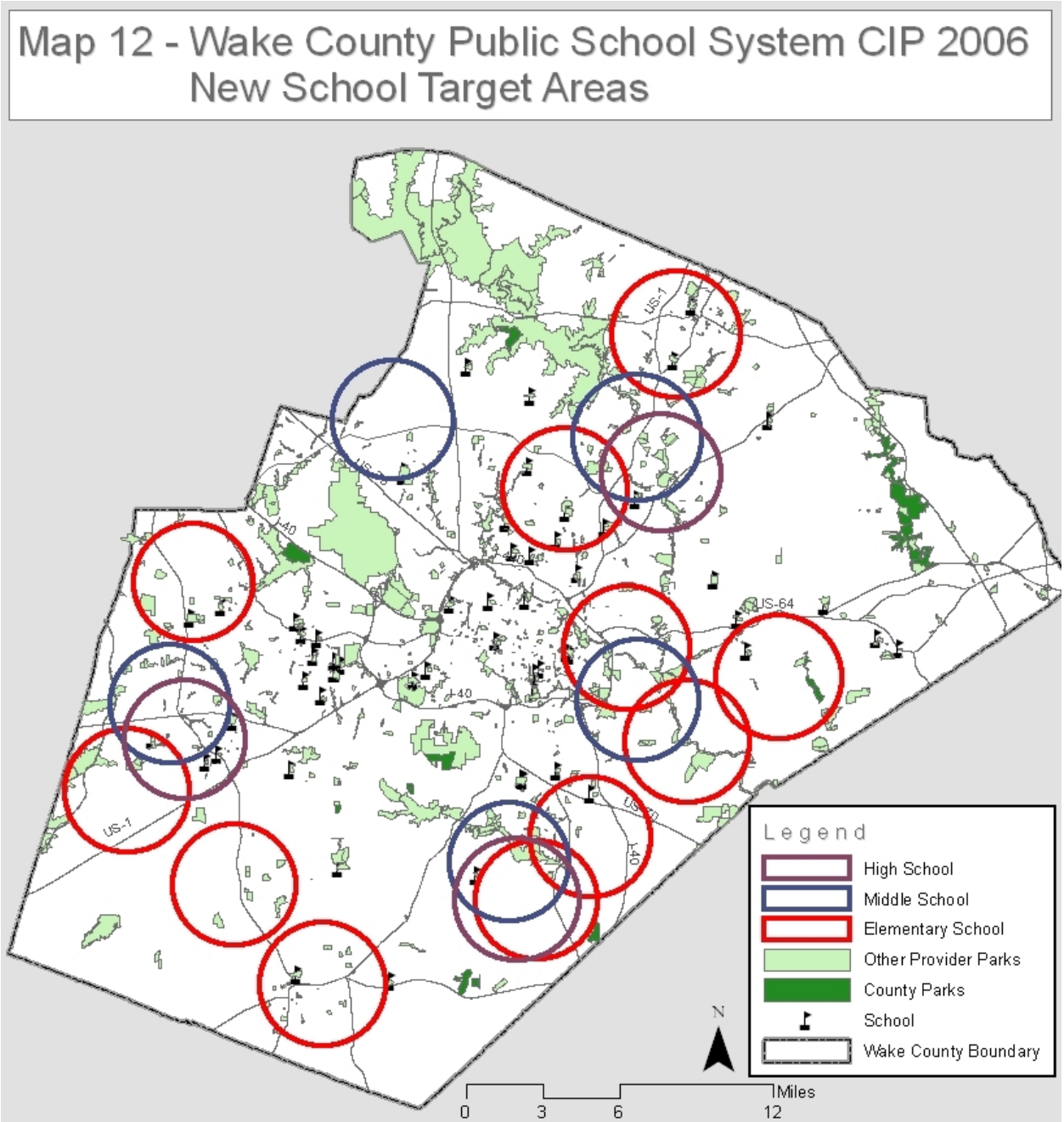
With the addition of the four future county parks, the eleven minute service area is extended to nearly the entire County. All parts of the County are within a twenty minute drive from at least one county park.



The School/Parks program was a partnership between Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) and Wake County Public Schools. This partnership allowed school campuses to be improved by including recreational amenities that exceed the requirements of the schools' regular program. These improvements include picnic shelters, trails, athletic fields, and playgrounds that provide the community with valuable recreational amenities.

The Community Use in Schools program is an evolution of the School/Parks concept in that it actively seeks partnerships with municipalities to oversee and maintain the park related improvements on these school campuses. The benefit of this program is municipalities and local communities becoming more engaged with public schools. The combined programs have allowed 34 school campuses to be improved.

The map above shows where this program has been implemented throughout Wake County. A red star on the map indicates school campuses where Wake County has developed parks and remains involved with administrative and site maintenance duties. A blue star indicates school campuses where Wake County has relinquished administrative and maintenance responsibility of the site, or has either provided funding for land acquisition and/or provided facility development as a part of its newer Community Use in Schools program.



The map above displays the new school target areas included in the Wake County Public School System's 2006 Capital Improvement Plan. The target areas are the result of data analysis by the Institute for Transportation, Research and Education at North Carolina State University.

Summary

As a result of this mapping exercise, these maps validate that the County is forward-thinking and is keeping up with population growth and development. With the addition of potentially four new parks, there is no concern for equitable access to the park system.

Coming in the Next Chapter…

See what Wake County citizens said in a random survey about their County Parks, Open Space, Trail and Greenway System.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

CHAPTER 6: CITIZEN SURVEY

What is the importance of completing a citizen survey?

Information received from a statistically valid citizen survey provides decision makers with the data needed to make informed decisions.

Introduction

The Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during March and April of 2007 to establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services within the County. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the County. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

Overview of the Methodology

The consultant worked extensively with County officials to develop the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

In March 2007, surveys were mailed to a random sample of 2,000 households in Wake County. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed, each household that received a survey also received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. In addition, about two weeks after the surveys were mailed the consultant began contacting households by phone, either to encourage completion of the mailed survey or to administer the survey by phone.

Use of survey data allows decision makers to make informed decisions

The goal was to obtain a total of at least 400 completed surveys within the County. This goal was accomplished with a total of 423 surveys completed. The results of the random sample of 423 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.8%.

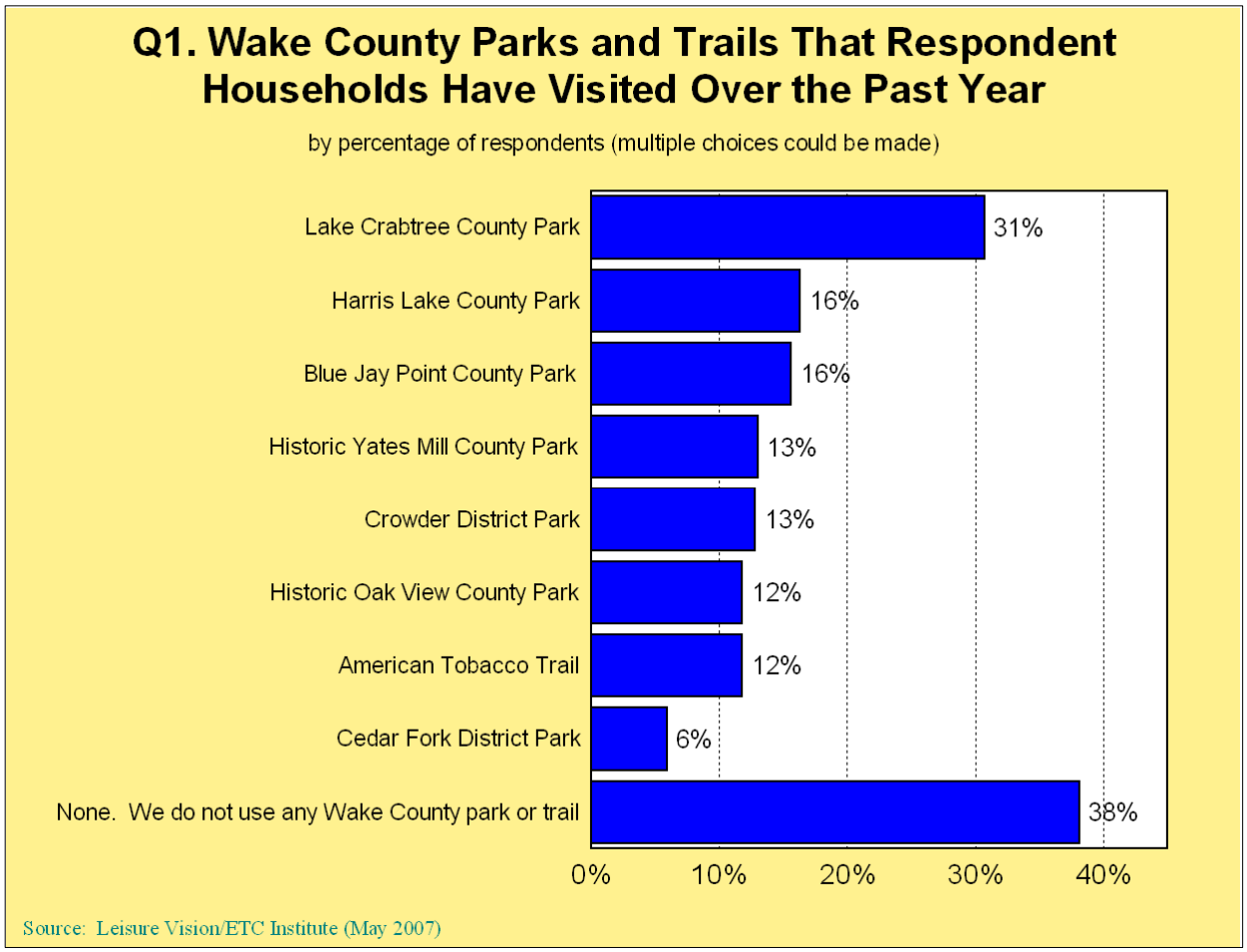
Selected Survey Results

The citizen survey Executive Summary is located in Appendix B of this report. Selected survey results are featured here which are germane to the planning effort.

Wake County Parks and Trails Visited Over the Past Year

From a list of eight Wake County parks and trails, respondents were asked to indicate which ones their household has visited over the past year. The following summarizes key findings:

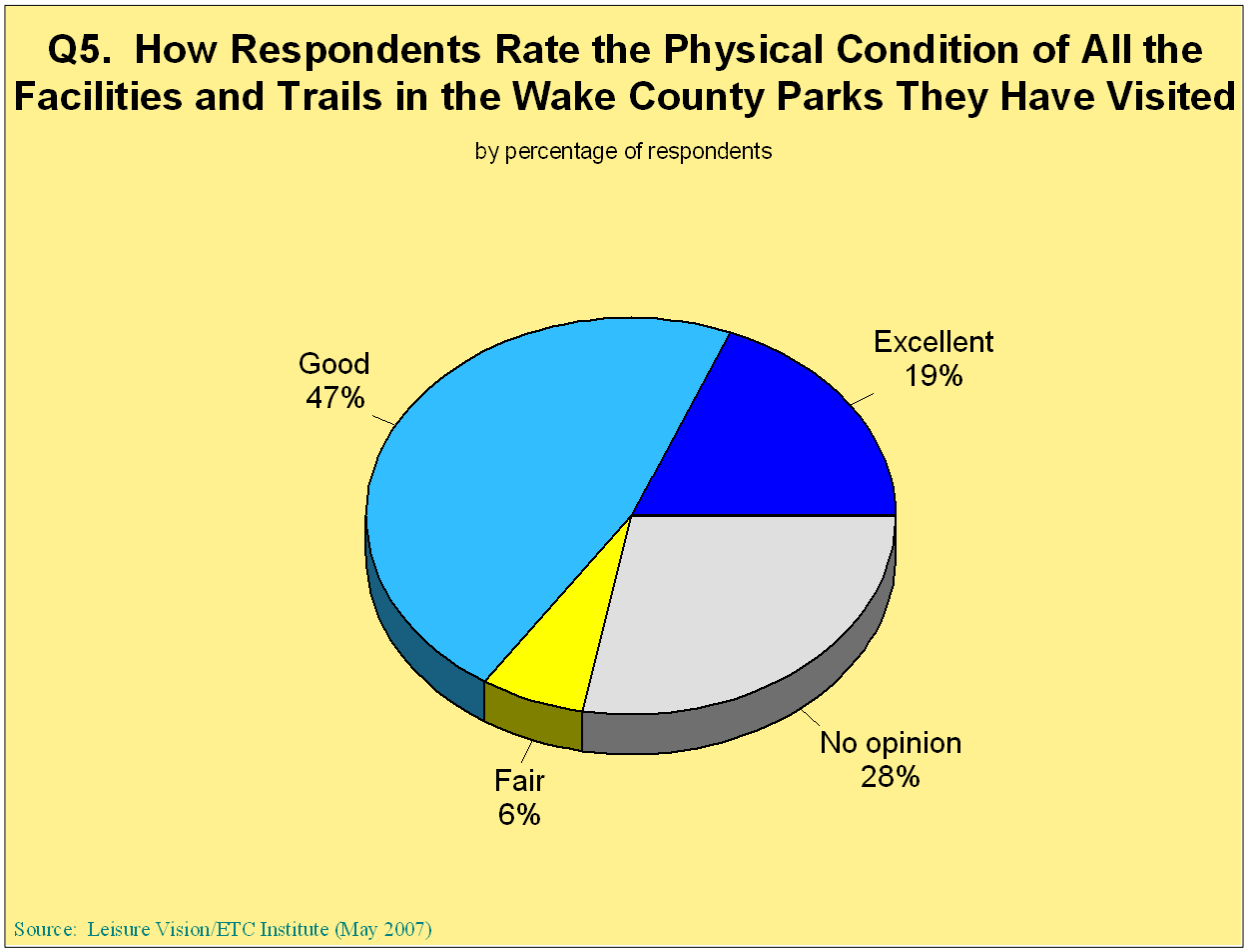
Lake Crabtree County Park (31%) is the Wake County park/trail that the highest percentage of respondents have visited over the past year. Other Wake County parks and trails that respondent households have visited the most over the past year include: Harris Lake County Park (16%) and Blue Jay Point County Park (16%). Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondent households have visited at least one of the Wake County parks and trails over the past year.



Overall Physical Condition of All Facilities and Trails in Wake County Parks

Respondents were asked to indicate how they would rate the overall physical condition of all the facilities and trails in the Wake County parks that they have visited. The following summarizes key findings:

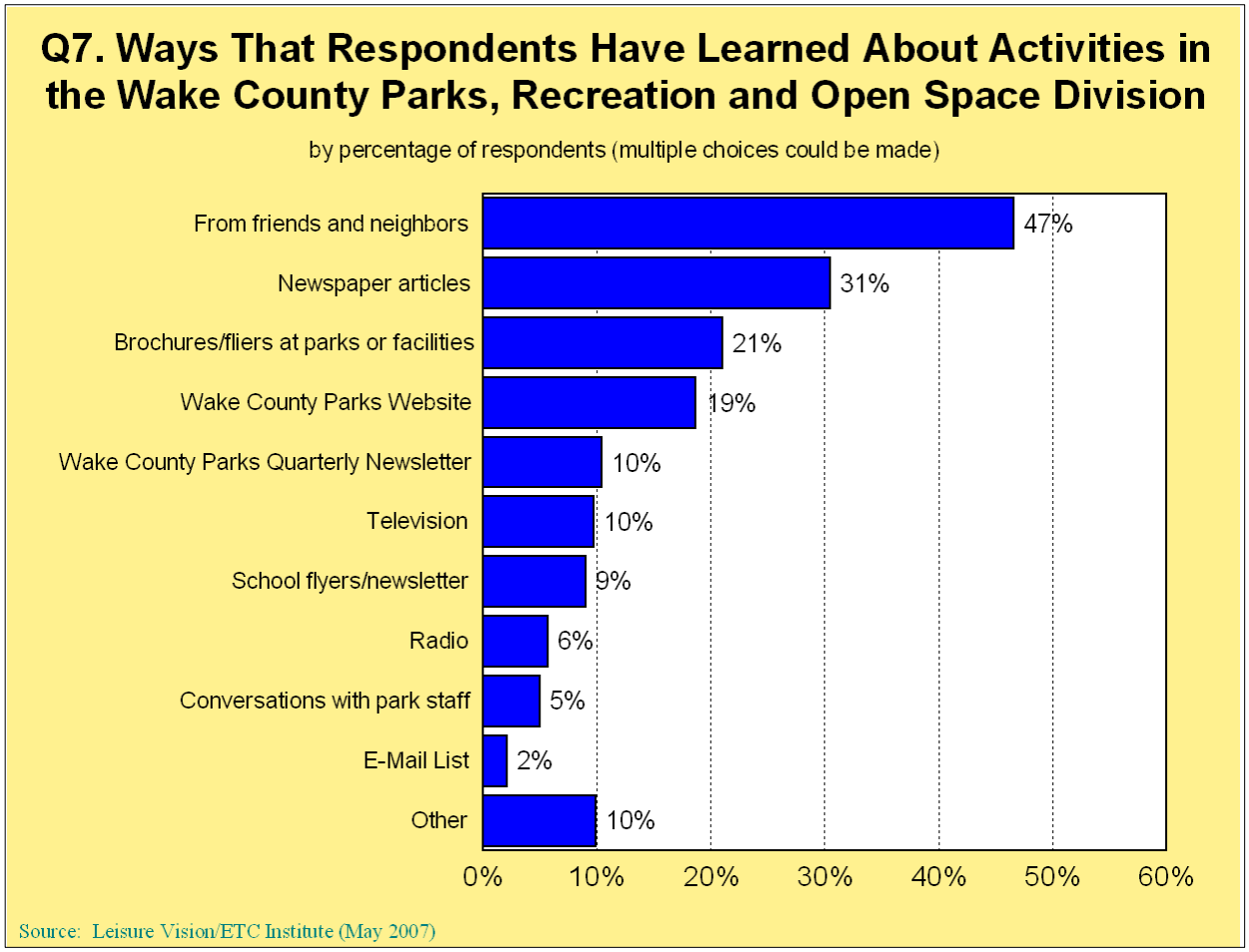
Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents rate the physical condition of all the facilities and trails in the Wake County Parks they have visited as either "excellent" (19%) or "good" (47%). An additional 6% rate the physical condition as "fair" and 28% have "no opinion". Less than 1% rated the facilities and trails as "poor".



Ways Respondents Learn About Activities

From a list of 10 options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ways they have learned about activities in the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division. The following summarizes key findings:

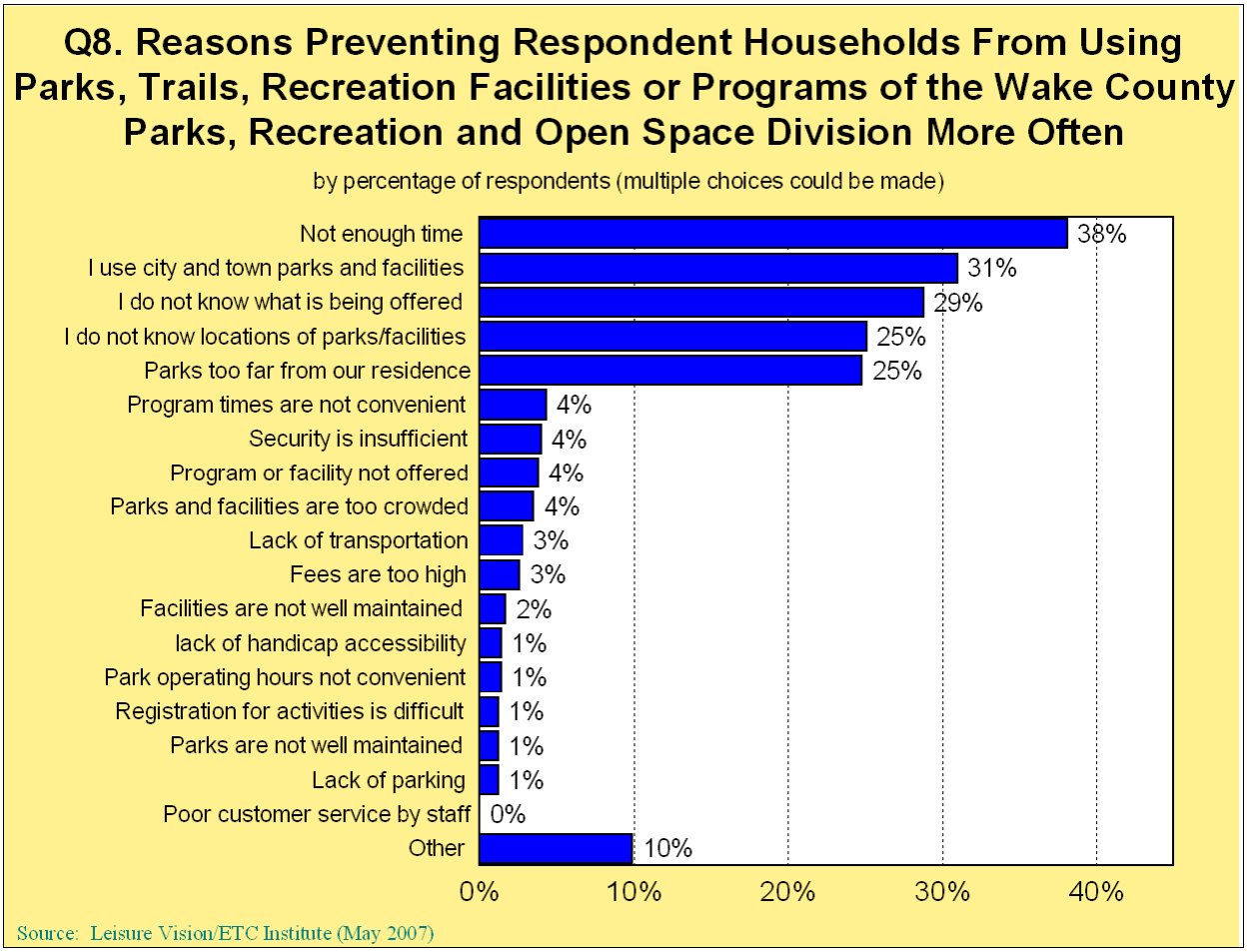
From friends and neighbors (47%) is the most frequently mentioned way that respondents learn about Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division activities. The other most frequently mentioned ways that respondents learn about Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division activities include: newspaper articles (31%), brochures/fliers at parks or facilities (21%), and Wake County Parks Website (19%).



Reasons that Prevent Respondent Households from Using Facilities and Programs More Often

From a list of 18 reasons, respondents were asked to indicate all of the reasons that prevent them and members of their household from using parks, trails, recreation facilities or programs of the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division more often. The following summarizes key findings:

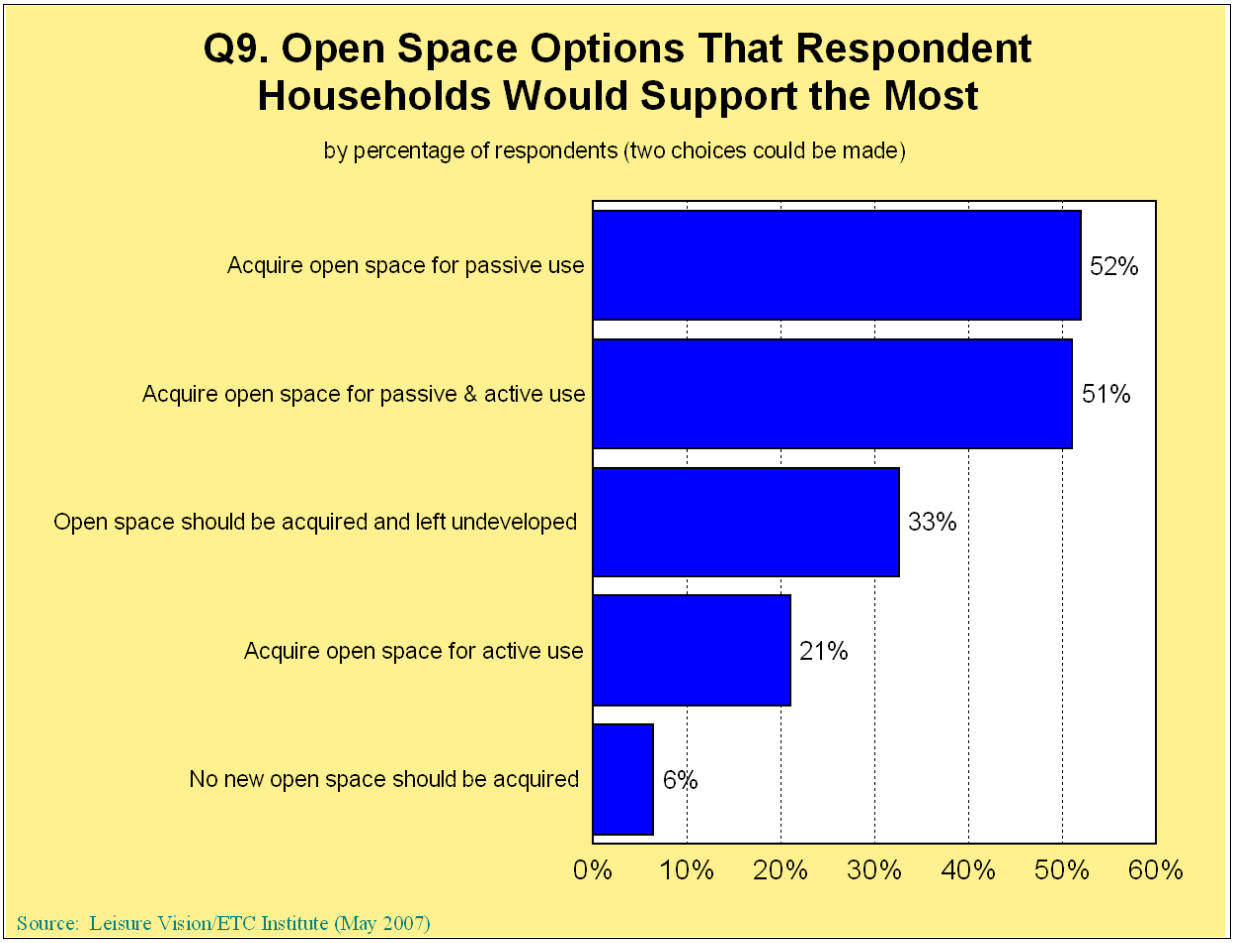
"Not enough time" (38%) is the most frequently mentioned reason that prevents respondent household members from using parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs of the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division more often. The other reasons that prevent respondents from using parks and facilities more often include: "I use city and town parks and facilities" (31%), "I do not know what is being offered" (29%), "I do not know locations of parks/facilities" (25%) and "parks too far from our residence" (25%).



Open Space Options Respondent Households Would Support the Most

From a list of four options for acquiring and developing open space for parks and recreation purposes, respondents were asked to indicate the two options their household would support the most. The following summarizes key findings:

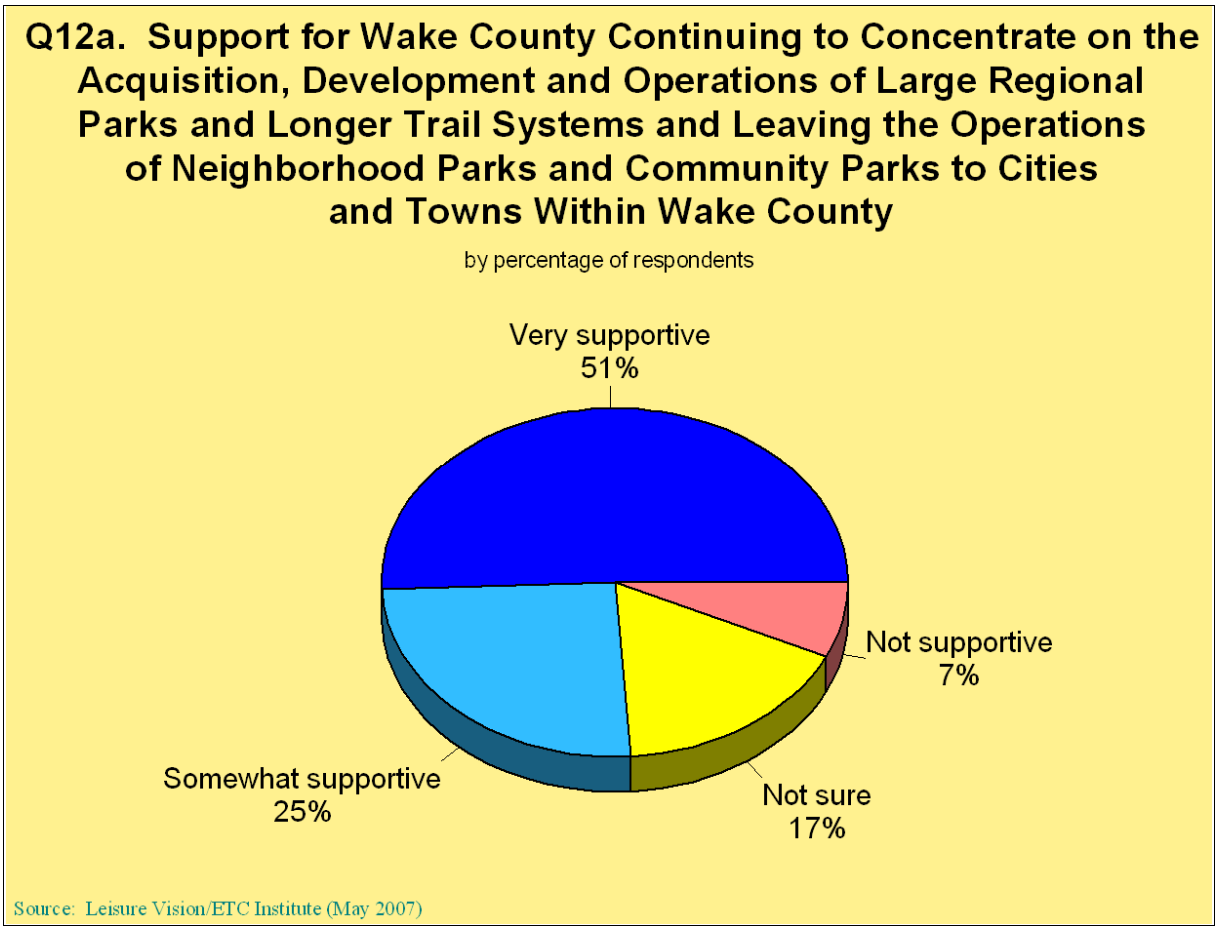
"Open spaces should be acquired and improved for passive use" (52%) and "open space should be acquired and improved for both passive and active use" (51%) had the highest percentage of respondents indicate those options as the two open space options that respondent households would support the most. Additionally, "open space should be acquired and left undeveloped" (33%) also had a high number of respondents indicate it as one of the two open space options that they would support the most. Only 6% of respondents indicated that no new open space should be acquired.



Support for Wake County Concentrating on Large Regional Parks and Longer Trail Systems

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of Wake County continuing to concentrate on the acquisition, development, and operations of large regional parks and longer trail systems that can serve citizens throughout the County and leaving the operations of neighborhood parks and community parks to cities and towns within Wake County. The following summarizes key findings:

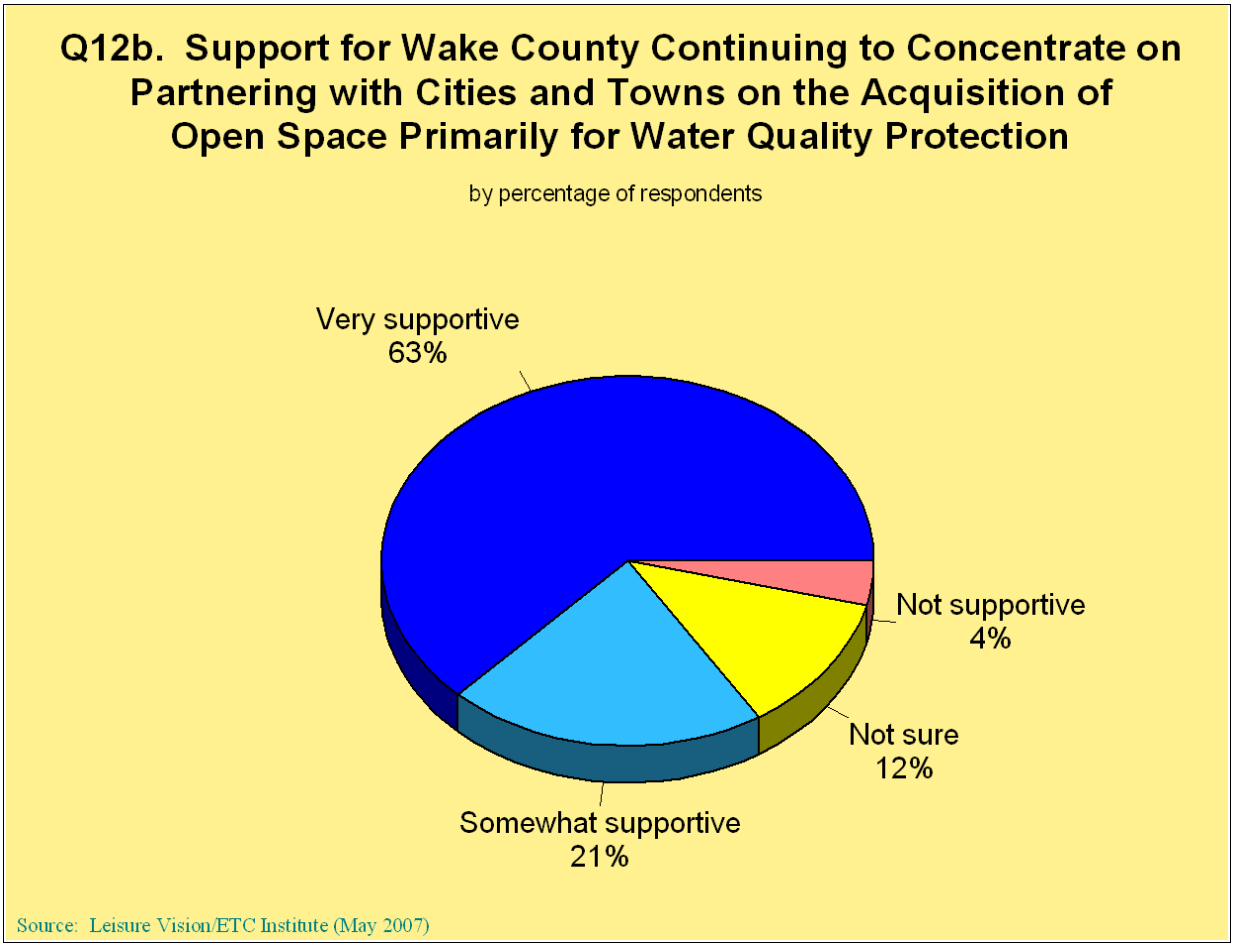
Seventy-six percent (76%) of respondents indicated being "very supportive" (51%) or "somewhat supportive" (25%) of Wake County continuing to concentrate on the acquisition, development, and operations of large regional parks and longer trails systems and leaving the operations of neighborhood parks and community parks to cities and towns within Wake County. An additional 17% of respondents indicated "not sure", and 7% are "not supportive".



Support of Wake County Concentrating on Partnering with Cities and Towns

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with cities and towns on the acquisition of open space primarily for water quality protection. The following summarizes key findings:

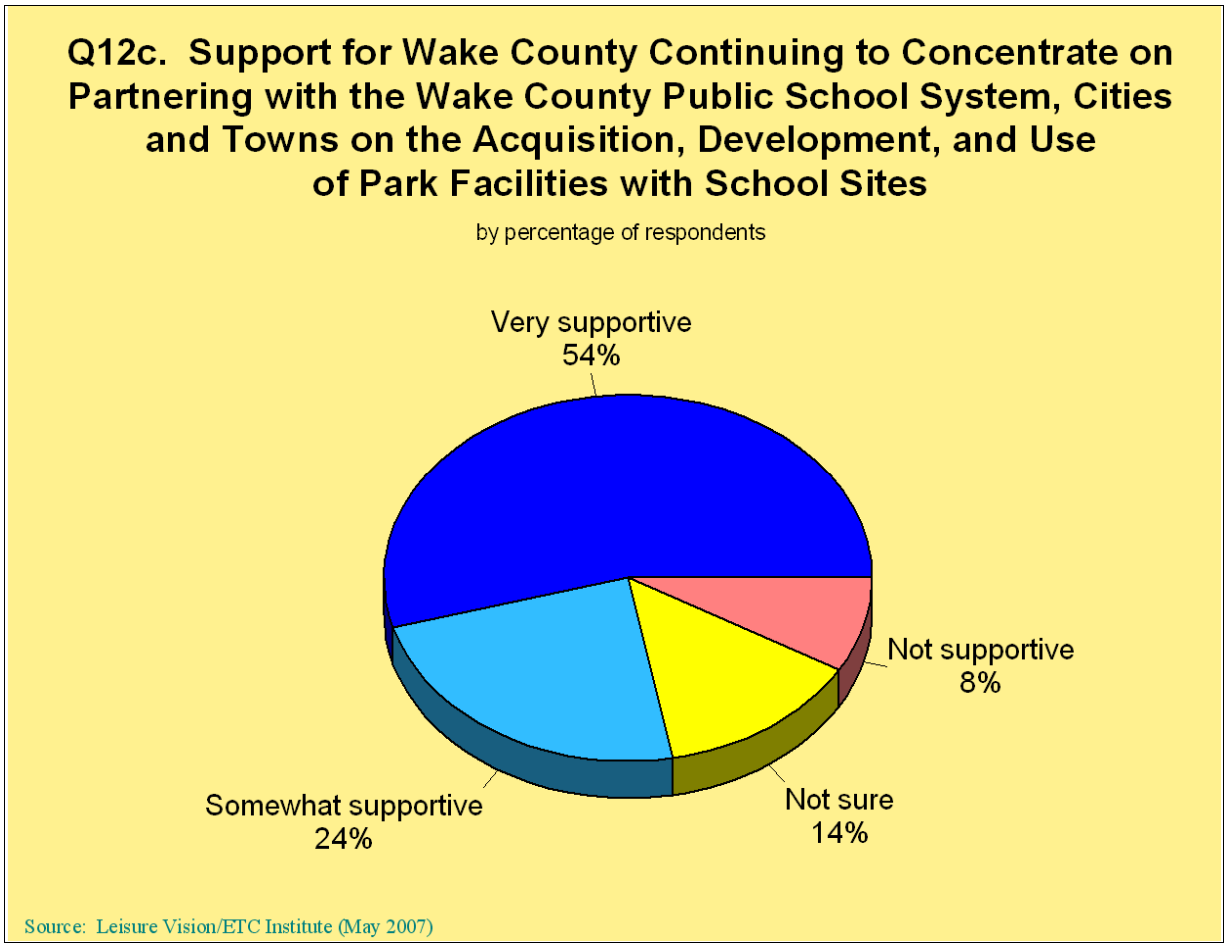
Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents indicated being either "very supportive" (63%) or "somewhat supportive" (21%) of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with Cities and Towns on the acquisition of open space primarily for water quality protection. An additional 12% indicated being "not sure", and only 4% indicated that they are "not supportive".



Support of Wake County Concentrating on Partnering with Wake County Public School System, Cities, and Towns

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with the Wake County Public School System, cities, and towns on the acquisition, development, and use of park facilities with school sites. The following summarizes key findings:

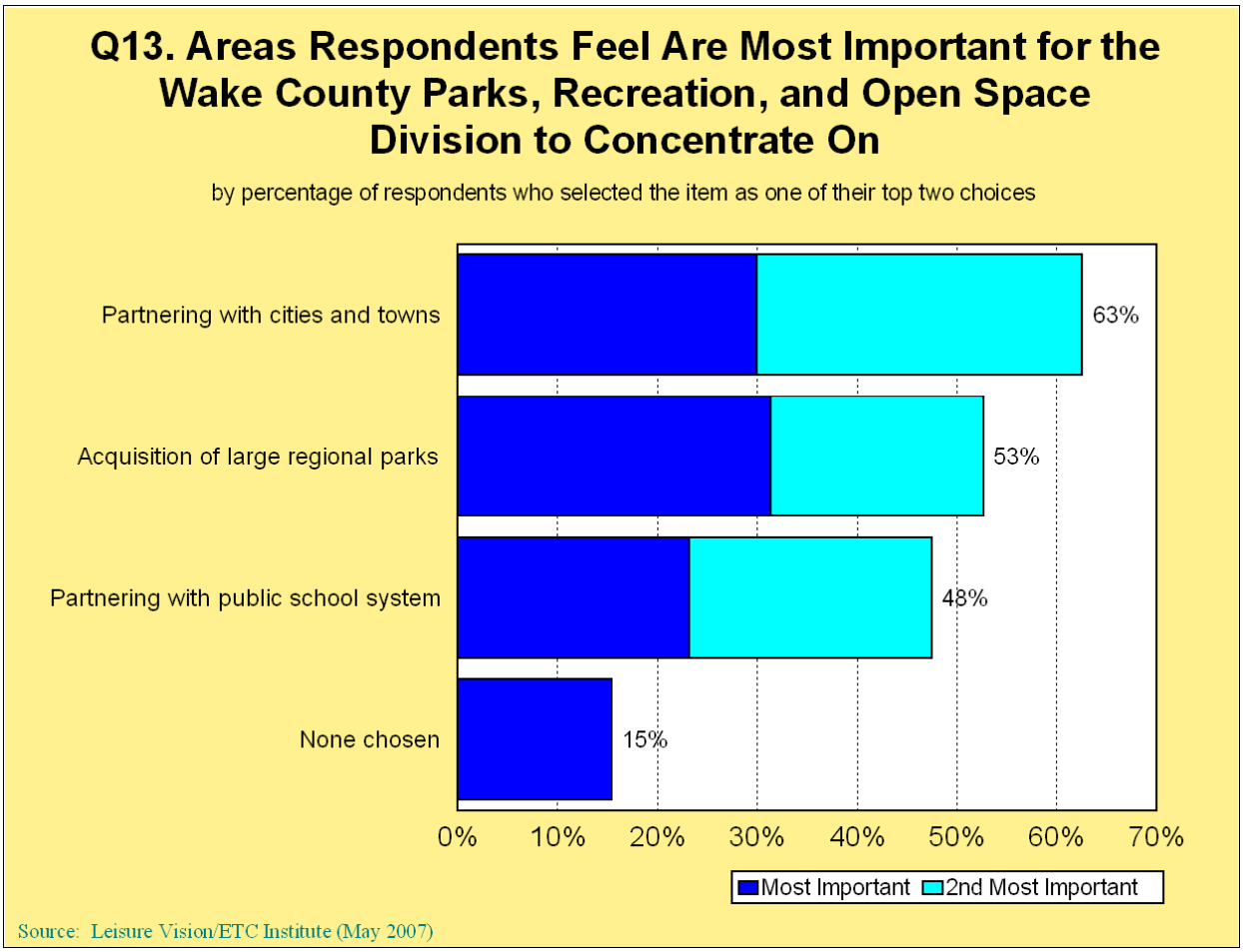
Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents indicated being either "very supportive" (54%) or "somewhat supportive" (24%) of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with the school system, cities and towns on the acquisition, development, and use of park facilities with school sites. An additional 14% indicated "not sure", and 8% indicated that they are "not supportive".



Areas Respondents Feel Are Most Important to Concentrate On

Respondents were asked which two areas they feel are the most important for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division to concentrate on. The following summarizes key findings:

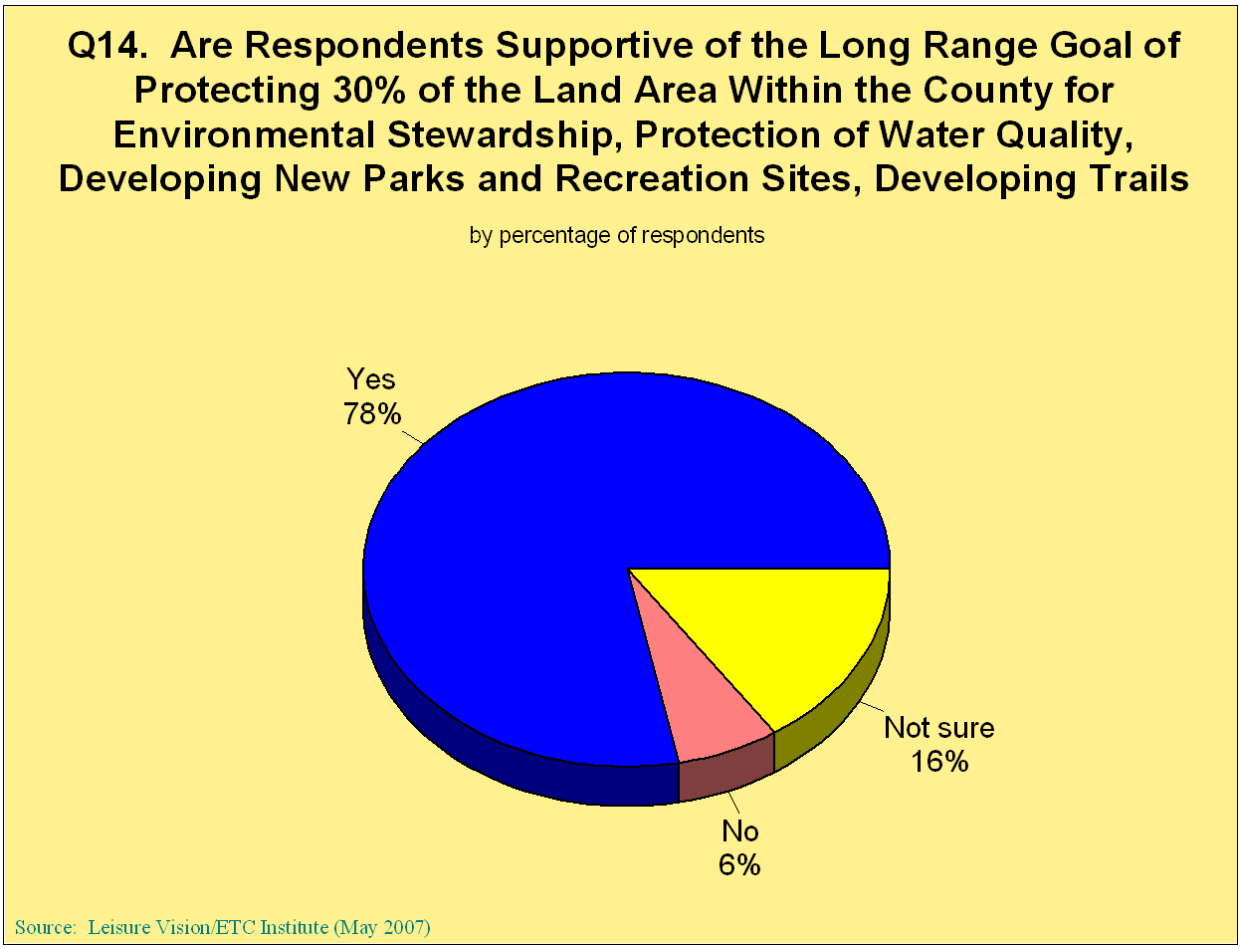
Based on the sum of their top two choices, the two areas respondents feel are most important for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division to concentrate on are: partnering with cities and towns (63%) and acquisition of large regional parks (53%).



Support for the Long Range Goal of Protecting 30% of Land Area

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of the long range goal of protecting 30% of the land area within the County for environmental stewardship, protection of water quality, developing new parks and recreation sites, developing trails, etc. The following summarizes key findings:

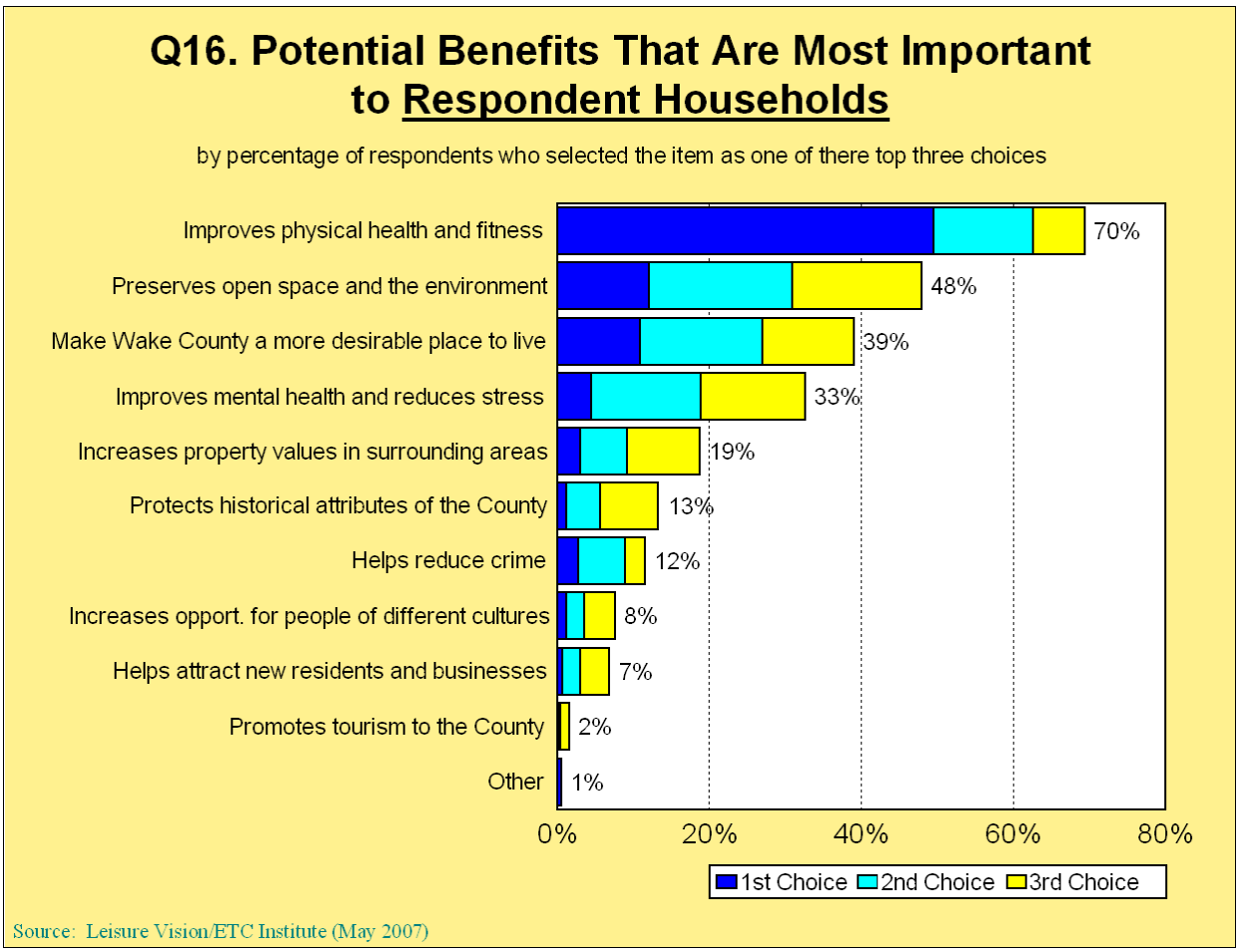
Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents are supportive of the long range goal of protecting 30% of the land area. Only 6% of respondents are not supportive of protecting 30% of the land area, and 16% indicated "not sure".



Potential Benefits That Are Most Important to Respondent Households

From the list of 10 potential benefits from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services, respondents were asked to indicate which three potential benefits are most important to their household. The following summarizes key findings:

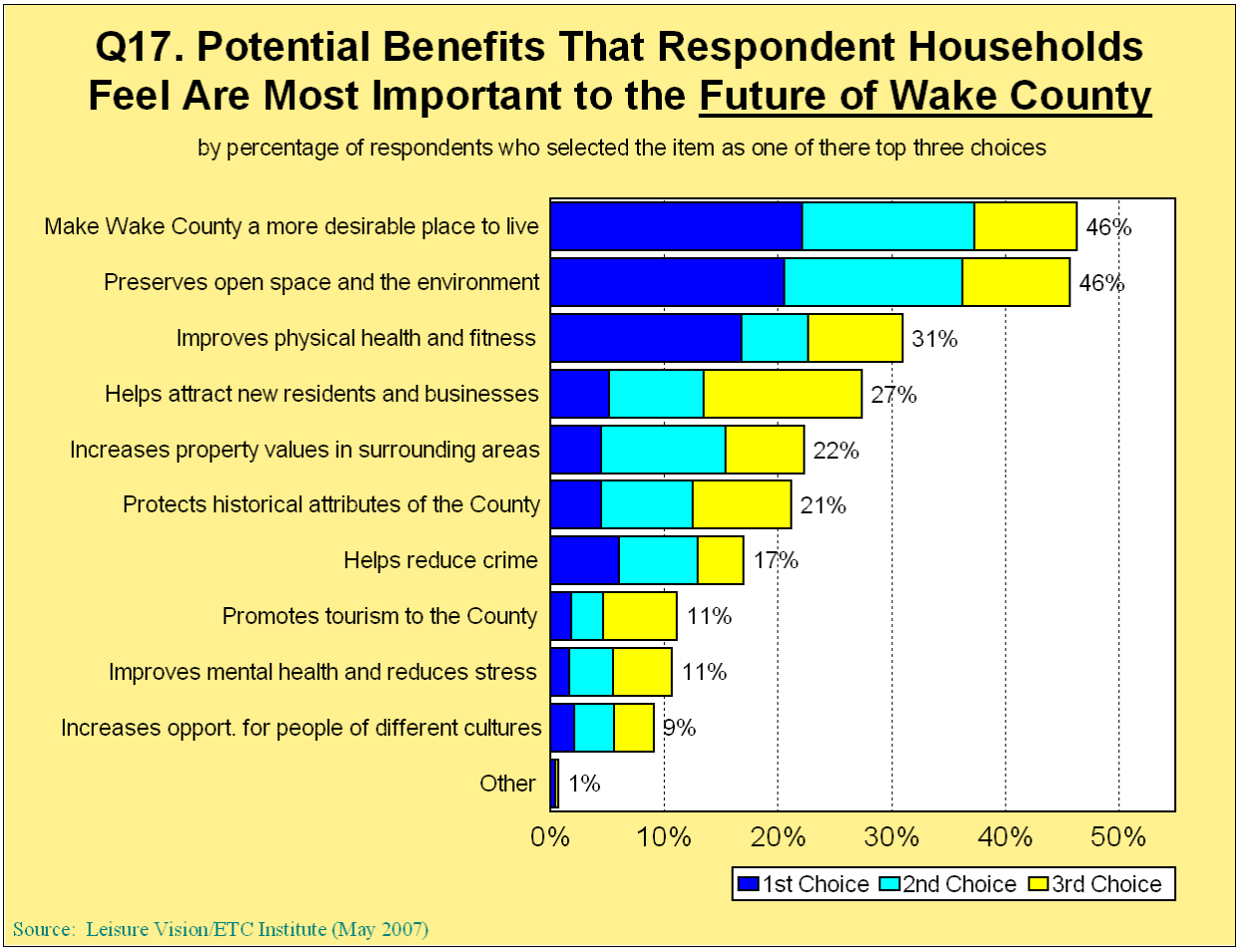
Based on the sum of their top three choices, the potential benefits that are most important to respondent households are: improves physical health and fitness (70%), preserves open space and the environment (48%), make Wake County a more desirable place to live (39%), and improves mental health and reduces stress (33%). It should also be noted that improves physical health and fitness had the highest percentage of respondents select is as their first choice as the most important potential benefit.



Potential Benefits Are Most Important to the Future of Wake County

From the list of 10 potential benefits from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services, respondents were asked to indicate which three potential benefits are most important to the future of Wake County. The following summarizes key findings:

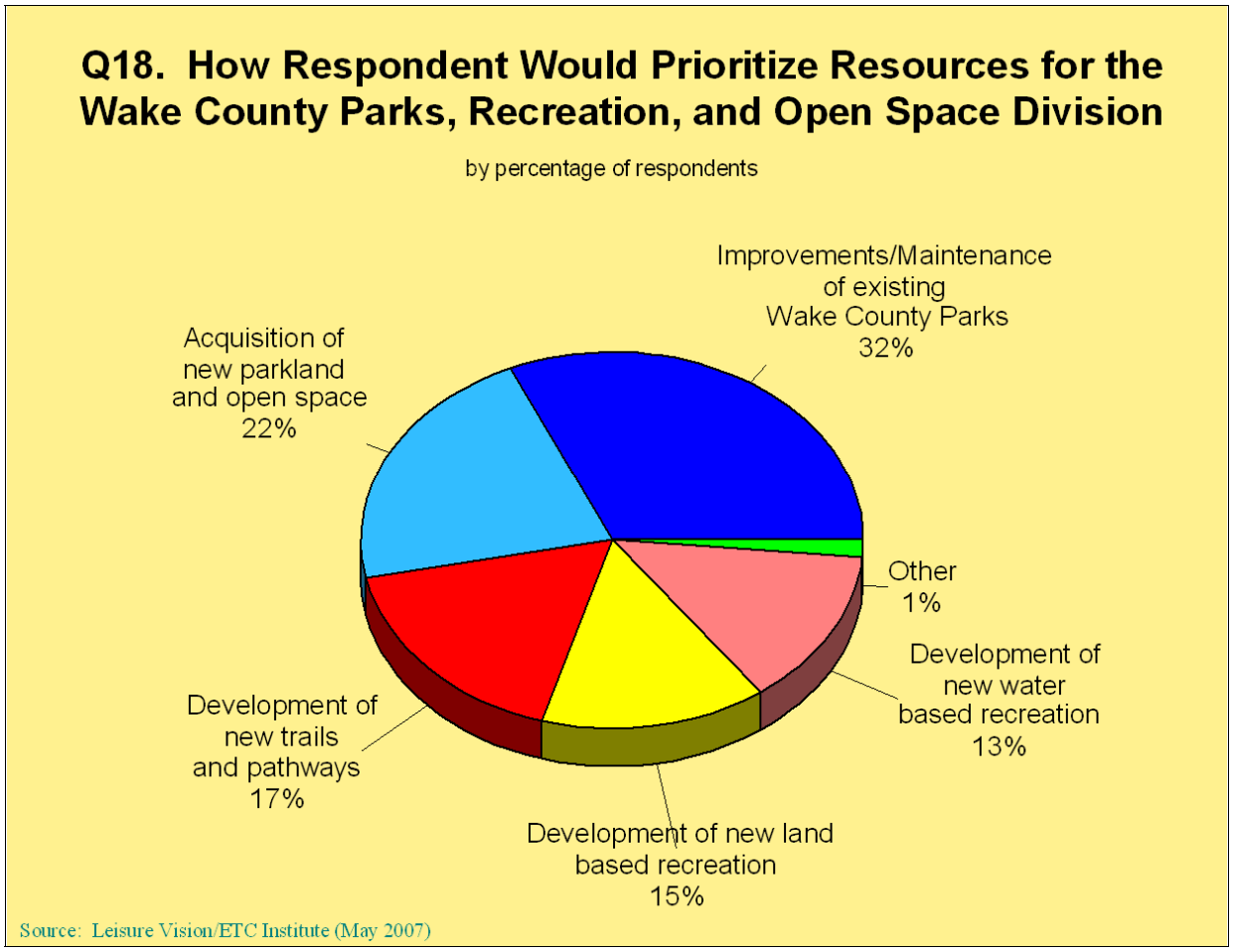
Based on the sum of their top three choices, the potential benefits that respondent households think are most important to the future of Wake County are: make Wake County a more desirable place to live (46%), preserves open space and the environment (46%), improves physical health and fitness (31%), and helps attract new residents and businesses (27%). It should also be noted that make Wake County a more desirable place to live had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important potential benefit.



Prioritizing Resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division

Respondents were asked to indicate how they would prioritize resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division. The following summarizes key findings:

Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents indicated they would prioritize resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division with improvements/maintenance of existing Wake County Parks. The remaining 68% was allocated as follows: 22% for acquisition of new parkland and open space, 17% for development of new trails and pathways, 15% for development of new land based recreation, 13% for development of new water based recreation, and 1% for other.



Summary of Key Findings

- Lake Crabtree County Park is the most heavily used park.
- The physical condition of the park system is rated high with 66% rating it as excellent or good.
- Marketing efforts need to be improved; for example, 25% of respondents do not know the locations of the County parks; however, this exceeds a national benchmark of 13%.
- Support for the acquisition of open space is very high with 90% being in favor of it.
- Walking and hiking trails are the highest rated new facilities that citizens want.
- Citizens want the County to expend its resources on large regional parks and longer trails, in fact, 76% expressed their support for this choice for resource allocation
- Citizens want the County to partner with cities to acquire open space for environmental purposes; 84% are supportive of this endeavor.
- 78% of the respondents are supportive of the County's effort to partner with the school district, cities and towns to co-locate parks and facilities adjacent to schools.
- 78% of the respondents are supportive of the County's effort to protect 30% of its land area for environmental stewardship, water quality, large parks and trails.
- Personal benefits from the services provided by the County are health and wellness.
- Citizens expressed a priority for improvements and maintenance to existing County Parks followed by the acquisition of new parkland and open space.

Coming in the Next Chapter…

View the Goals and the Action Strategies that are required to successfully implement the Comprehensive Master Plan.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

CHAPTER 7: GOALS AND ACTION STRATEGIES

What are goals and strategies?

Goals are realistic targets to achieve through this master plan. Strategies are steps that will need to be taken to achieve the goals.

Introduction

In this era of Parks, Recreation and Open Space planning, emphasis is placed on several concepts, which enable Wake County to simultaneously ***imagine its future*** and move forward with the confidence that the County's resource allocation is in alignment with the preferences of its citizens.

The concepts that are woven through the fabric of this document include: ***positioning*** (alignment with issues that are important when resources are allocated), ***sustainability*** (financial, environmental and management), ***partnerships*** (leveraging resources with others who share common goals), and ***accountability*** (performance measures). In a growing and increasingly more diverse county, these concepts are intended to enable County leaders to make informed, responsive and forward-looking decisions about the Division.

Key planning concepts:
- Positioning
- Sustainability
- Accountability
- Partnerships

Goal #1 – To position the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space (the Division) as a valued partner in the vision of Wake County

Strategy 1.1 – Refine the Division's role.

- The Division's core services will continue to be the provision of open space, recreation and leisure services and environmental and cultural education.
- The Division will develop consistent, cohesive policies and procedures to ensure the timely and effective delivery of core services to park visitors.
- The Division will continue to plan, develop and manage large regional parks.
- The Division will serve as a ***facilitator and partner*** to municipalities and special interest groups who share common goals in pursuing projects which are compatible with the intent of this comprehensive plan; for example, trails, greenways, environmental protection, land acquisition, and education.
- The Division will be proactive with other Wake County departments in discussions concerning land use plans, land acquisition, impact fees, partnership opportunities, etc. to ensure that parks and open space needs are considered.
- The Division will be proactive with external government agencies, such as municipal park directors, in discussions concerning the County's role in the development of parks, recreation and open space, and on matters of mutual importance.
- The Division will provide technical assistance to municipalities, non-profit groups, citizens, and others with regard to parks and open space.
- The Division will assume a strong leadership role in coordinating the planning and development of the trail and greenway system among municipalities.
- The Division will consider options with its partners and stakeholders toward providing opportunities for recreation and education opportunities.
- County Commissioners, the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee and other County Departments will be encouraged to participate in a one-day Visioning Workshop to encourage consensus on the intent of this Comprehensive Master Plan.

Strategy 1.2 – Become strategically aligned with key issues and partners.

- The Division will continue to align itself with:
  - Key individuals and groups who advocate environmental issues;
  - Key individuals and groups who advocate the development of trails and greenways;
  - The Wake County Public School System - to strengthen its co-location program for parks, schools and other public facilities; and
  - Municipalities and non-profit groups - to identify needs and provide services, which are in alignment with the intent of this Master Plan.

Goal #2 – To maintain and enhance the core services of Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

The Division's core services are the provision of open space, recreation and leisure services and environmental and cultural education. All core services are provided at each facility to varying degrees as dictated by individual park master plans.

Strategy 2.1 – Protect the environment through acquisition and stewardship of open space.

- The Division will actively promote its open space program and its goal to protect 30% of the land area within the County.
- The Division will work with other Wake County departments, municipalities and nonprofits to consider all manner of conservation measures including: acquisition in fee or easement; regulation; the land development process and others. Table 7.1 shown below details how this goal could be met.

Table 7.1: Future Protected Open Space

Category of Open Space	(Minimum) Goal In Acres	Percent of Total Open Space
Existing Protected Open Space	55,719	10.00%
Conserved Floodplain Lands (future)	60,000	11.00%
Protected Open Space through land development process (future)	22,000	4.00%
Future Open Space Acquisitions	27,281	5.00%
Total Protected Open Space	165,000	30.00%
Total Land Area of Wake County	550,000	

(Source: Wake County Consolidated Open Space Plan)

- The Division should fund and develop an environmental stewardship plan, which protects the County's acquired natural resources. The four key issues for this plan include:
  - Enhancement of natural resources for public benefit;
  - Natural resource inventory;
  - Ongoing monitoring of parks and open space lands; and
  - Natural resource management for protection of those resources.
- The Division will develop a sustainable program that meets the needs of current and future generations.

Strategy 2.2 – Provide facilities and amenities that allow citizens to enjoy recreational and leisure activities.

- Maintain and provide facilities to meet the recreational and leisure demands of a growing county population.
- Partner with internal and external agencies to support and promote health and wellness opportunities.
- Provide a safe environment for park visitors.
- Use best management practices when managing for recreational and leisure activities.

Strategy 2.3 – Provide cultural and environmental education programs, that introduce citizens to the history and natural environments of Wake County.

- Promote awareness of environmental and cultural issues affecting Wake County, and foster stewardship activities through the park's educational programs.
- Recognize and address the educational needs and interests of surrounding communities.
- Collaborate with the Wake County Public School System, local and state agencies, associations, and other groups to enhance and promote educational opportunities.
- Maintain professionally trained and certified educators to develop, lead, and sustain educational programs that promote environmental and cultural awareness, and stewardship.
- Provide and maintain appropriate educational facilities designed to meet increasing educational program needs.

Goal #3 – To be proactive with initiatives, that result in long-term sustainability of the Division and the environment

A sustainable park system is defined as one that is responsive to the environmental, economic, personal, social, and managerial needs of its citizens and political environment. Acknowledging that the demands on the environment and the services provided by the Division increase due to continued population growth and changing demographics, the strategies below are developed to address the long-term sustainability of the Division.

Strategy 3.1 – Set funding targets for County park maintenance, improvement and development.

Wake County PROS' funding is a combination of general fund operating dollars and capital improvement program (CIP) funding. The CIP funds three components for the Division of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space: a) existing park facility maintenance and improvements, b) community use of school parks, and c) facility master planning.

The funding for future county park development is not secure. In that regard, the strategy for park funding is as follows:

- Evaluate and recommend needed changes within PROS operating budgets;
- Evaluate and recommend needed changes within the PROS CIP budget; and
- Identify and secure funding sources for the planning and development of future county parks as outlined in Chapter 8 of this document.

Strategy 3.2 – Modify the Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance (RLDO).

An analysis of the current RLDO reveals that it is patterned from similar ordinances crafted for municipal parks and recreation agencies assessing a fee for the development of neighborhood services. Because of recent Supreme Court decisions that give municipal ordinances their standing, it is important that Wake County review its current ordinance.

The following recommendations should be implemented.

- Recommend that Wake County, through its Planning Department, review the current ordinance relative to Supreme Court decisions for possible revision or replacement.
- Consult an expert on the writing of a County ordinance that is supportable by current law and specific to Wake County.
- Create a fee formula supportable by actual Wake County conditions such as cost of development, expected population growth and future open space demand compared to the current documented demand.
- Include language specific to regional parks, countywide trails and greenways, and possible cooperative purchases or developments in cooperation with the adjacent municipalities.
- Include language to require periodic reviews of how the fee is calculated; i.e. once every three years.
- Cash in lieu of options should include the type and quality of land that will be accepted and should stipulate that land offers are subject to approval of suitability.
- Service areas may need to be created to establish where collected fees may be used so that it is used in proportion to the demand that created the need.
- Use fees collected under the current ordinance in partnership with municipalities in close proximity to the source of the fee.

Strategy 3.3 – Promote sustainability in park development and operations.

- Encourage sustainability and protection of the environment in all park and open space acquisitions, development, and operations.

Strategy 3.4 – Analyze long-term regional park lease agreements.

- Of the seven existing County parks, five of them include public and private lease agreements. These agreements should be analyzed, altered if necessary, and renewed in sufficient time to reduce or eliminate the interruption of services to citizens

Strategy 3.5 – Amend partnership and interagency agreements.

- The Division will formalize all partnership and interagency agreements. Agreements will be reviewed annually to determine if they are mutually beneficial to all parties.

Strategy 3.6 – Ensure adequate and qualified staff in order to sustain the level of service desired in a safe park environment.

- Using the Division-wide staffing study model, continue to assess and evaluate staffing needs in order to create a safe working environment for staff and to provide high-quality service to citizens.
- Update the existing succession plan that outlines a path of professional development for staff.
- Address the need for additional administrative support to manage and carryout operations.

Strategy 3.7 – Ensure staff needs to create and maintain an effective and productive work force.

- Give timely and sincere recognition for a job well done.
- Provide the necessary resources to do the job.
- Provide adequate latitude to make decisions within structured parameters.
- Provide and encourage professional staff development through a variety of means such as trainings, conferences, workshops, professional memberships, and opportunities to network with other professionals.

Strategy 3.8 – Acquire and utilize the technology necessary to operate at the highest levels of efficiency.

- Hardware and management software will be acquired to meet the Division's unique needs and training will be provided to ensure effective and efficient use of these resources.
- Upgrade technology that will allow effective communication among staff and citizens.
- Software will be acquired and used to streamline the appropriate processes such as the reservation process, registration process and program evaluation process.

Goal #4 – To market the benefits and services of the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Strategy 4.1 – Promote the program benefits provided by the Division.

- The Division will develop strategies to recognize environmental protection efforts that take place within the Division, to ensure that citizens, County leaders, and key stakeholders are aware of the opportunities that are available to them and the benefits of those opportunities.
- The Division will actively pursue local, state, regional and national awards. The benefit of this endeavor is that County leaders and citizens-at-large will develop a stronger appreciation of the Division's efforts when those efforts are widely recognized by outside agencies as meritorious.
- The Division will actively promote the benefits resulting from its involvement as a direct provider and facilitator of parks, trails, greenways, educational programs, services and facilities. These benefits include but are not limited to:
  - The value of the park system in attracting and retaining current and future citizens and businesses;
  - The economic impact resulting from its involvement with special events and other attractions;
  - The health and well being of its citizens from engaging in recreational activities; and
  - The quantifiable quality of the water supply and other environmental issues.

Strategy 4.2 – Market the Division's services.

- The Division's website will be managed by staff to ensure that its content is current, timely and user-friendly.
- A mailing list of core park system users will be constantly updated. From this list, a newsletter will be regularly distributed and e-mail blasts will be distributed in a timely manner to announce current events.
- Effectively market programs and events to the general public, public and private schools, and other organized groups, including home schools, through a variety of media.
- The Wake County logo and the Division name will be shown on all promotional materials and advertising for all programs and events sponsored or hosted by the Division.
- The Division will work with municipalities, local tourism agencies, and others to achieve a seamless exchange of information and to take advantage of marketing opportunities.

Goal #5 – To continue to serve the citizens of Wake County in our three core service areas and develop performance measures to track and report our success

The Division holds itself accountable for the efficient and effective allocation and management of its resources. The Division needs to improve its performance measure process to justify and support proposed facilities and services.

Strategy 5.1 – Develop performance measures to gauge customer satisfaction.

- Evaluate customer satisfaction through surveys, questionnaires and other assessment tools to strive for the highest level of customer service.
- Regularly evaluate programs and programmers to ensure quality educational programs.

***Strategy 5.2* – Develop internal performance measures to address process requirements.**

- The Division will annually evaluate major operations used to manage parks, open spaces and educational programs.
- Process measures will include customer satisfaction with their efficiency and effectiveness. Software will be researched to streamline the appropriate processes such as reservations, registration, and program evaluation.
- Division will conduct facility maintenance assessments to document park conditions, ensure a safe and quality experience for the customer, and project future budget needs.

Goal #6 – To create a regional park-land acquisition and development plan

Strategy 6.1 – Collaborate with partners.

- The Division should continue to partner with outside agencies in an effort to identify land for future regional park development. Potential partners may include the State of North Carolina, public universities, utilities, RDU Airport Authority, and any of the 12 municipalities within Wake County. Partners may also include counties adjacent to Wake County.
- Land acquisition in unincorporated areas near municipal boundaries needs to be collaboratively acquired and developed in a manner which is consistent with County and municipal long term needs. This effort is in response to the continued expansion of municipal boundaries into the unincorporated areas.
- Work with partners to continually update current and future park master plans.

Strategy 6.2 – Allocate required resources to support County parks, education, recreation, and open space needs.

- Commit County resources to a regional park system, which is connected to other systems by trails and greenways.
- Develop master plans for current and future parks to provide core services to the citizens of Wake County that reflect changing conditions and shifting priorities.
- Develop a priority approach to land acquisition in recognition of the level of need, limited resources, availability, and needs of municipalities.
- Include conservation data from state agencies such as the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission, North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, and others, to select environmentally sensitive locations for parks and greenways; thus implementing this plan's goal of protection.

Goal #7 – To participate in the planning and collaboration of municipal and regional trail and greenway plans.

The Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space is uniquely positioned to serve as the facilitator in the planning and collaboration among municipal and regional trail and greenway plans. The County's role in development will be on key linkages between municipal corporate limits and the development of potential partnerships towards the implementation of a regional trail and greenway system.

Strategy 7.1 – Host workshops with municipalities, and trail and greenway experts to review existing maps, ensure accuracy, and to map new corridors that are needed.

Strategy 7.2 – Become the repository for all trail and greenway plans and continuously update the corridors within the County, the connections to adjacent counties, and to regional trails such as the Mountains to Sea Trail.

Strategy 7.3 – Use directives from the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission for the development of greenways to create habitats for wildlife, wildlife viewing opportunities, and walking trails for our users.

Strategies Matrix linked to Key Issues

Table 7.2 below is a key that links issues identified during the planning process with the core team and other stakeholders with the goals and strategies that address them.

Table 7.2: Stakeholder Preferences for Important Initiatives

Key Issue	Goal	Strategy
County's Role	1, 2, 5	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 5.1, 5.2
Rapid Growth	All goals	All Strategies
Changing Demographics	All goals	All Strategies
Financial	3, 5	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8
Trail and Greenway System	7	7.1, 7.2, 7.3
Marketing	4, 5	4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2
Active Recreation Versus Passive Recreation Demands	1, 2	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3
Land Issues	1, 2, 3, 6, 7	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Coming in the Next Chapter…

Current and future park development projects and an opinion of probable costs for their planning and construction.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

CHAPTER 8: EXISTING AND FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT

What will the future park development projects be and what will they cost?

Detailed in this chapter are the future projects and costs that align the Division of Parks, Recreation and Open Space with the eight management goals that have been created in this comprehensive master plan to address environmental, social and personal needs of Wake County.

Introduction

Wake County conducts annual facility condition assessments at existing County Parks and School Park sites to identify critical park infrastructure repairs and minor improvements. The County's current seven-year CIP includes funding to address repairs and minor improvements through the facility condition assessment process. Since FY03, this program has facilitated needed repairs and minor improvements at all seven County Parks and many of the existing School Parks. Table 8.1 indicates the current seven-year CIP for continued funding of this program.

Table 8.1: Existing County Park Minor Repair & Improvements

Existing County Park Minor Repair & Improvements								
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total
Facility Repair & Improvements	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$1,750,000
Totals	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$1,750,000

The Community Use of Schools Program represents a partnership between the County, Wake County Public School System, municipalities and non-profit agencies to develop community parks in conjunction with the development of new school sites. Funds are used for land acquisition and/or infrastructure beyond what the school program requires. Park facilities may include ball fields, lighting, irrigation, parking, playgrounds, and picnic shelters. The County has been funding this program since FY98. Table 8.2 indicates the County's current seven-year CIP for continued funding of this program.

Table 8.2: Community Use of Schools Program

Community Use of Schools								
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total
Community Use of Schools	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$6,200,000
Totals	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$6,200,000

The County's current seven-year CIP includes funding to prepare updated master plans to existing County Park facilities. The master plan process will identify current and projected facility needs at existing parks. The process will also determine preliminary development costs for expansion and other improvements. As facility master plans are updated, projected development costs will be considered as part of Wake County's Capital Improvement Program or other funding source. Table 8.3 indicates the County's current seven-year CIP for continued master planning of existing parks.

Table 8.3: Existing County Park Master Planning

Existing County Park Master Planning								
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total
Master Planning / Design / Development								
Historic Oak View County Park								
Master Planning	-							
Design/Development		TBD						$0
Project Total								$0
Blue Jay Point County Park								
Master Planning		$37,500						$37,500
Design/Development			TBD					$0
Project Total								$37,500
Lake Crabtree County Park								
Master Planning			$37,500					$37,500
Design/Development				TBD				$0
Project Total								$37,500
Crowder District Park								
Land Acquisition	Potential acquisition of adjacent property.							
Master Planning				$25,000				$25,000
Design/Development					TBD			$0
Project Total								$25,000
Historic Yates Mill County Park								
Master Planning					$25,000			$25,000
Design/Development						TBD		$0
Project Total								$25,000
AmericanTobacco Trail (South)								
Master Planning						$80,000		$80,000
Project Total								$80,000
Harris Lake County Park								
Master Planning							$100,000	$100,000
Project Total								$100,000
Totals	$0	$37,500	$37,500	$25,000	$25,000	$80,000	$100,000	$305,000
*TBD: Design/Development costs to be determined as part of facility Master Plan update								
*Costs shown are based on 2007 estimates and do not include escalation.								

Future County Parks

Wake County has identified four potential future County Park facilities. These four facilities, when implemented, will achieve the necessary level of parks and leisure services provided by Wake County. Table 8.4 lists the projected costs for each facility. The costs outlined are based on conceptual program elements that will be further defined through the preparation of comprehensive facility master plans.

Table 8.4: Future County Park Projected Development Costs

Future County Park Projected Development Costs								
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total
Planning / Design / Development								
Lake Myra County Park								
Additional Land Acquisition (+/- 200 Acres)		$1,140,000	$1,140,000	$1,140,000				$3,420,000
Design/Development		$750,000	$3,380,000	$3,380,000				$7,510,000
Project Total								$10,930,000
Southeast Wake County Park								
Additional Land Acquisition (+/- 250 Acres)					$1,840,000	$1,840,000		$3,680,000
Master Planning			$100,000					$100,000
Design/Development				$750,000	$2,865,000	$2,865,000		$6,480,000
Project Total								$10,260,000
Brady Jefcoat Property								
Additional Land Acquisition (+/- 1 Acre)					$30,000			$30,000
Master Planning						$75,000		$75,000
Design/Development							TBD	$0
Project Total								$105,000
Little River County Park								
Additional Land Acquisition (+/- 35 Acres)							$575,000	$575,000
Master Planning							$100,000	$100,000
Design/Development (Phase 1)							TBD	$0
Project Total								$675,000
Totals	$0	$1,890,000	$4,620,000	$5,270,000	$4,735,000	$4,780,000	$675,000	$21,970,000

Lake Myra County Park

Over the past year, Wake County, in partnership with the Triangle Land Conservancy and Trust for Public Land, has acquired a 125-acre tract adjacent to the historic Lake Myra for a future Wake County Park. The acquisition is part of a larger priority preservation area of the Mark's Creek watershed in an effort to protect and preserve water quality and wildlife habitat, conserve unique natural areas, and to retain scenic and historical values.

The future County Park will overlook the 100-acre Lake Myra situated in eastern Wake County. The site will provide opportunities for trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, fishing, open space preservation, and environmental education. Adjacent to the park is a planned elementary school scheduled to open in 2009. The adjacency of the park to the school will provide outreach opportunities for environmental education and interpretation.

Little River County Park

In the mid 1980's, the Little River in eastern Wake County was identified as a future source of drinking water for that area of the County. During the early phases of planning, it was suggested that parkland be acquired in addition to land for the proposed reservoir. The 1993 parks bond allocated $2 million toward acquisition of land for a future County Park at the planned Little River Reservoir.

Since 1993, the County has assembled approximately 250 acres with several key acquisitions remaining. In addition to the parkland, the County is acquiring and preserving a 100' buffer adjacent to the permanent pool elevation of the planned reservoir. This buffer will accommodate a publicly accessible trail that will circle the 2,000-acre reservoir.

The County is also considering jointly acquiring with the City of Raleigh a 623-acre parcel in close proximity to the reservoir. This parcel, if acquired, may also present opportunities for development of County Park facilities with publicly accessible connections to the reservoir.

The future County Park will provide opportunities for open play, active play, hiking, biking, picnicking, boating, fishing, and environmental education. The trail circling the reservoir has the potential to serve a spine to a larger network of trails and greenways in eastern Wake County.

Southeast Wake County Park

The 2003 Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified an unmet and predicted need for County Park facilities and services in southeastern Wake County. In FY04, the County allocated the capital funds to begin the acquisition of land in that part of the County for a County Park. The identified park site is along Middle Creek in an area of unique topography, with significant wetlands and wildlife habitat.

Since 2004, the County has acquired multiple tracts totaling 235 acres for the park. Several potential acquisitions remain that would increase the size approximately 100 acres. Opportunities for the park development include trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds, restrooms, open play areas, open space preservation, environmental education center, and overnight lodge. There are also opportunities for active recreation through municipal partnerships.

Brady Jefcoat Property

In 2005, Wake County acquired a 55-acre tract just north of Lake Wheeler along Penny Road. The current landowner (who maintains a life estate) donated half of the tract and the County purchased the balance. The site could provide typical County Park opportunities including picnic shelters, playgrounds, trails, restrooms, fishing, open space preservation, and environmental education. A portion of the site also lends itself to playfields for active recreation, which could be developed through various partnerships.

A unique feature of the Jefcoat Property is its proximity to the Swift Creek Open Space Corridor, Historic Yates Mill County Park, Crowder District Park and the City of Raleigh's Lake Wheeler Park. Planning will determine the future uses of this site but a key element could be pedestrian trail connections.

Future Trails and Greenways

As defined in Goal #5 of this comprehensive Master Plan, Wake County will serve as the facilitator in the planning and collaboration among municipal and regional trail and greenway plans. The County's role in development will be on key linkages between municipal corporate limits and the development of potential partnerships towards the implementation of a regional trail and greenway system. Key to this effort is three major trail projects.

American Tobacco Trail South - The extension of the American Tobacco Trail south from its current ending point in New Hill to Raven Rock State Park in Harnett County. The extension would include a spur trail connecting to Harris Lake County Park. Further planning studies will have to be executed prior to developing projected costs for this trail project.

Swift Creek Greenway - In 2006, Wake County, in partnership with the City of Raleigh and Town of Garner, prepared a concept plan for a publicly accessible greenway trail in the Swift Creek corridor connecting Lake Wheeler and Lake Benson. Funding for this project is estimated at $9 million and is outlined in a separate facility master plan. Development of this greenway will require partnerships from the City of Raleigh and Town of Garner.

Neuse River Greenway - The County, through open space acquisition and other partnerships, has targeted the Neuse River corridor from Poole Road south to the Johnston County line for a publicly accessible greenway. This would be an extension of the Neuse River Greenway that the City of Raleigh has already implemented and planned for north of Poole Road. Further planning studies will have to be executed prior to developing projected costs for this trail project.

Operational Costs for Potential Future Projects

Operational costs associated with the four new County park facilities: Lake Myra, Little River, Southeast, and Brady Jefcoat, can only be projected based on current operational expenditures at existing County park facilities. The conceptual programs developed for each of the proposed facilities also impacts operational costs. The current operational figures at existing County parks vary based on the size of the facility and programs offered. The 2007 annual operational figures range from approximately $158,000 to $439,000. It can be expected that any new County park facilities will require similar operating funds.

Table 8.5 summarizes all projected costs associated with expansion and renovation of existing County Park facilities, school park facilities, and development of future County Parks.

Table 8.5: Summary of Costs

Summary of Costs								
	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	Total
Existing County Park Repair & Improv.	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$250,000	$1,750,000
Community Use of Schools	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$1,000,000	$800,000	$6,200,000
Existing County Park Master Planning	$0	$37,500	$37,500	$25,000	$25,000	$80,000	$100,000	$305,000
Future County Park Projects	$0	$1,890,000	$4,620,000	$5,270,000	$4,735,000	$4,780,000	$675,000	$21,970,000
Totals	$1,050,000	$3,177,500	$5,707,500	$6,545,000	$5,810,000	$6,110,000	$1,825,000	$30,225,000

Concluding Statements

1. The Master Plan identifies county park facilities, that when developed, achieve the level of parks and leisure services needed by Wake County.

2. The Division's core services of open space, recreation and leisure, and cultural and environmental education are on target.

3. There's an increasing need to collaborate and partner with municipalities in the provision of parks, recreation, trails and greenways throughout Wake County.

4. Existing Wake County park facilities are aging and will need higher levels of maintenance and renovation.

5. The opportunities to acquire and protect open space and parkland are decreasing as the County continues to develop and grow, thereby limiting the potential for expansion and achievement of the primary goal of protecting the environment.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

APPENDIX A

Focus Group Participants

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Active Recreation

- Wake County Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Town of Cary
- North Raleigh Athletic Association
- Capital Area Soccer League
- Triangle Futbol Club
- Triangle Flying Disc Association
- YMCA of the Triangle
- North Wake Baseball

Natural Resources

- Wake County Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Wake County Environmental Services
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- Town of Cary
- North Carolina Museum of Natural Science

Trails & Greenways

- Wake County Parks, Recreation & Open Space
- Triangle Rails to Trails Conservancy
- East Coast Greenway Alliance
- Town of Cary
- Triangle Greenways Council
- North Carolina Horse Council
- North Carolina State Trails / Parks & Recreation
- Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

APPENDIX B

Citizen Survey Executive Summary

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Community Attitude and Interest Survey

Executive Summary of Citizen Survey Results

Overview of the Methodology

The Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during March and April of 2007 to establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services within the County. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout Wake County. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with Wake County officials and members of the Bucher, Willis & Ratliff project team in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

In March 2007, surveys were mailed to a random sample of 2,000 households in Wake County. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed; each household that received a survey also received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. In addition, about two weeks after the surveys were mailed Leisure Vision began contacting households by phone, either to encourage completion of the mailed survey or to administer the survey by phone.

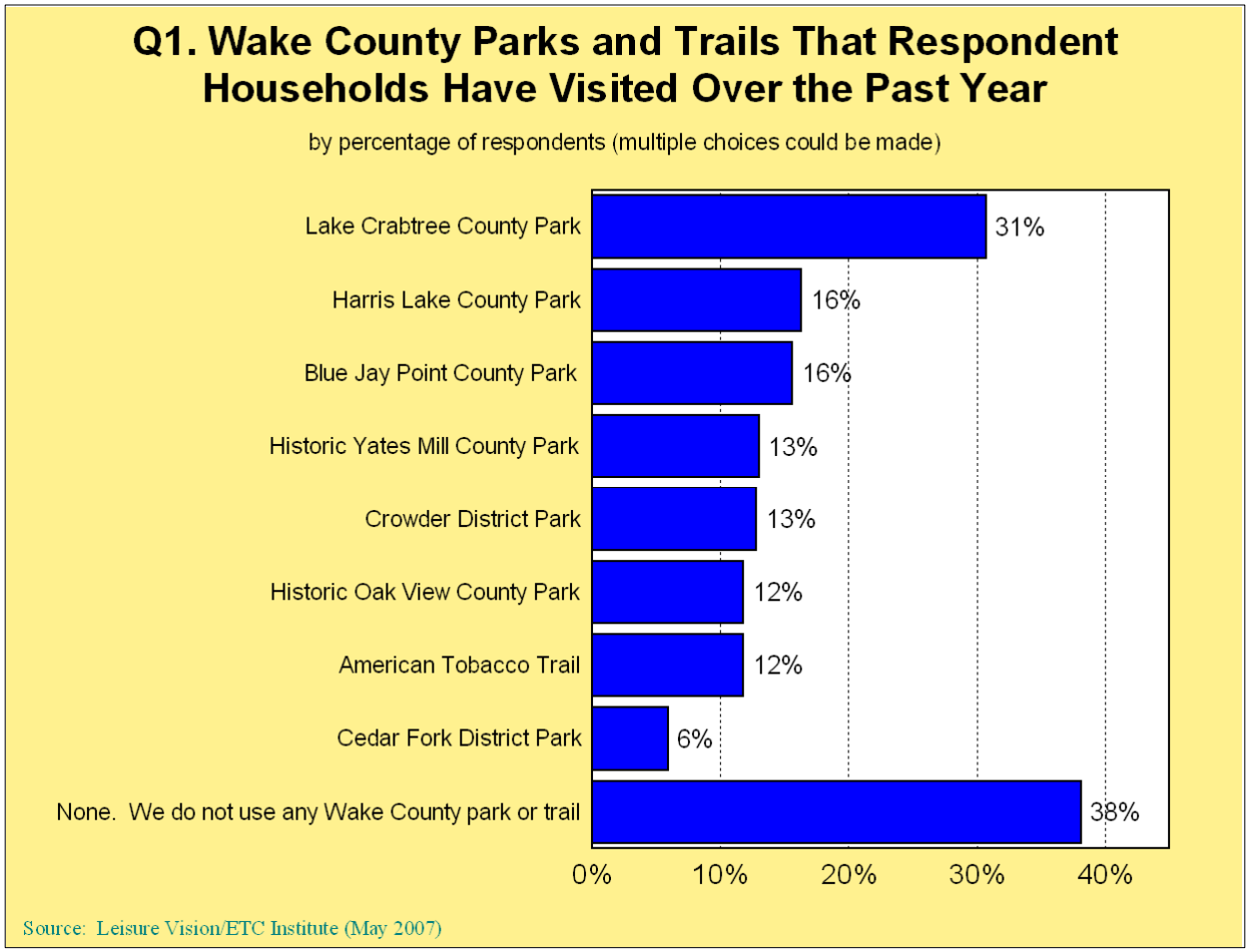
The goal was to obtain a total of at least 400 completed surveys within Wake County. This goal was accomplished, with a total of 423 surveys having been completed. The results of the random sample of 423 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.8%.

The following pages summarize major survey findings:

Wake County Parks and Trails Visited Over the Past Year

From a list of eight Wake County parks and trails, respondents were asked to indicate which ones their household has visited over the past year. The following summarizes key findings:

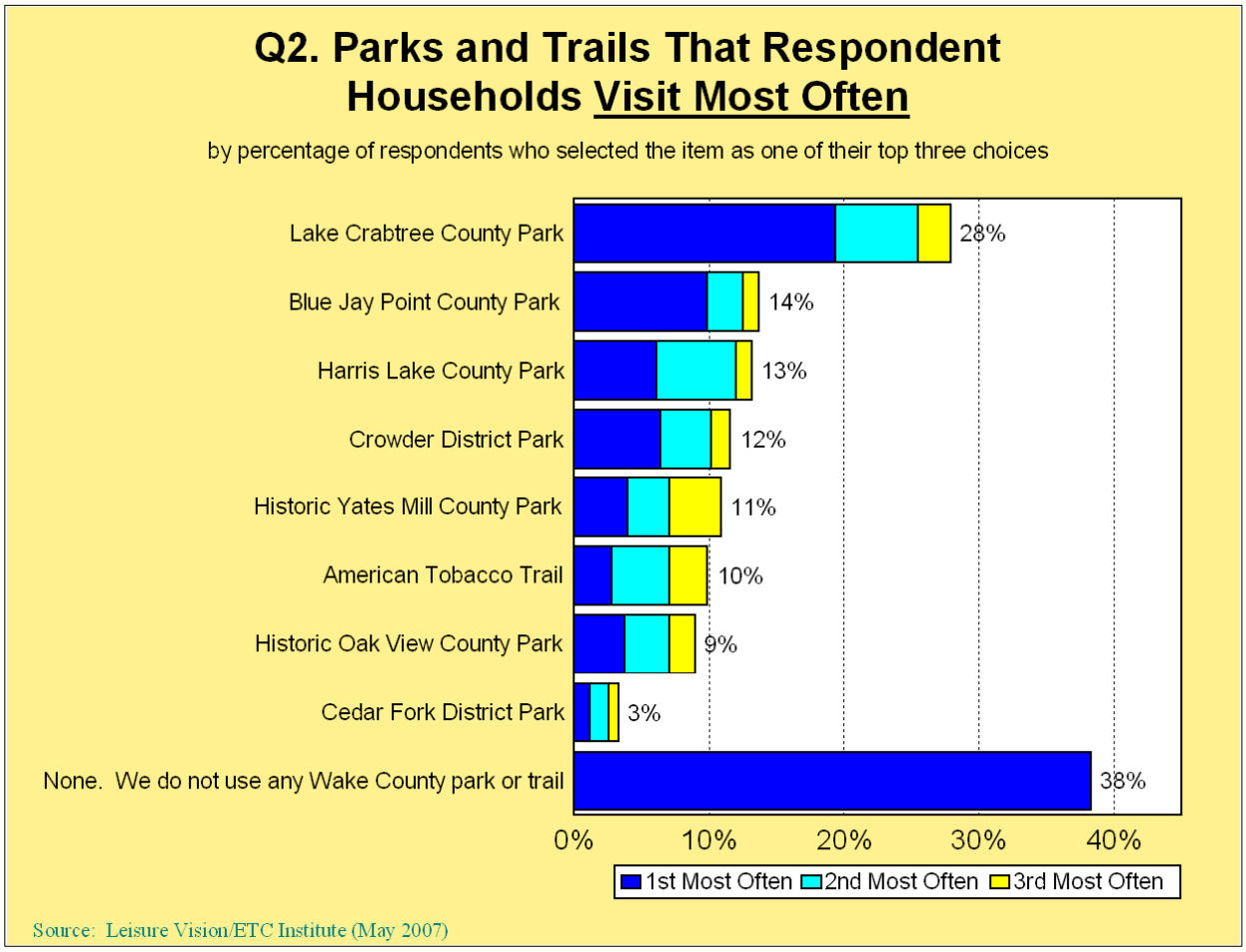
- **Lake Crabtree County Park (31%) is the Wake County park/trail that the highest percentage of respondents have visited over the past year.** Other Wake County parks and trails that respondent households have visited the most over the past year include: Harris Lake County Park (16%) and Blue Jay Point County Park (16%). Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondent households have visited at least one of the Wake County parks and trails over the past year.



Parks and Trails That Respondent Households Visit the Most Often

From the list of eight Wake County parks and trails, respondents were asked to indicate which three their household visits the most often. The following summarizes key findings:

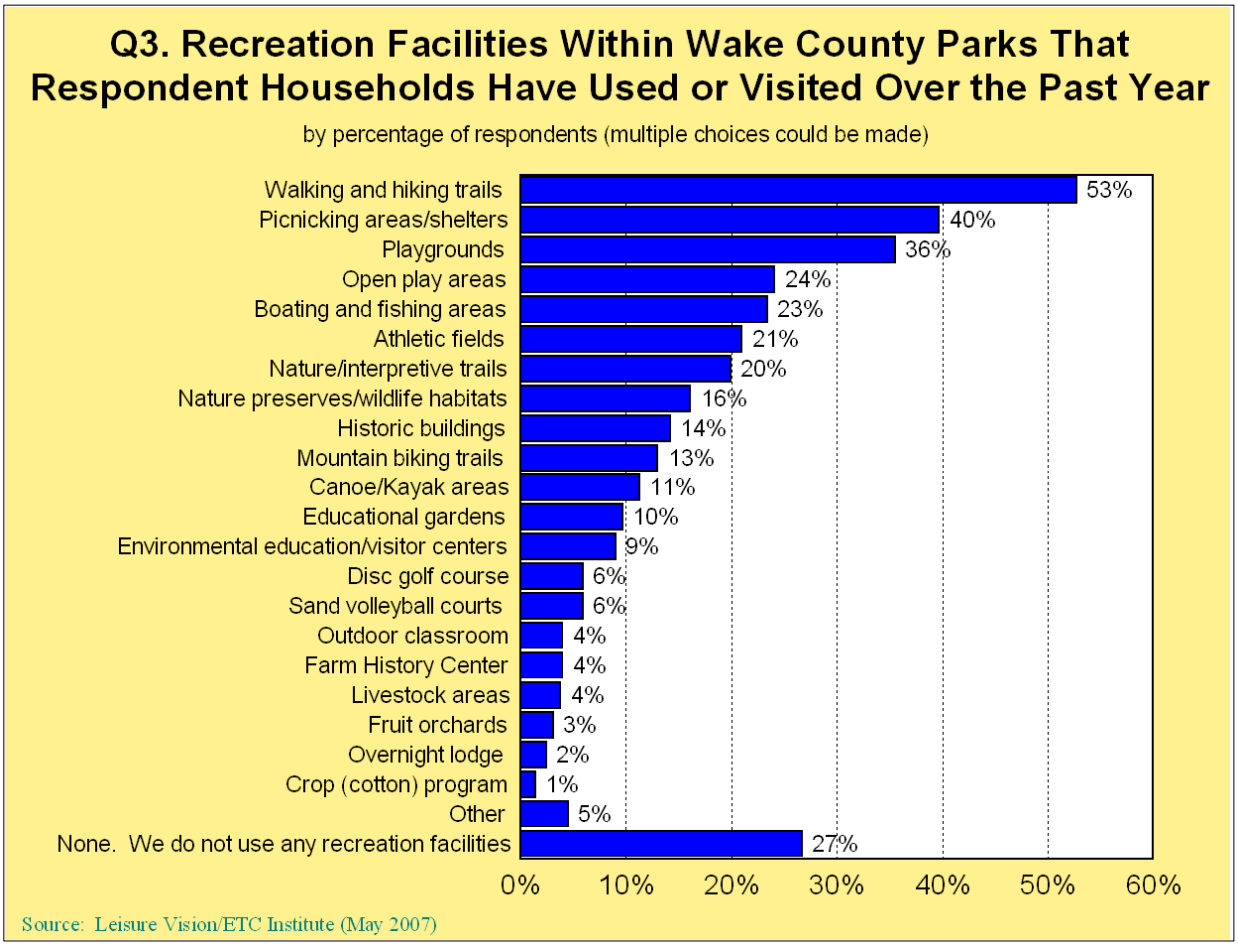
- **Based on the sum of their top three choices, the parks/trails that respondent households visit the most often are: Lake Crabtree County Park (28%), Blue Jay Point County Park (14%), Harris Lake County Park (13%) and Crowder District Park (12%).** It should also be noted that Lake Crabtree County Park had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the park/trail they visit most often.



Recreation Facilities Respondent Households Have Used Over the Past Year

From a list of 21 recreation facilities located within Wake County parks, respondents were asked to indicate all of the facilities that their household has used or visited over the past year. The following summarizes key findings:

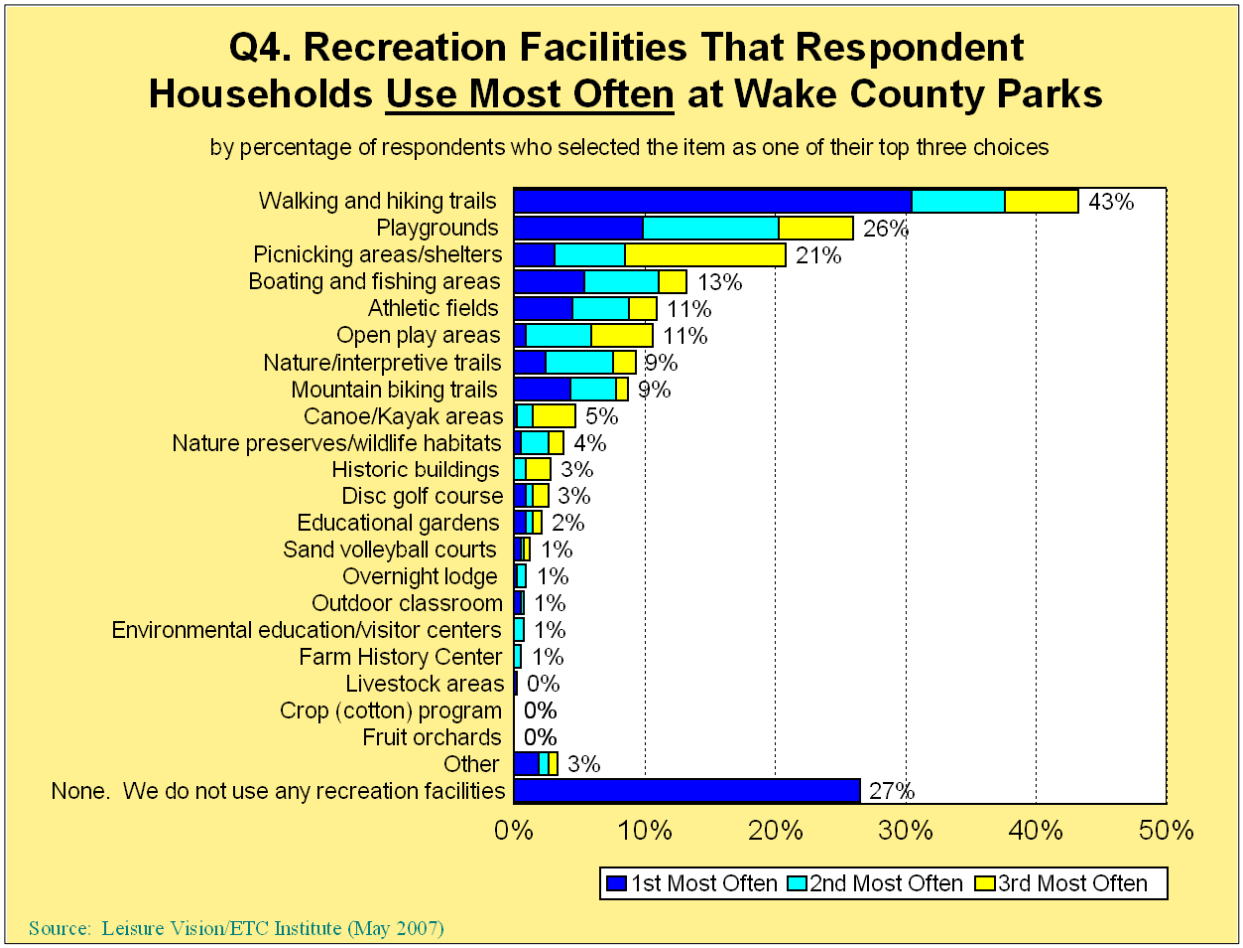
- **Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents households have used walking and hiking trails over the past year.** Other recreation facilities that respondent households have used or visited the most over the past year are: picknicking areas/shelters (40%), playgrounds (36%), open play areas (24%) and boating and fishing areas (23%).



Recreation Facilities Respondent Households Use Most Often

From the list of 21 recreation facilities located within Wake County parks, respondents were asked to indicate which three their household uses the most often. The following summarizes key findings:

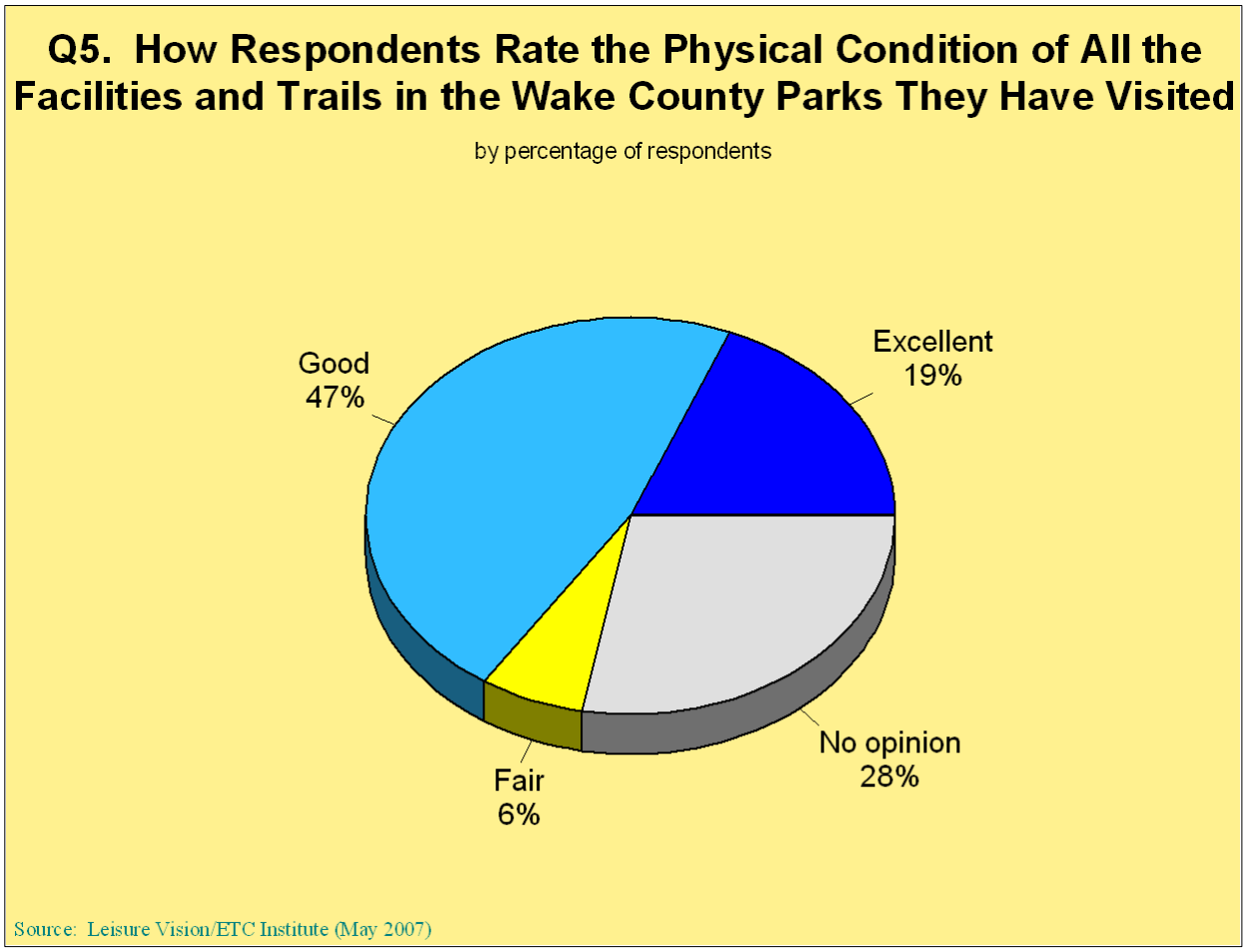
- **Based on the sum of their top three choices, the parks and recreation facilities that respondent households use the most often are: walking and hiking trails (43%), playgrounds (26%), and picnicking areas/shelters (21%).** It should also be noted that walking and hiking trails had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the facility they use most often.



Overall Physical Condition of All Facilities and Trails in Wake County Parks

Respondents were asked to indicate how they would rate the overall physical condition of all the facilities and trails in the Wake County parks that they have visited. The following summarizes key findings:

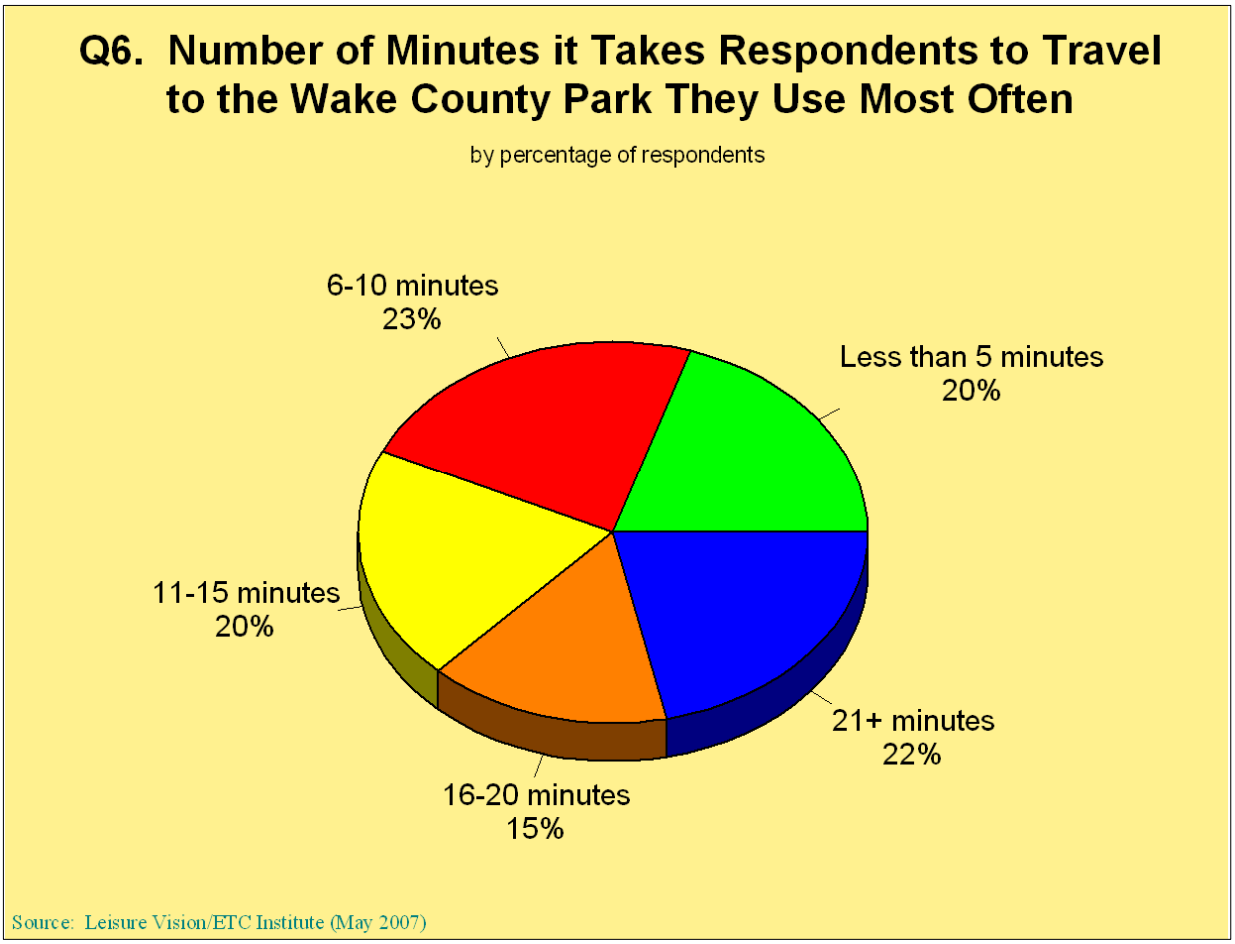
- **Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents rate the physical condition of all the facilities and trails in the Wake County Parks they have visited as either "excellent" (19%) or "good" (47%).** An additional 6% rate the physical condition as "fair" and 28% have "no opinion". Less than 1% rated the facilities and trails as "poor".



Time in Minutes it Takes to Travel to Park Visited Most Often

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of minutes it generally takes them to travel to the Wake County Park that they use the most often. The following summarizes key findings:

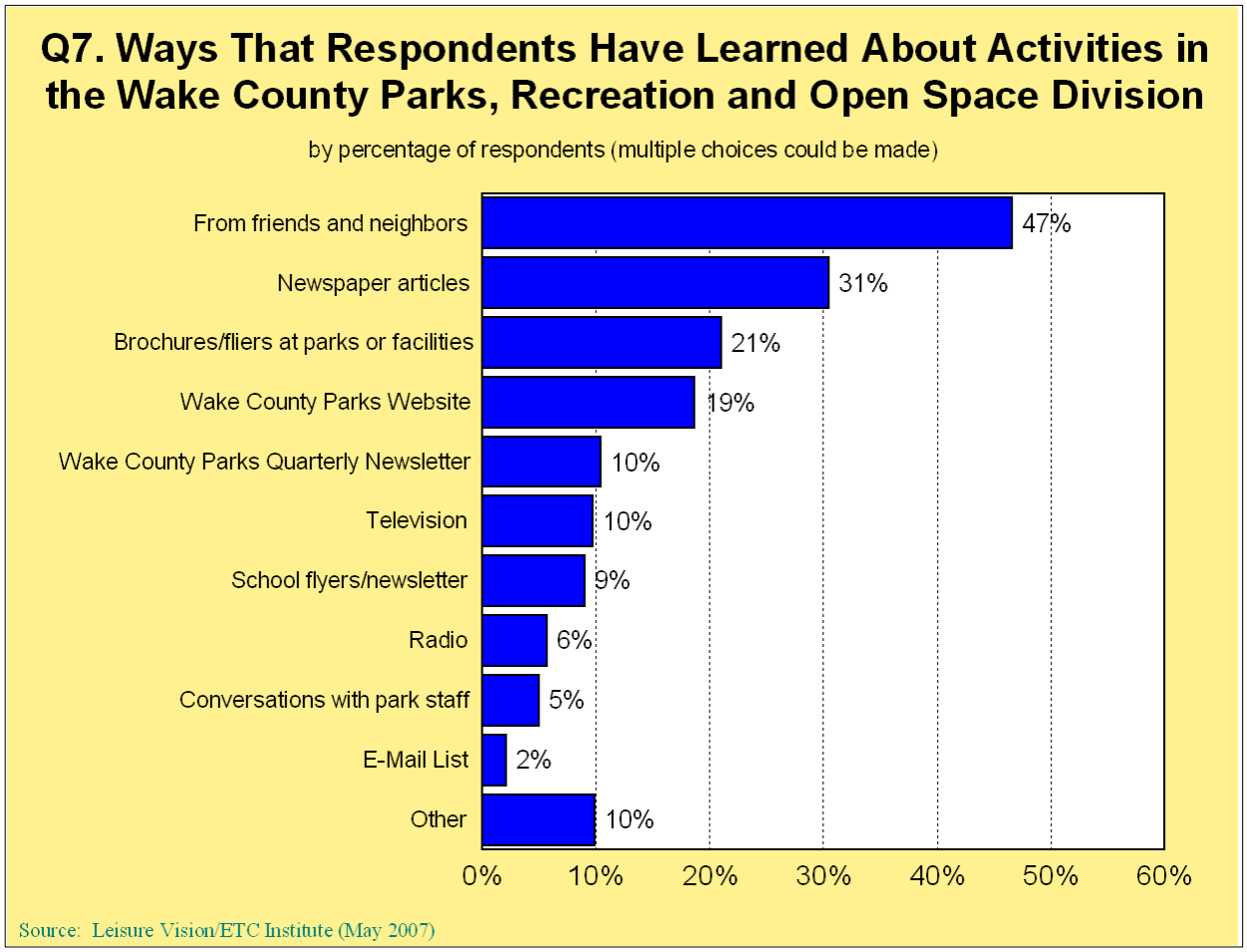
- **Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents take 6-10 minutes to travel to the Wake County park that they use the most often.** In addition, 22% of respondents travel more than 20 minutes to the park they use most often, 20% travel less than 5 minutes, 20% travel 11-15 minutes, and 15% travel 16-20 minutes.



Ways Respondents Learn About Activities

From a list of 10 options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ways they have learned about activities in the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division. The following summarizes key findings:

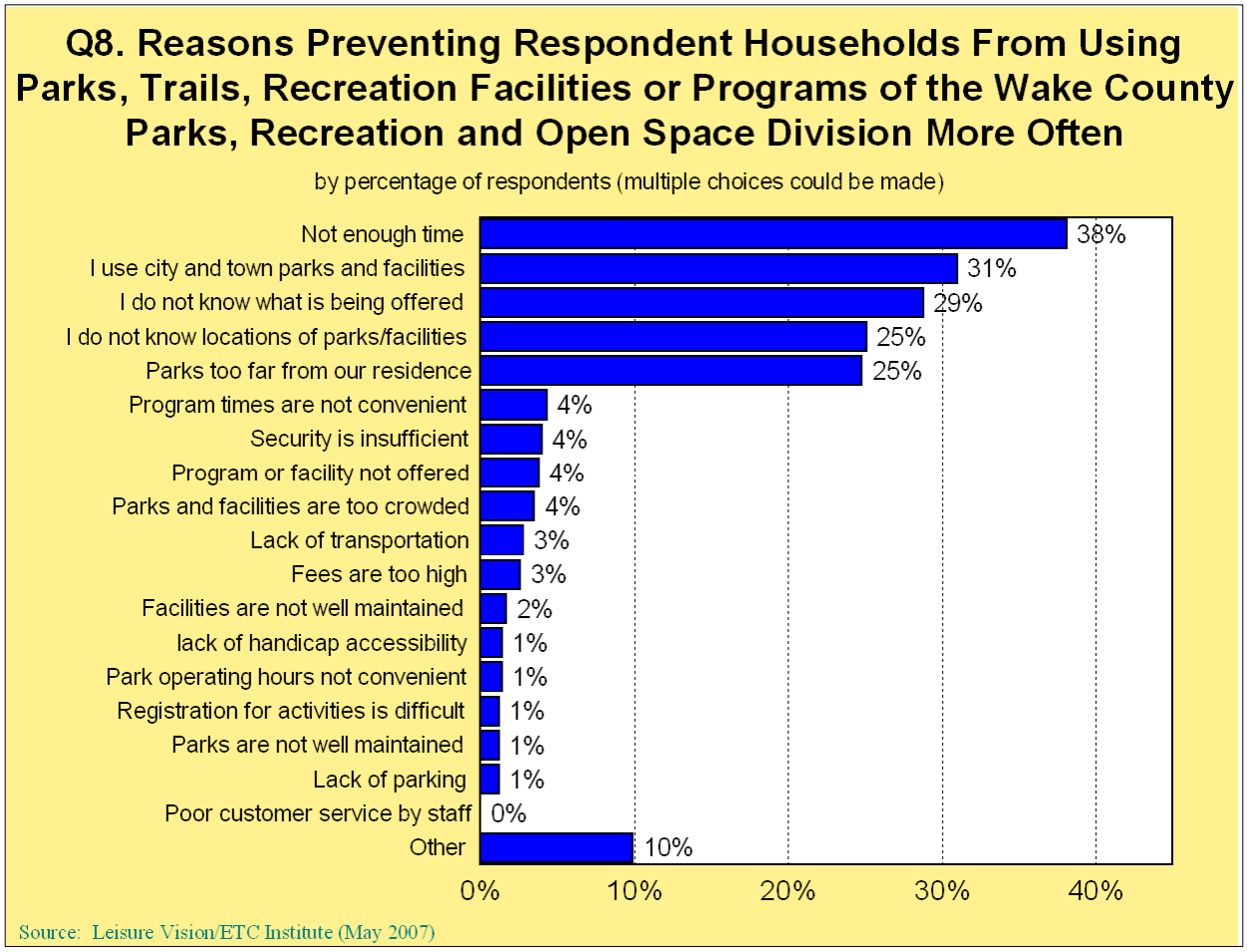
- **From friends and neighbors (47%) is the most frequently mentioned way that respondents learn about Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division activities.** The other most frequently mentioned ways that respondents learn about Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division activities include: newspaper articles (31%), brochures/fliers at parks or facilities (21%), and Wake County Parks Website (19%).



Reasons that Prevent Respondent Households from Using Facilities and Programs More Often

From a list of 18 reasons, respondents were asked to indicate all of the reasons that prevent them and members of their household from using parks, trails, recreation facilities or programs of the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division more often. The following summarizes key findings:

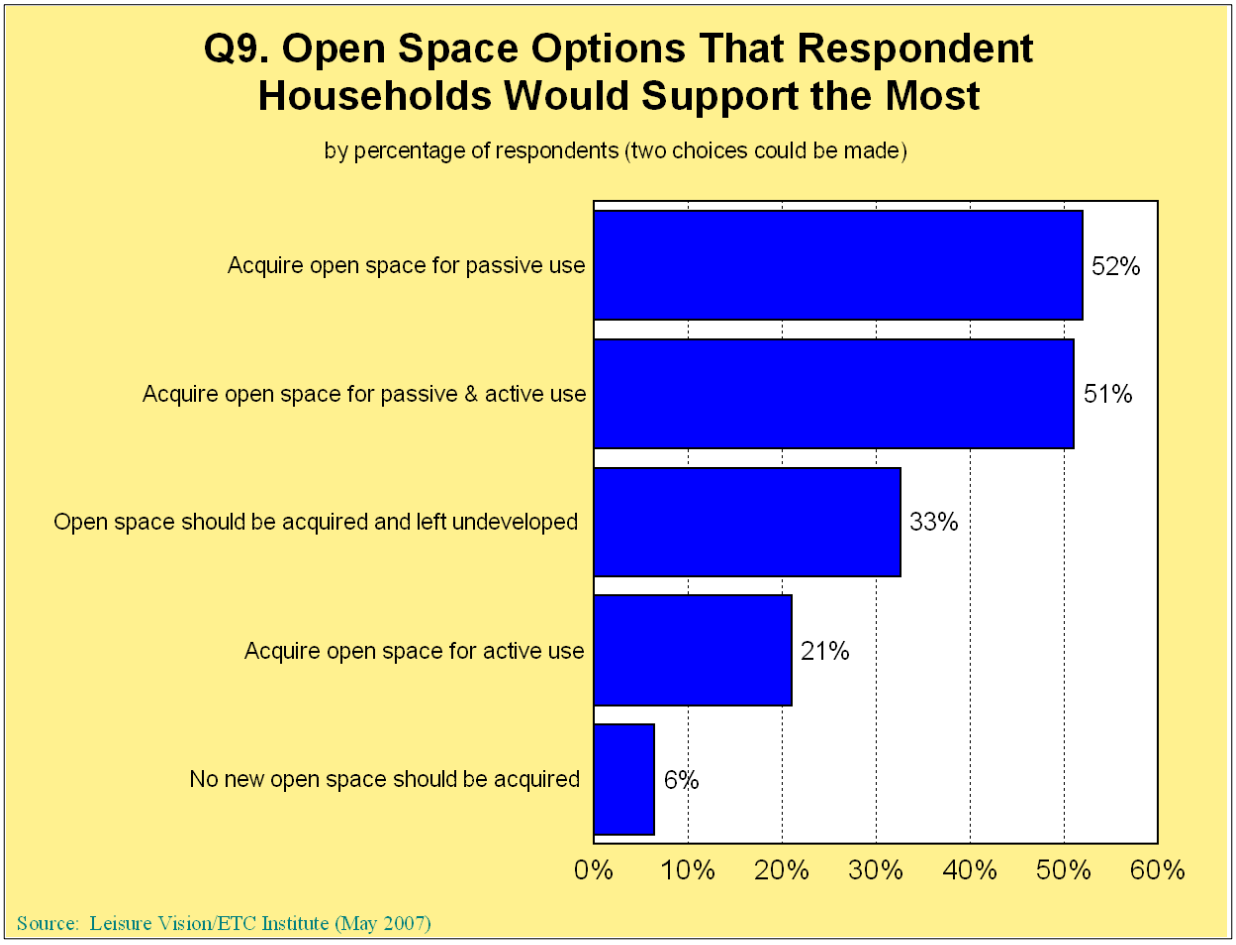
- **"Not enough time" (38%) is the most frequently mentioned reason that prevents respondent household members from using parks, trails, recreation facilities and programs of the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division more often.** The other reasons that prevent respondents from using parks and facilities more often include: "I use city and town parks and facilities" (31%), "I do not know what is being offered" (29%), "I do not know locations of parks/facilities" (25%) and "parks too far from our residence" (25%).



Open Space Options Respondent Households Would Support the Most

From a list of four options for acquiring and developing open space for parks and recreation purposes, respondents were asked to indicate the two options their household would support the most. The following summarizes key findings:

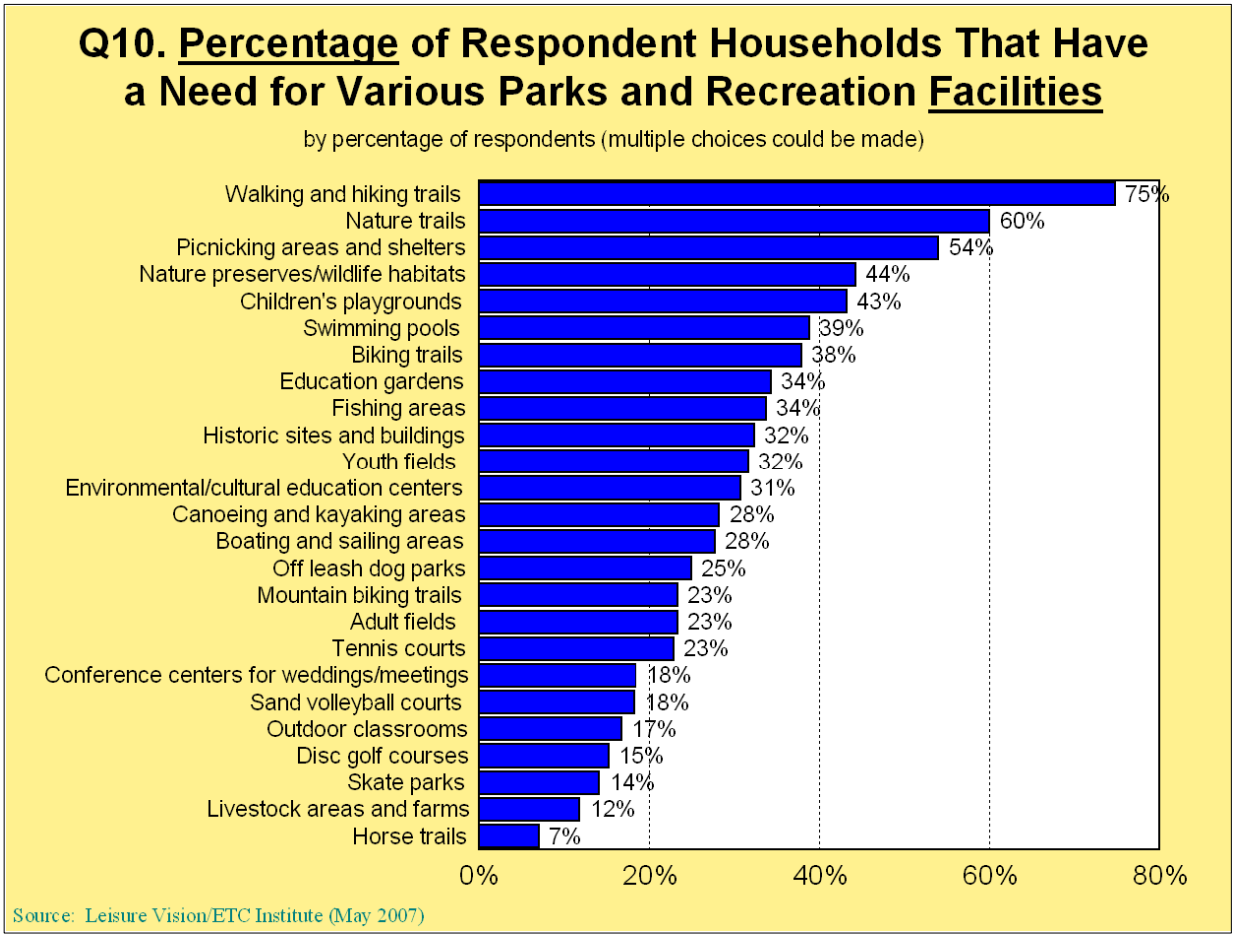
- **"Open spaces should be acquired and improved for passive use" (52%) and "open space should be acquired and improved for both passive and active use" (51%) had the highest percentage of respondents indicate those options as the two open space options that respondent households would support the most.** Additionally, "open space should be acquired and left undeveloped" (33%) also had a high number of respondents indicate it as one of the two open space options thatthey would support the most. Only 6% of respondents indicated that no new open space should be acquired.



Need for Recreation Facilities

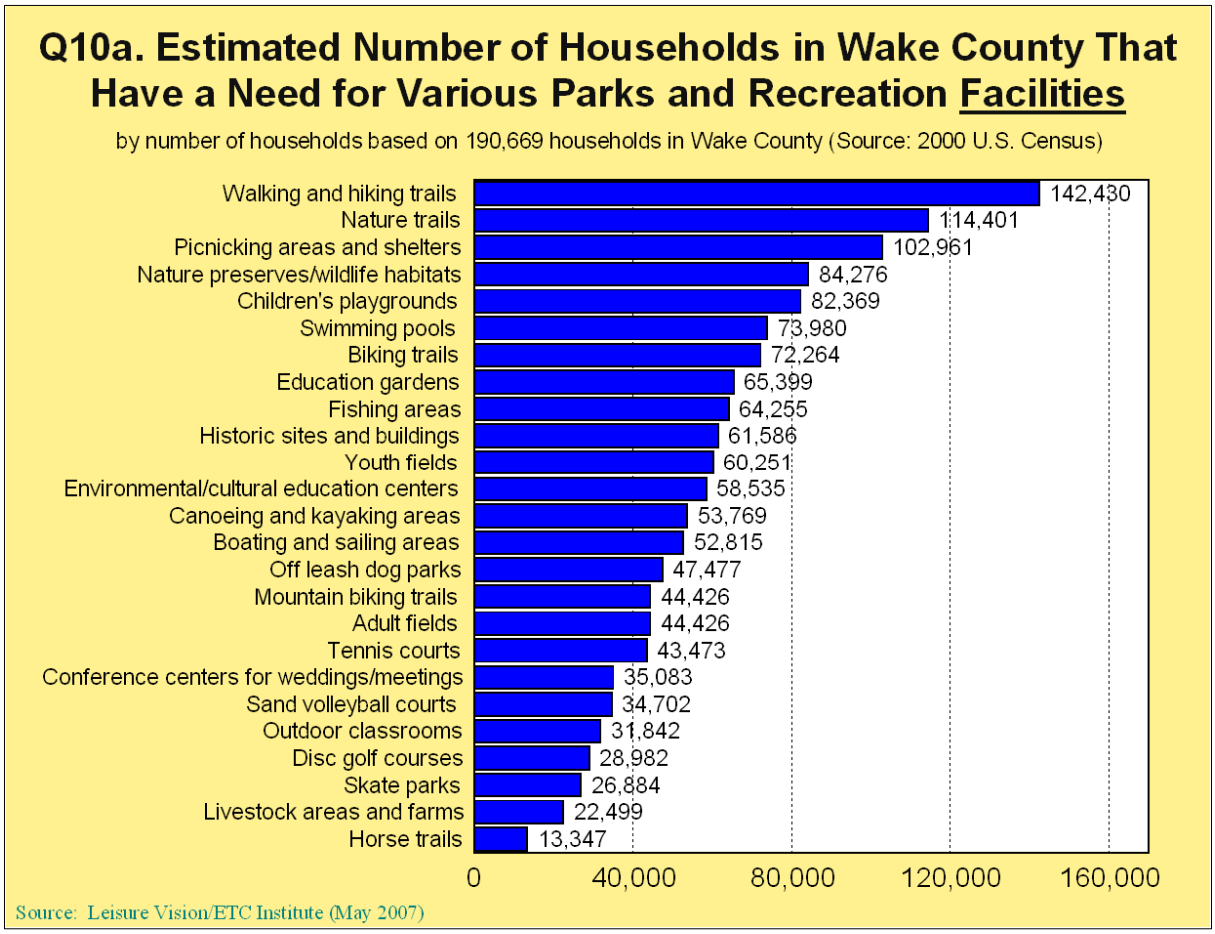
From a list of 26 recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ones that they and members of their household have a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Five of the 26 parks and recreation facilities had over 40% of respondents indicate they have a need for it.** These five facilities include: walking and hiking trails (75%), nature trails (60%), picknicking areas and shelters (54%), nature preserves/wildlife habitats (44%), and children's playgrounds (43%).



Need for Recreation Facilities in Wake County

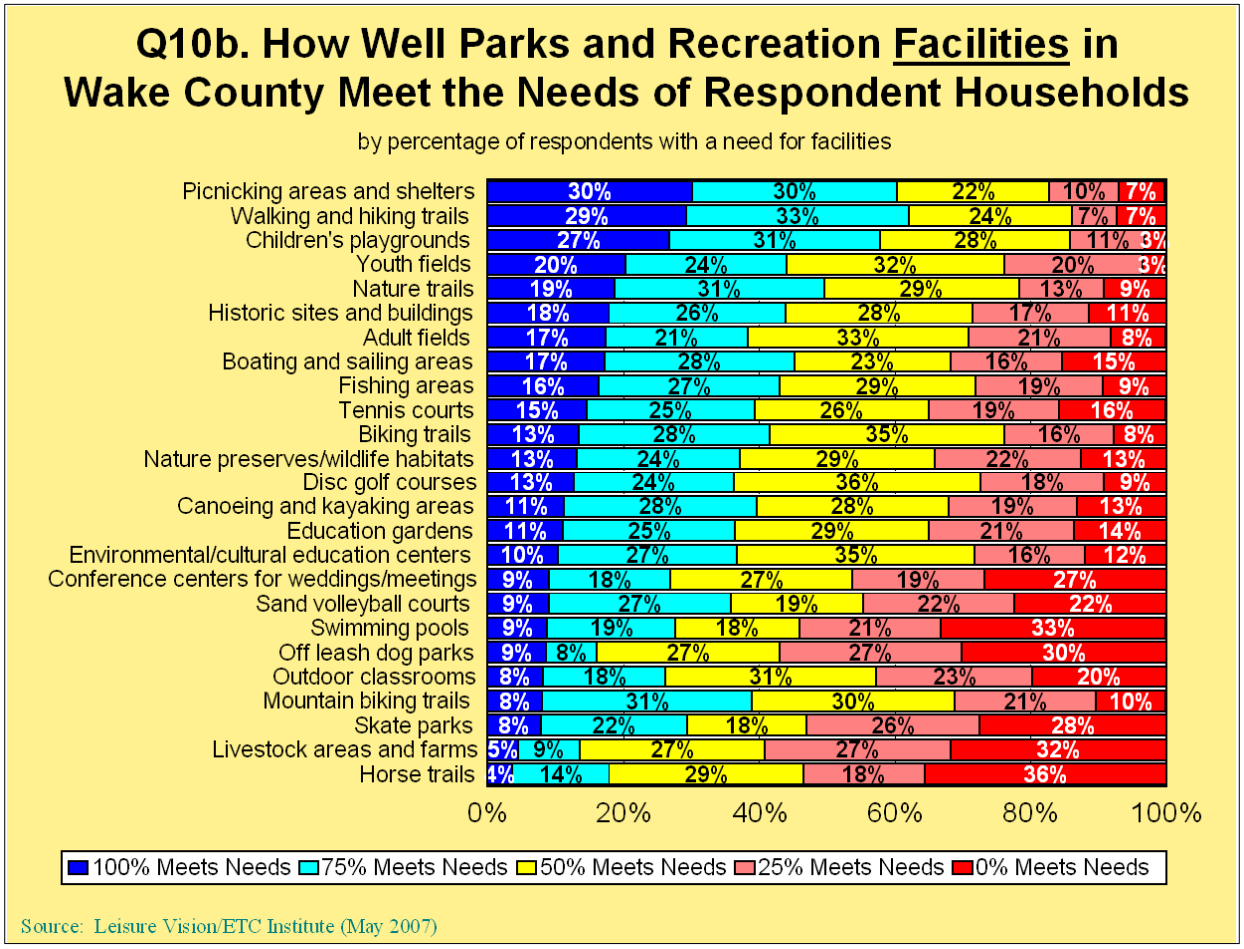
From the list of 26 recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The graph below shows the estimated number of households in Wake County that have a need for recreation facilities based on 190,669 households in the County.



How Well Recreation Facilities Meet Needs

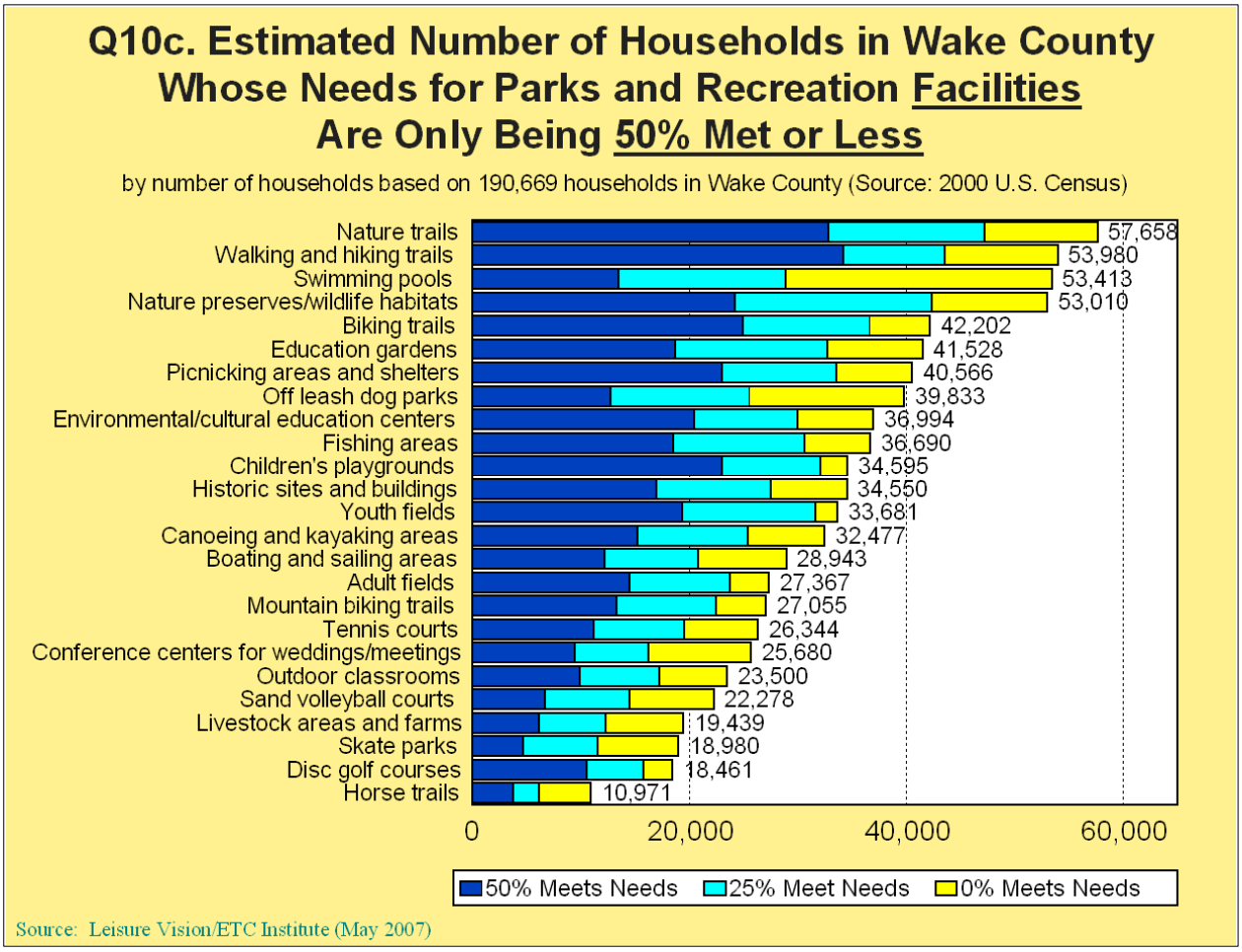
From the list of 26 recreation facilities, respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well those facilities meet their needs. The following summarizes key findings:

- **For all 26 facilities, less than 35% of respondents indicated the facility completely meets that needs of their households.**



Wake County Households with Their Facility Needs Being 50% Met or Less

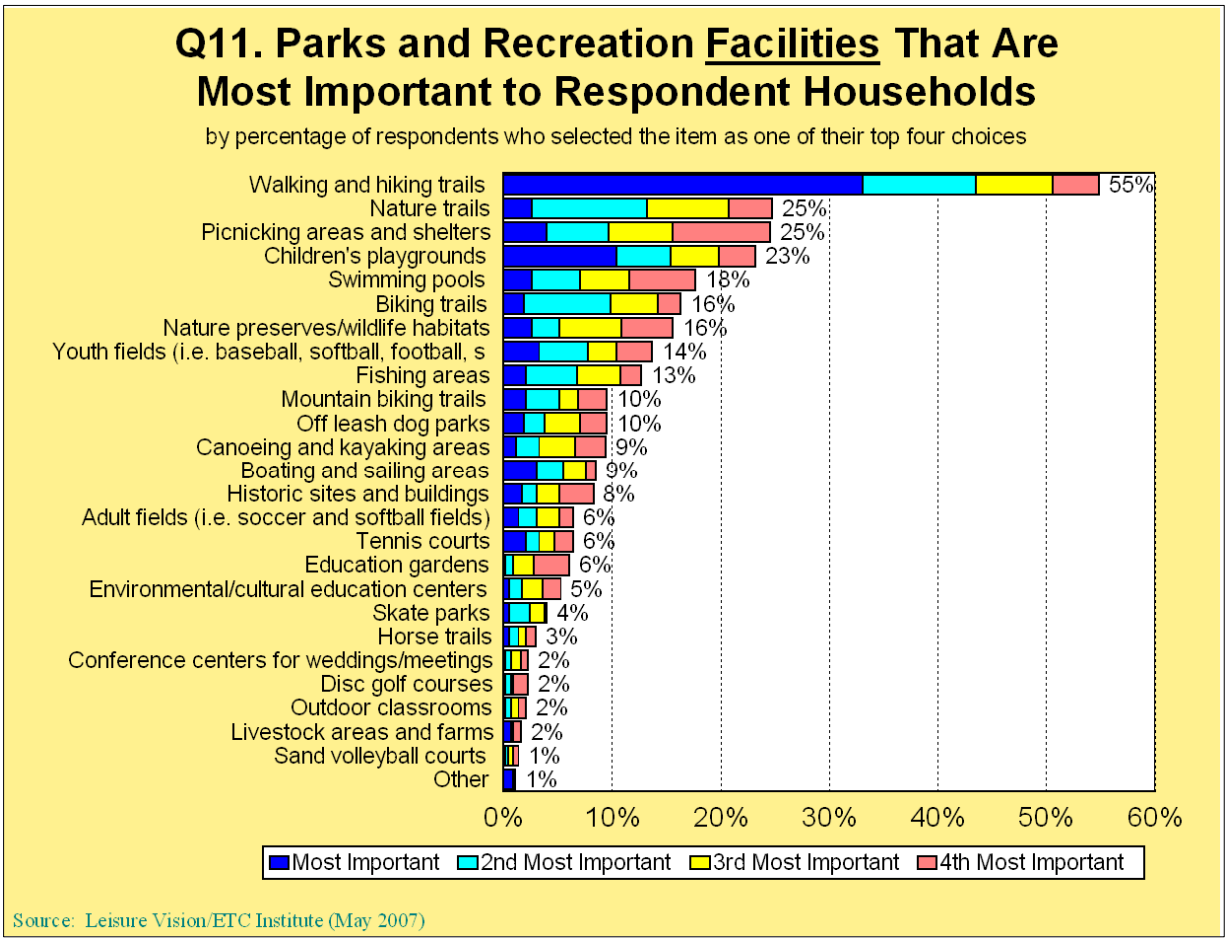
From the list of 26 recreation facilities, respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well those facilities meet their needs. The graph below shows the estimated number of households in Wake County whose needs for facilities are only being 50% met or less, based on 190,669 households in the County.



Most Important Recreation Facilities

From the list of 26 recreation facilities, respondents were asked to select the four that are most important to their household. The following summarizes key findings:

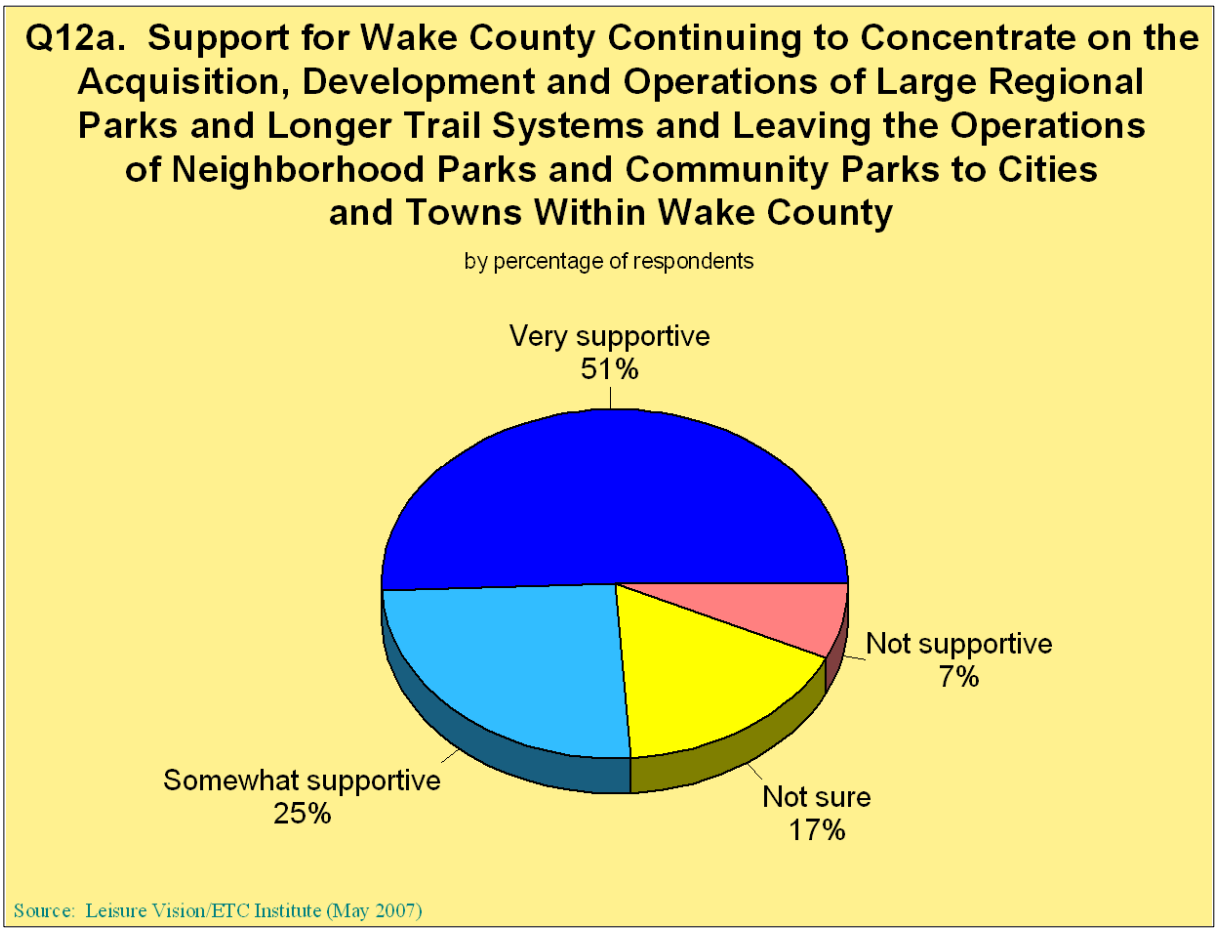
- **Based on the sum of their top four choices, the facilities that respondents rated as the most important are: walking and hiking trails (55%), nature trails, (25%), picnicking areas and shelters (25%) and children's playgrounds (23%).** It should also be noted that walking and hiking trails had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important facility.



Support for Wake County Concentrating on Large Regional Parks and Longer Trail Systems

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of Wake County continuing to concentrate on the acquisition, development, and operations of large regional parks and longer trail systems that can serve citizens throughout the County and leaving the operations of neighborhood parks and community parks to cities and towns within Wake County. The following summarizes key findings:

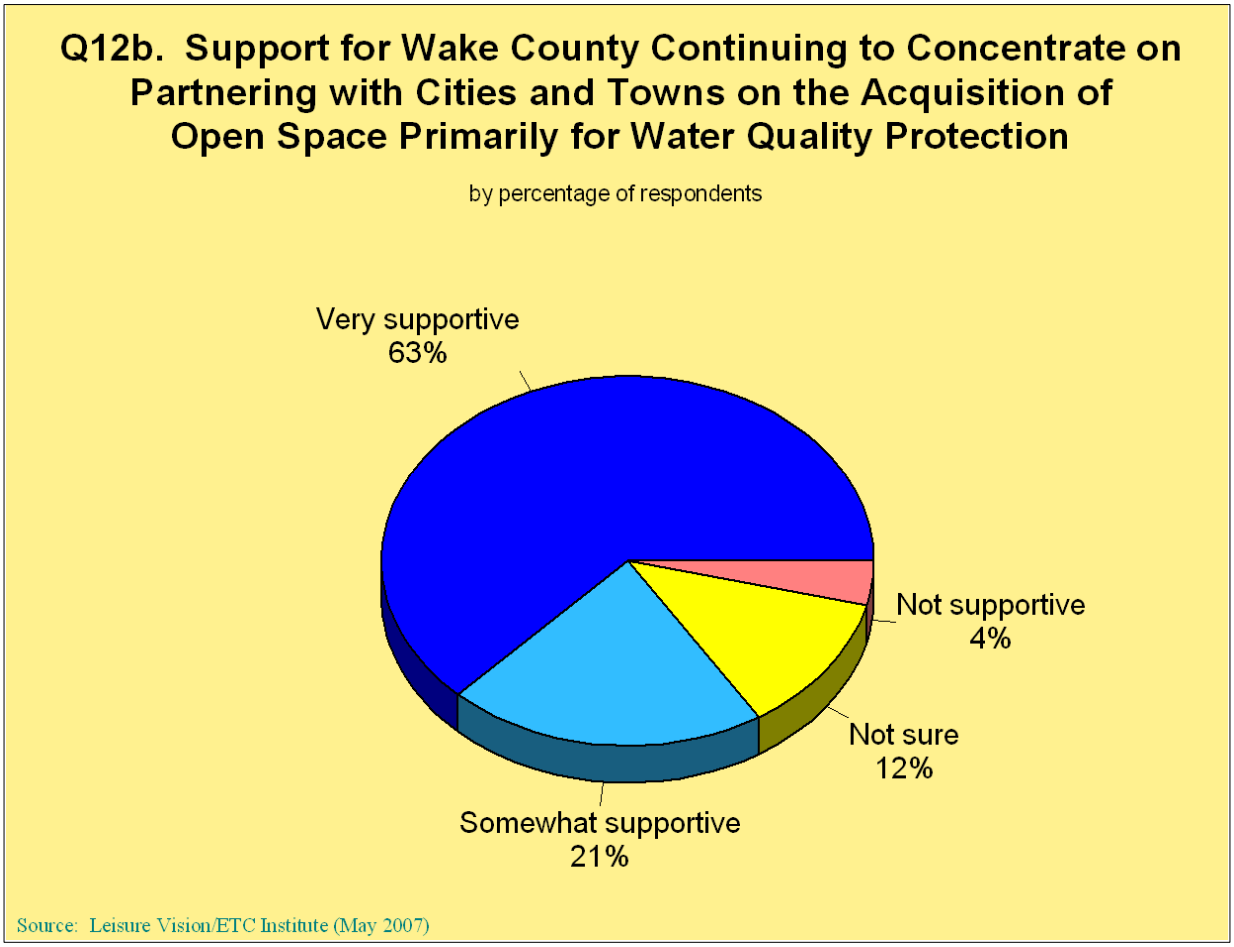
- **Seventy-six percent (76%) of respondents indicated being "very supportive" (51%) or "somewhat supportive" (25%) of Wake County continuing to concentrate on the acquisition, development, and operations of large regional parks and longer trails systems and leaving the operations of neighborhood parks and community parks to cities and towns within Wake County.** An additional 17% of respondents indicated "not sure", and 7% are "not supportive".



Support of Wake County Concentrating on Partnering with Cities and Towns

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with cities and towns on the acquisition of open space primarily for water quality protection. The following summarizes key findings:

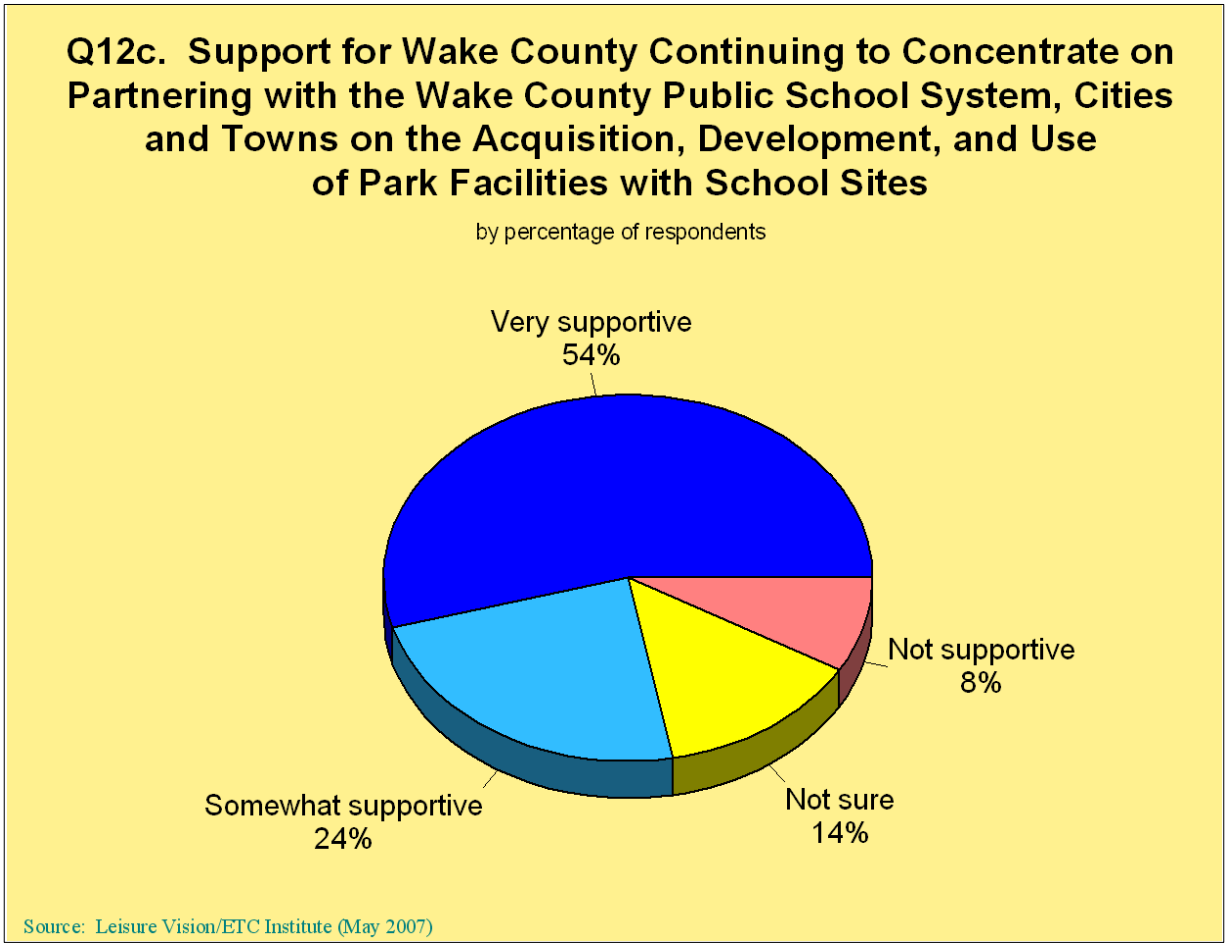
- **Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents indicated being either "very supportive" (63%) or "somewhat supportive" (21%) of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with Cities and Towns on the acquisition of open space primarily for water quality protection.** An additional 12% indicated being "not sure", and only 4% indicated that they are "not supportive".



Support of Wake County Concentrating on Partnering with Wake County Public School System, Cities, and Towns

Respondents were asked how supportive they are of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with the Wake County Public School System, cities, and towns on the acquisition, development, and use of park facilities with school sites. The following summarizes key findings:

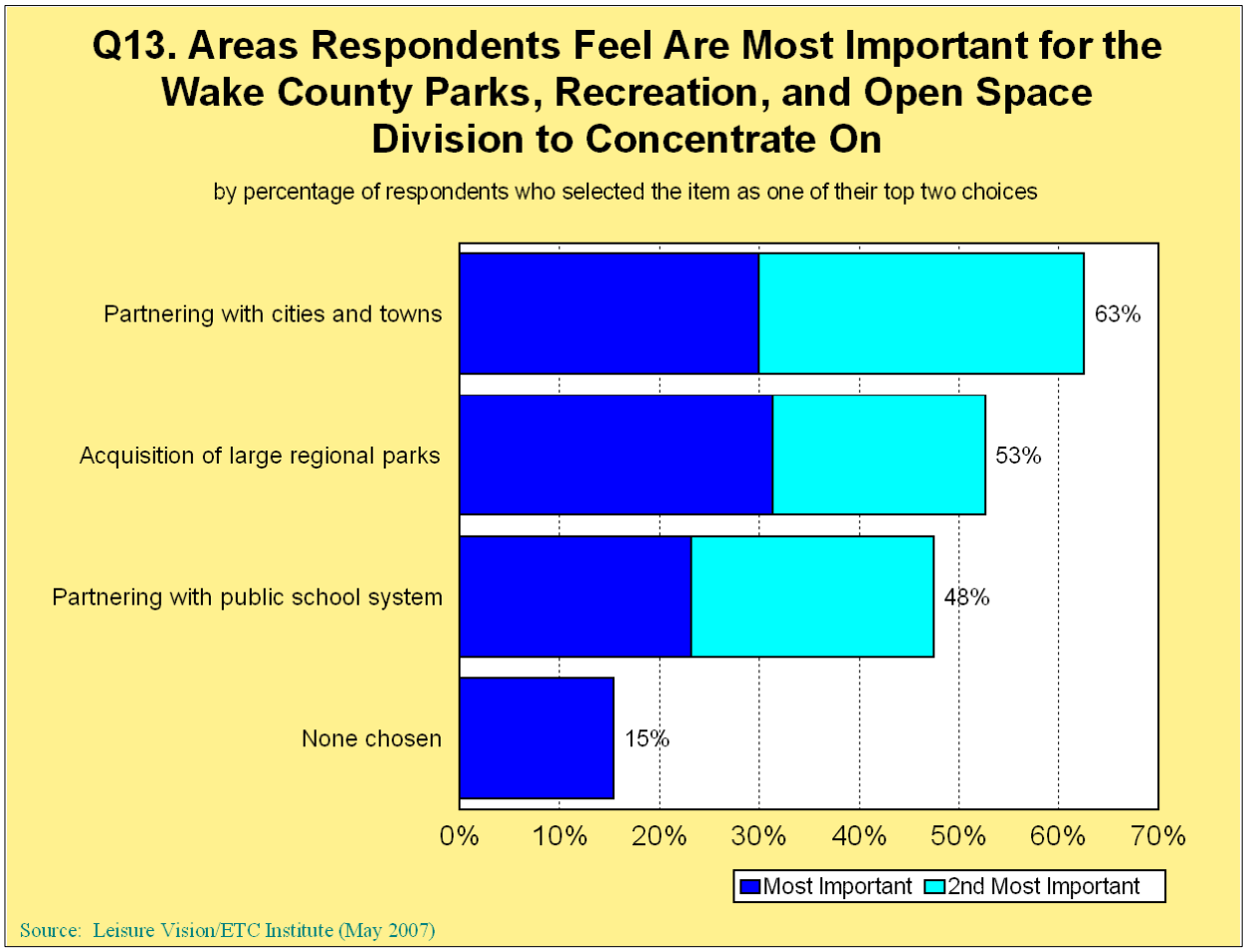
- **Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents indicated being either "very supportive" (54%) or "somewhat supportive" (24%) of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with the school system, cities and towns on the acquisition, development, and use of park facilities with school sites.** An additional 14% indicated "not sure", and 8% indicated that they are "not supportive".



Areas Respondents Feel Are Most Important to Concentrate On

Respondents were asked which two areas they feel are the most important for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division to concentrate on. The following summarizes key findings:

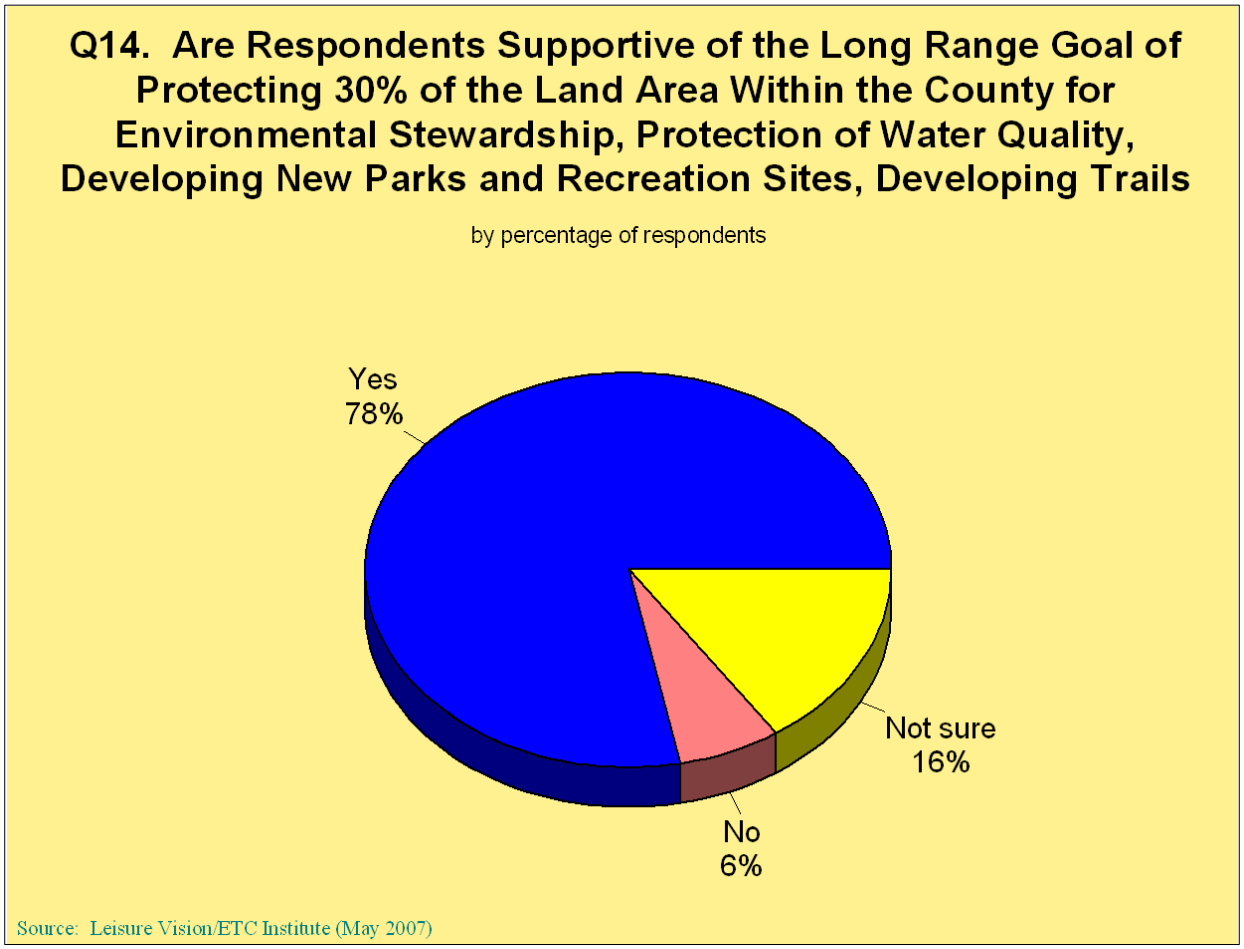
- **Based on the sum of their top two choices, the two areas respondents feel are most important for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division to concentrate on are: partnering with cities and towns (63%) and acquisition of large regional parks (53%).**



Support for the Long Range Goal of Protecting 30% of Land Area

Respondents were asked if they are supportive they are of the long range goal of protecting 30% of the land area within the County for environmental stewardship, protection of water quality, developing new parks and recreation sites, developing trails, etc. The following summarizes key findings:

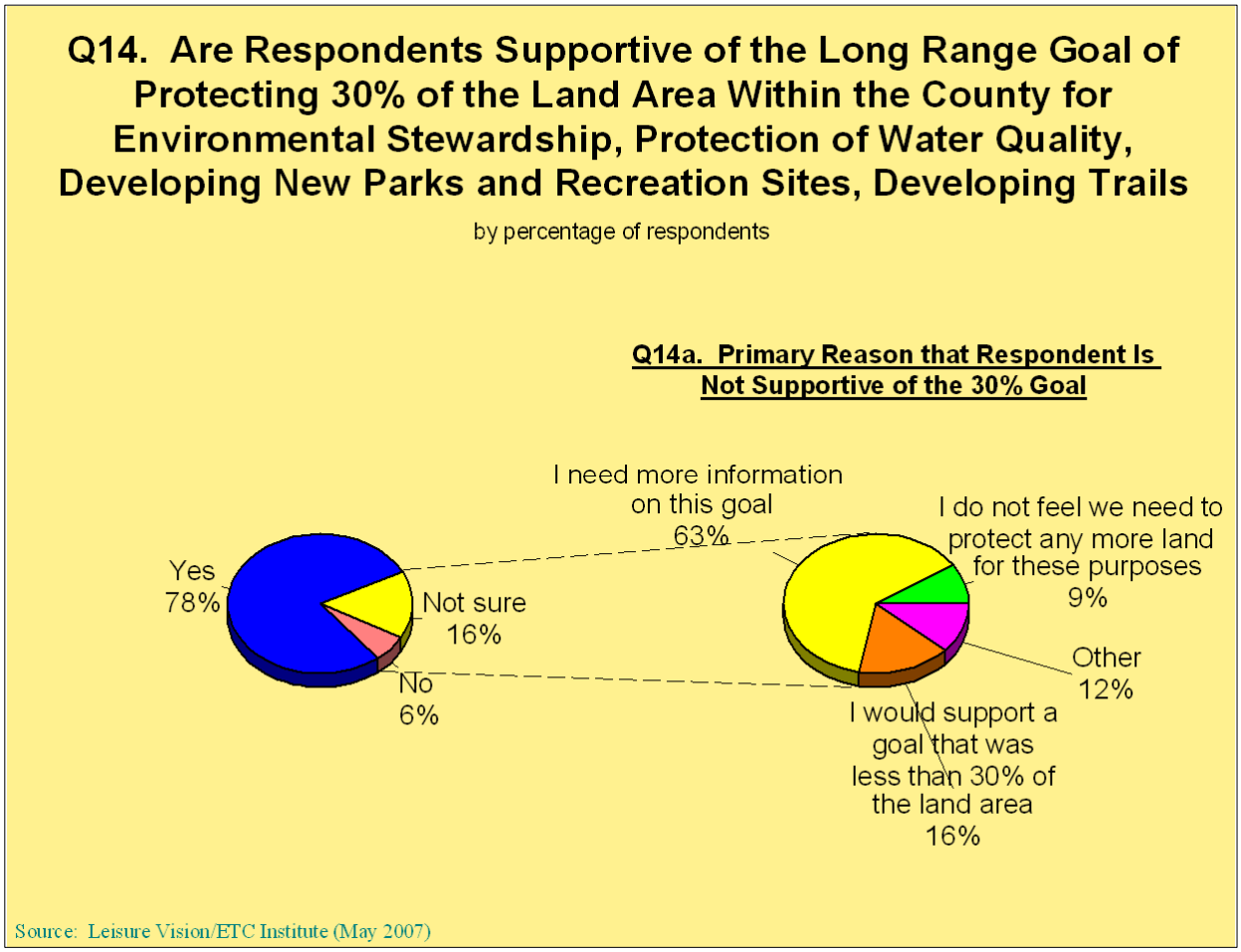
- **Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents are supportive of the long range goal of protecting 30% of the land area.** Only 6% of respondents are not supportive of protecting 30% of the land area, and 16% indicated "not sure".



Reason Respondent is Not Supportive of Protecting 30% of Land Area

Respondents who indicated that they are not sure or not supportive of protecting 30% of the land area within the County were asked to indicate the primary reason for their response. The following summarizes key findings:

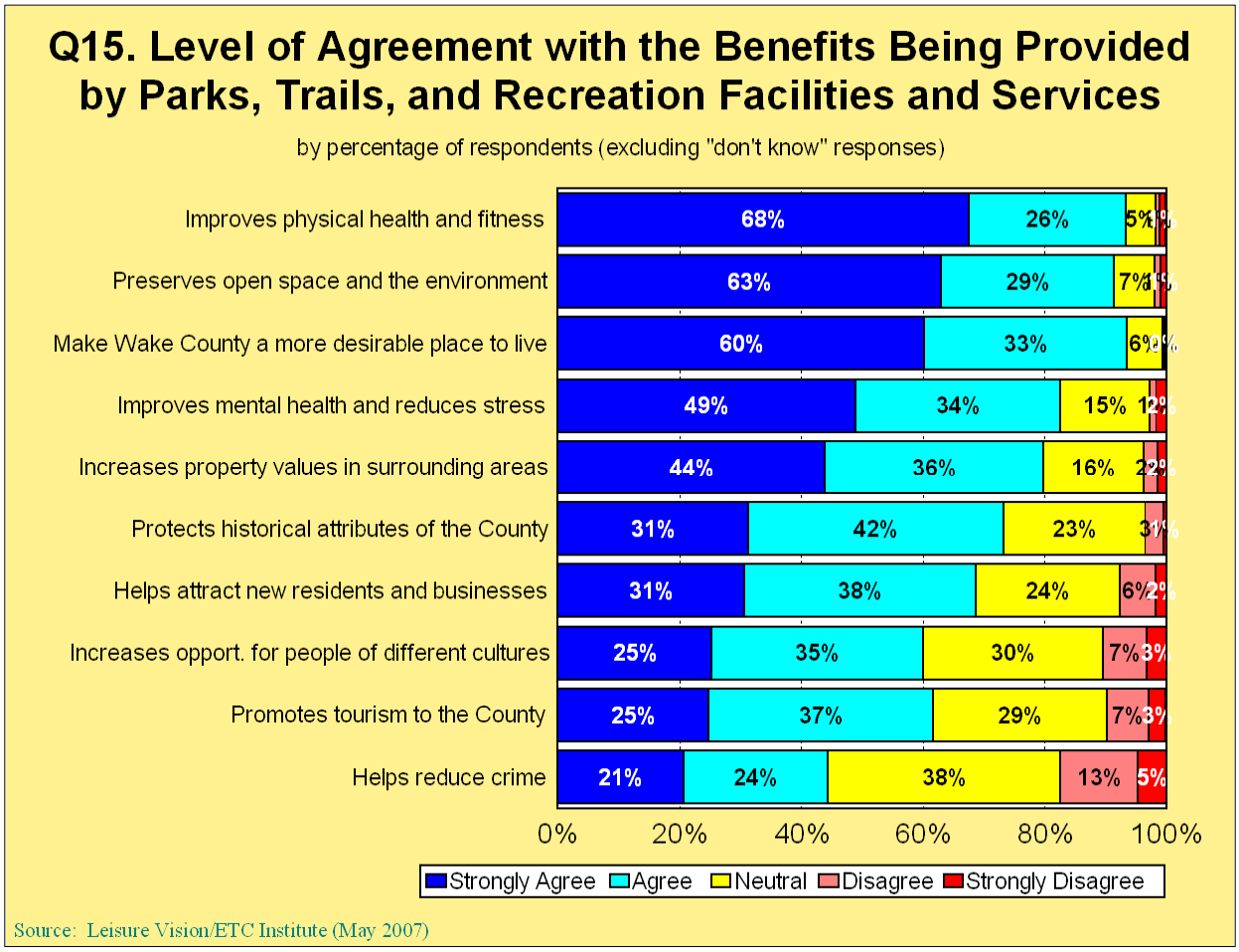
- **Of the 22% of respondents who indicated "not sure" or "no" to the long range goal of protecting 30% of the land area within the County, 63% indicated the reason that they are not supportive is "I need more information".** Additionally, 16% indicated "I would support a goal that was less than 30% of the land area", 12% indicated "other" and 9% indicated "I do not feel we need to protect any more land for these purposes".



Level of Agreement with Potential Benefits

From a list of 10 potential benefits from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services, respondent households were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each potential benefits that could be provided by parks, trails, and recreation facilities. The following summarizes key findings:

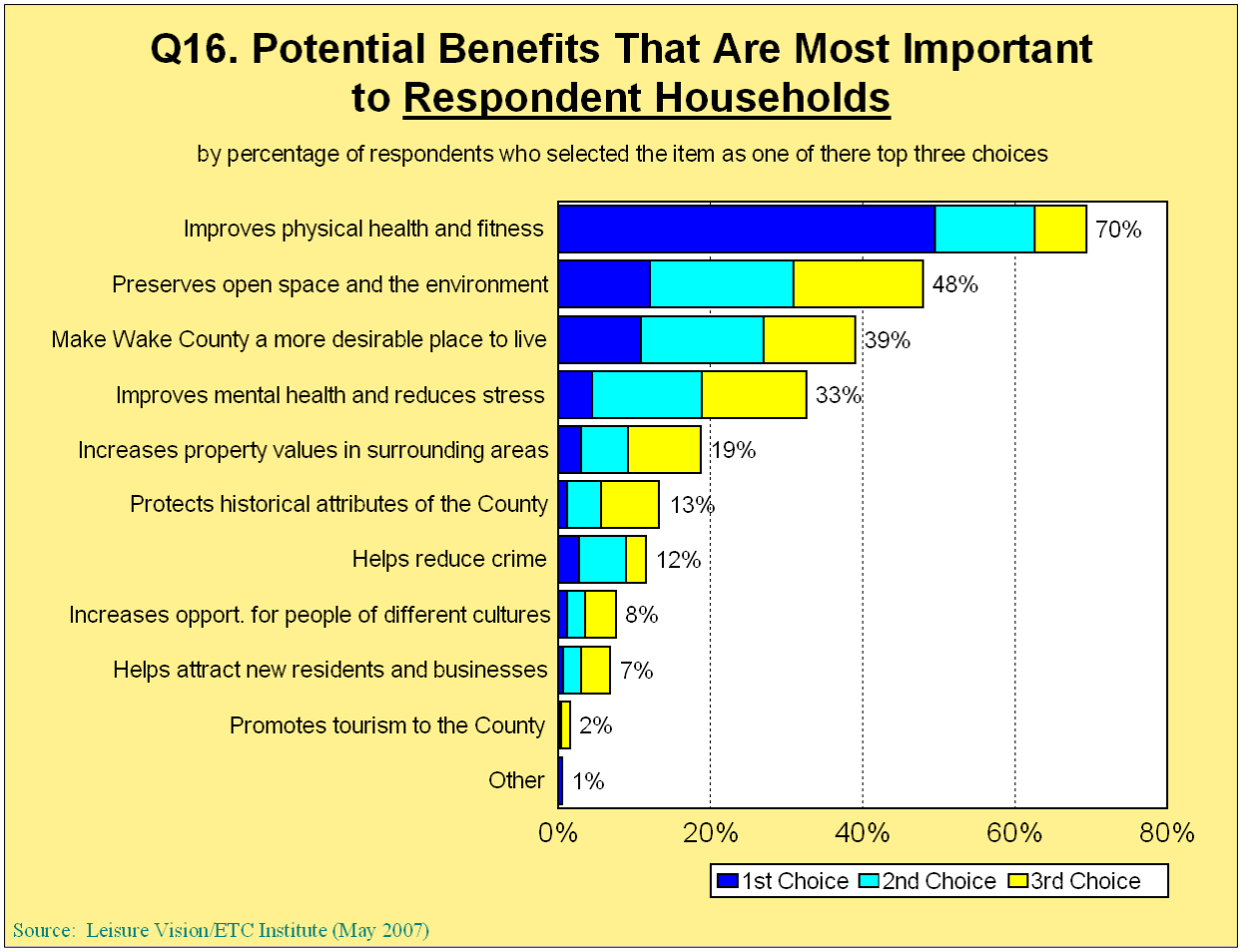
- **Five of the 10 benefits had over 40% of respondents indicate that they "strongly agree" with the benefits being provided by parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services.** These five benefits include: improves physical health and fitness (68%), preserves open space and the environment (63%), make Wake County a more desirable place to live (60%), improves mental health and reduces stress (49%), and increases property values in surrounding areas (44%).



Potential Benefits That Are Most Important to Respondent Households

From the list of 10 potential benefits from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services, respondents were asked to indicate which three potential benefits are most important to their household. The following summarizes key findings:

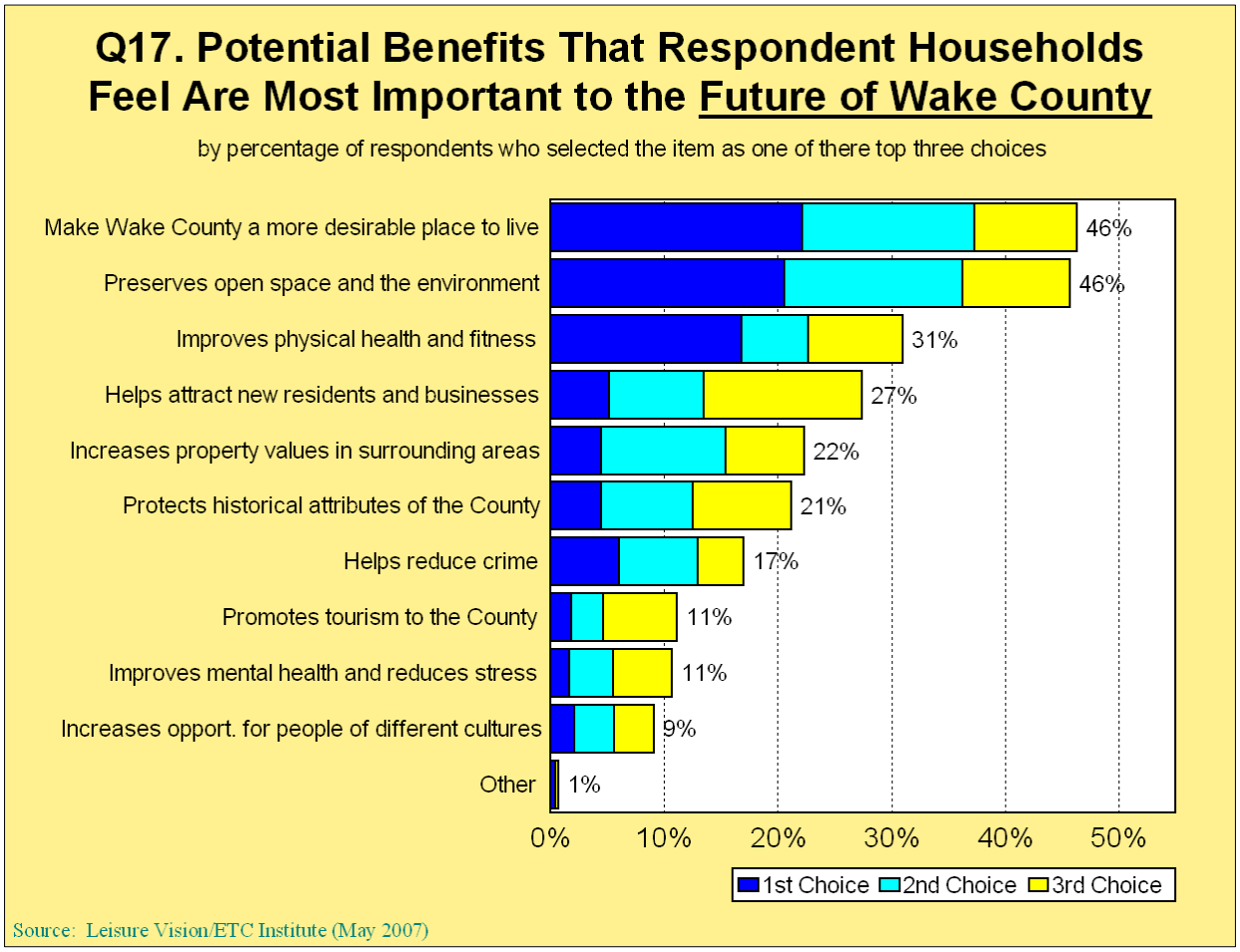
- **Based on the sum of their top three choices, the potential benefits that are most important to respondent households are: improves physical health and fitness (70%), preserves open space and the environment (48%), make Wake County a more desirable place to live (39%), and improves mental health and reduces stress (33%).** It should also be noted that improves physical health and fitness had the highest percentage of respondents select is as their first choice as the most important potential benefit.



Potential Benefits Are Most Important to the Future of Wake County

From the list of 10 potential benefits from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services, respondents were asked to indicate which three potential benefits are most important to the future of Wake County. The following summarizes key findings:

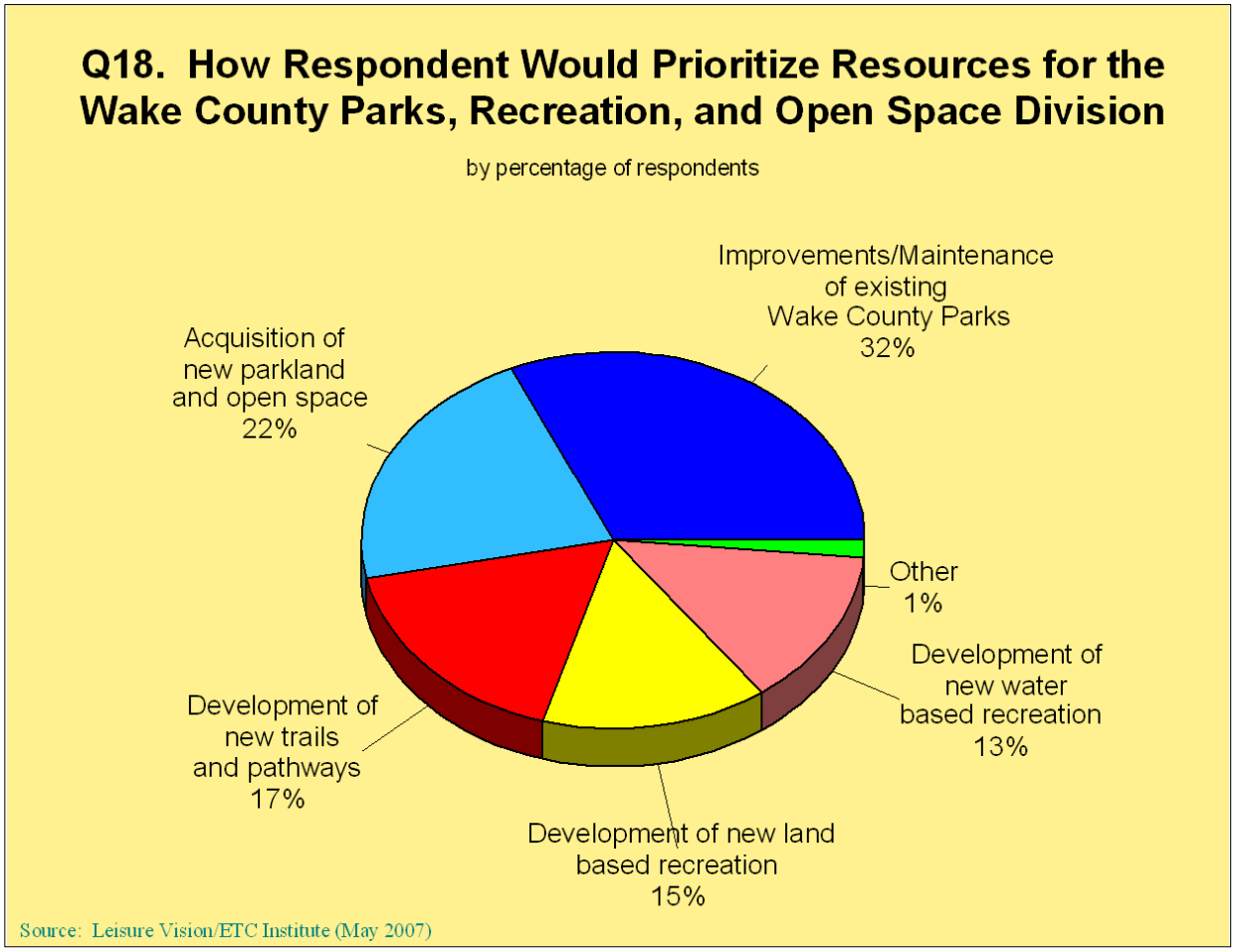
- **Based on the sum of their top three choices, the potential benefits that respondent households think are most important to the future of Wake County are: make Wake County a more desirable place to live (46%), preserves open space and the environment (46%), improves physical health and fitness (31%), and helps attract new residents and businesses (27%).** It should also be noted that make Wake County a more desirable place to live had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important potential benefit.



Prioritizing Resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division

Respondents were asked to indicate how they would prioritize resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division. The following summarizes key findings:

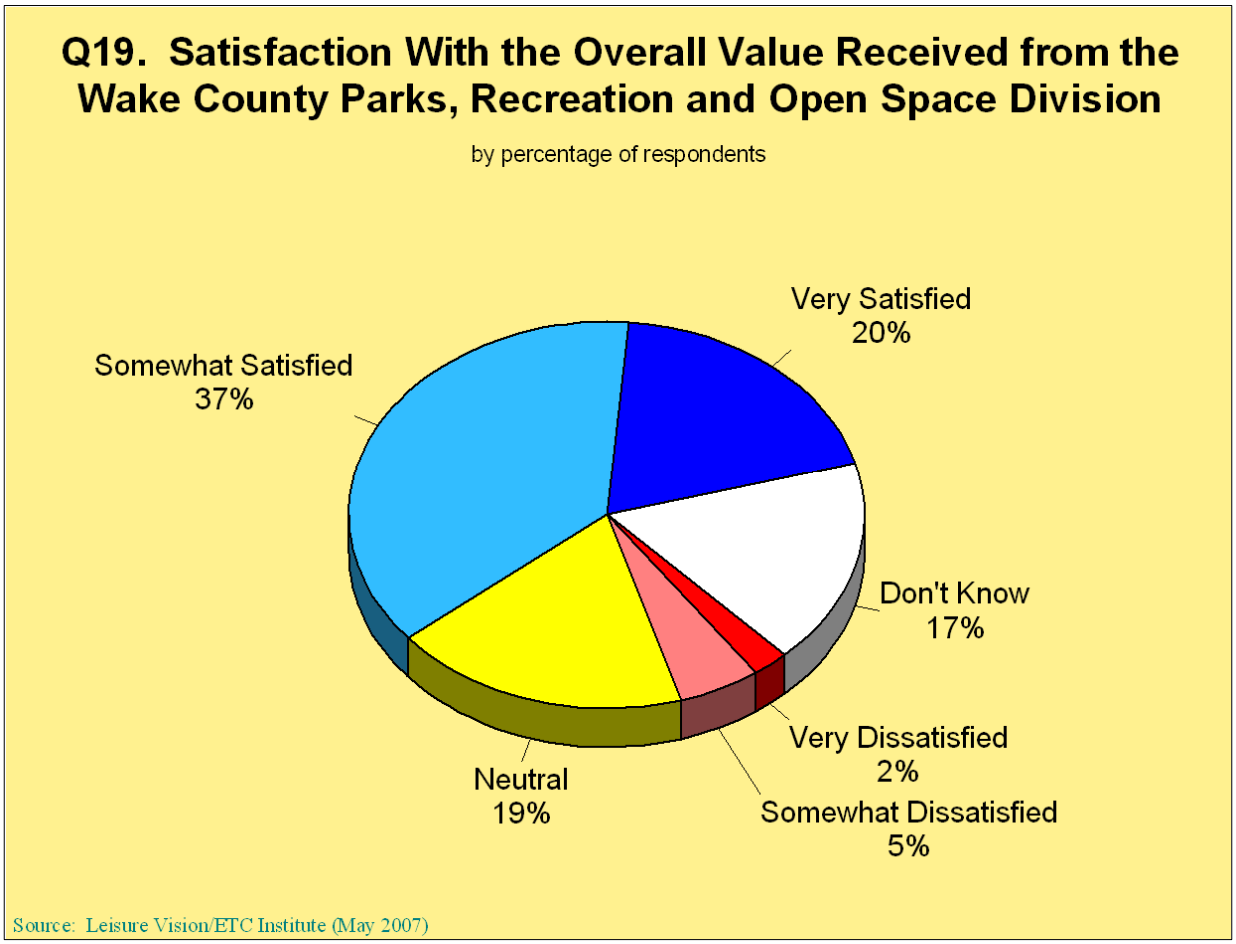
- **Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents indicated they would prioritize resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division with improvements/maintenance of existing Wake County Parks.** The remaining 68% was allocated as follows: 22% for acquisition of new parkland and open space, 17% for development of new trails and pathways, 15% for development of new land based recreation, 13% for development of new water based recreation, and 1% for other.



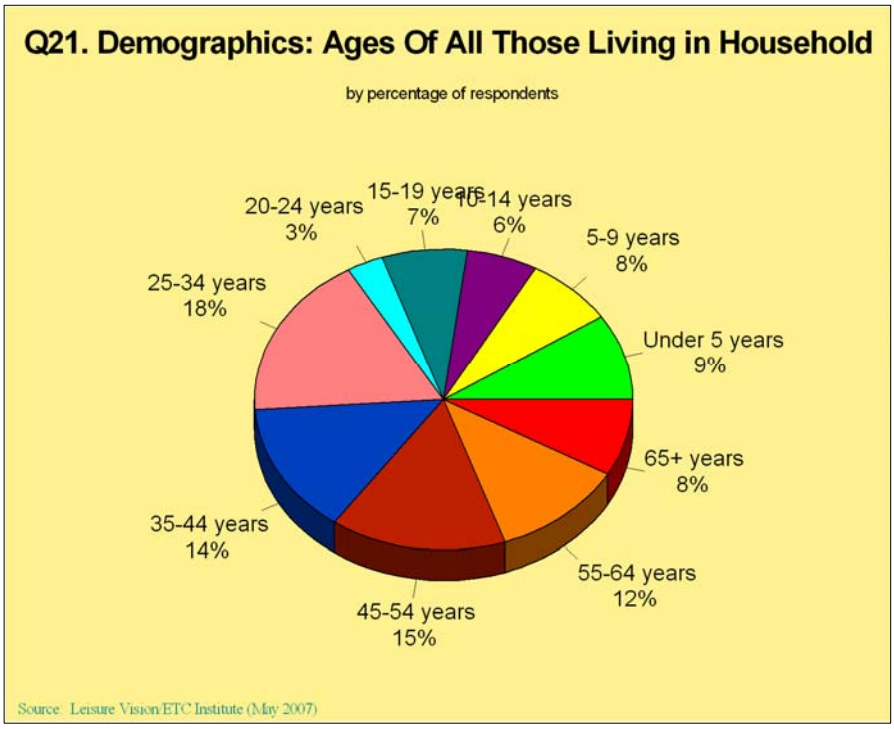
Satisfaction with Overall Value Received from the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division

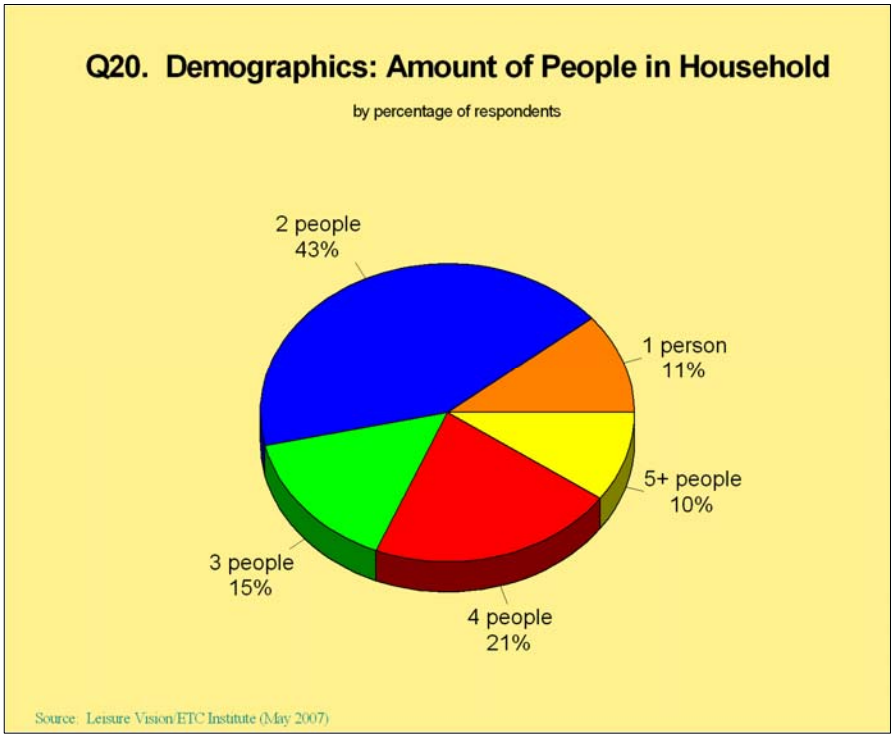
Respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction with the overall value their household receives from the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents indicated being either "very satisfied" (20%) or "somewhat satisfied" (37%) with the overall value their household receives from the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division.** Only 7% of respondents indicated being either "somewhat dissatisfied (5%) or very dissatisfied (2%) with the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division. In additional 17% of respondents indicated "don't know" and 19% indicated "neutral".

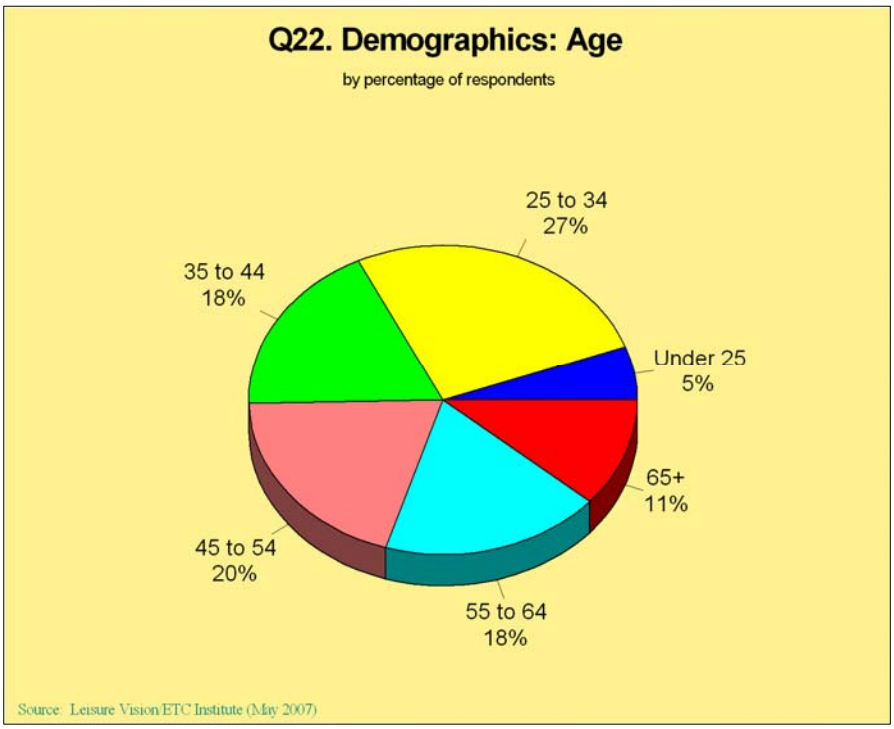


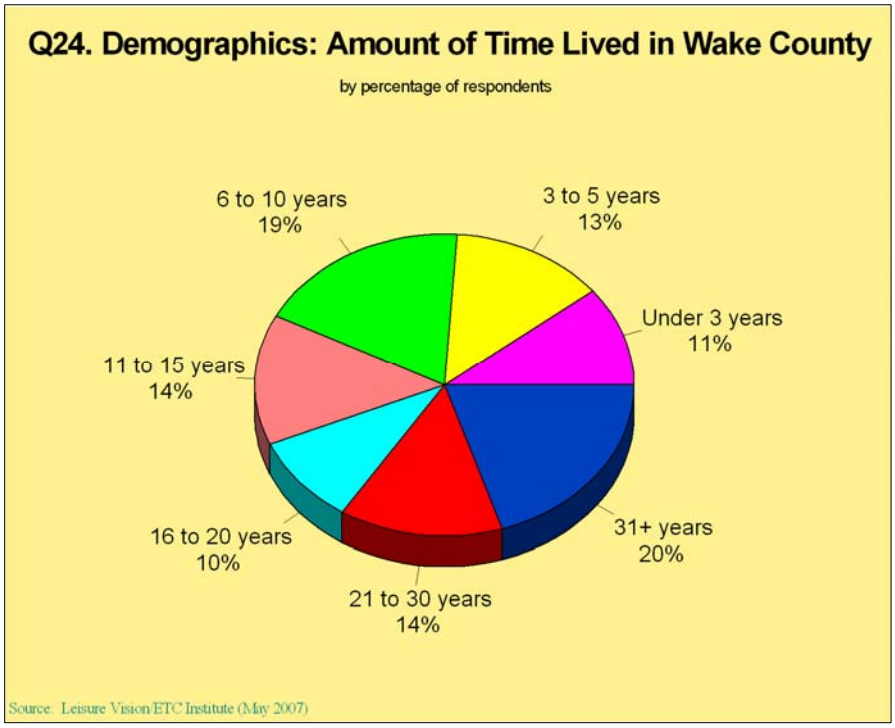
Demographics



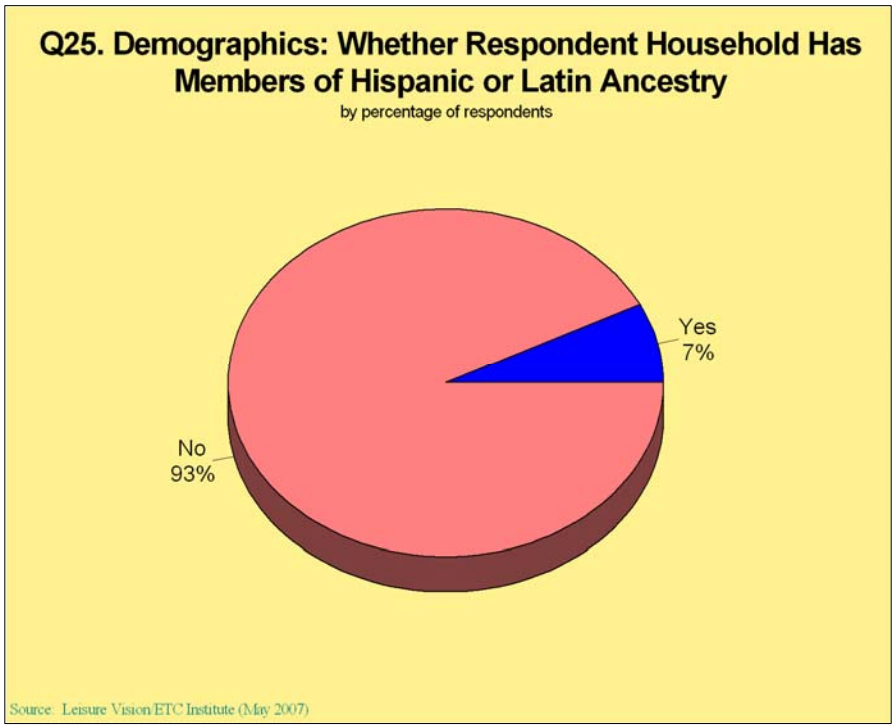


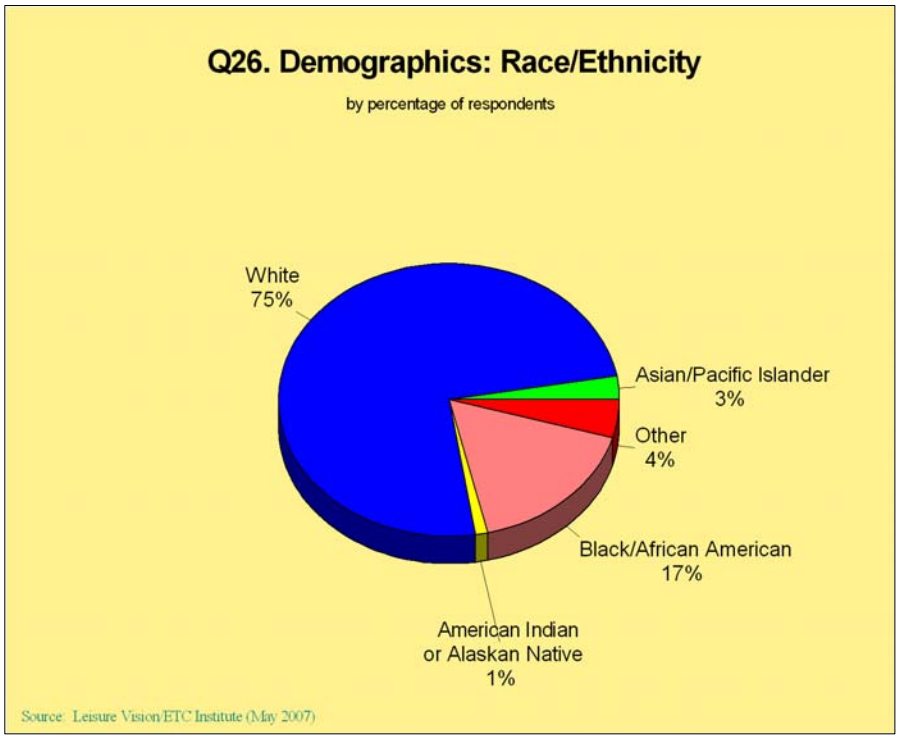
Demographics Continued



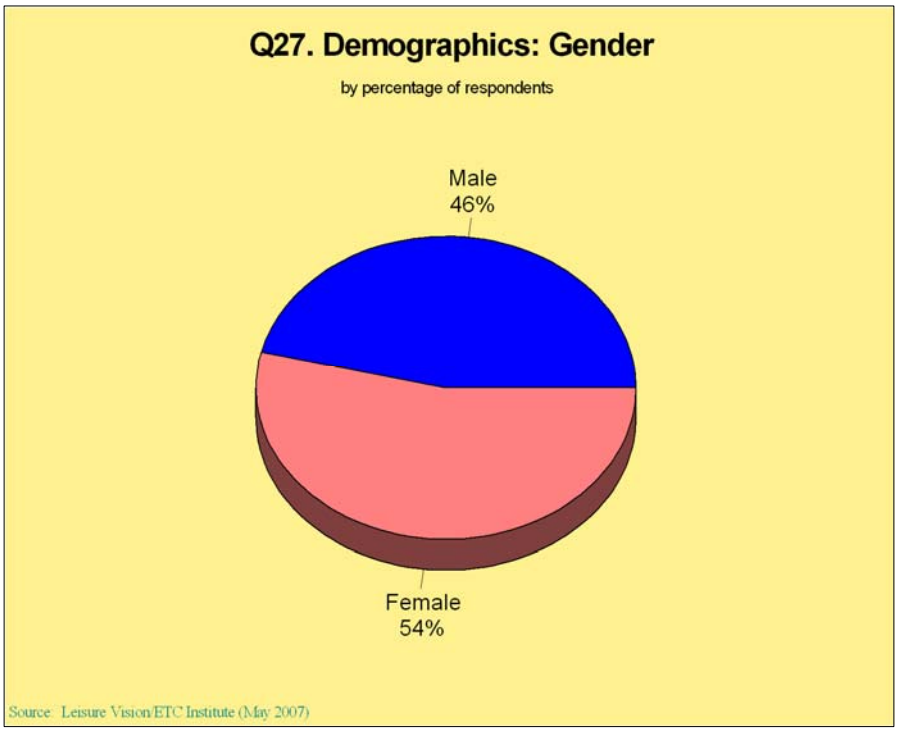


Demographics Continued





Demographics Continued



APPENDIX C

Survey Instrument

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Community Interest and Opinion Survey: ***Let your voice be heard today!***

The Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division would like your input to help determine parks, trails, open space and recreation priorities for Wake County. <u>This survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete</u>. When you are finished, please return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid, return-reply envelope. We greatly appreciate your time and efforts to improve the quality of life in Wake County.

Do you live in Wake County?

_____ (1) Yes [Please continue the survey.]
_____ (2) No [Please discontinue the survey. This survey is only for residents of Wake County.]

1. **From the following list, please check ALL the Wake County parks and trails you or members of your household have visited over the past 12 months.**

____(1) Lake Crabtree County Park
____(2) Blue Jay Point County Park
____(3) Historic Oak View County Park
____(4) Crowder District Park
____(5) Harris Lake County Park
____(6) Historic Yates Mill County Park
____(7) American Tobacco Trail
____(8) Cedar Fork District Park
____(9) None, we do not use any Wake County park or trails

2. **Which THREE of the parks listed in Question #1 do you and members of your household visit the most often?** [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd choices using the numbers in Question #1 above, or circle NONE.]

_____	_____	_____	
1st Most Often	2nd Most Often	3rd Most Often	NONE

3. **From the following list, please check ALL the recreation facilities found within the Wake County Parks listed in Question #1 you or members of your household have used or visited over the past 12 months.**

____(01) Walking and hiking trails
____(02) Nature/interpretive trails
____(03) Mountain biking trails
____(04) Educational gardens
____(05) Overnight lodge
____(06) Athletic fields
____(07) Boating and fishing areas
____(08) Playgrounds
____(09) Outdoor classroom
____(10) Disc golf course
____(11) Canoe/Kayak areas
____(12) Historic buildings
____(13) Farm History Center
____(14) Crop (cotton) program
____(15) Fruit orchards
____(16) Livestock areas
____(17) Environmental education/visitor centers
____(18) Sand volleyball courts
____(19) Open play areas
____(20) Picnicking areas/shelters
____(21) Nature preserves/wildlife habitats
____(22) Other: _____
____(23) None, we do not use any recreation facilities.

4. **Which THREE of the parks and recreation facilities listed in Question #3 do you or members of your household use most often at Wake County parks?** [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st' 2nd, and 3rd choices using the numbers in Question #3 above, or circle NONE.]

_____	_____	_____	
1st Most Often	2nd Most Often	3rd Most Often	NONE

5. **Overall how would you rate the physical condition of ALL the facilities and trails in the Wake County**

parks you have visited?

____ (1) Excellent ____ (3) Fair ____ (5) No opinion
____ (2) Good ____ (4) Poor

6. **How long (in minutes) does it generally take you to travel to the Wake County park that you use the most often? _____minutes**

7. **Please check ALL the ways you have learned about activities in the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division.**

____(01) Wake County Parks Quarterly Newsletter
____(02) Wake County Parks Website
____(03) Newspaper articles
____(04) Conversations with park staff
____(05) School flyers/newsletter
____(06) E-Mail List
____(07) From friends and neighbors
____(08) Brochures/fliers at parks or facilities
____(09) Radio
____(10) Television
____(11) Other:_____

8. **Please CHECK ALL the reasons that prevent you or other members of your household from using parks, trails, recreation facilities or programs of the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division more often.**

___(01) Parks are not well maintained
___(02) Facilities are not well maintained
___(03) Program or facility not offered
___(04) Security is insufficient
___(05) Lack of transportation
___(06) Parks too far from our residence
___(07) Parks and facilities are too crowded
___(08) Fees are too high
___(09) Program times are not convenient
___(10) Lack of handicap accessibility
___(11) Poor customer service by staff
___(12) I do not know locations of parks/facilities
___(13) I do not know what is being offered
___(14) I use city and town parks and facilities
___(15) Lack of parking
___(16) Park operating hours not convenient
___(17) Registration for activities is difficult
___(18) Not enough time
___(19) Other: _____

9. **The Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division has many options regarding acquiring and developing open space for parks and recreation purposes. From the following list, please check the TWO open space options that you or members of your household would support the most.**

_____ (A) Open space should be acquired and <u>left undeveloped</u>.

_____ (B) Open space should be acquired and <u>improved for passive usage, i.e. trails, picnicking</u>, <u>shelters</u>.

_____ (C) Open space should be acquired and <u>improved for active usage, i.e. baseball, soccer, football, etc.</u>

_____ (D) Open space should be acquired and improved <u>for both passive</u> (trails, picnicking) and <u>active</u> (baseball, soccer, football) usages.

_____ (E) <u>No new open space</u> should be acquired.

10. Please indicate if <u>YOU or any member of your HOUSEHOLD</u> has a need for each of the parks and recreational facilities listed below by circling the YES or NO next to the park/facility.

If YES, please rate ALL the following parks and recreation FACILITIES of this type in Wake County on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 means "100% Meets Needs" and 1 means "Does Not Meet Needs" of your household.

Type of Facility	Do You Have a Need for this Facility?		If YES You Have a Need, How Well Are Your Needs Being Met?				
	Yes	No	100% Met	75% Met	50% Met	25% Met	0% Met
A. Walking and hiking trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
B. Biking trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
C. Horse trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
D. Mountain biking trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
E. Nature trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
F. Youth fields (i.e. baseball, softball, football, soccer, and lacrosse)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
G. Adult fields (i.e. soccer and softball fields)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
H. Skate park	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
I. Canoeing and kayaking areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
J. Boating and sailing areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
K. Fishing areas	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
L. Swimming pools	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
M. Outdoor classrooms	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
N. Conference centers for weddings/meetings	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
O. Tennis courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
P. Sand volleyball courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
Q. Historic sites and buildings	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
R. Off leash dog parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
S. Environmental/cultural education centers	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
T. Nature preserves/wildlife habitats	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
U. Education gardens	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
V. Picnicking areas and shelters	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
W. Children's playgrounds	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
X. Disc golf course	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
Y. Livestock areas and farms	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
1. Other: _____	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1

11. Which FOUR of the facilities from the list in Question #10 are *most important* for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division to provide for your household? [Using the letters and number in the left hand column of Question #10 above, please write in the letters or number below for your 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices, or circle 'NONE'.]

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

12. Historically, the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division has concentrated on three major areas in the delivery of parks and recreation services. Listed below in Questions 12a, 12b, and 12c are each of the three areas. For each area please indicate how supportive you are of the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division concentrating on this area.

12a. How supportive are you of Wake County continuing to concentrate on the acquisition, development and operations of large regional parks and longer trail systems that can serve citizens throughout the County and leaving the operations of neighborhood parks and community parks to cities and towns within Wake County?

_____ (1) Very supportive
_____ (2) Somewhat supportive
_____ (3) Not sure
_____ (4) Not supportive

12b. How supportive are you of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with cities and towns on the acquisition of open space primarily for water quality protection?

_____ (1) Very supportive
_____ (2) Somewhat supportive
_____ (3) Not sure
_____ (4) Not supportive

12c. How supportive are you of Wake County continuing to concentrate on partnering with the Wake County Public School System, cities and towns on the acquisition, development, and use of park facilities with school sites?

_____ (1) Very supportive
_____ (2) Somewhat supportive
_____ (3) Not sure
_____ (4) Not supportive

13. Which TWO of the areas listed in Questions #12a, 12b, and 12c do you feel is most important for the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division to concentrate on? [Please write in the numbers below for your 1st' and 2rd choices using the numbers in Questions #12a, 12b, and 12c above, or circle NONE.]

_____	_____	
1st Most Important	2nd Most Important	NONE

14. Wake County has a long range goal of protecting 30% of the County's land area for a variety of purposes, including protection of water quality, environmental stewardship, developing new parks and recreation areas, developing trails, etc. Reaching this goal would mean protecting approximately 165,000 acres of Wake County's total land area of 550,000 acres. There are currently 55,719 acres protected throughout the County.

Are you supportive of the long range goal of protecting 30% of the land area within the County for environmental stewardship, protection of water quality, developing new parks and recreation sites, developing trails, etc.?

_____ (1) Yes [please continue with Q15]
_____ (2) No [please answer Q14a]
_____ (3) Not sure [please answer Q14a]

14a. Which ONE of the following is the PRIMARY reason you are not supportive of the 30% goal?

_____ (1) I do not feel we need to protect any more land for these purposes
_____ (2) I need more information on this goal.
_____ (3) I would support a goal that was less than 30% of the land area. Note: Please write in what percent you would support? _____%
_____ (4) Other: _____

15. The following are some benefits that you and your household may receive from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services. For each potential benefit, please indicate your level of agreement with the benefits being provided by parks, trails, and recreation facilities by circling the corresponding number.

Potential benefits from parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
(A) Improves physical health and fitness	5	4	3	2	1	9
(B) Helps reduce crime	5	4	3	2	1	9
(C) Makes Wake County a more desirable place to live	5	4	3	2	1	9
(D) Preserves open space and the environment	5	4	3	2	1	9
(E) Increases property values in surrounding areas	5	4	3	2	1	9
(F) Improves mental health and reduces stress	5	4	3	2	1	9
(G) Increases opportunities for people of different cultures to interact	5	4	3	2	1	9
(H) Helps attract new residents and businesses	5	4	3	2	1	9
(I) Protects historical attributes of the County	5	4	3	2	1	9
(J) Promotes tourism to the County	5	4	3	2	1	9
(K) Other: _____	5	4	3	2	1	9

16. Which THREE of the potential benefits listed in Question #15 are most important <u>to you and members of your household</u>? [Please write in the letters below for your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices using the letters in Question #15 above, or circle 'NONE'.]

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

17. Which THREE of the potential benefits listed in Question #15 are most important <u>to the future of Wake County</u>? [Please write in the letters below for your 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices using the letters in Question #15 above, or circle 'NONE'.]

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

18. Using percentages, please indicate how you would prioritize resources for the Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Division. Please indicate what percent of 100% you would allocate to each category by writing in that percentage in the space to the left of the descriptions below. [Please be sure that your allocation adds up to 100%]

_____% <u>Improvements/maintenance of existing Wake County parks</u>

_____% <u>Acquisition of new parkland and open space</u>

_____% <u>Development of new trails and pathways,</u> i.e. walking, hiking and biking trails, etc.

_____% <u>Development of new land based recreation</u>, i.e. athletic fields, picnic areas, historic areas, etc.

_____% <u>Development of new water based recreation</u>, i.e. boating and fishing areas, etc.

_____% Other: _____

100% TOTAL

19. Please rate your satisfaction on a scale of 5 to 1, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied", with the overall value your household receives from the Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Division.

____ (5) Very Satisfied ____ (2) Somewhat Dissatisfied
____ (4) Somewhat Satisfied ____ (1) Very Dissatisfied
____ (3) Neutral ____ (9) Don't Know

Demographics

20. Including yourself, how many people live in your household? _____

21. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are?

Under 5 years_____ 15 - 19 years _____ 35 - 44 years _____ 65+ years _____
5 - 9 years _____ 20 - 24 years _____ 45 - 54 years _____
10 - 14 years _____ 25 - 34 years _____ 55 - 64 years _____

22. What is your age? _____

23. What is your home zip code? _____

24. How long have you lived in Wake County? _____

25. Are you or other members of your household of Hispanic or Latin ancestry?

____(1) Yes ____(2) No

26. How would you describe your race/ethnicity? [Please check all that apply.]

____(1) Asian/Pacific Islander ____(4) Black/African American
____(2) White ____(5) Other: _____
____(3) American Indian or Alaskan Native

27. Your gender: ____(1) Male ____(2) Female

28. Please check which ONE of the following communities or areas of Wake County you live within.

____ (01) Apex ____ (06) Knightdale ____ (11) Wendell
____ (02) Cary ____ (07) Morrisville ____ (12) Zebulon
____ (03) Fuquay-Varina ____ (08) Raleigh ____ (13) Unincorporated Wake County
____ (04) Garner ____ (09) Rolesville
____ (05) Holly Springs ____ (10) Wake Forest

This concludes the survey. Thank you for your time.

Please Return Your Completed Survey in the Enclosed Return-Reply Envelope Addressed to:
ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061

APPENDIX D

WAKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

Recreation Land Dedication Ordinance (RLDO) Critique

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

BWR | Right in the Center

MEMORANDUM

TO: Wake County

FROM: Michael Malyn and Dick Horton

SUBJECT: RLDO Critique

DATE: Thursday, July 19, 2007 **Project #**

An analysis of the current May 20, 2002 Ordinance reveals that it is patterned from similar ordinances crafted for municipal parks and recreation agencies assessing a fee for the development of neighborhood services. Because of recent Supreme Court decisions that give municipal ordinances their standing, it is important that Wake County review its current ordinance.

It is recommended therefore that the following be implemented.

- Recommend that Wake County, through its Planning Department, review the current ordinance relative to Supreme Court decisions for possible revision or replacement.
- Consult an expert on the writing of a County ordinance that is supportable by current law and specific to Wake County.
- Create a fee formula supportable by actual Wake County conditions such as cost of development, expected population growth, future open space demand compared to the current documented demand.
- Include language specific to regional parks, county wide trails and greenways, and possible cooperative purchases or developments in cooperation with the adjacent municipalities.
- Include language to require periodic reviews of how the fee is calculated; i.e. once every three years.
- Cash in lieu of options should include the type and quality of land that will be accepted and that land offers are subject to approval of suitability.
- Service areas may need to be created to establish where fee may be used so that it is used in proportion to the demand that created the need.
- Use fees collected under the current ordinance in partnership with municipalities in close proximity to the source of the fee.

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

APPENDIX E

Park Inventory Worksheets

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

Blue Jay Point County Park

Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 234 acres
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 19,591 (gross ft^2: Education Center, Lodge, Maintenance Shop, Comfort Station and Residence)

Special Features and Amenities:

- Environmental Education Center (with exhibits)
- Overnight Lodge for environmental education
- Educational Garden area with small study pond
- Wildlife enhancement areas
- 5 miles of hiking trails including 1 self-guided interpretive trail
- 4.5 miles of shoreline on Falls Lake
- 5 acres of turf on open-play area and tee-ball field
- Picnic areas
- Park Residence
- 2 Playgrounds
- Small amphitheater
- Fishing area

Partnerships

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- North Carolina State Parks
- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- Wake County Public School System
- Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail
- Private individuals, community interest groups, private organizations and educational institutions
- Local, state and national governmental agencies in conjunction with special events and educator workshops

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

- Located in northern Wake County, the park is convenient for all County residents due to access from I-540 (The Outer Loop)

Types of Programs Offered:

- Environmental and cultural history education programs for school groups, camps and public programs
- Exhibits
- Special Events

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- Secondary asphalt path maintenance
- Picnic shelters (as identified in current Master Plan process)
- Office expansion
- Playground retaining wall

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- Lodge for environmental education
- Classrooms in environmental education center (priority given to groups with environmental education in their mission)
- Relationships with CASL and YMCA for field reservations

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Park is well known for excellence in environmental education
- High quality of maintenance
- Environmental Education Center has professional-level, high quality exhibits

Potential for Expansion:

- Currently in master planning process
- Future trail expansion possible
- Picnic shelter and Office expansion may be added as part of the master planning process

Notes:

- Blue Jay Point is a high quality, well maintained, park focusing on environmental education with additional provisions for informal recreation opportunities

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

Crowder District Park

- Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 33 acres
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 7,676 (gross ft^2: Park Office, Pavilion, Comfort Station and three Picnic Shelters

Special Features and Amenities:

- 3 Picnic shelters with grills
- 3 Playgrounds
- 1.1 mile paved trail
- 2.1 acre pond w/ boardwalk
- Viewing deck with Adirondack chairs at upper Pavilion
- Educational gardens
- Small amphitheater
- 2 restroom pavilions
- Playfield with backstop
- Sand volleyball court

Partnerships:

- Penny Road Elementary School
- Middle Creek High School
- North Carolina State University – Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management
- Private individuals, community interest groups and private organizations

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

- Within 5 miles (Fuquay, Apex, Cary, Holly Springs and Garner

Types of Programs Offered:

- Environmental and cultural history education programs for school groups, camps and public programs
- Special Events

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High
- Park appears to have a higher level of wear and tear than other County Parks

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- Need for indoor classroom/meeting space (for Park and County use)
- Easement potentially required for bridge leading to amphitheater. Currently about 5' of the bridge is on private property
- Consider acquisition of property adjacent to the park for conservation purposes
- Need for increased all weather, secure storage

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- Picnic shelters

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Very good general conditions
- Appears to be a highly used/visited park

Potential for Expansion:

- Additional property behind park which Park would like to be obtained
- Additional property would provide a habitat/eco system for improved educational programming and potential for increasing length of trails

Notes:

- Drainage/erosion issues at Heron Shelter
- Large portion of asphalt paths failing
- Turf issues around picnic shelters—noticeable high percentage of clover

- Restroom and deck structure could benefit from a touch up with paint/stain
- Wood fence along playground has failed at one point
- Interpretive sign regarding rain garden is not “lay person” friendly. Could improve to be more engaging, interactive etc
- Boardwalk needs improvements
- Users highly value Crowder Park

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

Harris Lake County Park

- Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 680 acres
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 8,478 (gross ft^2: Park Office, Comfort Station, three Picnic Shelters and a Well House

Special Features and Amenities:

Only Phase I completed:

- Visitor Center/Operations and Management Facility
- Day use area including:
    - 3 picnic shelters & picnic area
    - Restroom building
    - 10 miles mountain bike trails
    - 5 miles hiking
    - Interpretive trail
    - Playground
    - Fishing pier
    - Canoe/kayak launch site
    - Disc Golf Course
    - Catfish pond
    - Sand volleyball court

Partnerships

- Progress Energy
- Triangle Off-road Cyclists (TORC)
- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- Raleigh Area Disc League (RADL)
- North Carolina Forest Service
- NC State University
- Jordan Lake Trails Conservation Group
- Wake County
- Towns of Fuquay-Varina, Cary and Holly Springs
- Raleigh Astronomy Club
- Private individuals, community interest groups and private organizations

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

Located in New Hill, NC (southwestern Wake County) and convenient to:

- Apex
- Raleigh
- Cary
- Holly Springs
- Fuquay-Varina

Types of Programs Offered:

- Environmental and cultural history education programs for school groups, camps and public programs
- Special Events

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High
- Playground has regular maintenance regime
- General site appearance (asphalt, lawn shoulder, parking area, picnic area etc. appeared highly maintained)

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- Park would like to expand by adding an Environmental Education Center, camp ground and other facilities consistent with current master plan

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- Picnic shelters can be reserved

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Conditions are high quality and very well maintained
- Park is known for its mountain biking trails
- Provisions for adequate water based recreation opportunities

Potential for Expansion:

- Only Phase I completed at this point
- Potential for expansion

Notes:

- Recommended for Master Plan to be re-evaluated against potential future plans for Progress Energy to raise water level by 20'. Division should be pro-active in preparing for new park "footprint" by planning for moving facilities and amenities impacted by increased water level without disruption of service to visitors. Division should continue to communicate and negotiate with Progress Energy on potential additional land that could offset land lost from flooding.
- Map potential new shoreline and recommend relocation of future primary structures and amenities out of potential future flood elevation.
- Re-evaluate Master Plan to determine priority order of phases and capital budget of each phase.

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

Historic Oak View County Park

- Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 27 acres
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 16,602 (gross ft^2: Main House, Farm History Center, Cotton Museum, Carriage House, Livestock Barn, Plank Kitchen and two Picnic Shelters

Special Features and Amenities:

- Historic House and out-buildings
- Farm History Center
- Cotton Museum
- Crop program, fruit orchard, pecan grove, herb garden, livestock program

Partnerships

- Wake County Cooperative Extension
- Wake County Extension and Community Association
- North Carolina Museum of History
- Raleigh Heritage Trail
- North Carolina Pecan Growers Association
- Antique Automobile Club of America
- Wake County Public Libraries
- Herb Society of Wake County
- Wake County Master Gardeners
- North Carolina State University College of Humanities and Social Science
- Private individuals, community interest groups and private organizations

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

- County wide
- County wide school groups

Types of Programs Offered:

- Cultural educational opportunities
- Guided public tours
- School group programs
- Exhibits
- Special Events

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- Additional items on current Master Plan (i.e. tenant house, expansion of Farm History Center for conference room space)

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- County groups only can reserve house
- Shelters

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Excellent condition
- High quality, beautiful and unique park facility

Potential for Expansion:

- No potential for expansion due to site constraints

Notes:

- Directional signage into primary park area could be improved
- Park has an Advisory Board

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

Lake Crabtree County Park

- Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 215 acres
- 520 lake acres
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 9,330 (gross ft^2: Park Office, Maintenance Shop, Boat Rental Buildings, Observation Tower, two Comfort Stations, and three Picnic Shelters

Special Features and Amenities:

- Boat rental & boat launch
- Fishing pier & fishing platform
- Trails
- 3 Picnic shelters
- Volleyball courts
- Open space area
- 2 Playgrounds
- Educational gardens

Partnerships

- North Carolina State University
- Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority
- Triangle YMCA
- Triangle Paddling Club
- Carolina Sailing Foundation
- Triangle Off Road Cyclist
- Private individuals, community interest groups and private organizations

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

- Located in western Wake County on the edge of the City of Raleigh, the park is convenient for all County residents via access from I-40

Types of Programs Offered:

- Environmental education
- Canoe and kayak demonstrations
- Special Events

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- In-door Classroom

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- Shelters
- Boat launch fees

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Conditions are high quality and very well maintained
- Park is known for its mountain biking trails, boat rental program including sailing camps, and environmental education programming

Potential for Expansion:

- In 1993, the County expanded its original park site with a lease of 127 acres from the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority. Further park expansion is not likely, but additional trail and greenway connections between the park and the Town of Morrisville and the Town of Cary are planned.
- A revised master plan is needed and may include a plan for indoor conditioned educational space.

Notes:

- The park is the most heavily visited site in the Wake County system.
- Lake Crabtree has been impacted by the upstream release of PCBs from the Ward Transformer site. This EPA superfund site, and impacted waters down-stream are under investigation for remedial action.

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

American Tobacco Trail (ATT)

- Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 6.7 miles of trail in Wake County
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 444 (gross ft^2: two Comfort Stations

Special Features and Amenities:

- Restrooms, picnic areas, kiosks and benches at 3 trail heads

Partnerships

- North Carolina Department of Transportation
- North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- Triangle Rails to Trail Conservancy
- North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation
- Chatham County
- Town of Cary
- Town of Apex
- City of Durham
- North Carolina Horse Council
- Private individuals, community interest groups and private organizations

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

- Trail access points are located at New Hill/Olive Chapel Road, Wimberly, and White Oak Church Road

Types of Programs Offered:

- Environmental education programs
- Special Events

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High
- Equestrian group cleans trail 2x per week.

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- Wake County may need to make a decision about the use of granite screenings on its trail surfaces as it presents a significant maintenance problem. Users prefer granite screenings to asphalt.

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- No amenities require reservations

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Conditions are high quality and very well maintained
- Trails are wide to accommodate all user groups
- Gates allow for bike, pedestrian, and horse access while restricting motorized vehicles from entering.

Potential for Expansion:

- Town of Cary and Apex want to connect to ATT with their trail systems
- Expansion of the Trail south to Harris Lake County Park and possibly to Raven Rock State Park in Harnett County

Notes:

- Lack of directional signage to Wimberly trail head
- Wimberly trail head is smallest parking area and often overflowing with cars
- Pedestrian crossings could be improved or expanded at the Wimberly trail head
- Trail users parking outside gates before opening time creates safety concerns

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Wake County Parks Inventory

Facility Name (Public or Private):

Historic Yates Mill County Park

- Public

Size (Land area or Building Square Feet):

- 174 acres
- 20-acre pond with mill dam
- 16,000 SF Visitors Center
- Total Building sq ft maintained: 16,639 (gross ft^2: Education Center with Research Wing, and Outdoor Classroom Lodge, Maintenance Shop, Comfort Station and Residence

Special Features and Amenities:

- Native landscaping with piedmont prairie demonstration plot
- Wildlife enhancement features
- Best management practice demonstration areas
- Visitor's Center with museum
- Education Wing including
    - Two classrooms
    - Auditorium
    - Exhibits
    - Staff offices
    - Support facilities
- Historic Grist Mill and Mill Dam
- Pond and wetland boardwalks
- Pedestrian bridge
- Park center and mill overlook decks
- Covered outdoor field classroom (no utilities)
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Picnic tables
- 3 miles of hiking trails

Partnerships:

- NC State University/State of NC
- NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Yates Mill Associates
- Private individuals, community interest groups and private organizations

Location and proximity to the greatest number of users (1/2 mile away, within 5 miles, within 10 miles, from all over County.):

Located in southern Raleigh, NC (southwestern Wake County) and convenient to:

- 5 miles from downtown Raleigh
- North Carolina State University
- Apex
- Cary
- Fuquay-Varina
- Garner
- Holly Springs

Types of Programs Offered:

- Programs for the general public are offered in subjects including historical interpretation, environmental education, agro-ecology, and public recreation
- The park serves as a field research facility and wildlife refuge for NC State University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.
- The park is surrounded by the university's Biological Field Laboratories
- Programs for Wake County School students are currently being developed and will be offered starting in 2008
- 6 week summer program run by NC Museum of Natural Sciences, as well as week-long camp programs offered by PROS, NC State University's Biological Outreach Program, and Youth Unlimited Programs

Entry Sign

- Standard Wake County Park sign
- New, high quality

Quality of Maintenance

- High
- Newly opened historic mill is fully restored and operable- excellent restoration
- General site appearance (asphalt, entry drive, lawn shoulder, parking area, retaining walls, visitor's center, historic mill, picnic area etc. appeared highly maintained)

Needs and Estimated Quantities (for CIP estimates)

- Park entrance approach signs for safety reasons
- Auxiliary Parking Lot for amphitheater and overflow (current 75 spaces not sufficient for events)
- Reservable covered picnic shelter
- Accessible crossing at waterway
- Demonstration farm

Reserved Facilities or Uses (Shelters, Courts, Gyms, Meeting Rooms):

- Classrooms
- Auditorium
- Covered field classroom

General Conditions and Adequacy for Intended Purpose and Uses:

- Conditions are high quality and very well maintained
- Parking lot and visitor's center can accommodate wide variety of visitors from small family to school groups
- The mill is open by appointment at limited times – tour offerings should be expanded as resources become available to support an expanded operation

Potential for Expansion:

- Future 400 acres are programmed for additional trails
- Demonstration plots on adjacent land are used by students

Notes:

- Permitted visitor entrance into Mill is unclear
- Private donation may fund construction of general store for the sales of mill merchandise through Yates Mill Associates
- Decision must be approved by Advisory Board, YMA executive committee, and YMA board of directors
- The park was designed and developed without a separate maintenance facility. It was thought that maintenance equipment and materials storage could occur at nearby Crowder District Park. Future master plan revisions may address this issue.
- There has been limited discussion of relocating Lake Wheeler Road and its vehicular bridge away from the historic mill.

APPENDIX F

WAKE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

Other Plan Review

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan 2003-2008

Overview:

Since passage of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965, preparation of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) has been required in order for states to be eligible for LWCF acquisition and development assistance. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, the state agency with authority to represent and act for the state for purposes of the LWCF Act, has prepared this plan. The plan contents and format are shaped by the planning guidelines of the LWCF Act. The major requirements are:

- comprehensiveness
- evaluation of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation resources and facilities in the state;
- a wetlands priority component;
- a program for implementation of the plan;
- ample public participation in the planning process;
- description of process and methodology

Key Outdoor Recreation Issues:

1. **Improved Outdoor Recreational Services** — The need to provide improved outdoor recreational services to meet the needs of a growing and changing population including some highlights: adequate staffing, addressing deteriorating facilities, greater public accessibility, expanded protection of natural resources.

2. **Conservation of Natural Resources** — The need to conserve and protect important natural resources and open spaces in a rapidly developing state. Recognition of dwindling open space for future resources.

3. **Funding** — The need to ensure a stable and adequate source of funding to provide for the outdoor recreation needs of current and future generations. Reviews some of the statewide funding mechanisms including: Natural Heritage Trust Fund, Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Clean Water Management Trust Fund.

4. **Partnerships** — The need to create effective partnerships between all parties interested in outdoor recreation so they may pursue common interests more effectively. Encourage partnerships between government agencies and entities, public/private, and non-profit/public.

5. **The State Parks System** — The need to improve the North Carolina state parks system.

These issues were identified at statewide meetings and through responses to a statewide outdoor recreation issues survey.

Supply of Outdoor Recreational facilities

Provides an overview of park structures at the State Level, what activities are included in “Outdoor Recreation” and a comparative analysis of counties that provide these services and structures.

See section 2 of the report for charts, graphs and specific numbers related to these items:

Results Overview:

Wake County which ranks among the top 5 counties in North Carolina in population density by county, has some of the best distribution in the State of serving residents per park acre at the regional and local levels.

Its service levels for facilities rate it among the **best in the Sate at this time for residents per facility including:** residents per baseball fields, picnic shelters, playgrounds, soccer/football multi-purpose fields, trail per mile, volleyball courts,

Midrange within the state for: softball, basketball courts, soccer fields, swimming pools, tennis courts

Lowest in the state for resident per facility for: football fields, baseball/softball multi-purpose fields

Top Five most popular outdoor recreational activities within the state are:

1. walking for pleasure
2. driving for pleasure
3. viewing scenery
4. beach activities
5. visiting historical sites

Please note: Wake County's highest population age bracket is 25-44 years old and the following activities ranked among the highest with this age bracket:

1. bicycling for pleasure
2. jogging or running
3. use of play equipment
4. use of open areas
5. beach activities

Additional demand was broken down by age group and activity demand resulting in the following statewide future demand results for all categories:

1. walking for pleasure
2. fishing-freshwater
3. beach activities
4. camping (tent or vehicle)
5. bicycling for pleasure

The following activities are listed as ranking high for public support or funding for outdoor recreational activities:

1. walking for pleasure
2. camping (tent or vehicle)
3. picnicking
4. visiting historical sites
5. fishing-freshwater
6. visiting natural areas
7. beach activities
8. visiting zoos
9. use of play equipment
10. attending outdoor cultural events

Statewide Priorities for Funding 2003-2008

1. walking for pleasure
2. camping (tent or vehicle)
3. picnicking
4. beach activities
5. fishing-freshwater
6. attend outdoor cultural events

ROLES and Responsibilities:

The primary descriptions in this section define the roles of Federal, State, and local governments.

SCORPS view of County responsibilities:

Counties generally provide the resource-based and locally oriented outdoor recreational areas that are not large enough to be managed feasibly at the state or federal levels, or which do not have resources of statewide or national significance. Such areas constitute an invaluable part of the overall outdoor recreational effort in North Carolina and are indispensable to well-balanced statewide outdoor recreation.

SCORPS view of municipal responsibilities:

Because of population densities and the lack of large open-space areas, most municipal recreation systems tend to concentrate their efforts on providing services involving more intensive user-oriented facilities that require relatively little space in proportion to the use accommodated. Typical municipal outdoor recreational facilities include playgrounds, swimming pools, ball fields, tennis courts and picnic areas. A few municipalities even provide golf courses.

Although most municipal programs do not typically provide resource-based outdoor recreational facilities, **municipalities do play a vital role in providing facility-dependent recreational opportunities in North Carolina. The role of Municipal programs will likely grow in importance as increased public emphasis is placed on recreation closer to home.** Since municipal recreation agencies are closest to the populace, they are usually the first to feel the pressures to establish programs that meet the demands of residents.

Statewide Trends Affecting Outdoor Recreation:

1. primary trend in North Carolina is overall population growth
2. increased development
3. increased participation
4. population shifts: Statewide is seeing overall increase in the population age group 62 and over. HOWEVER, Wake County is one of 4 counties with the lowest elderly population containing only 9% of the population as 62 and over.
5. increased obesity
6. increased female participation

Activity trends & increased participation:

1. bird watching
2. hiking
3. backpacking
4. attending outdoor concerts/plays
5. walking

Natural Diversity Preservation

Section Acknowledges finite resources within the State and therefore active programs to ensure preservation and conservation of these resources. Section highlights various statewide programs for natural resource preservation.

Action Item Summary

Cleary defines order of action the State will take to implement items within the SCORP.

Highlights that impact Wake County?

- Projects will be funded by the state by how they address issues within the SCORP document
- The State offers technical assistance to agencies for trail planning, design, construction, maintenance, management and funding
- State will develop a statewide comprehensive trail plan system
- Allow Access to PARTF funds if projects illustrate they meet user needs
- NCDOT Bike Ped program will undertake state bikeway system improvements and projects such as signs, maps, and road improvements
- Consulting services available through RRS-Recreation Resource Services
- State is developing a statewide conservation plan “One North Carolina Naturally”
- State will work with local municipalities to preserve natural resources
- Grant proposals directed toward SCORP needs will have high priority funding through OPSP.
- The State encourages all partnerships and support these partnerships when they can
- The State encourages and support the protection of wetland resources and water resources

State Parkland and Open Space in Wake County

Falls Lake State Recreation Area
Wake Forest, NC
(leased by County from COE)

- 26,000 acres (+ 12,000-acre lake)
- Boating
- Concession with:
    - boat launching, slips and mooring
    - snack bar
    - equipment rental, supplies and gasoline
- Camping
    - Family camping: With more than 300 sites for tent or RV camping
    - Holly Point: 153 campsites, 89 with water and electric hookups.
    - Rollingview: 80 RV campsites and 35 campsites for tents and trailers
    - Backpack "hike in" camping
    - Group camping
- Community building
- Cycling (13 miles)
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Picnicking
- Swimming
- Special events and educational programming

Jordan Lake State Recreation Area
Apex, NC

- 46,768 acres (+ 14,000-acre lake)
- Boating
- Camping
    - Crosswinds: 129 campsites total with water and electric hookups
    - Parkers Creek: 250 campsites total, 150 with water and electric hookups
    - Poplar Point: 580 campsites total, 351 with water and electric hookups
    - New Hope Overlook: 24 Backpack or canoe in primitive campsites
    - Vista Point: RV Sites only
    - Group camping – Parkers Creek: 6 group sites with water; Vista Point: 5 group sites with water and 5 RV sites with water and electric hookups
- Bald Eagle Watching Observation Deck
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Picnicking
- Swimming (3 beaches)
- Special events (Heritage Day) and educational programming

William B. Umstead State Park
Raleigh, NC

- 5,481-acres
- Boating
- Bridle & Cycling trails (13 miles)
- Camping
    - Tent/Trailer camping
    - Primitive group camping
    - Group camping
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Picnicking
- Exhibit hall
- Special events and educational programming

The Mitchell Mill State Natural Area

- 93 acres
- Unique and fragile ecosystem of granitic flatrocks covering 10-15 acres of the site
- Environmental Education destination
- Entire site is a registered Natural Heritage Area

Hemlock Bluffs State Natural Area (aka Cary Nature Preserve)

- 92 acres
- Host to a unique stand of Canadian Hemlocks
- Nature trails
- Overlooks
- Environmental Education Center

Wake County Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update
Municipal Master Plan Summaries

Overriding themes found across municipal master plans:

- Significant county wide growth is occurring
- Municipalities highly value the school/park relationship with Wake County
- Municipalities value the County's role in:
    - School/park agreement assistance
    - Financial support
    - Open space acquisition assistance
    - Program and facility provisions from County Parks
- Would like County to:
    - Play a greater role in small town planning efforts
    - Assist smaller municipalities from a financial perspective

Potential County Issues that municipalities are concerned with:

- Growth
    - Growth is occurring at a rapid rate county-wide possibly requiring cross municipality/county wide planning efforts to guide and direct county wide connectivity issues
- Current "boom" in school facility development
    - County may need to continuously assess their role in the School Park
- County/municipal land relationship changing with growth (i.e. annexation, corporate limits expansion etc)
- Demographics may be shifting in a manner that requires an assessment of programming and facility needs

Wake County Parks and Recreation Role (as viewed by municipalities):

- School Parks
- Land acquisition
- Connectivity planning
- Continue with current county park programming & facilities

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Town of Apex
John Brown, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks & Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated October 10, 2001

The Town of Apex is located in southwestern Wake County and is one of twelve municipalities in the County. The town population has grown from approximately 5,000 in 1990 to approximately 30,000 in 2006. The town offers a variety of passive and active leisure opportunities to Apex Citizens and residents of Southwestern Wake County.

Facilities:

- Eight town owned parks ranging in size from 0.25 Ac to 159 Ac
- Two community facilities including a Community Center and Cultural Arts Center
- Environmental Education Center/ Nature Park (currently under construction)
- Six sections of greenway trails
- Seven school/parks

Programs:

- Traditional athletic programs
- Pre-school Programs
- Martial Arts
- Fine Arts Programs (Drawing, Arts and Crafts, etc…)
- Performing Arts Programs (Drama, Acting, etc…)
- Senior Activities
- Financial Planning
- Aerobics/Exercise
- Special Events
    - Seasonal Festivals (Egg Hunt, 4th of July, Halloween Carnival, Turkey Trot)
    - Peak Week
    - Concerts at the Depot
    - Youth Fishing Derby
    - Today and Yesteryear
    - Puppet Shows

Additional Program Needs: (as expressed in the Executive Summary of the Master Plan)

- Immediate: (0-2 years)
    - 2 Baseball Fields
    - 2 Basketball Courts
    - 1 Football Field
    - 1 Multi-use Field
    - 1 Horseshoe Pit
    - 1 Volleyball Court
    - 1 Gymnasium
    - Additional Playground
    - Fitness/Exercise Facilities
    - Year Round Indoor Swimming Facilities
- Near Term Needs: (0-5 years) (assuming Immediate needs are met)
    - 2 additional Baseball Fields
    - 2 additional Basketball Courts
    - 1 more Community Center
    - .25 more Football Field
    - 3 more Playgrounds
    - 1 Horseshoe Pit
    - 1 more Soccer Field
    - 1 more Softball Field
    - 1 additional Swimming Pool

- Special Facilities Needed
    - Frisbee Park/ Frisbee Golf
    - Dog Park
    - Special Events Lawn
    - Skate Park

Park Users:
- Community Members
- Residents of Southwestern Wake County

Partnerships:
- Active recreation needs are met through a joint use agreement with Wake County Schools

Future Impacts:
- Population Growth

Relation with Wake County:
- Continue School/Park relationship with County
- Working with the Wake County Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSAPAC)

Town of Cary
Mary Henderson, Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources
Parks & Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated December 11, 2003

Cary is a thriving community in the heart of the Triangle area of North Carolina, between Raleigh and the Research Triangle Park. The population more than doubled between 1990 and 2000, growing from 43,858 to 94,536, and currently has a projected population of 215,000 in the year 2025.

As the town experienced rapid growth and development in the 1990's and its parks and recreation system evolved into a regional benchmark, its residents have enjoyed an ever improving quality of life. As Cary's population has both grown and broadened (particularly in the number of residents over the age of 65) the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources department has worked hard to meet the challenges to provide high-quality facilities, programs and services to all residents.

Facilities:
- Four Mini Parks (.5ac -1.5ac)
- Eleven Neighborhood Parks (10ac-20ac)
- Four Community Parks (25ac-100ac)
- One Metro Park (274 acres)
- A strong base of connected Greenways
- Eighteen School Parks
- Special Use Facilities
    - Bond Park Boathouse
    - Bond Park Community Center
    - Sertoma Amphitheatre at Bond Park
    - Herb Young Community Center
    - Middle Creek Community Center
    - Green Hope Elementary School/Park
    - Cary Tennis Center
    - Amphitheatre at Regency Park
    - Senior Center
    - Page-Walker Arts & History Center
    - Jordan Hall Arts Center
    - Stevens Nature Center at Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve
    - Sk8-Cary
- Cultural Arts Facilities

Programs:
- Traditional athletic programs
- Pre-school Programs
- Senior Activities
- Martial Arts
- Fine Arts Programs (Drawing, Arts and Crafts, etc…)
- Performing Arts Programs (Drama, Acting, etc…)
- Martial Arts
- Aerobics/Exercise
- Special Events
    - Lazy Days in downtown
    - Spring Days at Bond Park

Additional Program Needs:
- Upgrading of some current facilities to better serve the community and new facilities that will serve areas of the community that are currently not well served
- Four additional Mini Parks
- Fifteen additional Neighborhood Parks
- Five additional Community Parks
- Three additional Metro Parks

- Four additional Special Use Facilities (Performing Arts Center, Aquatic Center, Golf Course)
- Unique Recreational Facilities (water recreation, horseback riding, skateboarding, disc golf, pet exercise areas, performance stages)
- Improved school parks
- Facilities
    - Two performance spaces
    - Rehearsal spaces
    - Purpose-built exhibition space, 4,000 sq. ft.
    - Smaller exhibition space, 1,000-2,000 sq. ft.
    - Classrooms
    - Artist studio space

Park Users:
- Community Members
- Residents of Wake County
- The Research Triangle Park
- Non-profit groups
- Recreation clubs
- Wake County Schools

Partnerships:
- Wake County Schools
- Wake County Parks
- Wake County Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSAPAC)
- Capital Area Soccer League (CASL)

Future Impacts:
- Population: Growth, Diversity, Age-range
- Expansion of Corporate Limits
- Community Development Patterns

Relation with Wake County:
- Continue School/Park relationship with County
- Working with the Wake County Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSAPAC)

Town of Fuquay-Varina
Director (Position vacant at this time)
Master Plan Summary
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources- 2005 Master Plan Update

Fuquay-Varina is located in southern Wake County, about 18 miles south of Raleigh. Its current population estimate is 10,300. The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department is now responsible for ten park sites with seventeen athletic fields, one gym, and a Community Center offering programs for fitness, education, and recreation. The Town of Fuquay-Varina produced its first comprehensive parks and recreation master plan in 2000 and due to sustained growth in the population underwent an update in 2005. The update has identified specific facility needs, pointed out opportunities for park acquisition and development, and produced an action plan to implement park development recommendations.

Facilities:

- Two Community Parks (20-100 ac)
- Two Neighborhood Parks (5-20 ac)
- One School/Park Facility
- One Mini-Neighborhood Park (Less than 2 ac)
- Two Specialty Recreation Facilities
    - (1) Environmental Education Park
    - (1) Historic Interpretation Park
- Playfields
    - (1) Multi-field
    - (9) Soccer Fields
    - Football, Baseball, Softball Fields

Programs:

- Traditional athletic programs
- Adult Athletics
- Pre-School Programs
- Fitness/Exercise
- Arts and Crafts
- Dance
- Special Interest Programs and Clubs
- Senior Citizens' Programs
- Community Programs (Red Cross Classes, N.C. Wildlife classes, Tax Help, etc…)
- Cooperative Programs (Fuquay-Varina Athletic Association, AARP, American Red Cross, etc…)
- Special Activities
    - Seasonal Festivities (Independence Day, Christmas Tree Lighting, etc…)
    - Multicultural Festival

Additional Program Needs:

- Current Needs (2005-Present)
    - New Gymnasium
    - Community Center
    - Four New Neighborhood Parks,
    - Three New Mini-Parks
    - Greenway Trails
- Intermediary Needs (By 2010)
    - New Neighborhood Park
    - Two Mini-Neighborhood Parks
    - Seven Acres of Playfields
    - Greenway Trails
    - Unleashed Dog Park
    - Larger Soccer Complex
    - Additional softball/baseball fields with all necessary support facilities

- Long Term Needs (By 2015)
    - One Community Park
    - One fully developed School/Park
    - Three Neighborhood Parks
    - Two Mini-Neighborhood Parks
    - Eighteen Additional Acres of Playfields
    - Greenway Trails

Park Users:
- Residents within the Town Corporate Limits
- Members of the Fuquay-Varina Athletic Association (FVAA)
- To a lesser degree those outside the limits in the surrounding communities

Partnerships:
- Lease agreements with private landowners
- Wake County Public Schools
- Fuquay-Varina Athletic Association (FVAA)
- North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission

Future Impacts:
- The number of current available neighborhood parks is too low to meet current needs
- Continued Growth
- High demand for programs and facilities
- Land Acquisition

Relationship with Wake County
- Town of Fuquay-Varina would like to continue school/park partnership with County
- County staff considered very important in working with school system and acquiring agreements

Town of Garner
Tom Maynard, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated May 2007

In 2000 the Town of Garner had a population of 17,757 with the anticipated growth increasing by 1.6 times the current population by 2010. The Garner Parks and Recreation Department currently operates 21 parks and facilities with a variety of active and passive recreation uses. Maintenance of the town parks is preformed by the Public Works Department. The Parks and Recreation Department offers a diverse array of recreational programs for all age groups ranging from pre-school to seniors, including children's camps, sports, arts, self-defense, fitness, and environmental education.

Existing Facilities:
- 8 developed town owned parks ranging in size from approximately 4 acres to 96 acres
- 5 undeveloped parks or open space properties from approximately 7 to 120 acres
- 3 shared parks with Wake County Schools
- 4 town owned recreation buildings
- 1 boathouse on Lake Benson leased from the City of Raleigh

Programs:
- Traditional athletic programs
- Variety Aerobics, Conditioning, wellness, and Fitness Programs
- Variety of Preschool program offerings, programs are expanding
- Nature, outdoor, and environmental education programs
- Teen Programs
- Martial Arts
- Variety of Fine Art, visual arts, cultural, and performing arts programs
- Summer Camps and school break camps
- Extensive Senior Program offerings & Special Events
- Special Events
    - Easter Egg Hunt & Kite Fly
    - Goblins in the park
    - Mayors Walk for Breast Cancer Awareness
    - Walktober
    - Christmas Parade
    - Special Trips
    - July 4th Celebration

Additional Program Needs:*)*
- Gymnasium
- Greenways
- Preschool/toddler programs
- Need to address conversion of several area traditional schools to year round schools; what programming will be done during school "track out" periods

Park Users:
- Town of Garner Residents (60%)
- Surrounding communities (40%)

Partnerships:
- Parks partnerships with Wake County Public Schools , Wake County, and City of Raleigh
- Program partnerships with various Drama and athletic associations
- Partnerships with other service providers to expand athletic program offerings
    - ie. Pop Warner Programs, Optimist Club, Towne Players of Garner, etc.

Future Impacts:

- Rapid community growth in the eastern part of Garner's ETJ
- Rapid community growth outside of Garner's ETJ to the south and east
- Raleigh continues to grow closer to Garner in the north
- Schools are becoming year round and the track-out schedule is impacting facilities and programs in the Town
- Town development is impacting open space in the community

Relationship with Wake County

- Town of Garner would like to continue working with the County on greenways and open space needs, shared school/park & park relationships, and land acquisition.
- Partnership with Wake County and the City of Raleigh for the Swift Creek Greenway

Town of Holly Springs
Len Bradley, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks & Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated January 2007

The Town of Holly Springs is located in Southern Wake County. The town population has grown from approximately 1,000 in 1990 to approximately 17,500 in 2006. The town offers a variety of passive and active leisure opportunities to its Citizens and residents of Southern Wake County.

Facilities:
- Two Trail Linkage Parks
- Two Neighborhood Greenway Parks
- Three Conservation Education Parks
- Three Town-Wide Entertainment Parks

Programs:
- Traditional athletic programs
- Youth Fine Arts programs (Drawing, Crafts, Dance, etc…)
- Cultural Events
    - Hollyfest Celebration
- Music Classes
- Youth Theater Program
- Culinary and Cooking Classes
- Language and Literary Classes

Additional Program/Facility Needs:
- Six "Community Central Parks"
- Immediate Facility Needs
    - Three Indoor Basketball Courts
    - Two Soccer Fields
    - Three Baseball Fields
    - Three Softball Fields
    - Two Multi-Use Fields
- Mid-term Facility Needs (Including Immediate Needs)
    - Five Baseball Fields
    - One Football Field
    - Four Soccer Fields
    - Four Softball Fields
    - One ¼ Mile Running Track
    - One Field Hockey Field
    - One Lacrosse Field
    - Six Multipurpose Fields
    - Four Basketball Courts
    - Four Tennis Courts
    - Two Multipurpose Courts
    - One Regional Trail System
    - One Swimming Pool
    - Two Additional Community Centers

Park Users:
- Community Members
- Residents of Southern Wake County
- Regional park visitors

Partnerships:
- Wake County Schools
- Wake County

Future Impacts:

- Population Growth
- Future Development

Relation with Wake County:

- Continue School/Park relationship with County
- Residents rely on Harris Lake County Park for programs and facilities

Town of Knightdale
Tina Cheek, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks & Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated July 7, 2007

The Town of Knightdale grew rapidly during the 1980's, and changed from a rural community with few demands for municipal services to a small town of more than 6,000 people. The town is expected to have more than 14,500 people by the year 2010. Associated with this growth is an increasing demand for many services, including parks and recreation facilities. To date, the community needs for parks and recreation facilities have been served by a combination of county, school/parks and private facilities, with the town playing a fairly minor role. As a result, parks and recreation facilities have not been developed in a consistent and coordinated manner, and some facility need are not being met.

Facilities:
- One main park facility: Harper Park
- Two community park facilities: Knightdale Elementary School, East Wake Middle School
- One recently added Environmental Park
- Knightdale Community Park (Currently under Construction)
- Three "Open Space opportunities": Anderson Point, East Neuse Park, West Neuse Park

Programs:
- Traditional athletic programs: Youth/Adult
- Pre-school Programs
- Martial Arts
- Fine Arts Programs (Hand-tinting photos)
- Cheerleading
- Aerobics/Exercise (Yoga, dance)
- Swim Club
- Frisbee Golf
- Special Events
    - Seasonal Festivals (Easter Egg Eggstravaganza, Harvest Hay Day, etc…)
    - Health and clinical needs (Health Fair and Blood Drive, Flu Shot Clinic, etc…)
    - Craft shows

Additional Program Needs:

- Community park in the northeastern area of the community
- Community park in the northwestern area of community
- Regional park with Wendell
- Community park at the intersection of Neuse river and Poplar creek

Park Users:
- Community Members
- Residents of Eastern Wake County
- Civic organizations (Junior League, Girl/Boy Scouts, Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs)

Partnerships:
- Active recreation needs are met through a joint use agreement with Wake County Schools

Future Impacts:
- Population Growth

Relation with Wake County:
- Continue School/Park relationship with County

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Town of Morrisville
Jerry Allen, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks & Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated June 22, 2001

The Town of Morrisville is located west of Raleigh and is in the approximate center of North Carolina's internationally recognized Research Triangle Park Region. The Town of Morrisville's Planning Department has projected that the 2007 population will be approximately 15,800 residents with at 2010 population projections of 20,100 residents. The Parks and Recreation department is working hard to meet the challenges associated with such a rapid increase of population by maintaining current parks and programs and planning land acquisition and facility expansion to accommodate the growth projections.

Facilities:

- Morrisville Aquatics and Fitness Center
  - Multi-use athletic and recreational facility
- Morrisville Community Park
  - Sports fields, pavilions, Hatcher Creek Greenway
- Cedar Fork Community Center
  - Sports fields, Gymnasium, Conference room
- Shiloh Park
  - Community Center, Sports fields, shelter
- Ruritan Park
  - Active and passive recreational opportunities
- Crabtree Creek Nature Park
  - Multi-purpose field, (future nature park and center)
- Morrisville Square
  - Historic green "open space"
- Future Park Site (Adjacent to Breckenridge Development)
  - Sports fields, shelter, playground
- Cedar Fork District Park
  - Multi-purpose fields

Programs:

- Traditional athletic programs, (Youth and Adult)
- Aquatic activities, (Swimming, Aerobics, etc…)
- Fitness programs, (Martial Arts, Gymnastics, Aerobics, etc…)
- Youth Classes, (Reading Adventures, Fairy Tale Foods, etc...)
- Pre-School Activities, (Tumble Tots, Kinder Kids, etc…)
- Special Events, (Seasonal activities)
- Cultural Events

Additional Program/Facility Needs:

- Adult and Senior program offerings
- Teen programming
- Youth programming (such as Arts and Crafts)
- Increase swimming pool offerings
- Increase amenities offered at Aquatics Center
  - Additional pool or gymnasium
  - Additional tennis court practice wall
  - Increase pool size to meet current demand
  - Increase overall classroom space
  - Increase size of fitness room
  - Facility renovations
- Additional Gymnasium
- Nature Park
- Off-Leash Dog Park
- Athletic Fields
  - Soccer and Basketball

- Multi-use Center (Active Adult and Cultural Center)
- Greenways (and multi-use pathways)
- Open space
- Provide Adequate Numbers of Professional and Trained Staff

Park Users:
- Community Members
- 0-14 age group

Partnerships:
- Wake County Schools
- Private Recreation Resources (Private Residential Amenity Centers)
- Wake County

Future Impacts:
- Recreation needs must grow to accommodate the large and growing youth population (youth participation has increased in girls programs 373% in five years)
- Current parks and facilities are running at full capacity

Relation with Wake County:
- Continue School/Park relationship with County
- Working with the Wake County Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC)

City of Raleigh
Jack Duncan, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Summary – dated 2004

The City of Raleigh is at the center of one of the fastest growing areas in the country. From 1970 to 2000, the population of Raleigh more than doubled. In the past decade, the population of Raleigh and its planning jurisdiction grew by 28.2%, from 237,056 to 303,971. As of January 1, 2007, Raleigh's population is estimated to be 359,332. It is projected that the area within Raleigh's extraterritorial jurisdiction will grow by approximately two percent each year in the foreseeable future and that by the year 2025, Raleigh's population will exceed 541,000.

Facilities: 8,500 total acres (2006)
- Mini Parks (4)
- Neighborhood Parks (37)
- Community Parks (21)
- Metro Parks (8)
- Special Parks (101)
- Greenway (57 miles of trails; 3,300 acres)

Programs:
- Adventure
- Aquatics
- Arts
- Corporate Event Planning
- Education
- Fishing
- Athletics
- Nature & Waterfront
- Seniors
- Social
- Specialized Recreation
- Fitness
- Teens
- Tennis
- Urban Forestry NeighborWoods
- Volunteer Opportunities

Additional Program/Facility Needs (2025):
- Neighborhood Parks (+43 parks/860.76 acres)
- Community Parks (+8 parks//476.09 acres)

Park Users:
- County wide

Partnerships:
- Goal 5 of Raleigh Parks Plan states:
  Continue to pursue additional opportunities to coordinate and cooperate with:
  - Wake County
  - Wake County Public School System
  - Neighboring municipalities
  - State of North Carolina
  - USACOE
  - Federal Highway Administration

- Wake County Board of Education:
  Rental of facilities for City of Raleigh programs
  Shared construction of two new School/Community Centers on park sites.

- Wake County PROS - Open space preservation – Swift Creek and Steep Hill watersheds, Neuse River greenway and Randleigh Farm acquisitions
- NCDOT
- Private developers

Future Impacts:
- One of the fastest growing areas in the country
- Raleigh's extraterritorial jurisdiction is projected to grow by approximately two percent each year in the foreseeable future and that by the year 2025, Raleigh's population will exceed 541,000

Relationship with Wake County
- Nearly half of Wake County residents are also City of Raleigh residents
- Shared funding with Board of Education facilities and open space acquisition

Town of Rolesville
William Leonard, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated November 6, 2006

Rolesville is located just 12 miles northeast of Raleigh and is the second oldest city in Wake County. Like many municipalities in Wake County, the Town is experiencing unprecedented growth. With the population predicted to increase by over 300% by 2010, it is clear that the Town's current park facilities will be unable to meet this future demand.

Facilities:
- One neighborhood park
- One school park
- Three Historic/Cultural areas as identified on the National Register of Historic Places

Programs *(offered in 2006)***:**
- Traditional youth athletic programs (soccer, baseball, softball, football, basketball)
- Cheerleading
- Special events
    - Senior Dance
    - Recreational Day
    - Easter Egg Hunt
    - 4th of July Parade/Fireworks
    - Fall Festival
    - Christmas Parade

Additional Program/Facility Needs:
- Rolesville P&R shows a deficit in the following types of recreational facilities:
    - Baseball fields (-1)
    - Softball fields (-1)
    - Tennis courts (-1)
    - Community centers (-1)
    - Swimming pools (outdoor) (-1)
    - Soccer fields (-1)
- Park deficits:
    - Neighborhood Parks (-2.5 acres)
    - Community Parks (-17 acres)
- Increased programming for youth, adults, seniors, and individuals with disabilities in diverse range of athletic, cultural, and social programs
- Need for Recreation Programmer
- Increased resource-based recreation opportunities

Park Users:
- Community residents

Partnerships:
- Rolesville Elementary School
- Wake County
- Wake County Schools

Future Impacts:
- Population expected to increase by 348.5% by 2010
- Estimated population from the anticipated developments is 6071 people by 2010

Relationship with Wake County:
- Continue school/park relationship with Wake County

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Town of Wake Forest
Susan Simpson, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Summary – dated August 2005

Located in northern Wake County, less than 10 miles from Raleigh, Wake Forest is a progressive community of over 23,000 residents. The Wake Forest Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of activities for all ages and interests, including youth and adult athletics as well as youth and adult cultural programs. The Town is continuing to undergo steady expansion in terms of both population and developed land within its jurisdiction. As the County's own growth began to influence the Town of Wake Forest, it became evident that current park and recreational facilities could no longer adequately serve the anticipated population growth. In light of the inevitable growth and development occurring both in the County as well as in the Town, a Parks and Recreation Master Plan update was needed to refresh and expand the framework for Town leaders and the P&R Staff. The current Wake Forest Parks and Recreation Master Plan, adopted in August 2005, establishes recreational objectives through the year 2015.

Facilities:
- 499.5 acres of park lands
- Five mini parks (>2 acres)
- Six neighborhood parks (5-20 acres)
- One metro park (100+ acres)
- Three school parks

Programs:
- Youth athletic programs (baseball, softball, t-ball, and basketball leagues)
- Adult athletic leagues (softball, basketball, and volleyball)
- Arts and/or crafts classes (all ages)
- Youth baking and cooking classes
- Youth golf
- Youth dance
- Kinder Gym
- CPR for Friends and Family
- First Aid Survival & CPR
- Babysitting Boot Camp
- Adult singing, dancing
- Tai Ji
- Yoga
- Dog Obedience
- Special Events (Concert in the Park, Pepsi Pitch Hit and Run, Easter Egg Hunt, Tangle of Tales Puppet Show, All the Same Web Youth Theatre)

Additional Program/Facility Needs:
- 6 ball fields, 15 tennis courts, 2.5 swimming pools, 2.5 neighborhood centers, 2 community centers, 6 soccer fields, 6 youth soccer fields, 19 multi use courts, 6 picnic shelters, 12 playgrounds
- Total parks needed by 2015: 14 neighborhood parks (includes mini and school parks), 1 Community Park, 2 Metro Parks

Park Users:
- Primary users are within the corporate limits and within a 5 mile radius.
- Residents from Youngsville, Rolesville, and Wakefield
- Residents beyond corporate limits but with Wake Forest address

Partnerships *(identified as "existing or potential" in Master Plan)***:**
- City of Raleigh
- Wake County and Wake County Public School System
- Towns of Rolesville and Franklinton
- USACOE

- Wildlife Resource Commission
- Federal Highway Works Administration
- Sports organizations:
    - American Legion Baseball, CASL, Dream Camps, Carolina Copperheads, Pop Warner Football, Greater Raleigh Fall Baseball League, Triangle Futbol Club, Raleigh Rugby Football Club, Mid-Atlantic Cricket Conference
- Trails related Organizations:
    - NC Bicycle Club, NC FATS Mountain Biking Club, Triangle Greenways Council, NC Mountains-to-Sea-Trail, East Coast Greenway
- Special Use Organizations:
    - NC Horse Council, Raleigh Area Disc League, NC Senior Games
- Conservation Organizations:
    - Triangle Land Conservancy, Trust for Public Land
- Parks Organizations
    - People for Parks
- Unaffiliated Groups:
    - Businesses, hospitals, churches, private schools

Future Impacts:

- Town's population has tripled in the past 10 years
- Growth rate is predicted at least at the County's rate if not faster
- Predicted that the most demand will be for programs and facilities for young & school age children and seniors

Relationship with Wake County:

- Town to broaden and strengthen partnering opportunities with Wake County
- Preserve remaining natural areas in a manner that complements the environmental stewardship and conservation efforts being undertaken by Wake County
- "The most important thing that Wake County does to assist municipalities is support the acquisition of open space through their bonds and through their leadership role with the Wake County Public School System for joint use and development of recreational facilities throughout Wake County." (Quote from Susan Simpson, Director)

Town of Wendell
Brinkley Wagstaff, Director of Parks & Recreation
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Summary (provided by P&R Director)

Wendell is a beautiful, small, historic town nestled just 10 miles east of Raleigh in North Carolina's Wake County. The Town does not have its own Parks and Recreation Master Plan but rather, it is a component of the Town's Comprehensive Development Plan last updated in 1996.

Facilities:

- One 37 acre park
  - 2 baseball fields
  - Open space for soccer
  - 2 tennis courts
  - 2 picnic shelters
  - 3/10 mile nature trail
  - 18,000 SF Community Center

Programs:

- Youth athletic camps
- Youth athletic programs (tennis, t-ball, softball, baseball, & basketball)
- Adult athletic programs (church basketball/softball, co-ed softball & volleyball)
- Yoga

Additional Program/Facility Needs:

- Addition to the Community Center to include the Eastern Wake Senior Center, an addition of 10,000 sq. ft.
- Develop a master plan for the 45 acres of land adjacent to the Wendell Park to include:
  - One 400 ft. baseball field
  - Three baseball fields with 200 ft. fences
  - Four tennis courts, lighted
  - One multi-purpose game field for football/soccer with lights
  - Two multi-purpose fields for practices of football/soccer
  - Two sand volleyball courts
  - 3.1 and a 5.0 mile cross country courses for the public and for the high school to use
  - Nature trails and Greenways through out the park with picnic shelters, adequate parking and restroom facilities throughout
  - Frisbee Golf course spread through out the park
  - Additional play ground areas
  - Updated Concession and restroom areas
  - New Concession and restrooms at selected points throughout the expanded park
- New lights on the existing two fields and Wendell Park
- An access into the Park off of Poole Road
- Sidewalks into the park from the Poole Road area
- Additional gym space in the Community Center for Basketball

Park Users:

- The majority of the users of the programs and of the park are within the Wendell ETJ, however we do have a lot of patrons that take part in our programs that are not from Wendell. Those individuals pay an outside fee vs. an in town fee.

Partnerships:

- Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space
- Wake County Public Schools
- United Arts Foundation
- Eastern Wake Senior Center
- East Wake Soccer Association
- Young Olympians
- Boys/Girls Club on Zebulon

- Triangle Select Baseball League
- Wendell Football Boosters
- Wendell Chamber of Commerce
- Hope n' Hoe Garden Club (the freedom Garden at the Town Square)
- Wendell Perennial Garden Club (Upkeep of the Wendell Women's Club)
- Kiwanis Club of Eastern Wake County
- And we work very close with the surrounding Parks and Recreation Departments of Zebulon, Knightdale, Rolesville, Clayton, Smithfield and Wake Forest.

Future Impacts:
With the expected growth that is being planned for Wendell, Parks and Recreation could see:
- Increase in the number of youth participating in the programs
- Increase in the number of rentals of the Community Center, picnic shelters, activity rooms, and outside rentals.
- Increase in the number of adults that participate in the paid programs as well as the free programs

Relationship with Wake County
- The people of Wake County have been very good to the Wendell Parks and Recreation department over the years.
- We would like for them to consider continuing to improve the facilities at Carver Park (Liles Dean Road) in Wendell.
- We are in need of concession and restroom facilities. Water has been run from Liles Dean Road to the park with the expectation that the concession and restroom facilities would be part of future capital projects.
- We also need help in repairing the playing surface at Carver Field #2.

Town of Zebulon
Greg Johnson, Director of Parks and Recreation
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Summary, (phone interview 1.16.2007)

The small, rural Town of Zebulon has a current population of 4,700 with anticipated growth doubling the current population in the next 10 years. The Zebulon Parks and Recreation Department maintains and operates four well-groomed parks that are available to the public in their leisure pursuits. The department offers a diverse array of recreational programs for all age groups ranging from pre-school to seniors, including children's camps, sports, arts, self-defense, fitness, and environmental education. The Town of Zebulon is currently developing its Comprehensive Open Space Plan, of which the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be a part. The Comprehensive Open Space Plan may identify need for greenways and direct the City to begin to develop a Greenway Master Plan.

Facilities:
- Four town owned parks ranging in size from 4 acres to 47 acres
- Two school/parks
- Currently looking for funding to begin design phase for converting a National Guard Armory Building into the town's first indoor facility to serve as the Zebulon Community Center

Programs:
- Traditional athletic programs
- Karate program
- Aerobics/Conditioning
- Walking Program
- Pre-school Program
- Summer Camps
- Special Events
    - Arts in the Park (in conjunction of opening day of youth baseball)
    - Dogwood Classic Disc Golf Tournament

Additional Program Needs: *(as expressed via public survey)*
- Indoor facility/wellness center for quality programming
- More trails, greenways, picnic shelters, and playgrounds
- Swimming pool (ranked #6 in most recent public survey but no plans currently in place to provide)

Park Users:
- Community Members
- Also serve Franklin, Nash, Johnston and Wilson Counties due to location of town

Partnerships:
- Partner with high school coaches to lead summer camps
- State Soccer Team (conducts soccer camp)
- Contract out referees and officials
- Rent Zebulon Middle School gymnasium as part of "Community Schools Program"
- School/Parks partnerships with schools and Wake County
- Wake County Arts Council (Arts in the Park)
- Raleigh Area Disc League (Dogwood Classic Disc Tournament)

Future Impacts:
- Growth doubling
- Current school/park agreements are in high growth areas
- No property currently purchased for parks in high growth areas
- Town P&R Department to reassess facilities and programs as population grows

Relationship with Wake County
- Town of Zebulon would like to continue school/park partnership with County
- County staff considered very important in working with school system and acquiring agreements
- Would like County to support small town planning efforts

(This Page Left Blank Intentionally)

Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space
Chris Snow, Director
Master Plan (dated October 2003) Summary

Wake County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space maintains parks and natural areas that promote environmental and cultural resource stewardship that provide safe recreational and educational opportunities for all county citizens. Wake County is home to many municipal, state and County parks. Wake County parks include Blue Jay Point County Park, Lake Crabtree County Park, Historic Oak View County Park, Historic Yates Mill County Park, Crowder District Park, Harris Lake County Park, and the American Tobacco Trail.

Facilities:
- Five County Parks and One Regional Trail
- Four additional County Parks in Planning and Land Acquisition Stages
- Two District Parks (Cedar Fork District Park is leased to the Town of Morrisville)
- Sixteen School Parks

Programs:
- Environmental Education
- Adventure Recreation
- Biking
- Hiking
- Pre-school Programs
- Summer Camps
- Scouting Programs
- Gardening
- Astronomy Classes
- Stewardship Programs
- Historical Education
- Boating
- Fishing
- Sailing

Additional Program Needs:
- 557 acres of acquired land and 553 acres of additional land for district parks
- Including the 297 acres proposed for Little River Park and additional 457 acres of County/Metro Park Land
- County Wide Deficit (per inventory analysis)
    - 17 softball/ baseball fields
    - 60 football/ soccer field
    - 44 multi-purpose fields
    - 54 gymnasiums
    - 14 swimming pools

Park Users:
- Wake County Residents
- Wake County School Students

Partnerships:
- Raleigh/Durham Airport Authority
- Wake County Soil and Water Conservation District
- CP&L
- Army Corps of Engineers
- Wake County Office Park
- Private Citizen: Mrs. Doris P. Crowder
- North Carolina State University

- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Wake County Public School System
- Surrounding Municipalities
- Non-Profit Agencies

Future Impacts:

- Population Growth
- Park Acreage exists where necessary infrastructure (E.G. water, sewer, roads) does not
- Managing agencies cannot afford the cost of full development due to lack of resources in meeting priorities
- Development of needed facilities may conflict with a community's interest in preserving the natural character of the land

BWR | Right in the Center

www.bwrcorp.com

PB No. 2006-0799.01