

Town of Maggie Valley

Recreational Needs Survey and Analysis: 2014



Maggie Valley
Planning



The Town of Maggie Valley wants to thank all residents and visitors for completing the 2014 survey as the data collected truly will aid us in making better decisions pertaining to parks and recreation.

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Executive Summary

In striving to move towards a better future for the Town of Maggie Valley, the Town Planning Department released a “Recreational Needs Survey,” in September 2014, in order to collect data for future parks and recreational planning. Overall, the parameters of the survey were directly limited to what residents and visitors of Maggie Valley thought was being provided well in the present and what they desired to see in the future. Also through the utilization of the 2014 study, the Town collected data pertaining to current use statistics, such as the frequency of user visitation, which further provided valuable information for future priority setting and planning efforts. Upon completion of the designated survey time allotment, the survey had a Town resident response rate of 8.3 percent, which is a combination of full-time and part-time resident responses. The survey was also distributed to visitors via the Town sunshine list, website, and the Mountaineer newspaper, which yielded 18 visitor survey responses.

Perhaps the most valuable data that was collected during the study, came from the responses within the subject matter of “what do you want to see in the future.” While there were a limited number of choices within this question (see page 12) to provide structure, respondents had the capability to write in other desired parks and recreational opportunities. Please view the data set below to see a break-down of surveyed future needs.

Statistical Highlights

Greenways and Trails	20.175%
Sidewalks	6.14%
Fishing Piers and Creek Access	14.912%
Play Grounds	14.913%
Ball Fields and Courts	9.649%
Bicycle Amenities	16.667%
Other/ Various	17.544%

Survey of Future Needs (Adjusted to 100%)

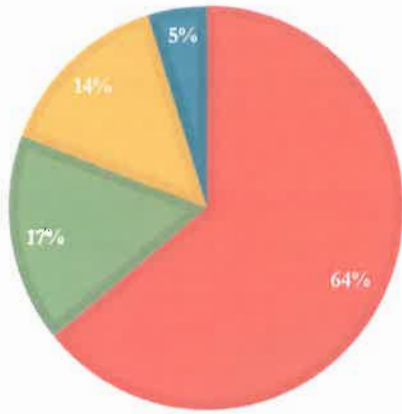


- Greenways and Trails
- Sidewalks
- Fishing Piers and Creek Access
- Play Grounds
- Ballfields
- Bicycle Amenities
- Other/ Various

Stats Continued

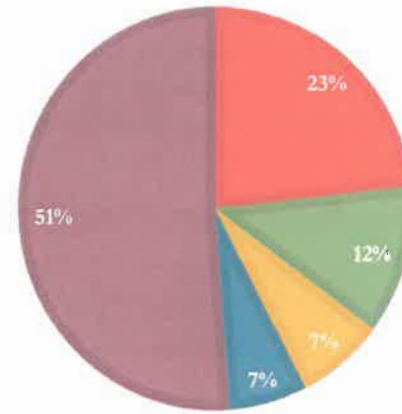
INDIVIDUAL LIVING STATUS

- Full-Time Resident Responses
- Part-Time Resident Responses
- Visitor Responses
- Not Provided



FREQUENCY OF WEEKLY USAGE

- Once
- Twice
- Three Times
- More Than Four Visits
- Other/ Not Specified



As the above graph displays, the largest proportion of data collected represents tax-paying citizens within Town.



“Other”
Explanation:

Many park visitors visit our facilities on a yearly basis, which is not represented on the above graph.



Other Trends

Adjacent to the above data sets, there were several individuals that wrote thoughtful responses for the "fill in" questions. While the trend of said responses for the most part ran in parallel with the structured questions, there were some positive anomalies.

Bicycle Infrastructure: While this was a choice in the structured question, many respondents expressed further desire and ideas for bicycle infrastructure within Maggie Valley. While there are some easy projects that the Town could complete, such as putting bike racks along Soco Road and near all public facilities, many individuals long for further infrastructural development. Perhaps the most prevalent request besides greenway trails, was a bicycle lane along U.S. 19. This project though would take great work on the part of the Town, as NCDOT must agree to such a large road alteration. There is possibility for this endeavor though, as the Town Center Master Plan (to be finished in 2015) will likely have such components and advise for making infrastructural change occur.

Mountain Trails and Outlooks: While there was great demand for creekside walking trails, several individuals expressed that there was a need for upward leading trails out of the Valley leading to overlooks and waterfalls. The establishment of such a trail system though would be difficult as several easements would have to be obtained and significant trail building efforts would have to be undertaken by the Town.

Old Still Waterfall: Also expressed in the survey, was the opinion that the Town should utilize its already owned parcel of land with a waterfall on Old Still Road near the Maggie Valley Club. This location would be ideal for a pocket park as it is already publicly owned. There are two central issues though that would make this project difficult. The first dilemma is that while there is a road leading to the already established trailhead, parking is non-existent. Second, the trail is in need of a total replacement of all steps, which would mean heavy public investment.

Structured Public Swimming Areas in Jonathan Creek: One individual offered up the idea to go further than river access and actually construct swimming areas in Jonathan Creek. Such development of swimming holes though would be difficult as actual active construction in the creek bed has heavy local and state restrictions. While actual "in the creek" construction may not be feasible, the Town could achieve the same general idea in defining holes deep enough for swimming and then create access and way-finding to said areas.

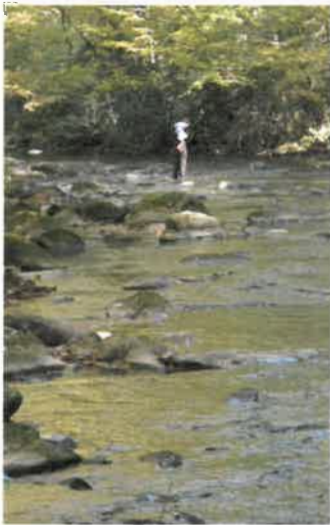
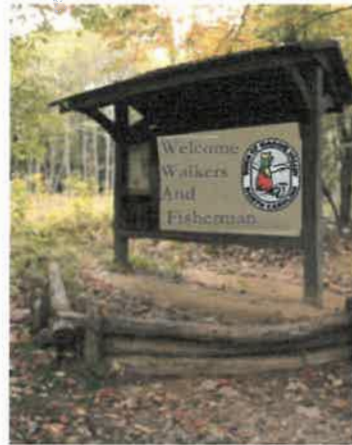
Racket Ball, Tennis, Horseshoes, and Bocce Ball: There were several individuals that stated that different sporting activities should be added to the Town's recreational network. In response, the Town could use the park behind Town Hall in order to fulfill at least two of these requests, as a horseshoe field is already present and a bocce ball court would be an inexpensive addition. As for racket ball and tennis facilities, these two would require much more public investment and community support.

Dog Parks: The need for a Town dog park was also prevalent within the survey's results. This could be made possible but only if the town could acquire a piece of land at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers.



Town Staff Recommendations and Site Planning

Coming Soon: To further expound upon this document will be a "Trail and Pocket Park Feasibility Study"





“Low Hanging Fruit” and Short-term Projects

In a few cases, the Town has the opportunity to create an entirely new parks atmosphere by simply improving and adding new features to existing facilities. Such projects are ideal because they can be completed with relatively low levels of public investment. Said projects also serve as social catalysts as they often give the community tangible perspectives of future planning.

As stated throughout the survey, our community desires to interact with nature and recognizes that local natural beauty is the Town's greatest asset. That being said, this resource while visually abundant in the region, is truly a local scarcity for most of our residents and visitors, as actual intimate interaction with our mountains and creeks is simply not available within Town.

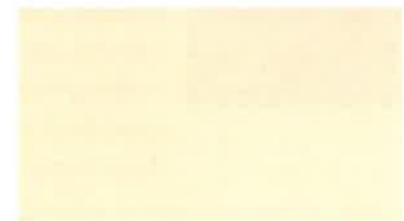
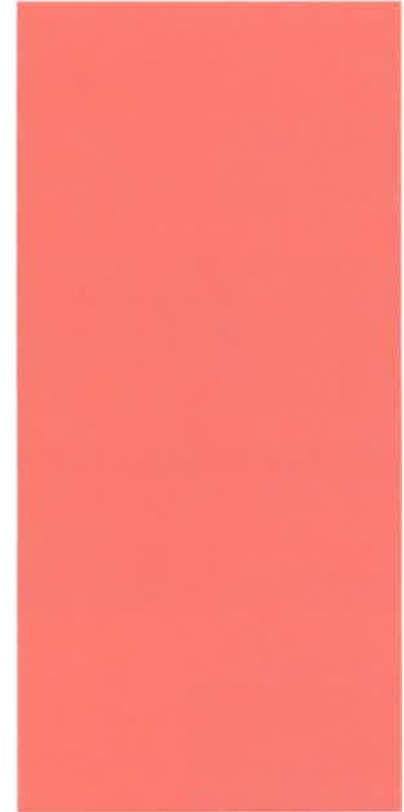


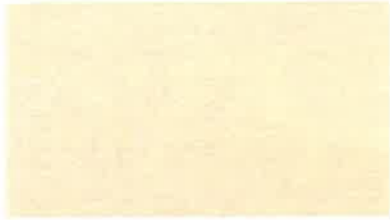
The playground behind Town Hall is a highly used facility as seen from the survey. Inasmuch, many respondents also stated that the equipment was in dire need of an upgrade. As seen above, the addition of new playground equipment, a water feature, upgraded horseshoe courts, and a new picnic shelter would vastly improve the area and create a destination within the community.

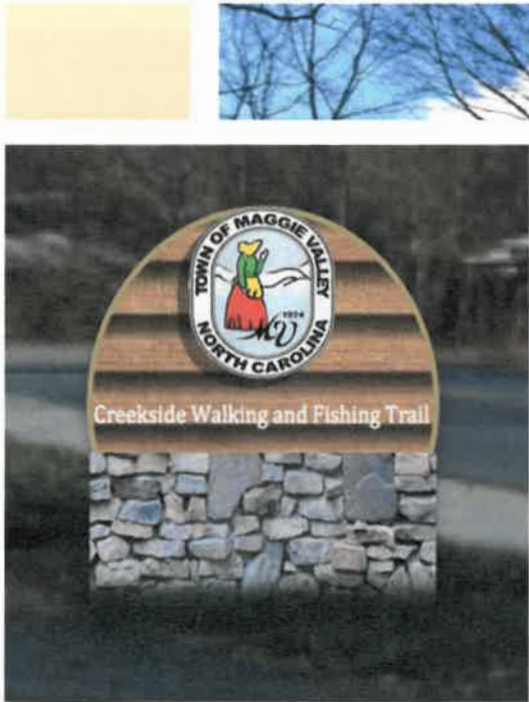


This trail, if created would add .30 miles of creekside walking trail to the Town's overall recreational network. While the trail would be short, a creekside easement has already been dedicated to the Town, which makes such a parcel a perfect candidate for a new park. Also, with its proximity to McCracken Park, which is currently under-utilized, the proposed trail would offer a great venue for walking and fishing. Lastly, this location would be ideal for child and youth outdoor and waterway education if made ADA accessible, as ample parking for school buses is close









Signage and Wayfinding

At McCracken Park



While the Festival Grounds are not considered a park, many individuals and families utilize said facility as such when an event is not going on. By adding a simple graveled surface trail around the perimeter of the fence, the Town could add an approximately ½ mile loop to its Town-wide walking system. This would fulfill a community need by adding a walkway away from the Soco Road corridor allowing for more peaceful recreation away from major roads.



Future Opportunities

As Maggie Valley further develops and more buildings are constructed along Jonathan Creek, the opportunity for a creekside trails and pocket parks system diminishes. That being said, there are still multiple lots within Town that have open creekside frontage of which could

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One direction the Town could take in order to remedy the "lack of trails" issue would be adding trails such as proposed above. This particular creekside trail would be approximately ½ of a mile long and would provide safe recreation for elders, invaluable learning opportunities for children and youth, and access to the creek for recreational outlets.



This trail, if created would add .36 miles of creekside walking trail to Maggie Valley. While the trail traverses across several different parcels, if the Town could facilitate and bolster community buy-in it would be a great addition.



While the three creekside trail locations provided would be great, they are only included in this document as examples of feasible projects. Furthermore, there are several more parcels both developed and undeveloped that could be potential sites for a future trail system.

