

## Final July 8, 2025

### Town of Waxhaw Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan Update 2025- Executive Summary- Need Assessment

The 2025 Update of the Town of Waxhaw Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan provides a needs assessment outlining accomplishments to date and identifying outstanding items related to safety requirements and citizen survey requests.

For a relatively small town, Waxhaw has a great parks and recreation department, considering the Department was only formed in 2015. The department offers recreational opportunities that are not often found in communities of its size, and the citizens of Waxhaw enjoy a very high standard of community events, parks, and recreational programs. Likewise, residents living outside of Waxhaw are benefiting from these outstanding facilities and programs. With these types of facilities, it is obvious that the Town's Parks and Recreation Department is serving citizens who live outside the town limits.

However, Waxhaw remains underserved for a municipality of its size, only offering about **76.3 acres** of developed recreational space. This number includes active land and land/facilities in transition through the Spring of 2025. The Waxhaw Greenway system has 2.64 miles at this time, including two future projects. There are 49.6 acres of undeveloped parks/facility property ~~is~~ dedicated to future recreational opportunities. Based on the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) recommended standards, the typical Parks and Recreation Department provides one park for every 2,114 residents served, with just over 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. To meet the Waxhaw community's needs, a total of 230 acres of parkland is required. With only active 76.3 acres currently available, and the inactive land of 49.6 acres, we need an additional 104.1 acres in 2025 and more than 80 additional acres by 2032 to serve the projected population of 30,808 residents.

The Town of Waxhaw has long recognized the value of parks and recreation to the quality of life in the community. The Town established an Events Division in 2005, which oversaw the Town's first recreation offerings through community events. The Town developed its first Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Master Plan in 2012. This plan recommended the formation of a formal Parks and Recreation Department, which occurred in 2015. In 2018, the Town reached out to the community again with the Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Plan that was adopted in 2019. This update guides the department in providing Waxhaw with access to outdoor recreation through a mix of public and private partnerships. Facilities include neighborhood greenways and trails, community parks, and special-use parks spanning over 76 acres. Existing amenities offer a range of recreational opportunities (see inventory sheets), including three indoor community spaces: the Duncan McDonald House, The Meeting Place, and the Recreation Barn. (\*Note: The Duncan McDonald House and The Meeting Place are being phased out of the current inventory.)

Currently, the Town provides recreational programming through the HERO & SMILE mobile trailer units, bring special play outside the park system's boundary. The PLAY Waxhaw Program Guide also adds another level of care, education, fitness, and cultural experience to the citizens of Waxhaw. These programs range from 1 year old to 99 with all abilities. They are meant to bring health, wellness, and the opportunity to get to know your neighbor. At the time of this update, the Parks & Recreation Department offers 50+ programs and camps for all abilities. The community events range from 27+ Town events, plus 10 community-supported events, for Waxhaw citizens. Waxhaw Town Community events range from a small event of 200 to a regional event of 20K citizens visiting and participating in what Waxhaw offers.

The Parks & Recreation Department also maintains the town's Public Art. Please see the Waxhaw Public Art Policy 2023 and the Community Public Art Plan 2013, updated 2025.

In collaboration with the Town's Planning department, the LDC-Land Development Code-Fee in lieu of "Park land or Funding"- Section 8.9 Open Space was adopted in 2022, updated in 2024. Details below:

Dedication of recreation areas and open space land:

General provisions. In addition to the open space requirements of subsection C. and D. above all major subdivisions shall dedicate a portion of land to the Town or pay a fee in lieu thereof, in accordance with this section, for public park, greenways, recreational facilities, open space sites to serve the recreational needs of the residents in the area. The decision to either accept land or a fee in lieu of shall rest with the Town Board of Commissioners after the Planning Board recommendation at the Preliminary Plat stage. All designated lands per this requirement shall coordinate with any adopted plans—amount of land to be dedicated. At least one thirty-fifth (or 1,245 square feet) of an acre shall be dedicated for each dwelling unit proposed on the major subdivision plat. Example: proposed 86-unit development with a tax value of 65,000/acre: Fee in lieu =  $(65,000 \times 86)/35$ .

Adjusts the parkland dedication/fee in lieu requirement to reflect current fair market value at the time such payment is due.

### **LDC- Land Development Code Section 7 sub 7.4 Greenways**

All greenways shall be paved and built to town standards as shown in adopted plans unless the Zoning Administrator determines that an exception is warranted based on site-specific conditions or other relevant factors.

The Department currently operates under the following Vision and Mission Statements:

**Vision** – “Professional park facilities, recreational opportunities and quality of life initiatives that unmistakably reflect the unique character of Waxhaw.”

**Mission** – “To provide recreational, educational and cultural opportunities that promote a healthy lifestyle and excellent quality of life in a safe environment for citizens of all ages, means and abilities.”

In 2012, the Town of Waxhaw completed its first Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Community Plan to provide the framework for the growth of parks and recreation facilities for the residents of Waxhaw. The Town has accomplished some of the recommendations of the 2012 plan, but improvements are still needed for parks and recreation facilities in the community.

The purpose of this master plan is to identify changes that have occurred in the years since the previous plan, work with citizens to develop a recreational needs analysis for the town, and, based on those needs, provide recommendations on park and recreation facility needs.

The most important aspect of this planning study is identifying the public's desire for parks and recreational facilities. The public was offered the opportunity to participate in the planning effort through:

- Four public workshops to discuss community recreational needs
- Discussions with town staff
- Discussions with the Town Board and Parks, Cultural & Recreation Advisory Committee
- A community-wide survey 2018
- 2022 Town of Waxhaw Citizen Survey
- Community input at Autumn Treasure, October 2023
- Town Commissioner Retreat January 2024
- Public input meetings: March 12, 2024, and March 26, 2024
- Flash Vote: October 31 to November 2, 2024
- Public Meeting: May 13, 2025

From the community-wide survey, we learned the following in 2018:

- High satisfaction ratings for parks, facilities and programs
- Lack of awareness is the top barrier to usage of programs/ facilities.
- The highest priorities for facilities include:
  - Walking, biking and Fitness trails
  - Greenway trail system
  - Indoor aquatic facility
  - Splash pad/water park
  - Dog Park
- The highest priorities for programs include:
  - Adult fitness and wellness programs
  - Workshops (CPR, babysitting, cooking, safety, etc.)
  - Seniors/Adults programs 50+
  - Outdoor challenge/adventure course
- There's strong support for making improvements to the parks and recreation system

Based on this input, standards for future park development have been reviewed, compared with other municipalities of similar size, and set for the Town of Waxhaw.

With the public's desires for park and recreation facilities identified, demographic and population data is reviewed.

Based on planning/census projections, the service area population for the Department has been determined to be 22,533, with a small increase in population over the next ten years (30,808).

By overlaying the standards for park development with the current and expected population growth, a needs assessment has been developed.

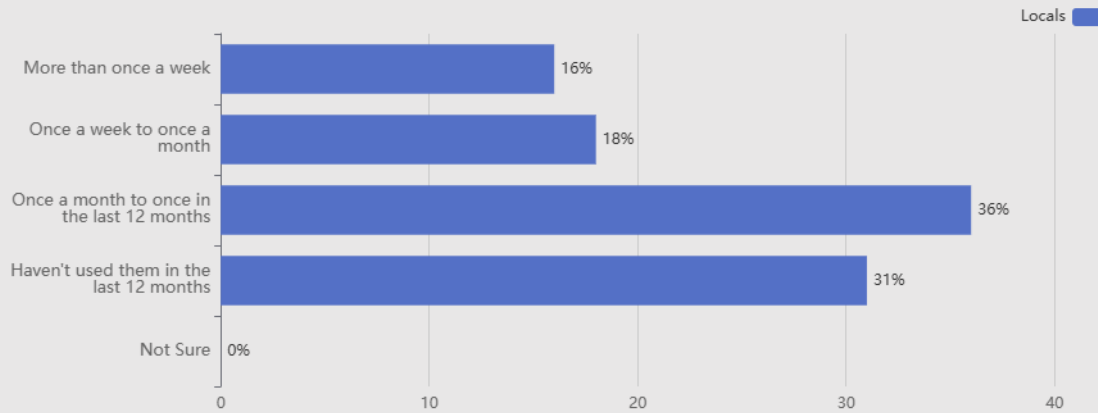
Flash Vote: Target All of Waxhaw, Time period October 31 to November 2, 2024

**Q1** In the last 12 months, about how often has your household used the parks or recreation facilities in the Town of Waxhaw?

(134 responses by locals)

[Touch or click chart bars for details]

Show table view

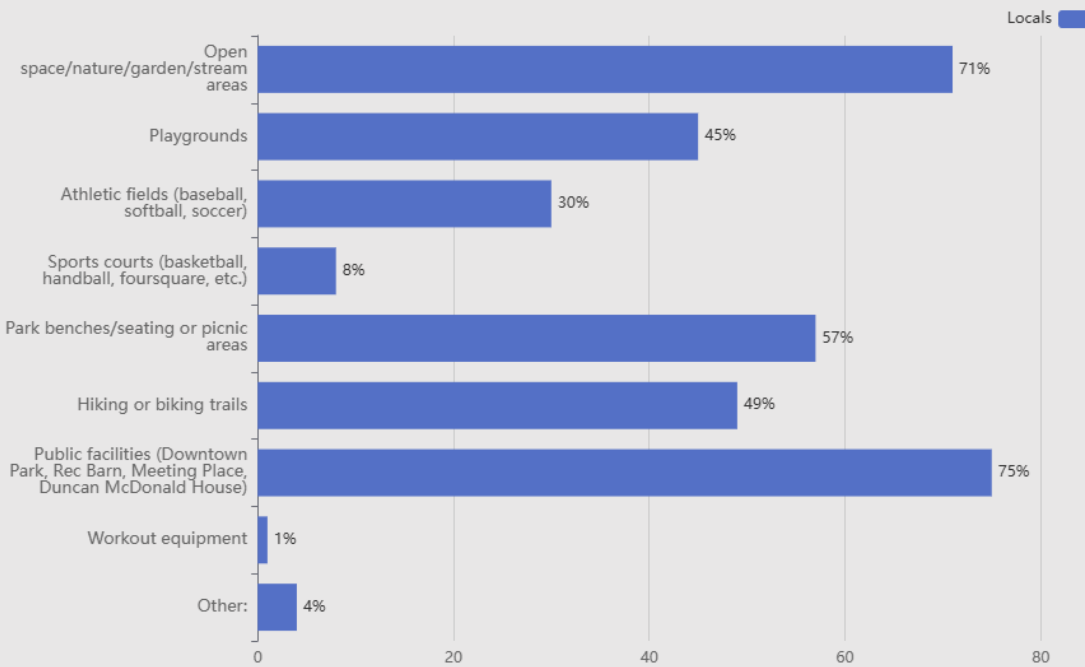


**Q2** In the last 12 months, which of the following Town park or recreation amenities have you or your household used in Waxhaw, if any? (Choose all that apply, if any)

(84 responses by locals)

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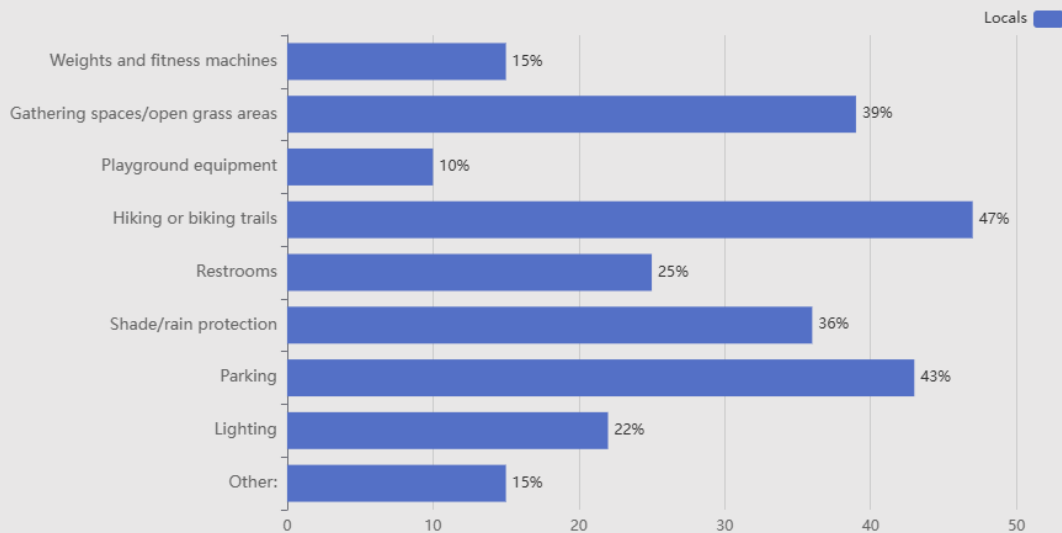


**Q3** Which current amenities do you think Waxhaw needs more of, if any? (You can choose up to FOUR, if any)

(122 responses by locals)

[Touch or click chart bars for details]

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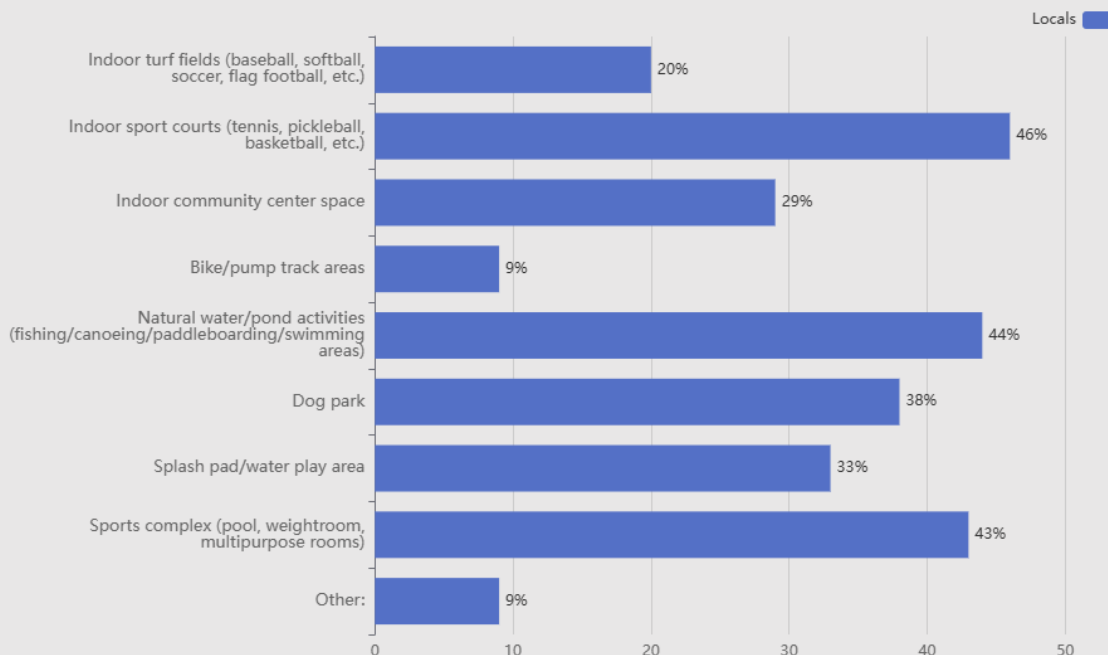


**Q4** Which new or additional amenities do you think are needed most in Waxhaw, if any? (You can choose up to FOUR, if any)

(123 responses by locals)

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2025 Update Survey Waxhaw Strategic Master Plan  
May 13 Public Meeting focuses on Waxhaw-Marvin Rd. Property:  
(written Survey, note cards & poster comments)

**WAXHAW PARKS & RECREATION IS THE TOP PROVIDER FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES IN WAXHAW. DOES YOUR HOUSEHOLD USE PROVIDERS FOR PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMS & FACILITIES? PLEASE CIRCLE BELOW. TOP PROVIDERS INCLUDE:**

- 1) Homeowners Associations
- 2) Waxhaw Parks & Recreation & State Parks
- 3) Athletic Associations/ Union County Parks & Recreation/ "Other" Municipal Parks
- 4) Union County Public Schools

Write in additional organizations:

Lifetime Fitness & Weddington Athletic Assoc.

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 FEATURES YOUR HOUSEHOLD WOULD BE MOST LIKELY TO USE IN A MULTI-GENERATIONAL COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER:**

- 1) Indoor running/walking track
- 2) Indoor lap lanes & Multi-purpose courts
- 3) Recreation swimming pool/water feature

Write in:

Walking trails

**IF YOU HAD 34 ACRES OF LAND, WHAT WOULD YOU PUT THERE:**

Write-In:

I would preserve and not develop. The top choice is a walking and hiking trail.

Natural playground, fishing pier, paved trails, and splash pads

I would love to have a land conservation plan. A % of Waxhaw should include open space.

It would be an open space, where community members can enjoy a walk, picnic with the family and friends.

Cross Country Trails

Disc Golf Course and walking trails

Trails & open space, and a disc golf course

Walking Paths and low noise

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 FACILITIES OR AMENITIES YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS A NEED FOR:**

- 1) Walking, biking & fitness trails
- 2) Disc Golf Course
- 3) Water Activity (canoeing and paddleboarding)/Expanded greenway/trail system/Playground

Write in:

Tennis Courts

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 POTENTIAL ITEMS THE TOWN COULD DEVELOP THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD:**

- 1) Turning undeveloped areas into a park
- 2) Greater connectivity among parks
- 3) Mountain biking/hiking areas/Musical events & concerts

Write in:

Pickleball Courts

Movie Theater/Community Playhouse

Maintain/keep undeveloped average preserve the natural environment

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM YOUR HOUSEHOLD IS MOST WILLING TO FUND WITH TAX DOLLARS:**

- 1) Developing greenways, trails, and enhancing connectivity
- 2) Acquiring land to preserve large natural areas
- 3) Developing restrooms in existing parks

Write in:

Do not sell our land to developer(s)

Hiking or Walking Trails and Dog park/area

**WHAT DOES A COMMUNITY CENTER MEAN TO YOU?**

- 1) Multi-Use/Ages Center
- 2) Senior Center
- 3) High School/Teen Center

Write-In:

Something for everyone

Active, Classes, programming for all ages

**WHAT ARE YOUR TOP 3 PROGRAMS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU:**

- 1) Adult fitness & wellness programs
- 2) Seniors/adult programs 50+
- 3) Outdoor challenge/adventure course

# HOW WELL ARE THE FOLLOWING WAXHAW PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MEETING THE NEEDS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE UNDER EACH SECTION):

Outdoor multi-purpose/sports fields

Fully Met 0 / Mostly Met 3 / Partly Met 5

Soccer fields

Fully Met 0 / Mostly Met 4 / Partly Met 3 /Not Met 1

Baseball & softball fields

Fully Met 0 / Mostly Met 1 / Partly Met 6

Playgrounds

Fully Met 0 / Mostly Met 2 / Partly Met 6

Arts center/gallery spaces

Fully Met 0 / Mostly Met 3 / Partly Met 6

Walking/biking & fitness trails

Fully Met 0 / Mostly Met 0 / Partly Met 9

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

### Top 3 proposed plan goals

- 1) Passive Park, Disc golf course (2), Catch and release fishing, tennis court, open space for community, expand connectivity of hiking trails, Have a plan for the Waxhaw-Marvin open, Develop property across from Quellin into parks and trails
- 2) Dog Park, Restroom, walking/biking trails, multi-purpose sports field, more open space, Land that makes sense for that side of town (scenic).
- 3) Restrooms, Dog Park, soccer fields/pickleball, walking Trails, community gardens, consider nearby neighborhoods.

### Top 3 potential plan recommendations

- 1) Keep under Parks & Recreation, Major Athletic Park/Fields, Multi-purpose sports Field, better manage flooding at Nesbit-Truf.
- 2) Community Center, park area, Adult classes that are not limited to seniors
- 3) Water Park, Community Garden, preserve open land

Park Master Plan- Public input May 13 before BOC meeting (focus topic)

Note Card Feedback: (no particular order)

- 1) Open the ,there is already 2 entrance , drop gravel for the at the top drop gravel for 10 parking spots. Open as a passive park at a minimum then let public decide on the build out or keep as nature preserve.
- 2) Covered riding arena-Danager. Burn it down, have the Waxhaw Fire Department do a control burn. Just like they did to burn mansion down, when the town bought land.
- 3) Provide ample parking whatever happens with turn lanes so traffic does not stop moving.
- 4) Land preservation and conservation simply open space
- 5) As natural an area as is safe and compliant
- 6) Nature center, outdoor playground for lands, outdoor garden for learning. Rental barn for all seasons to help bring in funds. No big building keep Nature! & Trees!

Town of Waxhaw Park & Recreation Strategic Master Plan Update 2025- Executive Summary

- 7) Hiking, walking, trails, and fishing pond
- 8) Anything other than more homes
- 9) Anything other than more homes. No more development please.
- 10) Please just not another community would love something we can walk to close by
- 11) Make 4218 Waxhaw-Marvin Road- 34 acre property a nature land; park, pond fishing, walking, trails, garden, barn events for revenue.
- 12) Do not sell 4218 Waxhaw-Marvin Road Property!
- 13) Do not sale the 34 acres on Waxhaw-Marvin Road for commercial development.
- 14) Please do not sell land for commercial development. Especially 34 aces on Waxhaw-Marvin Rd.

Park Master Plan- Public input May 13 before BOC meeting (focus topic)

Poster Feedback: (order of interest pre-section)

**Leader Board: My Favorite idea!**

Walking/Biking Trails/greenways

Water/Pond-fishing, pond-boating, recreational pond

Disc Golf

Community garden/ Nature Base play/playground/Classroom- /Don't sell to developers/keep public land

Adventure Course/Ropes course

Court System- Pickleball / Open Space / Passive park

Indoor pool (would be great)/ Tennis courts / Court system-covered-multi-use with pickle ball /Cross Country course (for schools to use)/ Restrooms with Shelter

**Leader Board: My Second Favorite idea!**

Walking/Biking Trails/greenways

Dog Park /Nature Base play/playground/Classroom

Disc Golf / Court System-pickle ball / Water/Pond-fishing pond / Community garden/community farmers owned space

Adventure Course/Ropes course / Baseball/Athletic Fields / Indoor pool / Shelter with Restrooms

**Leader Board: My Third Favorite idea!**

Water/Pond-fishing pond-boating, recreational pond, Paddle boating/ Athletic Fields/Multi-purpose fields (soccer)

Dog Park

Restrooms / Community garden / Picnic Area/shelters

Walking/Biking Trails/greenways /Disc Golf / Paved Trails/Greenways/ Performing & Culture Arts Center / Gym / Public Swimming /Indoor Multipurpose

**Park & Recreation Facility Needs**

As described in Appendix D and discussed in Section Four: Recreation Standards and Needs Assessment, a park system is typically comprised of eight park types. These types include:

- Mini Parks
- Civic Parks
- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- District Parks
- Regional Parks
- Specialized Facilities

Each of these park types provide recreation opportunities that are needed by residents. A variety of public and private agencies often play a role in providing a well-rounded complement of park and recreation facilities.

As a small municipal department, the Waxhaw Parks and Recreation Department holds responsibility for providing approximately half of these park types that make up this system.

The Town has significantly improved the facilities and programs offered by the Department over the past few years, as well as acquired additional land on which to develop new parks and extend the greenways. However, there are still improvements to be made as identified in this study's needs assessment. These needs are identified based on the following park types:

### Mini Parks

Mini parks are the smallest of park types. They typically range in size from one-half to three acres and provide a limited range of activities (playgrounds, picnic shelters, benches, etc.). Mini parks are usually found in municipal settings. Currently, the Department has two parks in this park classification: David G. Barnes Children's Park and Dare Steele Memorial Garden.

The national trend has moved away from the development of mini parks. Their small size and limited facilities often limit their recreational value. Likewise, their small size and geographic distribution often make maintenance expensive. Most agencies do not focus park development dollars on mini parks but instead focus on the development of neighborhood and community parks.

While the national trend has been away from the development of these smaller parks, there are opportunities where Mini Parks could provide important civic spaces throughout the community. Another opportunity for building a Mini Park would be the development of a small Town owned property in Wysacky Park. Likewise, the development of Mini Parks could be supported through the UDO by requiring residential developers to include these small parks in new communities. With the development of the Horton property, Downtown Park and David G. Barnes Children's Park will no longer be classified as Mini Parks.

### Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks play an important role in providing both active and passive recreation in most municipal park systems.

The citizens of Waxhaw are currently being served by one Neighborhood Park, Town Creek Park, on 19 acres of parkland. A bit larger by typical Neighborhood Park standards, Town Creek Park has very limited recreational facilities, with shelter, play equipment with an open field, and walking track. Since Neighborhood Parks typically serve as the primary building block of most municipal park systems, one Neighborhood Park is not adequate to serve the 22,533 people living in Waxhaw. Using the 2020 census utilizing a relatively conservative level of service standard for Neighborhood Parks (2 acres per 1,000 people), there is a need for an additional  $\pm 10$  acres of Neighborhood Parkland in Waxhaw. Typically, Neighborhood Parks are 5-10 acres; preferably in the 6-8 acre range. This indicates a need for at least one or two additional Neighborhood Parks located equitably within the Town.

### Community Parks

Community Parks are an important component in most municipal park systems. These parks are usually large enough (30-50 acres) to provide both valuable active recreation opportunities and preservation of undeveloped open space and passive recreation areas. There is one park in Waxhaw that is currently serving as a Community Park. H.C. Nesbit Park remains the most utilized park in Waxhaw, yet it is underdeveloped for the population it serves. Improvements were made by adding restrooms and concessions, but additional master planning should occur to address accessible circulation, lighting, shade structures and play equipment, at a minimum.

Based on input received during the public engagement process, there is a need for expansion of Community Parks. Utilizing a standard of 5 acres of Community Parkland for every 1,000 people in the service population, there is a need for 35-40 additional acres of Community Parkland.

### District Parks

District Parks are another large park type often provided by county agencies or larger municipalities. These parks are typically in the 100-acre range and provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities. The closest District parks to Waxhaw are Colonel Francis Beatty Park in Charlotte and Jesse Helms Park in Monroe. Both parks are slightly higher in acreage, leaning towards regional park status, but offer more active recreation opportunities than the regional offerings listed above. Both parks are a bit distant from Waxhaw, so it could be noted that there are no district parks in close proximity to Waxhaw and serving Waxhaw residents. The Town should be open to collaborating with Union County in the development of a District Park proximate to Waxhaw if that opportunity should present itself in the future.

### Regional Parks

Regional Parks are large parks that have a service area that covers an entire county or several counties. These large parks are predominantly passive and are typically provided by large municipalities, counties, or state agencies. The citizens of Waxhaw are currently served by one State Park (Andrew Jackson) and one County regional park (Cane Creek) that are within an easy drive. These two parks provide a wide range of low-impact recreation opportunities, including hiking, biking, camping, picnicking, fishing, equestrian trails, environmental education, wildlife/bird observation, etc. In addition to these outdoor recreation opportunities, these two parks offer visitor and nature centers for nature study and appreciation of wildlife.

Andrew Jackson State Park and Cane Creek Park provide excellent large-scale parks for Waxhaw residents. In addition to these two parks, the Catawba River Blueway and Anne Springs Close Greenway, also in South Carolina, are within an easy drive of the town. Visitors to these amenities can enjoy a wide variety of low impact outdoor recreational experiences.

### Special Use Facilities

In addition to these basic park types, well-developed park systems also provide their constituents with a variety of specialized facilities. During the public input process, much attention was given to the importance (and need) of several special use facilities. These facilities include:

Waxhaw Sk8 Park, \*The Meeting Place, \*Duncan McDonald House, the Community Corner/Water Tank, and the Waxhaw Rec Barn Center added in 2024. Coming soon, the town will renovate the old library to create the Waxhaw Learning Center, renovating the Space in 2025 & 2026. This facility will replace the special uses of Duncan McDonald House and The Meeting Place.

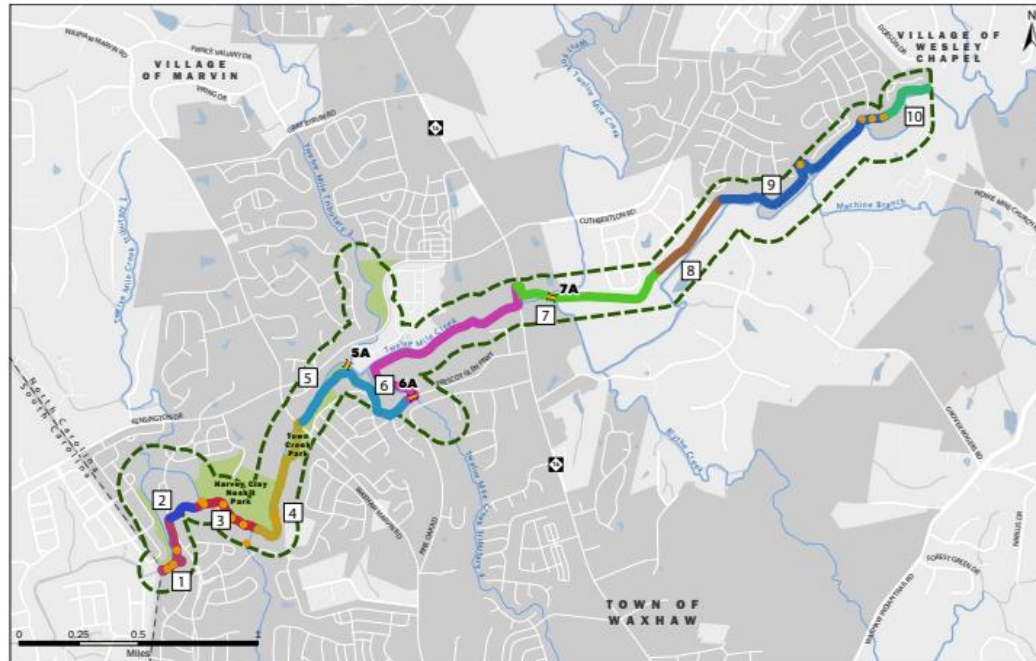
### Greenways & Blues ways

Greenways are typically off-road trails that meander through neighborhoods and natural areas providing transportation corridors and recreational opportunities for walkers, joggers, roller bladders, and cyclists. The trail surface can either be natural or paved. Paved trails are normally eight to ten feet in width. Natural surface trail widths can vary based on conditions. In addition to providing environmental protection and recreation opportunities, greenways and bike trails can produce economic development. The community's desire for the development of walking trails, as well as the preservation of public open space, was expressed in the survey and at the public workshops. The Town, in coordination with Lancaster County has begun the development of Twelve Mile Creek Greenway which currently is the Town's most popular recreation facility. Further extension of this greenway should be an immediate focus not only in procurement of land, but design and implementation of trail.

\*Horse Trails to complement future trail connections on our southern trail  
Check the survey from 2012/2018

## NCDOT IMD- Waxhaw Twelve Mile Creek Greenway Feasibility Study 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



TWELVE MILE CREEK GREENWAY  
FEASIBILITY STUDY

SEGMENTS



### 12-Mile Creek Restoration Project: 2025-2030

The Town of Waxhaw, in anticipation of a formalized partnership with Union County Public Works, is seeking \$300,000 in Advance Assistance Funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to support the Twelve Mile Creek Streambank Restoration Project. The Town will utilize these funds to conduct pre-project planning activities that enhance project readiness, including the design and data collection necessary for the benefit-cost analysis (BCA) required to submit a competitive application for HMGP implementation funding. The Advance Assistance phase will focus on achieving a 60% design level, ensuring the project is feasible, cost-effective, and shovel-ready. Initial efforts will prioritize an approximately two-mile stretch of stream between the H.C. Nesbit Park bridge and Highway 16, providing a pilot section that will demonstrate restoration strategies applicable to the full five-mile reach. Once fully planned, this project will restore and stabilize approximately five miles of degraded streambank within Waxhaw's jurisdiction, reduce erosion, improve water quality, and mitigate flood risks to critical infrastructure, public utilities, and nearby properties. A key component of the project is to identify and implement the most feasible and cost-effective design approach to mitigate erosion along the stream, thereby safeguarding critical assets, such as the expansion of Union County's Twelve Mile Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, from flooding and erosion. If no action is taken, ongoing streambank erosion and flood risk jeopardize this critical wastewater treatment plant's long-term sustainability, Town of Waxhaw Park & Recreation Strategic Master Plan Update 2025- Executive Summary

potentially leading to service disruptions for approximately 43,000 customers. Additionally, there is a risk of environmental contamination caused by the release of untreated or partially treated wastewater into the creek, decreasing water quality, harming aquatic life, and posing public health risks. The proposed project aligns with FEMA's HMGP mission by investing in mitigation activities that aim to reduce the loss of life and property, thereby minimizing future disaster risks in the Town of Waxhaw through targeted restoration and stabilization measures. By implementing these solutions, we aim to:

- Decrease damages to critical infrastructure, such as bridges and park facilities, to increase monetary savings for the Town of Waxhaw
- Prevent the loss of sewage services to approximately 43,000 customers

In addition to our anticipated formal partnership with Union County Public Works, the Town of Waxhaw maintains an ongoing working relationship with Union County Government, which has been instrumental in coordinating infrastructure planning and environmental initiatives across jurisdictions. The Town has also established strong working relationships with local homeowners' associations (HOAs) along the creek corridor, including Millbridge, Prescott, and Lawson. These partnerships play a vital role in building community support and long-term project success. The Town will continue to engage these stakeholders to promote awareness, gather input, and foster collaborative implementation strategies that reflect shared community priorities.

This project aligns with Mitigation Action 8.3.3 - Natural Resource Protection (Page 8.6) in Section 8 (Mitigation Strategy) of the Cabarrus-Stanly-Union Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2020).

### **Updated Need Assessment: 2025 to 2029**

#### **Renovation & Expansion of Existing Parks**

There is a need to complete, improve, and expand facilities and infrastructure at several of the Town's existing parks. Important renovation projects that should be considered include:

- Improvements to/completion of H.C. Nesbit Park
- Improvements to Town Creek Park
- Improvements and expansion of David G. Barnes Children's Park
- Improvements/Refurbishment of Sk8 Park
- Extension of the Twelve Mile Creek Greenway

As noted in previous sections, master plans should be developed for all the existing parks and future parks serving Town residents. Site Specific Master Plans should be developed for each of the Town's existing parks.

Priority should be placed on the following parks:

- Harvey Clay Nesbit Park
- Town Creek Park \*NC DOT Bridge replacement (TBT Fall 2027)
- David G. Barnes Children's Park/SK8 Park (Connect to Downtown Park)
- Waxhaw Learning Center Building (in progress- Spring 2026)
- Kensington Trailhead/ Dog Park/ Spine trail- "Sonny Way"

### **Recreation Deserts:**

Two areas of Waxhaw currently lack parks, greenways, or recreation opportunities.

These recreational deserts occur in the northeast area (defined as the area bounded by NC 16, Waxhaw Indian Trail Road, and Main Street) and the southern area (defined as the area bounded by Rehobeth Road, Sims Road, Old Providence Road, and the Southern Waxhaw Parkway corridor).

Waxhaw should seek land opportunities in these two quadrants for future park development.

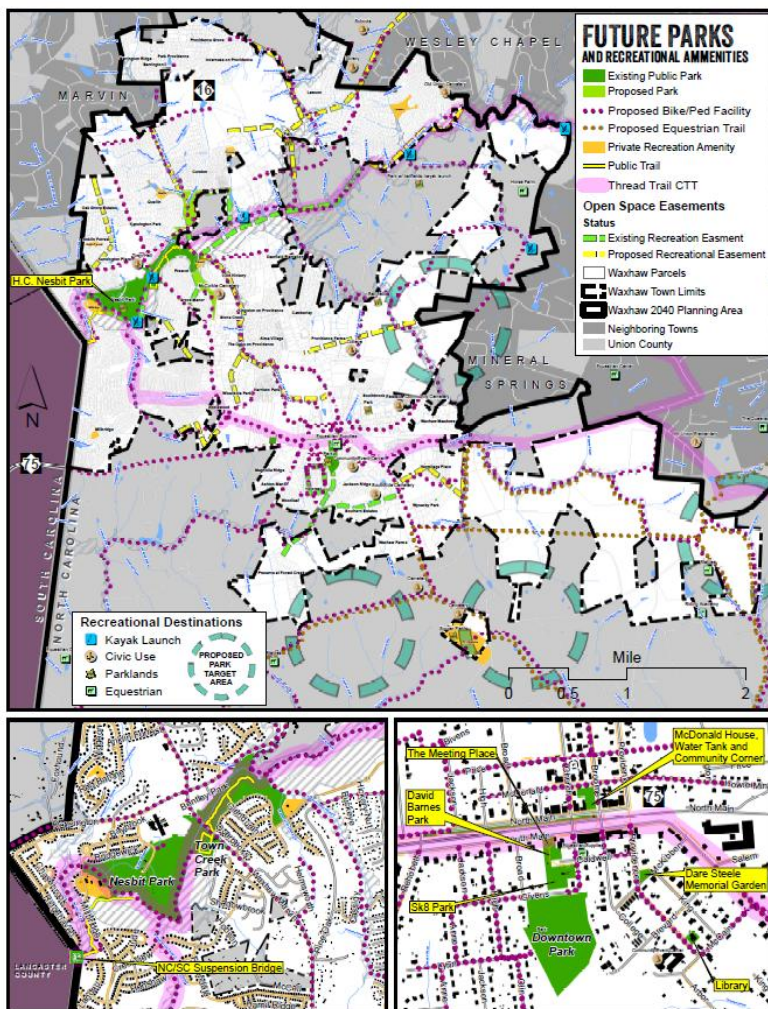
The Capital Improvements Plan on Tables 5-1 and 5-2 includes budgets for potential renovations, completions and expansions of existing parks.

### **Recommended Priority Projects 2025**

Recognizing that this is a vision plan for a community-wide park system, Department staff and elected Town of Waxhaw Park & Recreation Strategic Master Plan Update 2025- Executive Summary

officials must prioritize the recommendations in this document based on the public’s input and staff review. The following park development and facility upgrades and maintenance initiatives should also be considered in the recommended priorities in the next 10 years:

- Completion of Harvey Clay Nesbit Park
- Development of a Master plan for the David G. Barnes Park & SK8 Park Expansion to Downtown Park
- Downtown Park (Shades & connective)
- Waxhaw Athletic Fields/ Court System and support facilities
- Completion of Town Creek Park (NCDOT Bridge replacement TBT 2027)
- Land Acquisition for the Waxhaw Community Center
- Development of Aquatic Amenities
- Assess safety and security measures for each facility; address any basic policies
- Seek land /opportunities for park development in the northeast and east area as well as the southern Waxhaw
- Create a Natural-base park with walking, biking, adventure/ropes course, disc golf, nature-based playground/outdoor classroom, community garden, with access to recreational water-based activities (boating, fishing)



Based on discussions with staff and a review of the public input received, park development and facility upgrades/ maintenance initiatives could be envisioned in potential phases as follows:

**Town Creek Park** – 4240 Waxhaw-Marvin Rd. (Neighborhood Park)

Currently, there is a playground, picnic shelter, picnic tables, sensory garden, portable toilets, multi-purpose field, it serves as a trailhead for the Carolina Thread Trail.

Phase 1 - Install security cameras, lighting, and connection of Carolina Thread Trail from Nesbit Park (see Greenway plan)

Phase 2 - NCDOT Bridge replacement- under bridge multi-use paved path to connect Town Creek to Prescott CTT trail. With this replacement, half of the parking lot will be taken for improvement. The Town would have to plan for new parking, trails/greenway alignment, driveway, and replanting of trees. TBD September 2027

Phase 3 - Repave trail, fix drainage, and field repair.

\*Phase 4 - Install water and sewer lines to enable the installation of a restroom facility (Town Campus site- brick building)

\*Phase 5 - Install restroom facilities (Brick building at Town Campus); additional parking to be added with scheduled bridge replacement. Under non-active parkland.

Phase 6 - Shade for Playground

Phase 7 - Parallel or angle parking on the Town Creek side of Prescott (Exbury Gardens Dr.)

**Harvey Clay Nesbit Park** –1304 H. C. Nesbit Park Drive (Community Park)

Currently, there are 4 irrigated baseball diamonds with bleacher seating, 3 of which have permanent lighting, and 6 multi-use fields, 2 of which have permanent lighting. Two fields are regulated for soccer, and the other 4 are not regulated but are used for soccer. It has a trailhead for the Carolina Thread Trail with a small parking area for connections and trails. The park has a concession stand and restrooms, an ADA sidewalk, toppers for baseball field fences, and screen netting replaced on the Baseball fields.

Phase 1 - Shade and Netting for Fly balls (1<sup>st</sup> priority ADA Walkway between Baseball field one and four, 2nd priority netting to the right of the home base) and Signage/Maps/Rules for Park

Phase 2 - Higher fencing/netting for Field 1 for the dugout and left sideline

Phase 3 - Lighting for Field 2 Baseball

Phase 4 - Lighting for Field 5 and 4 Soccer

Phase 5 - Fencing around Field 7 and Mico fields

Phase 6 - Replacement bench and bleacher- partially done

Phase 7 - Replace current field lighting with LED lighting. (Field 1, 4, 6, and 7)

Phase 8 - Lighting for common areas and the parking lot for safety

Phase 9 - Add playground/Fitness with shade, basic field improvements, toppers for fence (5yr rotation),

Phase 10 - Add additional paved parking near the Restrooms and the driveway, starting at the entrance to the park to the roundabout. Stormwater improvements.

Phase 11 - Shade for picnic area near the Restroom/Concession building, add Geo grid for the picnic area and redo downspouts- partially done

Phase 12 - Equipment needs for maintaining the fields and athletic equipment.

Phase 13 - Auto Gates for entrance

Phase 14 - Add bollards at the PED entrance to prevent cars from entering the fields

**SK8 Park** – Caldwell St and Church St (Special Use Facility)

Currently, off half-pipe, quarter-pipe, decking, rails, ramps, a bowl and more. The Department is

currently in the process of making upgrades and renovations.

Phase 1 – Develop Park Master plan with David G. Barnes Park

Phase 2- conduct assessment of all elements, including circulation

Phase 3 – repair structures, install additional elements as determined by the assessment

Phase 4 – Consider purchase of additional property for expansion

**David G Barnes Children's Park** – 209 West South Main St (Mini Park)

There are 2 (25+ years old) playgrounds, one picnic shelter, walkways, benches and new family restrooms.

Phase 1 - Develop Park Master Plan with the SK8 Park.

Phase 2 - Connect D.G. Barnes Park to The Waxhaw Downtown Park with the next phase of the update to the park.

Phase 3 - Renovate Playgrounds to include toddlers' area and gathering spaces.

Phase 4 - Line up with renovations, reline the utility within the park, and establish land easement where needed

**Waxhaw Downtown Park** – 301 Givens St. (Neighborhood Park)

There is a playground, pump track, amphitheater, nature play area, nature stream, event lawns, shelters, picnic pods, walking paths, Hobbit homes, and public art.

Phase 1 - Shade structure; amphitheater seating, Playground, and Flex court

Phase 2 - Brevard PED Connection (Learning Center and Union County School)

Phase 3 - David G. Barnes PED Connection to Downtown Park

Phase 4 - Amphitheater roof

Phase 5 - Sound system

Phase 6 - Additional lighting in the Playground

Phase 7 - Hobbit home in phases

Phase 8 - Public art

Phase 9 - Automatic gate

Phase 10 - Perimeter fence

Phase 11 - Rehab Stormwater stream on the east side of the park.

**Waxhaw Recreation Barn** – 5412 Waxhaw-Marvin Rd. (Special Use Facility)

Two building facilities that have baseball pitching and hitting practice space, active fitness, and program space. Outdoor space includes one turf practice baseball field, 2 small turf active fields with lights. Public ready-ADA parking lot, ADA doors, security and camera, flooring, heat and air conditioning, fencing, storage and program equipment.

Phase 1 - Update lighting to LED in and outside

Phase 2 - Sound and Intercom System

Phase 3 - Sound-dampening boards in the community room (partially done)

Phase 4 - Flex Court system & Basketball court, and flooring

Phase 5 - Automatic roll-up doors

Phase 6 - Ice Machine and water fountains (ADA)

Phase 7 - Rock wall and low ropes course

Phase 8 - Public Art- Mural

**The Green/Serpentinite Art Walk** – W N Main St to Rehobeth Rd (Special Use Facility)

Phase 1 – Assess and master plan for enhancement and extension of the greenway and facilities. That includes a Public Art walk and seating.

Phase 2 - Place additional Public Art along the corridor

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Phase 3 - Lighting and power along the walkway to Rehobeth Rd.

Phase 4 - Extend the 5ft sidewalk to 8 ft-10 ft multi-greenway path. This section of the North-South-East corridor of the CTT system leads through Downtown Waxhaw to town limits on Hwy 75.

**Dare Steel Memorial Garden**-McKibben St and S. Providence St (Mini Park)

Rose garden, seating, small path and wildlife and butterfly habitat

Maintain space

**Trails and Greenways:** multiple locations (Connection)

We currently have two trailheads with limited connections. H.C. Nesbit and Town Creek Park are currently the only Carolina Thread Trailheads. The Waxhaw Cross State 170-foot suspension bridge is a major destination regionally for Waxhaw. This trailhead is in HC Nesbit Park. There is a selection of the trail underdeveloped between HC Nesbit Park and Town Creek Park to make a continuous section of trail. The Town Creek Park trailhead is connected to the Prescott community. A future connection will be at the Prescott Village commercial site to reach HYW 16. At the completion of the 16-Bridge construction, Waxhaw will have an underpass for the 12-mile creek greenway to continue through the Lawson community.

In the fall of 2023, the Waxhaw was awarded a grant for an NCDOT Feasibility Grant for the East-West corridor. This study will improve our availability for future grants and identify needs along the trail expansion.

Phase 1 - Complete 12-Mile Creek Feasibility Study and identify future CIP projects- Done

Phase 2 - Connect HC Nesbit Park to Town Creek Park (12-mile Creek Greenway) (highest priority on feasibility study) Segment 4: Creekview Drive Trailhead to Town Creek Park/Waxhaw-Marvin Road (Partial Grant- complete by FY 27)

Phase 3 - Connection of Prescott Community to Prescott Village with PED Bridge and Greenway. Segment 6/6A: Prescott Glen Parkway West to NC 16/Providence Road (2<sup>nd</sup> highest priority on feasibility study)

Phase 4 - Encore Union County development to Lawson community (Waxhaw). Segment 8: Encore at Streamside – East Side (3<sup>rd</sup> highest priority on feasibility study)

Phase 5 - Conduct a Feasibility Study on the “spine greenway” Sonny’s Way (connecting Marvin to Downtown Waxhaw and past NC 75). This Greenway/multi-mobile connects neighborhoods, markets, and parks.

Phase 6 - Add signage along all the trail and greenway system

Phase 7 - 12-mile Creek Feasibility Study is the next identified project (phase).

Phase 8 - Working with the Planning Department and future development for future construction to place in Recreation PED facilities. Refer to the Waxhaw PED Plan and the Updated Parks & Trails Map for future connections.

Phase 9 - Blueway and 12-mile creek restoration

Phase 10- NC/SC Suspension Bridge restoration/replacement

**Blue Way/ 12 Mile Creek Restoration Project:** (Connection/Sustainability)

Project Need Statement Five miles of Twelve Mile Creek meander from east to west through the Town of Waxhaw. As Union County has developed upstream, increased runoff has accelerated the deterioration of the streambanks within Waxhaw. The banks are now increasingly unstable laterally and vertically, as indicated by the severe incision and actively eroding stream banks that contribute to high sediment loads downstream. The channel and bank instability is systemic and threatens the water quality of the River Basin. While site-specific data for the pilot section is currently unavailable, regional studies by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality and similar Piedmont streams indicate typical bank erosion rates of 0.5 to 3 feet per year. Over the past five years, this

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translates to 2.5 to 15 feet of cumulative streambank loss—a substantial contributor to downstream sediment and a major risk to local infrastructure and water quality. With the incision and erosion of the streambanks, there is also a loss of trees with every significant storm event. The displacement of these trees leads to the damming and flooding of parks, bridges, and residential property.

Phase 1- Feasibility Study for the Hazard Mitigation Planning Grant (Funded by Town)

Phase 2-Conclude the Feasibility Study, adding the Preliminary Design and HMGP Application (Advance Assistance Funding) (survey, stream restoration plans, HEC-RAS modeling for FEMA compliance)

Phase 3- Final Construction Plans, permitting, Bidding, and Construction.

Phase 4- Identify sections for phasing and budgets. Identify funding sources for each phase and timeline.

### **Park Land or Facility-in-Transition:**

**\*Waxhaw Learning Center** – 509 S. Providence St.- 0.23 acre (Special Use Facility)

(This Park Facility would take the place of Duncan McDonald House and The Meeting Place- Use Rentals, Meetings, Programs, and the missing services when the Union Co. Library moved to a new location.)

Special Note: project in progress- TBT Spring 2026

Phase 1 - Master Plan/ Design Plan/ BID the project

Phase 2 - Funding for Renovation of space

Phase 3 - Complete the Renovation, if phased, and partner with the Union County Library on a Book drop-off unit for citizens.

**\*Southern/Brevard Maintenance Center** – 402 Brevard St (Special use/Support Facility)

402 Brevard St (office and support facility for Parks & Rec Parks team, Downtown Park, Cemetery, and Emergency Management)

Phase 1 - Rebuild and repurpose the facility for new use.

Phase 2- Security (lighting, camera, and locking)

Phase 3 - Combine with Downtown Park, phasing the PED connection from Park to Brevard St for underserved citizens. This connection will also connect to the Learning Center and South Providence School.

**\*Town Creek Park/ MillBridge 12-Creek Greenway-CTT System** - (connection)

Phase 1 - Outline the area and material suitable for the ADA greenway through the floodplain

Phase 2 - Apply for grants and additional funding to complete the project. \*CTT grant of \$60K was granted in 2025 for this section. The timeline has started, and the Town will have 3 years to complete.

Phase 3- NC DOT Waxhaw-Marvin Rd Bridge replacement is adding an under-shelf for PED in the Fall of 2027

Phase 4 - Start project, add phasing if necessary.

**\*Prescot Village/Bridge at Prescot Glen Pkwy- 12-mile Creek Greenway- CTT system-**  
(connection)

Phase 1 - Outline the area and material suitable for the ADA greenway through the floodplain

Phase 2 - Apply for grants and additional funding to complete the project. Development has been in lieu of funds for this project.

Phase 3 - Start project, add phasing if necessary.

**\*Prescot Village 12 mile Creek Greenway from new Bridge to Hwy 16 Bridge- CTT system-**

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(connection)

Phase 1 - Outline the area and material suitable for the ADA greenway through the floodplain

Phase 2 - Apply for grants and additional funding to complete the project. Development has in lieu of funds for this project.

Phase 3 - Start project, add phasing if necessary.

**\*The Meeting Place (209 West South Main Street)(Special Use Facility)**

Currently, this location is utilized as a rentable recreation meeting room, which can accommodate 20.

This space services are scheduled to be replaced by the Learning Center meeting space in 2026.

Therefore, it is being taken off the Active Parks inventory list. There is no Master Plan for this at this time.

**\*Community Corner / Water Tank – (111 McDonald St.) (Special Use Facility)**

Currently, this lot provides an open event space along with an urban garden and has been prominently discussed for other potential considerations in the ULI report on downtown Waxhaw as a park/recreation facility.

Phase 1 - To remain a recreation space, construct a stage and hardscape, and provide shade elements, lights, and public restrooms.

**\*Duncan McDonald House (115 N. McDonald Street)**

Currently, this location is utilized as a program space and event operational center for town events, which can accommodate 30. These space services are scheduled to be replaced by the Learning Center meeting space in 2026. Therefore, it is being taken off the Active Parks inventory list. The space is also being utilized by the Business Development offices.

**Park Inventory- Undeveloped**

Brick Building- Waxhaw-Marvin Rd - .50+/-acre

(future public restroom and storage- located on Town Creek's Parks plan)

Wysacky Park- 1.67 acres

Pocket Park within the neighborhood

Phase 1 - Develop a master plan for the park

Phase 2 - implement the master plan and confirm funding source

Kensington/Cureton- 13 acres

Phase 1 - Clear off all safety hazards & obtain any environmental permits

Phase 2 – Master Plan for Quellin & Cureton Neighborhood on the Footbridge to connect over a feeder of 12 Mile Creek. Designated public parking in each neighborhood. Confirm funding source

Phase 3 - Trail Head for Sonny's Way (spine trail) and dog park

Phase 4 - Link trail to Carolina Thread Trail through Lindsey Meadows Neighborhood or bridge over 12-mile creek. This area is currently being studied with the 12 Mile Creek Feasibility Study.

Waxhaw-Marvin Rd Property- 34 acres

Phase 1 - Clear off all safety hazards & obtain any environmental permits; develop site master plan for the property; determine to phase.

Phase 2 – Design and develop phase one of the master plan with public input, confirm funding source

Phase 3 – Develop phase two of the master plan and confirm funding source

## **Future Park, Facility & Trails Needs:**

Community/Regional Park - Athletic (min-50 to 100+ acre) Baseball, soccer, court system-tennis/pickleball/racquetball, swim facility, etc.

- Note that the Town has future parkland and greenway connections planned with future neighborhoods, but at the time of the update, they are not within the town's inventory.

## **2022 Town of Waxhaw Citizen Survey Findings Reports**

### Executive Summary:

As a place to raise children - Waxhaw 91.2%

Quality of Parks and Recreation service - Waxhaw 71.5%

Maintenance of Town-owned building - Waxhaw 75.1%

### Trend Analysis:

Image of the town - 2022 Waxhaw 86.5% / 2017 Waxhaw 67.3%

Quantity of public park - 2022 Waxhaw 49.6% / 2017 Waxhaw 35.2%

Quality of athletic fields - 2022 Waxhaw 57.9% / 2017 Waxhaw 43.9%

Quantity of athletic fields - 2022 Waxhaw 51.2% / 2017 Waxhaw 37.5%

Quality of parks & recreation services - 2022 Waxhaw 71.5% / 2017 Waxhaw 58.1%

Maintenance of athletic fields - 2022 Waxhaw 60.0% / 2017 Waxhaw 47.3%

Maintenance of public park - 2022 Waxhaw 70.9% / 2017 Waxhaw 64.7%

Maintenance of trail/greenways - 2022 Waxhaw 67.0% / 2017 Waxhaw 63.9%

At Town sponsored events/program - 2022 Waxhaw 91.6% / 2017 Waxhaw 90.6%

Events sponsored by the Town - 2022 Waxhaw 75.4% / 2017 Waxhaw 74.9%

### Importance - Satisfaction rating

Quality of parks & recreation facilities rank 4 and rank 7 for parks & recreation services and 8 on events sponsored by the town.

## **Public Survey results from 2023 Autumn Treasure event**

Where would you like to see.....

### Trails & Greenways

- Off Highway 75 between Locklyn Rd and Rockwood Drive

- Off Tory Path Rd

- Off Waxhaw-Indian Trail Rd S along Blythe Creek

### Mini/Pocket Park (less than 1 acre)

- Off Howie Mine Rd, between Pearl St and Cureton St

- Community Corner/Water Tower Area

### Civic Park (1-5 Acres)

### Neighborhood Park (5-10 acres)

- Off Waxhaw-Marvin Rd, North of the Anklin Forrest Neighborhood

### Community Park (30-50 acres)

- Blythe Mill Lot

- Off Blythe Mill Rd and Southcliff Dr

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- Extend Downtown Park South

District Park – (100 acres and/or more)

- Off Waxhaw-Indian Trail Rd S and North of Knotty Pine Rd

Regional/State Parks (100 acres and/or more)

- Extend Cane Creek Park

- Extend Andrew Jackson State Park into North Carolina

Unique/Special Facilities

Athletics/Courts

- Extend Nesbit Park

- North of Blythe Mill Rd and Southcliff Dr

- Extend Back of Town Creek Park

Community Center

- Near Waxhaw Library/South Providence School

- Intersection of Helms Rd and Waxhaw-Marvin Rd

Art/Cultural Center

- South of Downtown Park

Senior Center

- Near Waxhaw Library/South Providence School

Youth/Teen Center

## **Map**

Map: Existing public/ HOA/ private

## **List the Plans that support:**

Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan - 2009

Waxhaw Community Park Master Plan - 2012

Parks & Recreation Strategic Master Park Plan - 2019

Downtown Central Park Master Plan Update 2021

Public Art Policy 2023

Waxhaw Pedestrian Plan update “PED plan” 2023

Waxhaw 2040 Comprehensive Plan updated 2023

NCDOT IMD - Waxhaw Twelve Mile Creek Greenway Feasibility Study 2024

Flash Vote - Community Survey 2024

Community Public Art Plan 2013 and Update 2025

Land Development Code 2021 and updated 2025

Downtown Master Plan 2025

