



Children gather at the rocks at Southern Community Park

Section Two

The People of Chapel Hill

INTRODUCTION

The next step in understanding the park and recreational needs of the Town is to develop an understanding of the people that make up the community. Section Two includes a review of the Town's population and demographics, and looks at changes that are occurring in the community.

The population of Chapel Hill has grown since 2002, and the demographic make-up of the community has changed. Growth and change are anticipated in the future. While the population is expected to increase, the Town's land area is not expected to grow. Increased density and demand for land will place even greater demand on parks and open space.

In addition to reviewing the projected growth and demographic changes, this planning process has included several exercises to engage the public to better understand public demand/expectations for future parks. When developing a needs analysis, it is not enough to simply review changes in population, it is also important to understand the community's desire for parks and recreation activities. This planning effort incorporated several initiatives to assist the planning team in better understanding community preferences. These initiatives included:

Community Survey

A written survey was sent to 2,500 addresses throughout the town. These addresses were selected from a random sample. Over 400 people responded to the survey.

Stakeholder Interviews

Twenty-four one-on-one interviews were held with local stakeholders to learn more about park needs.

On-line Survey

Citizens were invited to participate in an online survey about park and recreation needs. The online survey was hosted on a website established specifically for this planning process. Over 167 electronic responses were received.

Master Plan Committee

A small committee of interdepartmental representatives worked with the planning consultant to evaluate recommendations and review draft plans.

Public Workshops

Two public workshops were held to allow citizens to comment on park needs.

Staff Meetings

The planning consultant met with Parks and Recreation staff, as well as other Town department heads to discuss facilities, programming, and operation.

2020 Vision Plan

The Town held over a dozen public meetings and work sessions in the development of the 2020 Vision Plan. Public input was provided on a wide range of park and recreation issues at these events. This input has been used in the development of this plan.

Through these efforts, considerable insight was gained regarding the public's desire for parks and recreation programs and facilities. This section discusses the information gathered in preparation of this comprehensive plan.

POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

There have been a number of changes in the population and demographic characteristics of Chapel Hill since the 2002 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. The Town's population grew by 11,214 from 2000 to 2010. The Town's 2010 census population was 57,233. Much of this population growth (42%) was due to annexation.

The 57,233 census figure includes UNC students that live in Chapel Hill. Approximately 13,000 (around 46% of student population) UNC students list their address as Chapel Hill. Three fourths (9,800) of these students live on campus (residence halls, married housing, and fraternity/sororities), and are not considered part of the Town's park and recreation service population. For purposes of this planning report, it is assumed that students living on campus have the majority of their recreational needs met through campus facilities and programs. With this understanding, the Town's recreational service population is considered to be 47,500 ($57,233 - 9,800 = \pm 47,500$).

The 2009 Chapel Hill Data Book (Appendix 2-A) predicts that the Town will experience an annual population growth rate of approximately 1.5% over the next decade. Using this growth projection, the Town's 2020 population will be 66,421. Removing the students living on campus from this figure, we anticipate a 2020 service population of $\pm 56,500$.

The Town's 57,233 people are spread out over an area covering 20.95 square miles; giving the Town a density (people/acres) of 4.28 people per acre. The density of the Town has increased since 1990 when the density was 3.32 people per acre. Chapel Hill's density is greater than neighboring communities of Raleigh (4.2) and Durham (3.5), but less than Carrboro (4.9) or Cary (4.3). With limited land expansion options and as an attractive community for future population growth; Chapel Hill's density will likely increase in the future. This increased density will place greater demand on existing parks.

As expected, in 2010 the population between the ages of 20-24 years was the largest segment of Chapel Hill's population (21.1%). Combining the population segments of 15-19 and 25-29, the young adult population represented 42.9% of the overall population. It should be noted that 40% of these ±24,000 young adults live on the UNC campus and are not included in the service population.

Based on the 2008 American Community Survey, the Town's population is aging. From 1970-2008, the percentage of citizens over 65 increased from 4.4% to 9.5%. This was the largest percentage increase relative to all other age groups.

Another area of change in Chapel Hill's demographics is its racial composition. In 1980, 85% of Chapel Hill's population was white. The 2010 census shows the Town's white population to be 72.8% of the overall population. This figure represents a slightly higher white population than North Carolina's 68.5%, but slightly less than Orange County's 74.4%.

There has been a decline in the percentage of Chapel Hill's black population. In 1980, the black population comprised 12.2% of the Town's overall population. This percentage decreased to 9.7% in 2010.

Offsetting the decrease in the Town's white and black populations, the Asian and Pacific population increased from 1.6% of 1980's population to 11.9% of the Town's population in 2010. Likewise, the Town's Hispanic population increased from 1% to 6.4%.

The majority of Chapel Hill's population is female; consistent with Orange County, North Carolina, and the United States. The percentage of Chapel Hill's female population is significantly greater than in most communities. The State's female population makes up 51.1% of its total population. Orange County's female population is 52.5% of its population, and Chapel Hill's female population is 53.5% of its total. The percentage of males in Chapel Hill has grown from 45.1% to 46.5% of the population since the 2000 census.

Orange County has a highly educated population. Almost one fourth of the County's adult population

has obtained a bachelor's degree; significantly more than North Carolina's adult population where 17% have a bachelor's degree. Likewise, 29.5% of Orange County's adult population has attained a graduate or professional degree, while only 8.5% of North Carolina's adult population has reached that education level.

This higher level of educational attainment probably contributes to a higher median family income. Chapel Hill's median income in 2008 was \$89,507. This was greater than the national median family income (\$63,211) in 2008. It was also greater than neighboring cities Raleigh/Cary (\$76,424) and Durham (\$65,370). Even with this elevated median family income, the poverty status in Chapel Hill has increased. In 1980 only 7.6% of families lived in poverty, while in 2008 the percentage increased to 8.6%. It should be noted that this increase was likely the result of a dip in the national economy. The poverty status for the Town actually declined from 1980-2000.

Education/health and social services is the largest employment sector in the community. Approximately 45% of the work force is engaged in that sector. Arts/entertainment and food services include 14% of the work force, and almost 12% are employed in the professional/management/administrative sector. The Town's largest employers are UNC, UNC Hospital, Orange County, Chapel Hill/Carrboro Schools, and Blue Cross Blue Shield. The Town of Chapel Hill is also a major employer.

A review of the Town's demographics indicates a community that is socially and economically vibrant. The Town has experienced consistent growth over the past two decades, and that growth is anticipated to continue. The university will continue to exert significant influence on the Town's demographic make-up by attracting young adults from diverse cultures. Likewise, the university will continue to influence the Town's population by attracting highly educated professionals with higher than average incomes.

One of the most important factors related to population and demographics is the geographic limitations that limit the Town's ability to expand its city boundaries.

With few opportunities to incorporate new land, the Town’s density will likely increase. As the density of the Town grows, demand for open space will increase. As this occurs, more and more demand will be placed on the Town’s existing parks and open spaces.

PUBLIC INPUT

Perhaps the most important step in the planning process is gaining an understanding of the public’s needs and desires related to parks and recreation. Both controlled and informal surveys were used to ensure the public was offered an opportunity to voice its opinion.

PUBLIC SURVEY (CONTROLLED)

A written survey was sent by mail to 2,500 households located within Town limits. Four hundred thirty three (433) surveys were returned or 18.3%. This response rate is considered good and statistically sufficient to use in preliminary recommendations for this plan.

There were 1,929 non-responses and 138 un-deliverable surveys. Several surveys had critical missing data and were not used. The survey contained questions which were used in estimating proportions and means of the population. For example: The gender question reflects a proportion of males to females and analysis of the household income question provides a mean household income. A sample of 400 yields a confidence interval of $\pm 5\%$ for estimates of proportions and means. The usable response rate for recreation participation and activity preferences (proportional estimates) were 418 responses (17.7%). The numbers of responses for each of the other questions are provided in the summary tables which follow. Results for each question are in the order in which they appeared on the survey.

Were you living at this residence in April 2010?

The first question of the Chapel Hill resident survey determined the respondents who were not living at their current Chapel Hill address for longer than 12 months prior to the survey. Responses to question 1 indicated that 8.65% of the respondents had lived at their current Chapel Hill address for less than 12 months (Table 2-1). There were 5.29% of the respondents who had moved from one location to another within Chapel Hill in the last 12 months. 86.06 of respondents had lived at their current residence since April 2010. Residents of Chapel Hill that responded who have lived in the community for more than 12 months made up 91.35% of the respondents.

Table 2-1

	Number	Percentage
Did not live in Chapel Hill in April 2010	36	8.65
In Chapel Hill in April 2010, but not this residence	22	5.29
Lived here in April of 2010	358	86.06
Total	416	100.0

How long have you lived in Chapel Hill?

Respondents also indicated their length of residences in Chapel Hill. The distribution among the “years in Chapel Hill” categories should not be compared due to unequal time periods. New residents (less than 1 year) made up 9.05% of the respondents (Table 2-2). The slight difference between the new residents 9.05%, (Table 2) and those that did not live in Chapel Hill in April 2010 (8.65%, Table 1) may be due to households returning to Chapel Hill. Long term residents (greater than 15 years) made up over 40 percent of the respondents. From this analysis just under half (49%) of the respondents have lived in Chapel Hill for less than 10 years.

Table 2-2

Years in Chapel Hill	Number	Percentage
Less than 1 year	37	9.05
1-5 years	92	22.49
6-10 years	71	17.36
11-15 years	43	10.51
Greater than 15 years	166	40.59
Total	409	100.00

Age of Individuals in Chapel Hill for Respondent Households and 2010 Census

Respondents were asked to provide age and gender for all individuals in the household. The age categories representing the 0–5, 15–19, 20–24 year olds are under-represented based on the 2010 census (Table 2-3). The 5–9 year olds are slightly over-sampled while the 10–14 age cohort is only slightly under-sampled. The 45–49 year olds and older are all over represented. The sample mean age is 41.57 years (± 1.55 at 95% confidence).

It was assumed that the cohort groups which were over-sampled had a higher interest in the planning process (cohorts 45 to 64 years old) or that respondents who are retired (65 years or older) had more time to fill out the survey. As explained above, the sample of households did not include the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill campus residents and surveys were mailed after the spring semester ended so the 15–19 and 20–24 year olds representing the student population were purposefully under sampled.

Table 2-3

Age Group	Sample Count (n=948)	Sample Percentage	2010 Census Percentage
Under 5	27	2.8	4.2
5 to 9	57	6.0	5.1
10 to 14	45	4.8	5.1
15 to 19	65	6.9	13.4
20 to 24	75	7.9	21.1
25 to 29	79	8.3	7.7
30 to 34	50	5.3	5.4
35 to 39	43	4.5	4.9
40 to 44	51	5.4	5.6
45 to 49	66	7.0	5.3
50 to 54	75	7.9	5.1
55 to 59	77	8.1	4.4
60 to 64	71	7.5	3.6
65 to 69	60	6.3	2.7
70 to 74	37	3.9	1.9
75 to 79	25	2.6	1.7
80 to 84	20	2.1	1.4
85 and over	25	2.6	1.6

A comparison of the distributions of ages for the sampled households and the 2010 census is provided in Figure 1. The decision to not include the UNC-CH campus in the mailing list and the fact that classes were not in session during the sampling period significantly biased the sample population toward the non-student households in Chapel Hill. The chart also shows the inflation of the sample for the cohorts between the ages of 45 and 74.

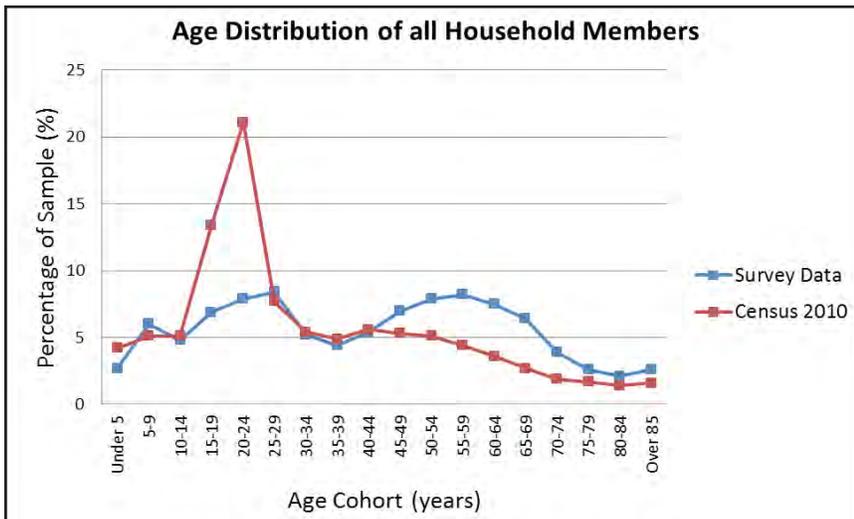


Figure 1: Comparison of Survey Sample and 2010 Census Data of Age Cohorts

Size of Respondent Household and 2010 Census

The number of persons in the household, for those responding to the survey, was compared to the 2010 census “Number of persons in household” (Table 2-4). The distribution of number of persons in the households for those responding was very similar to the 2010 census with the exception of the single household being under represented (by 4.9%) and the couples being over represented (by 7.7%) in the sample. The mean household size is 2.32 persons (± 0.11 at 95% confidence).

Table 2-4

Household Size	Sample Count	Sample Percentage	2010 Census Percentage
Single	105	25.7	30.6
Two Persons	171	41.9	34.2
Three Persons	54	13.2	15.2
Four Persons	55	13.5	13.4
Five Persons	21	5.2	4.4
Six Persons	2	0.5	1.6
More than Six Persons	0	0.0	0.6
TOTAL	408	100	100

Gender Distribution of Individuals in Chapel Hill Households and 2010 Census

The proportion of males and females who were included in the sample households were nearly split evenly with 53.0 percent of the household occupants being female (Table 2-5). The sample proportions are statistically the same as the gender distribution reported by the 2010 Census ($\pm 3.2\%$ at 95% confidence).

Table 2-5

Gender	Sample Count	Sample Percentage	2010 Census Percentage
Female	507	53.0	53.4
Male	450	47.0	46.6
TOTAL	957	100	100

Household Income

Respondents were asked to provide their household income for 2010 using a blank line on the survey followed by three zeros. This response format allows for rounding to the nearest \$1,000 and improves the response rate. For the respondents who reported their household income (294) the average was \$105,458 (\pm \$8,420 at 95% confidence) (Table 2-6). At the time of this analysis a mean household income had not been reported for the Chapel Hill 2010 census so a comparison was not available.

Table 2-6

Income Statistics (n=294)

Mean	\$105,458
Median	\$89,500

Park Nearest to Residence

The responses of the name of park nearest to the resident’s home provided an indication of the distribution of the sampled households within Chapel Hill (Table 2-7). Responses also provided a relative indicator of the service provided by each park. There are a number of locations listed that are not Chapel Hill Park properties.

Table 2-7

Park Name	#	Park Name	#
Battle Branch Trail***	27	Homestead Park	29
Bolin Creek Trail	64	Horace Williams Tract	2
Booker Creek/Lower Booker Creek Trail	54	North Forest Hills Park	15
Cedar Falls Park*	69	Phillips Park	2
Community Center Park**	33	Pritchard Park	3
Dry Creek Trail	4	Umstead Park	5
Ephesus Park	1		

*Includes responses for Cedar Falls Park and Weaver Dairy Road.

**Includes responses for Community Center Park, Community Center Estes Drive, and Community Center Bolin Creek.

***Includes responses for Alice Greenway and Battle Branch Trail.

Mode of Transportation on Most recent Park Visit

The average number of visits in the past 12 months by everyone in the household to the “nearest” park was 59.2 visits (\pm 11.08 at 95% confidence). This average included all the households responding, even households with no park visits (n=393). Visits to all parks in Chapel Hill per household averaged 90.6 visits (\pm 15.98 at 95% confidence) (n=341). Responses to the question on mode of transportation used for the most recent visit to a park indicate that most of the respondents walked to get to parks (54.37%, Table 2-8).

Table 2-8

Mode	Number	Percentage
Walk*	193	54.37
Car	131	36.90
Bike	29	8.17
Other	2	0.56
Total	355	100.00

*Includes those who responded they ran or jogged to the park

Time and Distance for Most Recent Visit to a Park

For the most recent visit to a park, the average time to travel to a park from the respondent’s house was 7.42 minutes (± 0.65 at 95% confidence) to a park located an average of 1.36 miles (± 0.14 at 95% confidence) from the house (Table 2-9).

Table 2-9

Time/Distance	Mean
Minutes to Park (n = 378)	7.42
Miles to Park (n = 368)	1.36

Effects of Parks and Recreation Facilities in Chapel Hill

The survey included statements to determine how respondents feel parks and recreation facilities affect Chapel Hill. Most respondents indicated that they either “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement, “Public parks and recreation areas enhance the economic health of Chapel Hill” (Table 2-10). Similarly, almost all respondents either “strongly agree” or “agree” with the statement, “Public parks and recreation areas enhance the physical and mental well-being of residents of Chapel Hill.” In contrast, over 25 percent of the respondents “strongly disagree” or “disagree” with the statement, “Public parks and recreation facilities in Chapel Hill help to reduce crime.”

Table 2-10

Response	Economic Health (n=404)	Physical and Mental Well-being (n=405) Percentage	Reduces Crime (n=385)
Strongly agree	58.9	76.5	23.4
Agree	35.9	21.5	49.9
Disagree	3.5	0.7	23.4
Strongly Disagree	1.7	1.2	3.4

Feelings on the Current Mix of Parks and Recreation Facilities in Chapel Hill

Respondents were asked, based on their recreation preferences, to rate how they felt about the current mix of park and recreation resources in Chapel Hill. Not all respondents completed this rating for all the listed resources so the number of respondents for each facility is provided in Table 2-11. There are very few respondents who feel there are more recreation resources than necessary in Chapel Hill. In most cases, except nature trails, respondents felt the level of development was “about right.” Development of nature trails stand out, with open space and paved greenways as a close second and third in respondents feeling there is a need for more or much more of these resources.

Table 2-11

Park Resources	Way Too Many	Too Many	About Right	Need More	Could Use Much More
	Response Percentage				
Developed Parks (n=381)	0.8	1.0	65.1	29.1	3.9
Open Space (n=376)	1.1	0.8	50.8	36.4	10.9
Paved Greenways (n=385)	0.5	2.9	50.1	35.6	10.9
Natural Trails (n=376)	0.8	0.8	43.9	41.2	13.3
Gymnasiums (n=373)	0.8	3.5	64.6	27.3	3.8
Community Centers (n=321)	0.9	1.6	72.0	24.0	1.6
Athletic Fields (n=373)	1.6	4.0	63.5	26.0	4.8

Feelings on the Current Condition of Parks and Recreation Facilities in Chapel Hill

The next statements on the survey solicited respondent opinions about the condition of park resources in Chapel Hill (Table 2-12). The vast majority of respondents felt the greenways and parks were average or above average. Less than 10% felt that either greenways or parks were in excellent condition.

Table 2-12

Condition of Park Resources	Need major renovations	Need some improvement	Response Percentage		
			Average	Above Average	Excellent
Greenways (n=378)	0.8	12.4	33.3	46.3	7.1
Parks (n=391)	0.5	14.6	41.4	37.1	6.4

Feelings toward Funding Sources for Perceived Parks and Recreation Facility Needs in Chapel Hill

The survey also contained a question to determine the level of comfort respondents had for various options to fund their perceived park and recreation area or facility needs. The question was worded to imply that if the respondent felt there were some needs how comfortable would they be in the use of the four listed funding sources. Respondents were most uncomfortable with “user fees” as a source of funding, while grants or donations were the most popular (Table 2-13). Nearly half of the respondents were either comfortable or very comfortable with “bonds” (47.4%) and “general funds” (48.5%) as funding sources. Most importantly, a significant proportion of respondents indicated they did not know their level of comfort for using bonds or the general fund as funding sources (27.4 percent and 36.5 percent respectively).

Table 2-13

Park Funding Sources	Not At All Comfortable	Not Comfortable	Don't Know	Response Percentage	
				Comfortable	Very Comfortable
User Fees (n=376)	23.9	21.0	23.1	26.9	5.1
Grants/Donations (n=380)	0.8	1.1	24.2	37.1	36.8
Bonds (n=380)	10.5	14.7	27.4	35.0	12.4
General Funds (n=381)	5.2	9.7	36.5	37.0	11.5

Distribution of Age Cohorts of Individuals with Most Recent Birthday

To this point in the survey, the instructions indicated that the head of household should provide responses to questions on the survey. The final question for the head of household was to provide the age and gender of the person who has had the most recent birthday. The survey respondents were asked to allow this individual in the household to respond to the questions regarding recreation participation and activity preferences. This random selection method aims to achieve a distribution of ages which are representative of each age cohort. The age distribution of the sample does not reflect the general population based on the 2010 census (Figure 2). As with the overall sample the college age cohorts are under-represented and adults over 50 are over-represented in this sample. The explanation for the college age cohort bias was provided above. The most significant factor which influences the adult bias is that all households have adult members. The chance for an adult to be selected is 100% for singles and households without children. In households with children (usually adult couple) there is twice the chance in selection of an adult as any one of the children in the household. For single parent households, the adult is just as likely to have had the most recent birthday as the children in their household. So, because the initial sample was drawn from household addresses (at least one adult), there was an adult bias in this sampling process (Figure 2).

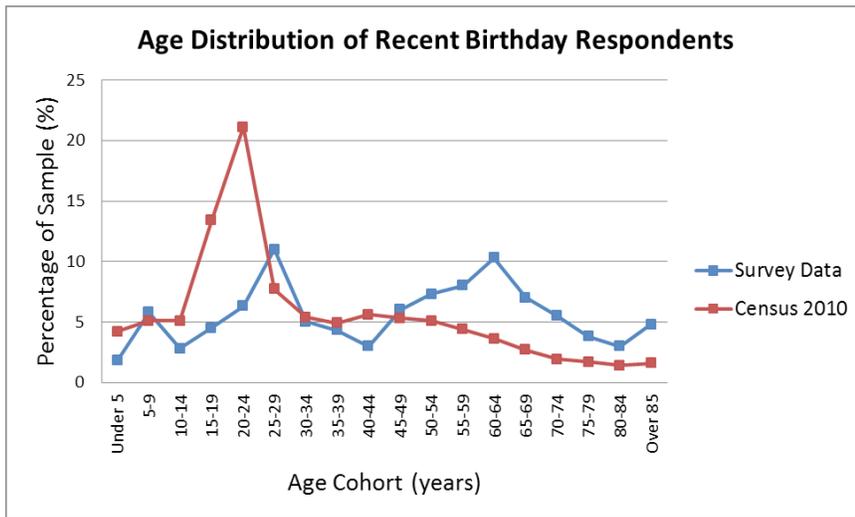


Figure 2: Comparison of Sample Household Member with the Most Recent Birthday and 2010 Census Data of Age Cohorts

Due to the age cohort distributions presented in Figure 2, a weighting process was used to redistribute the responses for the participation and preference so that they reflect the population distribution reported in the 2010 Census, with the exception of the 15 to 19 and 20 to 24 year cohorts. These two cohorts reflect the significant college age population in Chapel Hill. As discussed in the Methods section above, the sample of households tried to under-sample these ages by not including the campus housing and by collecting the sample after the spring semester. The resulting proportions were 6.3% and 11% respectively or about half the population proportions for these age cohorts. The assumption was made that these proportions reflect the off campus year-round student residents and non-student residents in these age cohorts who may use Chapel Hill park and recreation resources. The remaining proportions for the other age cohorts, were multiplied by 1.2589 to redistribute the actual population. The second step in the weighting process was to multiply individual responses by the weighting factor for each age cohort, which is listed in Table 14. These factors are based on the proportional distributions of age cohorts for the survey sample and the 2010 Census, also listed in Table 2-14. In addition to the weighting it is important to note that each age cohort contains a sample greater than 5 observations. This allows for statistically significant representation of each age cohort at the 95% confidence level. For those age cohorts that are under-represented in the sample, the weight factor is greater than 1.0 and for those cohorts which were over-represented, the weight factor is less than one. Note that the 15 to 19 and the 20 to 24 age cohorts the weight factor is 1.0.

Table 2-14

Age Cohort	Totals (n=399)	Percentage	2010 Census Percentage	Weighting Factors
Under 5	7	1.8	4.2	3.01
5 to 9	11	2.8	5.1	2.33
10 to 14	18	4.5	5.1	1.42
15 to 19	25	6.3	13.4	1.00
20 to 24	44	11.0	21.1	1.00
25 to 29	20	5.0	7.7	1.93
30 to 34	17	4.3	5.4	1.60
35 to 39	12	3.0	4.9	2.05
40 to 44	24	6.0	5.6	1.17
45 to 49	29	7.3	5.3	0.92
50 to 54	32	8.0	5.1	0.80
55 to 59	23	5.8	4.4	0.96
60 to 64	41	10.3	3.6	0.44
65 to 69	28	7.0	2.7	0.48
70 to 74	22	5.5	1.9	0.43
75 to 79	15	3.8	1.7	0.57
80 to 84	12	3.0	1.4	0.59
85 and over	19	4.8	1.6	0.42

Weighted* Activity Interest and Participation

Responses to the level of interest and participation questions for 38 recreational activities are presented in Table 2-15. The activities are listed in order from highest percentage of the respondents with an extreme or very high level of interest to the lowest percentage of respondents. The percent of respondents who were extremely interested or had a very high interest in an activity are reported. The percent of respondents who reported participating in an activity during the previous 12 months are also reported. Levels of participation and levels of interest of 20 percent or more are bolded in the table. In most cases, the level of participation is lower than the level of interest. The greatest percentages of respondents were interested in walking in a natural area (68.65%), use a natural surface trail (67.09%), use paved trail (66.37%), and swimming in a pool (43.63%). There were several activities which had less than ten percent of the respondents with an extreme or very high interest in; from playing disc golf (9.18%) to in-line hockey (2.74%).

There are two ways to look at the percentages reported in Table 2-15. First, one should look at the difference between the respondents who indicated an extreme or high interest in an activity and those who indicated that they had participated in the activity during the previous 12 months. This difference indicates for which activities there may be a shortage of facilities or some other limitation to access. Second, one should also look at the percent difference between those interested and those participating. This second analysis is important in that while only a small proportion of the sample may be interested in the activity, only a small proportion of those interested individuals may have been able to participate in the past 12 months.

Picnicking with family provides an example of the first important comparison. While over a third (39.00%) of the sample had an extreme or high interest, only 28.61% had participated in the past 12 months (a difference of 10.38%). There were six other activities which had significant differences between interest and participation which were: ceramic arts classes (11.54 difference), climbing wall (10.21 difference), kite flying (7.88 difference), use natural surface trail (6.49 difference), fishing (6.04 difference), and playing volleyball (5.65 difference).

The activities which had a small proportion of interested respondents but a significant difference in the participation in the past 12 months are also of interest. For example, playing in-line hockey has a difference of only 2.22%, the difference shows that only 19% of those interested have participated in the past 12 month for one reason or another. The other activities which should be considered based on those interested but not participating are: roller skating/blading (49% participating), skateboarding (54% participating), playing bocce (62% participating), playing football (66% participating), playing baseball (69% participating), playing softball (74% participating), playing soccer (79 % participating), and playing tennis (87% participating).

Table 2-15

Activity	% Interested (extreme-v/high)	% Participation 12 months	Activity	% Interested (extreme-v/high)	% Participation 12 months
A walk in a natural area	68.65	69.91	Climbing wall	18.59	8.37
Use natural surface trail	67.09	60.60	Mountain Biking	17.99	15.81
Use paved trail	66.37	73.78	Playing Soccer	16.67	13.25
Swimming in a pool	43.63	41.81	Playing Basketball	15.81	18.90
Jogging/running	42.57	43.75	Ceramic arts classes	14.58	3.04
Looking at gardens	39.73	58.15	Use dog park	14.33	14.82
Picnicking with family	39.00	28.61	Kite flying	13.96	6.09
Outdoor Performances	38.36	31.95	Fishing	13.86	7.82
Viewing Wildlife	38.33	40.67	Playing Frisbee	12.80	13.38
Viewing public art	35.34	43.08	Disc Golfing	9.18	7.62
Museum/gallery	34.67	37.33	Playing Volleyball	9.04	3.38
Cycling	34.18	31.13	Playing Baseball	8.36	5.74
Picnicking with groups	33.60	33.80	Roller Skating/blading	7.22	3.57
Sitting quietly in a park	32.18	45.42	Playing Bocce	6.74	4.19
Playing at a playground	31.44	40.05	Playing Football	6.56	4.34
Playing Tennis	28.47	24.85	Playing Softball	5.69	4.21
Indoor Performances	27.41	22.40	Skateboarding	4.66	2.51
Walking pets	23.04	24.21			
Watch sports events	22.46	29.21			
Bird watching	18.84	24.07			
Activity	% Interested (extreme-v/high)	% Participation 12 months			
In-line Hockey	2.74	0.52			

*Weighting based on age cohort distribution of sample vs. actual age distribution for 2010 census

DISCUSSION

An analysis looking at several combinations of survey questions is also of interest to this park planning effort. For example, the number of visits to parks in the past 12 months compared with the types of transport to the parks, indicates those respondents who walked for their most recent visit to a park had a statistically significantly higher average number of overall visits to their nearest park and to all parks in Chapel Hill ($p < .000$). Bike riders also had a statistically significantly different average ($p < .000$) of park visits to the nearest park and to all parks (Figure 3).

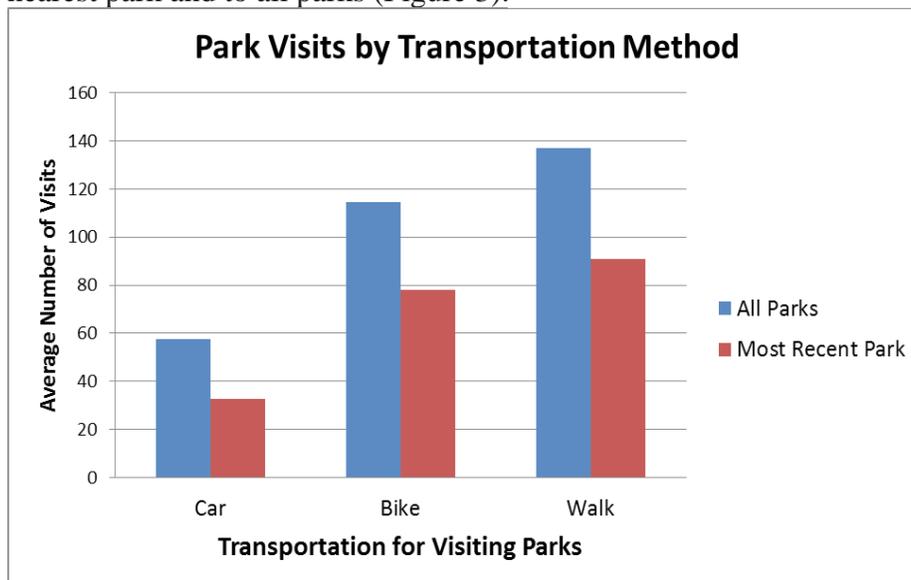


Figure 3: Average Number of Park Visits for the Previous Twelve Months by Mode of Transport for Most Recent Visit

As would be expected, the travel distance for the most recent park visit increased for those who used a car as transport with the shortest average distance for the most recent trip was for those who walked to the park (Figure 4). Mode of transport and distance traveled each affect the time it takes to get from home to a park.

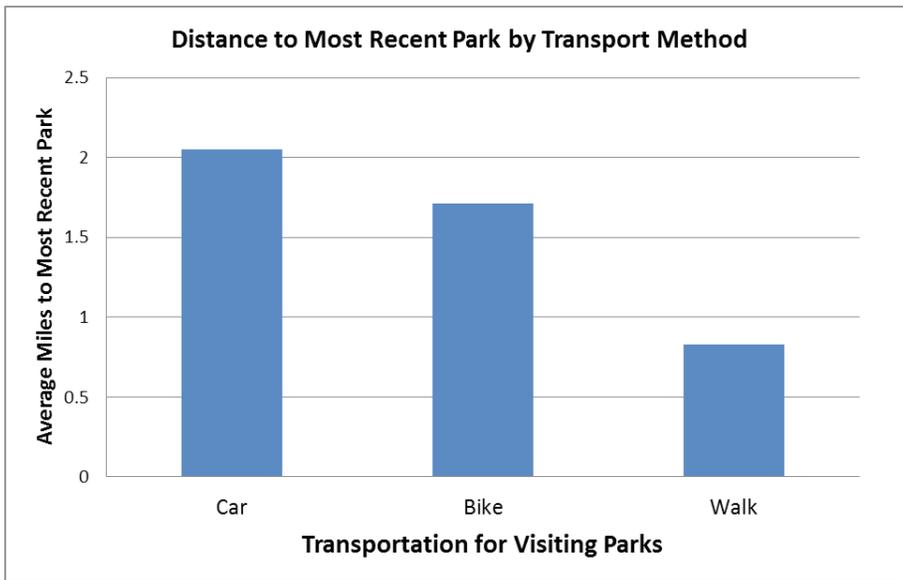


Figure 4: Average Distance to Park for Most Recent Visit by Mode of Transport

As time and distance have an influence on the number of trips taken to parks, this should guide decisions regarding location of parks throughout Chapel Hill. It was found that there was a negative correlation between distance to the most recently visited park and number of overall park visits ($p < .001$). Similarly, there was a negative correlation between minutes to the most recently visited park and number of overall park visits ($p < .001$). In addition, overall park visits significantly increase with length of residence in Chapel Hill beyond the initial year (Figure 5).

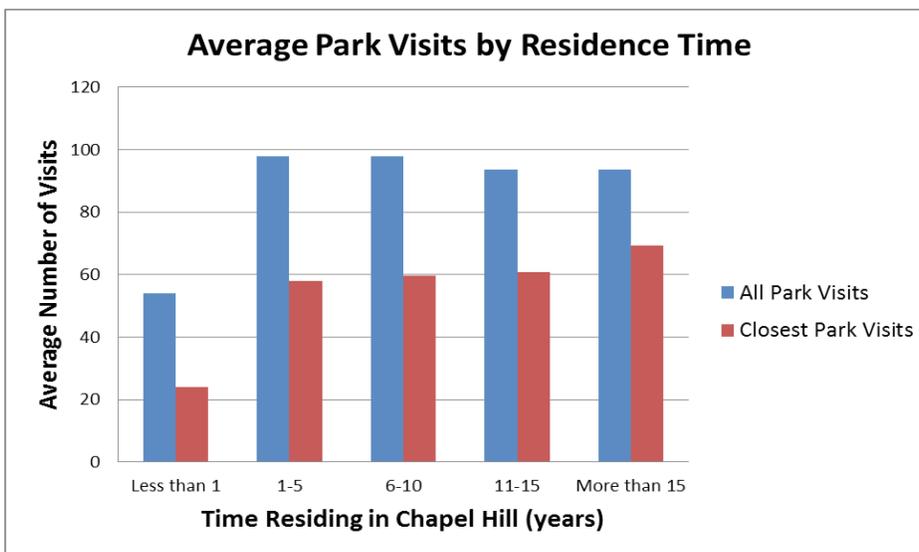


Figure 5: Average Number of Park Visits for the Previous Twelve Months by Length of Residence

Demographic variables were also correlated with questions about the parks, i.e., effects of parks, development of park facilities, conditions of greenways and parks, and funding resources for future development. There were no statistically significant correlations between these park questions and household size, income, or log transformation of income. Age of the head of household was also included in these correlations. The head of household was assumed to be the first age in the household age and gender listing. If the first listing happened to be a person under 20 or if there was an older adult in the household this person was identified as the head

of household for this analysis. The three variables that statistically significantly correlated with the age of the head of household were: “Parks improve physical and mental well-being” ($r = -0.149, p=0.003$), “condition of greenways” ($r = -0.118, p=0.023$), and “condition of park facilities” ($r = -0.151, p=0.003$). No other variables were significantly correlated with head of household age.

The average agreement for head of household age categories (young adults, middle-aged, and seniors) to the statement regarding parks enhancing community physical and mental well-being are shown in Figure 6. A comparison of mean values (t-test) for the young adults and the senior adults indicated that the mean scores for these two groups are statistically significantly different ($t = 3.221, p = 0.001$). All three groups were, on average, in agreement with this statement.

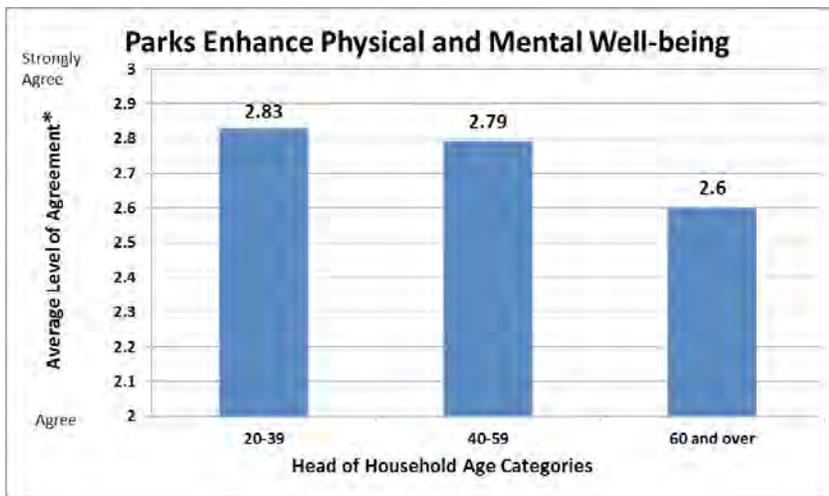


Figure 6: Average Level of Agreement by Head of Household Age Categories ~ “Public parks and recreation areas enhance the physical and mental well-being of residents.”

* Public parks and recreation areas enhance the physical and mental well-being of residents. (strongly agree = 3, agree = 2, disagree = 1, and strongly disagree = 0).

The mean scores of head of household age categories of the average condition of Chapel Hill greenways are shown in Figure 7. The mean score of the young adult households was compared with the senior adult households and they were statistically significantly different ($t = 2.796, p = 0.005$). The middle-aged category had the lowest mean score at 2.35 on the 4 point scale.

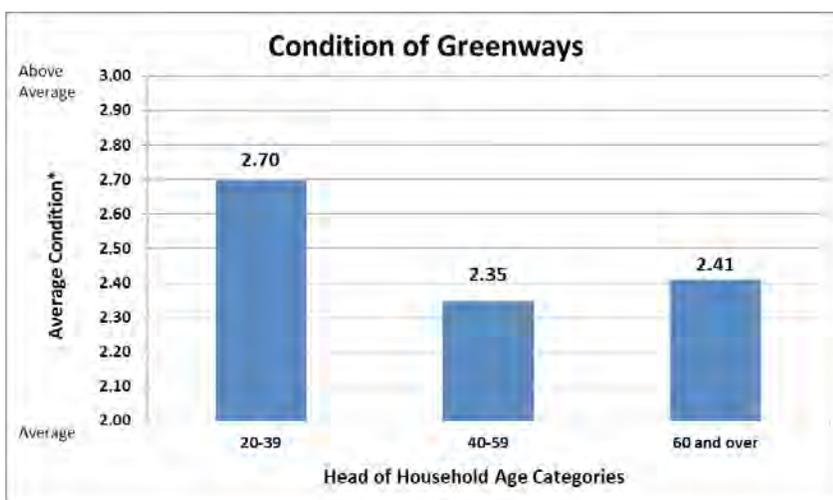


Figure 7: Average Condition of Greenways by Head of Household Age Categories

*Condition: Excellent = 4, Above Average = 3, Average = 2, Need Some Improvement = 1, and Need Major Renovations = 0

PUBLIC SURVEY (INFORMAL)

As part of the planning process, the planning team established a website to inform citizens of the master plan process and seek public input. Through this special web connection, citizens were invited to fill out an informal survey on existing parks and their preference for future park improvements. 167 citizens responded to at least some of the questions. Complete results from the website survey can be found in Appendix 2-C. The following is a list of the questions and a summary of the responses.

1. Which of the following Chapel Hill Parks do you use most often? (select top three)

The five parks that received the highest number of responses were:

Community Center Park	50.0%
Homestead Park	40.2%
Southern Community Park	40.2%
Umstead Park	23.2%
Cedar Falls Park	21.3%

2. For your top ranked park in Question 1, how often do you use the park?

Respondents to the online survey were regular park users. Over half (57.1%) of those responding said they used parks on a weekly basis.

Daily	6.2%
Two to four times per week	30.4%
Weekly	20.5%

Conversely, approximately one fourth (19.9%) said they used parks only a few times per year, and 5% of the respondents said they never used parks.

3. Which of the following Chapel Hill trails do you use most often?

Bolin Creek Greenway was the most used greenway, with 77% of respondents indicating they use this greenway. Battle Branch Trail (40.1%) and Lower Booker Creek Greenway (21.1%) were the next used trails.

4. For your top ranked trail in Question 3, how often do you use the trail?

Almost half (48.3%) of those responding indicated they use the greenways on a weekly basis. Similar to park use, approximately one-fifth (22.5%) of those responding said they only use the trails a few times per year, while 7.9% said they never use greenways.

5. For your most recent trip to Chapel Hill parks or trails, how did you get there?

The majority of respondents (53.6%) said they drove to the facility, while almost a third (32%) said they walked to the facility. Approximately 12.4% of respondents said they bicycled to the park or greenway.

6. Would you use Chapel Hill parks and trails if you could more easily bike or walk to them?

The majority (61.8%) of those responding said they would use parks if they were more easily accessible by bike and pedestrians.

7. What are the most significant obstacles, if any, that prevent you from using Chapel Hill's parks and trails? (select top three)

Almost half (46.2%) of those responding said there are no obstacles preventing them from using Chapel Hill parks and trails. The top four reasons listed as obstacles included:

Lack of information about parks/trails	25.0%
Travel time	18.9%
Facilities in need of maintenance	15.9%
Personal safety	14.4%

8. For the Chapel Hill parks and trails that you most often use, how would you rate the overall condition? (select one)

58.6% of those responding felt the Town's facilities are better than average. Almost a fifth (19.1%) of those responding felt the facilities are excellent. Conversely, approximately a quarter (24.3%) felt there was at least some need for improvement.

9. What recreational or cultural facilities would you like to have more access to in Chapel Hill? (select top five)

By far, the most popular facilities listed by respondents were trails and greenways. Almost two-thirds (61.8%) state they would like to use natural surface hiking trails, and over 43% of the respondents indicated paved greenways. Another 28.3% indicated a desire to use off-road bike trails.

Almost a third (34.2%) of respondents indicated open space as a desired facility, while botanical gardens (27.6%) rounded out the top five choices. Athletic fields ranked sixth on the list with approximately a fifth (20.4%) responding,

indicating a desire for athletic facilities. Typical family recreation opportunities (playgrounds 19.1% and picnic areas 18.4%) were next on the list. Specialty facilities such as aquatic facilities (19.7%), outdoor theatres (19.1%), environmental education centers (16.8%), arts facilities (16.1%) were next areas of interest.

10. Do public parks and recreation areas enhance the economic health of Chapel Hill?

The vast majority (92.2%) of those responding feel parks enhance a community's economic health.

11. Do public parks and recreation areas enhance the physical and mental well-being of Chapel Hill residents?

97.4% of those respondents believe that parks and recreation areas enhance residents' physical and mental well-being.

12. Do public parks and recreation facilities in Chapel Hill help reduce crime?

40.5% of those respondents did not feel comfortable connecting public parks with crime reduction.

13. How did you hear about this park planning project?

Most people received notice about the master plan process either on the Town's website (41.2%) or by word of mouth (36.1%).

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

As part of this planning effort, one on one interviews were conducted with twenty-three community stakeholders. The purpose of these interviews was to gain insight into the specific needs of various park user groups and community advocates for parks and recreation. The interview findings are very helpful and represent a wide spectrum of public and private interests. Views expressed during these interviews provided an important backdrop for the development of this plan.

Those interviewed included the Mayor, Town Manager, Assistant and Deputy Town Managers, the Economic Development Director, seven Town Council members, the Assistant Planning Director, the Town Attorney, the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Chair of the Public Arts Advisory Committee, the Chief of Police,

the Superintendent of Schools, the Director of the Orange County Department on Aging, the YMCA Director, and one Orange County Commissioner. The following are results of those interviews. A complete list of responses is provided in Appendix 2-D.

1. What do you like most about living in Chapel Hill?

Those interviewed truly enjoy living in Chapel Hill. Reasons cited include excellent public schools, the beauty of the town and campus, cultural opportunities and events provided by the University, cultural and racial diversity, a small-town atmosphere with big city amenities, the people, restaurants, emphasis on environmental sustainability and a general lack of big city challenges.

2. What do you like least?

Many community leaders struggled to identify issues of concern regarding life in Chapel Hill. Some of those mentioned more than once included the slowness in making policy decisions due to strong but diverse opinions held by elected officials, a high cost of living due primarily to property taxes and expensive real estate, decreasing diversity among residents, limited resources for aged citizens, the difficulty in access and parking in the downtown area, and limited access to UNC-CH cultural events by those not associated with the University.

3. What role do local parks and recreation offerings play in the quality of life?

Responses included providing open space and stewardship as the community becomes more densely populated, facilitating public participation in cultural arts, providing quality programs and services at low costs, being responsive to public interests and contributing to healthy living through programs and facilities.

4. What role should they be playing?

A number of interviewees suggested the Parks and Recreation Department should seek out more opportunities for partnering with other agencies and organizations in providing park and recreation services. Other suggestions mentioned included focusing on the improvement of facilities, increasing the diversity of recreation programs, increasing the emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles and doing more to improve community aesthetics.

5. What things are they doing right?

Many of those interviewed stated they think the Parks and Recreation Department is doing a good job given current budget limitations. Other significant compliments were that parks and recreation responds well to all citizens, that they are good at putting on special events, and that they have good examples of partnering with other agencies and organizations. The staff was complimented for being honest and straight-forward with Town Council, for being responsive to public interests, for providing leadership in the development of a park and recreation plan, and for some high quality facilities including the Aquatic Center and Southern Community Park.

6. What things could they improve?

Suggestions for improving the Parks and Recreation Department included improving existing areas and facilities, including landscaping and cemeteries; adding additional special events, particularly in the downtown area; adding additional facilities as needed; increased programming in the arts; more activities for underserved segments of the population and improving access to facilities and parks.

7. In the next 10 years, Chapel Hill Recreation and Parks Department should...:

A number of suggestions for the direction parks and recreation should take in the future related to maximizing the wise use of existing land and park areas for greenspaces and recreation facilities, completing the plan for greenways and trails, adding additional athletic fields, and adding spaces for recreation programming. Other suggestions included emphasizing innovation in meeting park and recreation development needs with limited public land areas and given the challenging economic climate, and improving the maintenance of existing areas and facilities, including town entrance areas. It was also suggested that better office space should be provided for park and recreation staff.

8. The Chapel Hill Recreation and Parks Department gets participants from Carrboro and other communities. What role should Chapel Hill play in providing services to those that do not reside in the community?

Six of those interviewed stated they think higher user fees should be charged for non-residents.

Others suggestions included the development of reciprocal agreements with other agencies and the consolidation of park and recreation agencies within Orange County.

9. Should Chapel Hill/Carrboro Schools play a role in providing opportunities for park and recreation activities?

All interviewees made statements in support of the concept of the school system playing an increased role in providing park and recreation services. Specific suggestions included strengthening the current memorandum of understanding between the two agencies and planning future schools with recreation facilities and adjacent park lands.

10. What activities do you feel Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation should be focused on in the next 10 years?

Of 50 activities considered for increased emphasis in the next decade, greenway use, cycling, outdoor performances, summer camps, basketball, playground use, and walking in natural areas, were mentioned most frequently, followed by indoor performances, observing wildlife, picnicking, fitness classes, soccer, tennis, and the passive use of parks. Other activities receiving support by six or more interviewees included volleyball, softball and swimming in pools. Four or more respondents stated they did not believe the town should focus on the provision of golf or watching sporting events.

11. Based on what you know or have heard, would you say there is a great need, some need, little need, or no need for additional public parks in Chapel Hill as the Town grows.

Ten respondents indicated some need for additional parks as the town grows. Three stated a great need while two indicated no need.

12. Perceptions of the need for, and value of, parks, recreation areas and facilities in Chapel Hill.

The town leaders that participated in interviews were asked four questions regarding the need for, or potential value, of parks and recreation services. Those questions with resulting scores ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) included the following:

- Would additional public parks and recreation facilities benefit Chapel Hill? (4.6)
- Do public parks and recreation areas enhance the economic health of a community? (4.9)
- Do public parks and recreation areas enhance the physical and mental well-being of the community? (4.9)
- Can public parks and recreation activities help reduce crime? (4.2)

Overall the majority of those interviewed agreed or strongly agreed that parks and recreation activities benefit the community.

13. Have you used a public park, greenway or recreation area in Chapel Hill in the past year?

Of the 19 town leaders interviewed, 12 indicated they had used a public park, greenway or recreation area in Chapel Hill during the past year.

14. How many times have you or someone in your household visited or used a public park, recreation area or trail in the past year?

Responses to this question shows a high use of parks, recreation areas and trails by community leaders during the past year with 10 stating five or more uses, six stating two – five times, and five that could not recall.

15. What public park, recreation area or trail did you visit most often?

Of the community leaders interviewed eight had visited parks and eight had used trails or greenways during the past year. The most visited park was Homestead (4) followed by Cedar Falls (3) and Hargraves (3). Others were Community Center Park and Southern Community Park (2) and Ephesus, Meadowmont and Umstead (1). Bolin Creek Trail was the most used greenway or trail (8) followed by Cedar Falls Trail (2). Other trails were mentioned once each with the exception of Dry Creek Trail and Meadowmont Trail that had no visits mentioned.

16. What prevents you from using a public park, recreation area or trail?

Lack of time was reported by seven interviewees as the primary reason for not visiting parks, recreation areas or trails, while one respondent stated physical reasons. Two others stated the

need for better running surfaces on trails and a lack of interest in current offerings.

17. What other types of recreational facilities would you like to see in Chapel Hill?

Town leaders interviewed identified greenways and walking or bicycle trails as the recreation facility they would most like to see developed, followed by arts facilities, open space and community recreation centers, gymnasiums, athletic fields and water-based recreation areas. Interviewees provided many comments related to the development of recreation facilities. Those comments are included in the full report located in the Appendix 2-C.

18. Based on what you know or have heard, how would you rate the current condition of Chapel Hill parks and greenways?

The majority of interviewees expressed their opinion that the condition of parks and greenways was “average.” Second in response frequency was “need minor repair.” No respondent stated the condition to be “excellent.”

19. Are there any other types of recreational facilities you would like to see provided by the Town?

Sixteen suggestions were offered ranging from a golf course to senior population facilities. Greenways linked to other transportation systems and restrooms open year around in parks were suggested multiple times.

20. Other Suggestions:

Several suggestions focused on the development or expansion of partnerships with other entities, including the schools, YMCA and Orange County. Other suggestions included developing high quality facilities to help sell the community, emphasizing “smart” buildings in any new construction, developing a plan for public and cultural arts, improving maintenance of parks and the cemetery.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

As part of the planning process, two public workshops were held. The first workshop was to obtain citizen input and guide the works. A second workshop was held to allow a public review of the draft document. These workshops were promoted through the Town’s website, announcements on public access TV, signs placed in parks/community buildings, and blast

emails to those citizens signed up for previous Town programs.

The following is a summary of the two workshops:

First Public Workshop

Workshop Date: Tuesday, May 24, 2011

Location: Town of Chapel Hill
523 E. Franklin Street

The first public workshop to discuss Chapel Hill's Comprehensive Parks Plan was held on May 24 at the 523 E. Franklin Street building. Seventeen people attended the meeting.

Butch Kisiah, Director of Parks and Recreation for Chapel Hill, opened the meeting by thanking the attendees for participating in the planning process and gave a brief introduction to the history of the previous Comprehensive Plan document that was prepared approximately 10 years ago. Mr. Kisiah discussed the Department's history and pointed out that the Plan will be a critical resource document that will give direction for the future development of the Town's parks and recreation system. He noted that many of the goals from the 2002 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan have been completed and the Parks and Recreation Department looks forward to completing the goals of the next comprehensive plan as well.

Bill Webster, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation for Chapel Hill, further discussed the Department's history and pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan is a very important project. The development of this Plan is the foundation for the future growth of the Town's Parks and Recreation system that will support the community's needs. Mr. Webster explained two community surveys are available for local citizens as a part of the planning process. The first is the scientific survey that has been mailed to randomly selected local households. He encouraged everyone who received the questionnaire to complete and return it. The second survey is the online survey. All citizens have the opportunity to participate by filling out the survey online. Mr. Webster offered access to the online survey for anyone interested at the meeting. He then introduced Derek Williams of Site Solutions, the park planner for the planning process.

Derek Williams thanked everyone for attending this public workshop. He began the presentation by explaining that the purpose of the meeting was to obtain public input and noted the meeting was about asking questions and listening. No plans or recommendations have been formulated at this time. Plan formulation will not begin until public input has been gathered. With that understanding the six steps of the planning process were presented along with a brief discussion of the Town's previous 2002 plan. The previous comprehensive plan will be reviewed to see what elements of the plan are still relevant. The new Comprehensive Park Plan will set direction for the parks and recreation system and establish recommendations to address park improvements, additions and operations, maintenance, revenue generation and additional comprehensive goals.

Mr. Williams explained the existing parks and recreation system is comprised of Mini Parks, Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, Special Use Facilities, and Greenway/Trail systems. The new plan will use the current inventory and assessment to establish a base line from which to establish updated facility needs and recommendations.

Upon summarizing the park system and planning process, Mr. Williams opened the meeting for public discussion. The group was asked a series of questions regarding current park facilities and services and desires/needs for future parks, open space, and greenways. Participants' responses are listed below each question.

Question #1: What parks and greenways do you currently use?

Most participants at the meeting appeared to be regular park users, utilizing a wide variety of the Town's park facilities. Responses included:

- Booker Creek Trail
- Umstead Park
- Bolin Creek Trail
- Cedar Falls Park
- Southern Community Park
- Fan Branch Trail
- Homestead Park
- Ephesus Park
- Community Center Park
- Dog Parks
- Hargraves Park
- Duke Forest (not a Town park)
- Battle Park Trails

- Johnston Mill (not a Town park)
- Carolina North (UNC open space)
- Adams/Greene Tract (open space area)

Question #2: What types of recreational activities do you currently enjoy?

Attendees appeared to enjoy a wide variety of park activities.

- Hiking
- Walking
- Disc golf
- Dog walking
- Mt trails and mt biking
- Soccer
- Rock climbing
- Playgrounds
- Tennis
- Archery
- Golf
- Open field access
- Art/garden space, interactive opportunities
- Biking

Question #3: How would you rate the quality of the programs in which you are currently participating?

Most attendees felt that overall the Town's park system offers citizens a good variety of programs and facilities, but improvements could be made.

Hargraves Park

- Good facilities, needs breathing room

Climbing Wall/Community Center

- Great activity, poor hours of operation

Playgrounds

- Good activity, overcrowded at all playgrounds
- Seasonal, no alternate facility during bad weather

Soccer Fields

- Homestead Park, overcrowded, drainage problems
- Southern Community Park, overcrowded, good drainage
- Overall inaccessible for general public use

Greenways

- Good Trails, too many invasive plant species

Umstead Park

- Fair facilities, needs re-modeling/upgrade
- Problems with vandalism and loitering

Ephesus Park

- Fair facilities, needs updating/seating, not visible

Southern Community Park

- Good facilities, needs shade, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains

Homestead Park

- Problems with vandalism and loitering

Wallace Plaza

- Bad restrooms

Question #4: How would you rate the quality of existing facilities you are currently using?

- Cramped quarters at the Park and Recreation Department offices.
- Lack of shade, seating, restrooms, infrastructure at existing parks.
- Need better administrative offices.
- Better facility for the art and culture program.
- Need all weather facilities, alternate/indoor space available during poor weather conditions.
- Good online options, announcements, scheduling and department activities.

Question #5: What recommendations would you offer to improve existing programs and/or facilities?

- More integrated facilities with other communities, public schools/joint use.
- Environmental sensitivity when developing parks and greenways.
- More concerns for creeks and other water bodies when work adjacent to these areas.
- A concern was expressed that greenway development along some sections of Bolin Creek (south bank) will have environmental impacts on the adjacent stream. It was suggested that moving the trail to the north bank and reducing its width would promote better water quality for the adjacent creek.

Question #6: What new facilities and/or programs would you like the Department to offer?

Attendees provided a long list of new facilities and programs to consider.

- Artificial turf on athletic fields.
- Tournament level complex to host outside events.
- Consider environmental issues at park/trail

facilities.

- Para course/challenge course.
- Integrate parks with transit system.
- Integrate parks/connect parks to parks with pedestrian corridors.
- Alternative methods of travel.
 - Additional informal pedestrian connections to parks
 - Options for Non-motorized connections to parks
- Trails between Ephesus school and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Utilize open space near YMCA (south and east).
- Develop downtown park, quiet remote urban space.
- Educational/interpretive areas in the parks.
- War memorial/civil rights type of park/plaza area.
- More benches, seating and shade.
- Facilities more accessible, less fencing of fields.
- Develop exterior rock climbing opportunities and clinics/traverse wall.
- Something special to showcase Chapel Hill.
- More contemporary/trend setting facility to represent the Town.
- Pedestrian connections from Northside Neighborhood to Umstead Park.
- More night/evening facilities with pedestrian lighting.
- More community meeting areas with night lighting and evening options.

Question #7: What recommendations do you have for the Department as it plans for the next ten years?

- Provide alternative plans with options and cost.
- Front load the plan with programming opportunities.
- Phasing of proposed improvements to assist with budgets.
- Land objectives/acquisition before property values increase.
- Reach out to children to promote fitness and environmental education.
- Encourage input from the Town's youth.
- Consider large athletic complex for tournament events
 - 24 hour access to parks
- Recognize natural areas, promote open space

that remains.

- Bolin Creek watershed, etc.
- Environmental Programming, provide educational and instructional programs.
- Promote wildlife community certification.
- Lead by example, invest in environmental facilities that work with nature.
- Make maintenance/operation costs a priority.
- More trees, life expectance is approximately 70-120 yrs. with little maintenance cost.
- Plan for providing more tree canopy for future generations.
- Personnel/staff are great resources and provide excellent services for the town. Reduce facilities and programs prior to eliminating staffing.
- The use of technology for record keeping and posted on a website with community involvement to record and document the natural environment via greenways and parks.

The discussion ended at 9:15 pm after an interactive session of comments and discussions by all who attended. Overall there was strong support for developing better parks, greenways and supporting environmental education. Butch Kisiah closed the meeting by thanking all of those who attended. He reminded the participants to follow the progress of the planning process on the Department's web site and invited all attendees to participate in the second public meeting to be held later this fall.



First Public Workshop May 24, 2011

Second Public Workshop

Workshop Date: Tuesday, June 12, 2012

Location: Chapel Hill
Town Hall

A second public workshop was held on June 12, 2012 at the Chapel Hill Town Hall to present the draft report for the Comprehensive Parks Plan and the Greenways Master Plan Update. Approximately 25 people attended the second workshop to discuss the draft recommendations.

Butch Kisiah, Parks and Recreation Department Director opened the meeting by welcoming and thanking everyone for attending. He then introduced several of the department staff and Advisory Board members. Following introductions, Mr. Kisiah explained the history and background of the master plan process and emphasized the importance of the input that the citizens provide.

Derek Williams, park planner with Site Solutions, provided an overview of the planning process and a summary of the major recommendations of the Comprehensive Parks Plan. Anne Eshleman, greenway planner with Alta Greenways, presented a summary of the findings and recommendations of the Greenways Master Plan.

A copy of the Power Point presentation for both the Comprehensive Plan and Greenway Plan are provided in Appendix 2-E of the planning document.

Following a 30-45 minute presentation by the consultants, the meeting was opened up for questions. The following questions and comments were made:

- **Did the master plan process include a detailed assessment of programs?** Detailed programming was beyond the scope of this planning study. The consultant worked with departmental staff to identify areas of high program demand that warranted additional facilities.

The citizen asking the question suggested that new programs and educational opportunities be considered and opportunities to partner with schools be explored.

- **Are the plans for the next phase of greenway through Umstead Park a “done deal”?** The Town has studied the best route to make this greenway connection and believes the plan currently being considered is the best option.
- **It was suggested that the Town review its current fee policy for aquatics and consider increasing fees.** Department staff responded to this comment by saying user fees were established based on a market review of other agencies, but staff will continue to monitor charges for aquatics and other activities.
- **Someone suggested the Town work in cooperation with Carboro, Orange County, and other agencies and organizations in the area as it considers development of an arts center.** The department should also consider using one of the Town’s vacant buildings for the new arts center.
- **Does it really cost \$1 million to construct a mile of greenway?** Most greenway corridors in Chapel Hill are constricted and present construction obstacles. Past experience has shown local greenway construction is running about \$1 million per mile.
- **The importance of developing small civic parks in the downtown area was mentioned by several people.** Likewise, several people mentioned the value of small “walk to” parks in neighborhoods.
- **The report mentions providing shade in parks, especially around playgrounds. Does this refer to building shade structures or planting trees?** The report’s recommendation refers to built shade structures, but planting trees in parks for future canopy and shade is also important.
- **The importance of connecting greenways to schools was mentioned by several people.**
- **Someone suggested community gardens should be developed in the Town’s parks.** Someone also suggested there are grants for building community gardens and working in conjunction

with schools could be an excellent way to get gardens started.

- **Someone suggested the Town continue to program sport events on natural turf fields and not convert fields to synthetic surfacing.** The speaker felt natural turf and soil was more environmentally friendly than the synthetic surfacing.
- **Someone stated they felt North Forest Hills Park was a wonderful park and neighborhood amenity and recommended that parks like North Forest Hills Park be constructed in other neighborhoods.**
- **There was a discussion on greenway lighting.** While most people did not feel all greenway trails should be lighted, major corridors (particularly if they are alternative transportation corridors) should be lit. It was also noted that safety in greenways and parks is a high priority.

Following an hour and a half of very good discussion, Butch Kisiah thanked everyone for attending, reminding them to sign the attendance sheet, and adjourned the meeting. Overall there was a very good dialogue between citizens, staff, and consultants. While there were many good ideas discussed, there was no indication that those attending the meeting felt major changes were needed to the recommendations of either plan.