

5.0	Parks & Recreation	5-1
5.1.	Introduction	5-1
5.2.	Inventory and Existing Conditions	5-1
5.3.	Summary of Issues and Opportunities	5-16
5.4.	Goals, Objectives and Policies	5-17

5

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Lake Lure is located in a natural playground setting offering a variety of recreational opportunities. From passive recreation, such as walking and hiking, to adventure sports, such as rock climbing and mountain biking, Lake Lure and the surrounding area has a variety of opportunities for all ages. However, some of these opportunities, which lie outside the town limits, are provided by other private and public entities. To date, Lake Lure has not provided a formal recreation program for its local residents but does have local public parks and recreation facilities. These facilities are sufficiently utilized by residents and visitors alike and offer a combination of both active and passive recreation opportunities. Lake Lure has an active park and recreation board.

5.2 Inventory and Existing Conditions

The following recreation and parks inventory highlights the town’s recreation facilities, regional recreation offerings and private recreation providers in the Lake Lure area. This section also provides an analysis of the town’s existing overall park level of service, potential classifications for the park system and existing recreation facility level of service.

Town Recreation Facility Inventory

The following section identifies town-owned recreation facilities available for public use.

Lake Lure Beach and Water Works:

Lake Lure Beach and Water Works is a special use public recreation facility approximately 3 acres in size, located in the town center area. The facility is currently operated through a contract with a private company and contains various amenities including a beach area, concession stands, restrooms, water slides, water games and picnic areas. This facility is available for public use between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year and requires an admission fee based on individual, group and season pass rates. Rental space for a variety of special, corporate, and family events is also available at this facility.

Morse Park Meadows:

Morse Park Meadows is a 19-acre public community park facility located adjacent to the Lake Lure Town Hall. This park contains amenities such as a playground, picnic areas, grills, basketball court, two tennis courts, walking trails and restrooms. This entire facility is open



Lake Lure Beach Area



Morse Park Playground

to the public and all or portions of it may be rented for private functions. This park is well used by both local residents and visitors alike.

Lake Lure Marina:

Lake Lure Marina is a town-owned facility in Morse Park that offers a variety of boating and lake-based recreation opportunities. Currently, the marina operations are contracted through a concessions agreement with the local boat tour company. Various rentals include: hydrobikes, rowboats, kayaks, canoes, paddle boats, electric boats, john boats, and pontoon boats. The Lake Lure Marina also has a number of covered and uncovered public boat slips available for rent throughout the year.



Morse Park Pathway

Lake Lure Pavilion:

The Lake Lure Pavilion is a public facility that may be rented throughout the year by residents and visitors. This facility, often used for weddings, offers beautiful views of the lake, the rugged rock faces and forested slopes of the surrounding mountains. One may also see Chimney Rock Park and the public beach with the Lake Lure Inn and the Arcade Building as its backdrop.



Lake Lure Marina

Lake Lure Beach Picnic Area:

The Lake Lure Beach picnic area is located near the town center adjacent to the lake and contains covered tables and charcoal grill areas. This facility is available for public use between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year and requires an admission fee based on individual, group and season pass rates.



Town Center Walkway

Town Center Walkway:

The town center walkway is a pedestrian-oriented recreation trail that is planned to run parallel to Memorial Highway (US 64/74A) beginning at the intersection of Boys Camp Road heading east through the Town Center and finishing at the Lake Lure Post Office. Currently portions of 1.3-mile walkway have been constructed along the Lake Lure Beach Area.

Community Center:

The Lake Lure Youth Center is a facility that offers recreation and youth activity programs, which are administered by the Lake Lure Police Department. The

building has the potential for expansion to include a branch office of the county's Tourism Development Authority (TDA) and/or additional public office space. The building currently houses the Hickory Nut Gorge Chamber of Commerce which operates the Visitor's Center.

Lake Lure Golf Course:

Lake Lure owns a 9-hole municipal golf course reportedly designed by the famous Scottish born golf course architect Donald Ross. Mr. Ross designed over 400 courses in his lifetime between 1872 and 1948. He is best known for his design of Pinehurst Country Club #2. Open year round, the Lake Lure Golf Course provides public golfing at a reasonable fee. Weekend greens fees with a cart are \$26.85 for 18 holes as compared to private area courses where weekend greens and cart fees range from \$45 to \$65. Located along Memorial Highway, the nine-hole course has enough land for a potential nine-hole course expansion to 18-holes. Although the town has indicated interest in the past to conduct a market study for expansion of the golf course, the market study was not completed. However, the town consulted an engineering firm to provide a grade analysis for an additional nine holes to the golf course.

A system of soft surface hiking trails is currently under construction in the natural area originally intended as the 'back nine' holes. The trails should offer no obstruction to future redesign efforts.

Lake Lure:

Lake-based recreation is one of the top reasons people choose to come to Lake Lure to either live or vacation. The lake is approximately 720 acres and it provides many water-based recreational opportunities, including boating, swimming, fishing, water-skiing and wake boarding. These activities are available either privately or through local tourism companies.

Various lake management issues have been raised recently, including the potential for overcrowding. A concurrent Lake Use study was conducted to explore management options to fully maximize lake use with

regards to overall user safety. *For further information see Section 6A: Lake Management of this document.*

Regional Recreation Facility Inventory

The regional recreation inventory denotes existing facilities found in the Lake Lure region that are destination-based recreation attractions.

Hickory Nut Gorge:

The Hickory Nut Gorge, which contains Lake Lure at its lowest point, stretches from Bear Wallow Mountain down to the lake and encompasses over 14,500 acres in both Rutherford and Henderson counties. This natural area houses a significant biodiversity of rare plant and animal species. Numerous caves, waterfalls, and forests attract thousand of tourists each year and will continue to be the anchor for environmental recreation activities such as hiking and camping for the Lake Lure area. (source: www.nature.org)

Chimney Rock Park:

Chimney Rock Park is one of the natural wonders of North Carolina. With over 1,000 acres of nature based recreation, Chimney Rock Park provides numerous recreation opportunities for all ages. The park was purchased by the State of North Carolina in 2007.

A unique piece of property, the park has historically provided many recreational activities including hiking and rock climbing with breathtaking scenic views reaching 75 miles out over the western North Carolina landscape. With a 400-foot waterfall and scenic views as its two major attractions, Chimney Rock Park also hosts numerous recreational and educational opportunities. The park offers a variety of environmental education programs, a nature education center, rock climbing instruction and various camping and scouting programs. Current admission rates to the park are \$14 for adults and \$6 dollars for youth from the ages of 6-15 admission is free for children under the age of 6.

Hickory Nut Gorge State Park (Future):

Recently, the Carolina Mountain Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy purchased 1,568 acres of natural area in the Hickory Nut Gorge. The state hopes to

acquire more acreage. This area has been designated as part of a future state park to be called the Hickory Nut Gorge State Park. This tract is home to awesome views from its Blue Ridge Escarpment vantage points and contains much of Hickory Nut Gorge's unique biodiversity of plants and animals. It is anticipated that this state park will dramatically increase the area's recreation opportunities and become a major provider in the regional recreation tourism industry. The General Assembly established Hickory Nut Gorge State Park and appropriated \$15 million in fiscal year 2006. The Nature Conservancy also owns 900-plus acres on Rumbling Bald Mountain and the state now owns about 100 acres near or on Rumbling Bald Mountain. Both of these areas are also slated to be part of the new state park.

Ski Areas:

Within an hour and a half's drive of Lake Lure, opportunities for winter sport activities exist at the Cataloochee Ski Area and Wolf Ridge Ski Resort, formerly known as Wolf Laurel. These winter resorts offer downhill skiing, trail skiing, snow tubing and a ski school.

Other Recreation Providers

The following section highlights important private and non-private recreation providers located within the local area. These recreation providers offer valuable recreational services to Lake Lure residents and visitors.

Lake Lure Adventure Company:

The Lake Lure Adventure Company is a private recreation provider that offers water-skiing, wake boarding, wake surfing, boat rentals and fishing opportunities for both residents and visitors. The private provider also offers a number of instructional and education water-based courses.

Lake Lure Tours:

Lake Lure Tours is a private recreation provider offering scenic boat tours, dinner cruises and boat rentals on Lake Lure under a concession agreement with the town. Lake Lure Tours is also currently the private recreation provider and operator of the Lake Lure Beach and Water Work recreation area and Town Marina.

Rumbling Bald Resort:

Rumbling Bald Resort is a local private recreation provider that offers two daily-fee, open to the public, 18-hole championship golf courses (Apple Valley and Bald Mountain Golf Courses), indoor and outdoor pools, tennis, mini-golf, hiking, fitness center, outdoor outing tours, beachside cabana and various recreation programs – All of the facilities are reserved for resort guests and residents except for the golf courses, which provide fee-based golf to the general public.

Riding Stables:

Horseback riding in western North Carolina is a popular recreation activity. Currently, two stables offer riding opportunities within Lake Lure: Cedar Creek Stables and Riverside Riding Stables.

Bill's Creek Community Center:

The Bill's Creek Community Center is located just outside of Lake Lure's town limits and offers a variety of recreational facilities including a ballfield, tennis/basketball court, playground, picnic areas and community meeting space.

Camp Lurecrest:

Camp Lurecrest is a private religious camp which provides a variety of education offerings, summer camps and ministry retreats and conferences. The camp includes cabin facilities, basketball court, outdoor pool, volleyball court, low ropes course, climbing wall, lake-based activities and various meeting space.

Women's Fitness Center:

Curves for Women, a private fitness provider, offers fitness and aerobic opportunities for women of all ages. This provider is located in the Bill's Creek area outside of the Lake Lure limits.

Fishing Guides:

Various professional fisherman offer guided trips on Lake Lure and within the surrounding area. The following companies currently offer private fee-based fishing trips within Lake Lure: Fishtale Guide Service, Lewis No Clark Expeditions, Pro Bass Fishing Personal

Guide Service and The Granddaddy Fly-Fishing Experience.

Park Level of Service

Level of service (LOS) for parks represents the minimum amount of land needed to serve a population of 1,000 based on a particular park type. It is generally recommended that the town provide up to 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 in population. This allocation of park land is often divided among park types or park classifications. Currently, the Town of Lake Lure does not formally classify its parks. The town owns approximately 22 acres of existing traditional park land with a majority of the land used for passive recreation activities. This calculation does not include the golf course and lake acreages. The golf course, a pay-for-play recreational opportunity, was not included in the calculation because it is a golf course, not a park. Similarly, the lake, although a natural resource, was excluded in calculation of park LOS. Based on the 2006 full-time resident population of 1,066, Lake Lure has a high park level of service of approximately 20.6 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. However, due to the seasonal influx of close to 3,600 people (full and part-time residents – 1,957 households times x 1.84 people per household) during the peak recreation periods, the available park resources function at a level of service of 6.1 acres per 1,000, which is below park level of service recommendations of 10 acres per 1,000 population. If we assume the full and part-time population also includes additional seasonal visitors, we can make a general, low-end estimate that the town functions at the 5,000 person population level during seasonal peak times. During peak-season, the recreation level of service would decrease to 4.4 acres per 1,000 of population.

Table 5.1: Park Level of Service:

Type	Population	Park Acres	LOS	LOS Goal	Surplus/Deficiency
Full-Time Population	1,066	22	20.6 acres per 1,000 people	10 acres per 1,000 people	10.6-acre surplus
Full-Time & Part-Time Population	3,600 (estimate)	22	6.1 acres per 1,000 people	10 acres per 1,000 people	14-acre deficiency
Full -Time, Part-Time and Tourist Population	5,000 (estimate)	22	4.4 acres per 1,000 people	10 acres per 1,000 people	28-acre deficiency

An issue for Lake Lure to consider is whether or not to plan for future recreation services at the 5,000 person population level. If this is the desired service provision, it will ensure that the town will be proactively planning to have enough recreational land to meet its part-time resident population and tourist demands for the next 20 years. By planning to add 28 acres of town-owned recreation land and facilities, Lake Lure will function at an optimal level of service and meet the goal of providing a minimum 10 acres of tax-based non-user fee park land for every 1,000 residents while also providing core park infrastructure to help promote additional recreation-based tourism development.

Park Classification

The following park classifications are suggested as guidelines for park and recreation facility development. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) supports these classifications as guidelines for development and community park evaluation. It is important to classify the existing park system in order to efficiently plan for future expansion efforts, set public expectations for park uses and to help determine appropriate geographic park location and size for each proposed facility. The following park descriptions are cited from 1995 Park Recreation and Open Space Guidelines (Mertes and Hall 1995)

Mini Parks:

Mini parks are the smallest park classifications and are used to address limited recreation needs. Mini parks contain a variety of programmed active and passive recreation facilities and include playgrounds, picnic areas and green space.

The following are examples of a typical mini park:

- Scenic overlooks (An example would be the overlook located at intersection of NC 9 and US 64/74A near Larkin's. This site is currently being upgraded).
- Small park active and passive areas adjacent to greenways and neighborhoods.
- A small play area.

Locations:

Mini parks often tend to take advantage of a specific location and uniqueness. The service areas for these parks are often less than a quarter-mile in radius. Accessibility by way of trails and sidewalks increase park accessibility and is an important consideration in the development of these types of parks. Potential sites for mini parks in Lake Lure include the proposed park locations highlighted in the town center walkway project. Located adjacent to the proposed recreation trail, approximately midway from the town Center and the Lake Lure Post Office, these sites provide an excellent opportunity for mini park development. Another site for a potential mini park includes the area along the lake near the US 64/74A and NC 9 intersection. This site provides opportunities for passive green space and lake views as you enter into the town.

Size Criteria:

Mini parks are generally between 2,500-square- feet and one acre in size. Anything larger would be considered a neighborhood park. The selection criteria for mini parks include the need for access from the surrounding area and linkages to adjacent trail and sidewalk systems.

Mini Park Development:

Generally, the design criterion for a mini park is often dictated by the site location, topography and recreational activities that are proposed to be included.

Typical Mini-Park (up to 1 acre)

- Playground
- Open Space Area/Nature Exploration Area
- Picnic Area

Neighborhood Parks:

Neighborhood parks are the basic units of the comprehensive park system and should be developed for both active and passive

recreation. Neighborhood parks should be designed to create a sense of place and belonging to the specific neighborhood(s).

Location Criteria:

A neighborhood park should be centrally located in its service area. These service areas should radiate approximately up to a half-mile in distance around the park. The distances might vary due to topography and population density. In Lake Lure, it would be advantageous to consider developing neighborhood parks in accordance with future development patterns. As more neighborhoods are built, the need for public recreation facilities will increase.

Size Criteria:

The general rule is that neighborhood parks are between 5 –15 acres in size. This size is denoted as large enough to host a variety of formal recreational opportunities and programs. The primary component for selection of neighborhood parks is the location within the town's context. It is imperative that a neighborhood park be easily accessible by the immediate neighborhood. Traffic and sidewalk availability affects the determination of a neighborhood park.

Neighborhood Park Uses:

As stated by Mertes and Hall, development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive park uses. Active recreational facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner. Neighborhood parks are not intended to be used for highly programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking and congestion.

Menus of potential active recreation facilities include play structures, court games, informal play space, ball fields, tennis courts, volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts, and horseshoe areas. Facilities for passive activities include trails, picnic/seating areas and open space. As a general rule, active recreation facilities should consume roughly 50% of the park's acreage. The remaining 50% should be used for passive activities.

Typical Neighborhood Park (5-15 acres)

- Ball Field
- Walking Path (half-mile)
- Basketball Court
- Picnic Area
- Playground

- Open Space Area/Nature Exploration Area

Community Parks:

Community parks are larger than neighborhood parks and provide activities catering to larger quantities of people. Community parks are often the focal point of the local park system.

Location Criteria:

A community park should service a majority of the town's population and should be easily accessible via major roads. The service area should not exceed three miles in radius. The community park should also be located in an area that can easily be connected to various planned and existing trails and greenway systems. One potential area in Lake Lure for a community park would be along the NC 9 corridor near the municipal golf course.

Size Criteria:

Generally, the size of a community park is from 20 acres to 60 acres. Its actual size should be based on community need, desired program options and land availability. When developing a community park, certain features should be taken into consideration. Proper location within the community as well as appropriate environmental context is necessary. Ease of access throughout the community is needed, as well as a centrally located place within the existing park framework.

Community Park Uses:

A menu of potential active recreation facilities include large play structures and/or creative play attractions, informal ball fields for youth play, tennis courts, volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts, horseshoe areas, ice skating rinks, and swimming pools. Passive recreation facilities include an extensive network of internal trails, individual and group picnic areas, open space/nature areas, and ornamental gardens. Facilities for cultural activities, such as plays and concerts, are also appropriate for a community park. In most communities golf courses are not included in the community park menu. However, Lake Lure could elect to designate its 9-hole municipal golf course part of the community park menu if so desired.

Currently, Morse Park functions as a Community Park within the Town of Lake Lure, but without a variety of sport field facilities normally associated with a typical community park. The location along the lake, array of attractions and its size, makes this park a popular destination for all residents.

Typical Community Park Menu (20-60 acres):

- 1 Little League Field
- 1 Softball Field
- 1 Baseball Field
- 1 Soccer/Multi-Purpose Field
- 1 Playground
- 2 Basketball Courts
- 2 Tennis Courts
- Picnic Area
- Walking Path/Trail (1-mile)
- Open Space Area/Nature Exploration Area (1 acre min.)

Natural Useable Public Open Space/Greenspace:

Natural Usable Public Open Space/Greenspace areas are natural places provided by the town, which are accessible and useable by the general public and can be included as a component of other park classifications. These areas are part of an open/greenspace network which provides opportunities for passive recreation pursuits. Recreation space is often misinterpreted and cited as open space use and vice versa. Actually, open space is any space not occupied by a built structure. Often, non-useable open space skews park analyses by including non-usable recreation land limited by its location and natural characteristics. The Usable Public Open Space/Greenspace category is designated for natural settings that are identified and suitable for public use. This classification is important to limit land dedications for recreation that do not provide adequate opportunities for recreation use. A program to develop additional natural useable open space as part of Morse Park along the riverside is currently being discussed by the Parks and Recreation Board.

Location Criteria:

Public open space and greenspace can take a variety of shapes and sizes. This type of space can range from expansive natural areas to a small urban green space. It is important to note that open/green spaces provide key connecting nodes in an efficient and effective greenway network.

Size Criteria:

Public open space can be developed on a variety of land sizes and shapes. It is important to note that strategic location is more often a primary factor in acquisition than is size. Once again, location and availability are keys for the development of natural usable public open/greenspace. The practical limit of acreage set



Multi-Use Trail Greenway



Soft Surface Trail Greenway

aside under this classification is in resource quality, availability, development consideration and acquisition costs.

Usable Open/Greenspace Uses:

A variety of passive uses, as well as environmental benefits, can be provided within these types of parks. Passive recreation can range from picnicking to hiking to nature tours and dog walking. Passive parks are used within their surrounding contexts whether urban or natural. Often, environmental concepts can be incorporated into these parks, including wetland mitigation and natural habitat preservation.

Greenways:

Greenways can serve a variety of functions and uses within the park and recreation environment. They can tie park components together to form a cohesive park, recreation and open space system. They also can establish natural habitat corridors and flood relief. When greenways become structured and designed, they can offer pedestrian and biking opportunities within the community and provide alternatives to conventional transportation. Greenways also have been proven to enhance adjacent properties and become a central focus for relocation and attracting new residents. Greenways and usable open space, as mentioned above, are similar in some aspects. For greenways, the emphasis is on trail usage and connections as opposed to the nodal points of destination as seen in usable public open space.

Location Criteria:

Land availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining location. "Natural" greenways generally follow suitable natural resource areas. Man-made greenways are corridors that are built as part of development projects or during renovation of old development areas. Man-made greenways, include residential subdivisions, revitalized river fronts, abandoned railroad beds, old industrial sites, safe power line rights-of-way, pipeline easements, road rights-of-way, etc" Since greenways are the preferred way to get people from their homes and into the parks, adjacency to development areas and parks is important. The town center walkway is a specific example of a man-made greenway within Lake Lure. This walkway connects residents to shopping and attractions along the lake edge.

The location of greenways is integral to the trail system plan and in some cases they can also be considered light traffic facilities. There are great opportunities to expand and develop Lake Lure's

greenway system. Expanding the town center walkway is one opportunity that needs to be explored further.

Size Criteria:

According to Mertes and Hall, location, resource availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining the width of greenway corridors. Although corridor width can be as little as 25 feet in a subdivision, 50 feet is usually considered the minimum. Widths over 200 feet are considered optimal. Natural corridors are generally sought out for greenway development. Often this is not feasible for a community. Man-made greenways are then designed and built to fill this void. It is important to note that greenways due to physical attributes may not always connect. Town infrastructure should continue to bring the park system together by filling the gaps and voids between parks, trails and designated greenways with appropriate sidewalks and urban bikeways.

Greenway Uses:

Greenways can be designed and developed for numerous reasons. Some of the most prominent activities include hiking, walking, jogging, bicycling and in-line skating. Greenways can begin to change recreation behaviors and transportation demands by exposing new recreation and transportation options for the local residents.

Currently the Town of Lake Lure provides most of its non-user fee public recreation offerings around its town center in the form of Morse Park, the town's existing community park facility and the town center walkway. Lake Lure is also developing a future mini park at the intersections of US 64/74A and NC 9 to help provide passive recreation opportunities at key locations. As the recreation land grows in Lake Lure, it is important to further study areas that are currently underserved by non-fee based public park and recreation facilities. Future facility expansion efforts need to be studied in detail to provide for efficient and effective locations for future recreation service offerings and to meet the level of service (LOS) goals described in the previous section.

Recreation Facility Level of Service

The following table highlights the current recreation facility level of service in Lake Lure. Understanding that Lake Lure's population fluctuates greatly during the season, the table identifies facility service based on a 1,000-person population and a 5,000-person population. The following list of facilities to

population ratios was generated from the 1990 Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines; Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association, and by North Carolina standards issued by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. This section is a general guide that highlights current service issues in regards to recreational facilities and does not include boating activities on the lake.

If the Town of Lake Lure chooses to deliver recreation service based on a 5,000-population standard, the town would need to develop the following facilities within the next 20 years in order to provide a comprehensive menu of recreation facilities that serve full-time residents, part-time residents and additional tourists at peak seasonal populations.

- 1 Baseball Field
- 1 Multi-Purpose/Soccer Field
- 1 Volleyball Court
- 1 Large Playground
- 1 Small Playground
- 2 Miles of Trails (1.3 miles currently planned-town center walkway)

The above recreation facilities could easily be accommodated within the framework of the 28 acres of recommended future municipal park land to be developed within the next 20 years.

Table 5.2: Facility Level of Service

Facility	National Standard (quantity/pop.)	State (NCDENR) Standard	Existing Facilities	Need @ 1,000 Population (State)	Need @ 5,000 Population includes existing facilities (State)
Baseball Field	1/5000	n/a	0	0	1 (National Standard)
Soccer /Multi Purpose Field	1/10000	1/5000	0	0	1
Football Field	1/20000	1/20000	0	0	0
Basketball Court	1/5000	1/5000	1	0	0
Tennis Court	1/2000	1/2000	2	0	0
Volleyball Court	1/5000	1/5000	0	0	1
Large Rec. Center (Gym)	1/25000	1/25000	0	0	0
Small Rec. Center (No Gym)	1/10000	1/10000	0	0	0
Playground	1/2000	1/2000	1	0	1.5
Picnic Shelter	1/2000	1/2000	2	0	0
Swimming Pool (Lake Beach)	1/20000	1/20000	1	0	0
Trails - Miles	1/region	.4/1000	1.3	.4	2
Golf Course	1/25000	1/25000	1	0	0

5.3 Summary of Issues and Opportunities

- Currently, the town functions at a lower park level of service during peak seasons when part-time residents come back to Lake Lure and weekly tourists reside in the various rental homes and apartments.
- The town has not developed a variety of parks that are geographically located and sensitive to population service areas. Currently, all of the town's public recreation land is located near the town center.
- As pointed out in various public input forums, there is a need to connect open spaces and parks via trails, greenways and sidewalks. According to the visitor's center, there has been a consistent interest in hiking trails by residents and tourists. The need for pedestrian safety throughout Lake Lure has been raised by the steering committee and citizens. It has also been

identified that an opportunity exists to use recently planned and future trails to connect to open space and park areas as part of a town-wide greenway system.

- Making local parks a viable component to the tourism economy is another opportunity identified in the public process. Capitalizing on park actives around the town center and future developable nodes presents an opportunity to integrate public recreation into the tourism economy. This is an opportunity to increase special events offerings to further compliment the local tourism economy.
- Lake Lure has the opportunity to build on successful planning efforts such as the town center walkway as catalyst for developing a comprehensive system of pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- Currently, the town does not have a specific parks, recreation and special events department within its existing organizational framework. In order to capitalize on the tremendous potential for the development and expansion of the current park system, it has been identified that a stand alone department is worthy of consideration. Recently, the parks and recreation board has been reactivated after a period of inactivity and could help direct the growth and development of future park and recreation services and facilities.

5.4 Goals, Objectives and Policies

PR Goal 1: A town-wide system of parks, recreation facilities and open space interconnected by trails, greenways and sidewalks.

Objectives PR-1-1: Develop and adopt a Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan by the year 2008. *This will help define a specific plan of action for new parks, trails and open space development based on public recreation needs and community input. The plan should include detailed analysis of funding opportunities, potential partnerships, information and communication efforts, analysis of existing and future facilities and potential linkages.*

Policy PR-1-1.1:

Complete a town-wide parks, recreation, trails and open space plan and execute strategic steps to accomplish its objectives.

(1) Acquire parkland in accordance to the park and recreation plan in advance and in conjunction with local development.

(2) Evaluate the feasibility of fee in lieu and/or land dedication efforts for the acquisition and development of future public park land.

(3) Develop a “purchase of development rights” program that can preserve future parks and open space.

Objective PR-1-2: Establish a permanent, ongoing source of funding for recreation programming, operations and maintenance, as well as park acquisition and development to further expand the town-wide park and recreation system.

Policy PR-1-2.1:

Dedicate a portion of capital improvements program funds specifically for park and recreation projects.

(1) Evaluate the proposed parks, recreation, trails and open space plan recommended capital projects and strategically determine which projects are achievable in the short, mid, and long-term based on town support and financial capabilities.

Policy PR-1-2.2:

Evaluate all potential sources of funding for park development and recreation planning projects.

(1) Explore opportunities to secure funding from state and federal park, recreation and trail grants.

(2) Apply for PARTF Grant Funding – *The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) program provides dollar-for-dollar grants to local governments. Recipients use the grant to acquire land and/or to develop parks and recreational projects that serve the general public. Source: Park and Recreation Trust Fund Grant Application.*

Objective PR-1-3: Establish and maintain optimal amounts of formal recreation-based parkland.

Policy PR-1-3.1:

Acquire and develop park acreage shown as net park and recreation space, exclusive of riparian corridors, wetlands, steep topography, heavily wooded areas and other beneficial natural areas.

(1) Aggressively pursue conservation easements either through fee simple purchase, purchase of development rights program or voluntary donations.

(2) Explore and utilize all forms of parkland acquisition, such as fee simple purchase, leasing, property transfers, trades, easements, joint agreements, and private donations to help acquire future park land.

PR Goal 2: Park development that meets the needs of existing, future and peak seasonal populations.

Objective PR-2-1: Develop facilities and programs to be universally accessible to all people regardless of physical ability, financial welfare, and residency.

Policy PR-2-1.1:

Create new recreation facilities and programs that are designed in accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

(1) Ensure the parks, recreation, trails and open space plan includes facilities and programming recommendation designed for all age groups.

Objective PR-2-2: Develop a variety of future public recreation program offerings based on current and future recreation demand

Policy PR-2-2.1:

Adopt LOS standard for recreation parkland at a minimum of 10 acres of park land for every 1,000 full and part time residents.

- (1) Establish and maintain approximately 28 additional acres of park land to service a population of 5,000 (full -time residents, part-time residents and visitors).
- (2) Develop park and recreation facilities that are strategically located throughout the town based on LOS radii.
- (3) Provide recreation facilities and programs that appeal to full-time residents, part-time residents and visitors.
- (4) Develop recreation facilities that can be used year-round, as well as have the capacity to host recreation activities during peak seasonal demand.

Policy PR-2-2.2:

Develop a level of service standard for individual recreation facilities based on ratios of facility type per number of full and part-time resident populations combined.

- (1) Formally classify all existing parks and develop a classification hierarchy for future park development.
- (2) Adopt a park facility level of service measure to ensure a wide variety of individual recreation facilities (tennis courts, baseball fields etc.) are developed within future parks to meet the needs of both full and part-time residents.

Policy PR-2-2.3:

Recognize and plan for potential shifts in demographics and their impact on recreation needs.

- (1) Consider the potential for future demographic changes and how they will affect the utilization of park space and facilities as outlined in the parks, recreation, trails and open space plan.

Policy PR-2-2.4:

Develop a recreation programming action plan as part of a parks, recreation, trail and open space plan.

- (1) Coordinate recreation programming expansion efforts with new park development.
- (2) Coordinate recreation programs with other jurisdictions to provide comprehensive, complimentary and efficient recreation programming opportunities.
- (3) Adopt a benefit-based recreation program philosophy for all programming activities and implement a recreation cost recovery pricing model for all program offerings.
- (4) Provide appropriate and all inclusive recreational programs for all genders, ages, and levels of skill and ability.
- (5) Develop a specific recreational programming strategy and conceptual development plan for each new park site

Policy PR-2-2.5:

Develop multi-use trails to provide access to parks and open space and to meet demands for walking, hiking, running and biking.

- (1) Prepare a trail system assessment to establish a hierarchy of trails, bicycle and pedestrian facilities in accordance with NC DOT standards as well as a prioritization schedule of all future trail projects such as future trail corridors leading from the proposed Hickory Nut Gorge State Park to the Town Center. (See *Transportation / Circulation* section.)

PR Goal 3: An integrated community park and recreation system that enhances the local tourism economy year-round.

Objective PR-3-1: Utilize public recreation to attract additional visitors and to become an integral part of the local tourism economy.

Policy PR-3-1.1:

Develop a community-based recreation tourism strategy to complement regional tourism attractions in order to provide additional strength for the local economy.

Policy PR-3-1.2:

Optimize existing and future community recreation facilities to complement the variety of unique recreation offerings in the region.

Policy PR-3-1.3:

Collaborate with private recreation providers to expand recreational opportunities and program offerings.

Policy PR-3-1.4:

Collaborate with area counties and the state to develop regional recreation offerings.

Objective PR-3-2: Educate the public on how parks and recreation efforts can benefit both healthy lifestyles and the Lake Lure's tourism industry.

Policy PR-3-2.1:

Develop an education program that highlights the quality of life benefits of becoming active in local parks and recreation offerings.

Policy PR-3-2.2:

Develop an education program depicting how future parks and recreation improvements can complement and enhance the local tourism economy.

Objective PR-3-3: Establish a Parks, Recreation and Special Events Director if warranted by future staff planning study.

Policy PR-3-3.1:

Continue to use the existing Parks Advisory Board to help coordinate future park and recreation expansion efforts.

(1) Hire a director whose basic duties include planning, organizing, and executing community events, recreation programs, services, and will be held accountable for park planning and park development, and ongoing capital improvements to park and recreation facilities in concert with Public Works and Community Development.

(2) Create a yearly funding source from the capital budget for the Parks, Recreation and Special Event Department operations.