



---

# 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

---



---

Pender County Department of Planning and  
Community Development

---

# 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

*Adopted June 21, 2010 by the Pender County Board of Commissioners*

## *Acknowledgements*

### **Board of Commissioners**

Jimmy Tate – Chairman  
Norwood Blanchard – Vice-Chairman  
George Brown  
F. D. Rivenbark  
David Williams, Jr.

### **County Manager**

Rick Benton

### **County Attorney**

Carl “Trey” Thurman III

### **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board**

Terry Lanning – Chairwoman  
Roy Brandenburg Jr.  
Wilfred Nixon  
David Piepmeyer  
Jimmy Roughton  
Barbara “Bobbie” Smith  
Rick Winn

### **Planning Board**

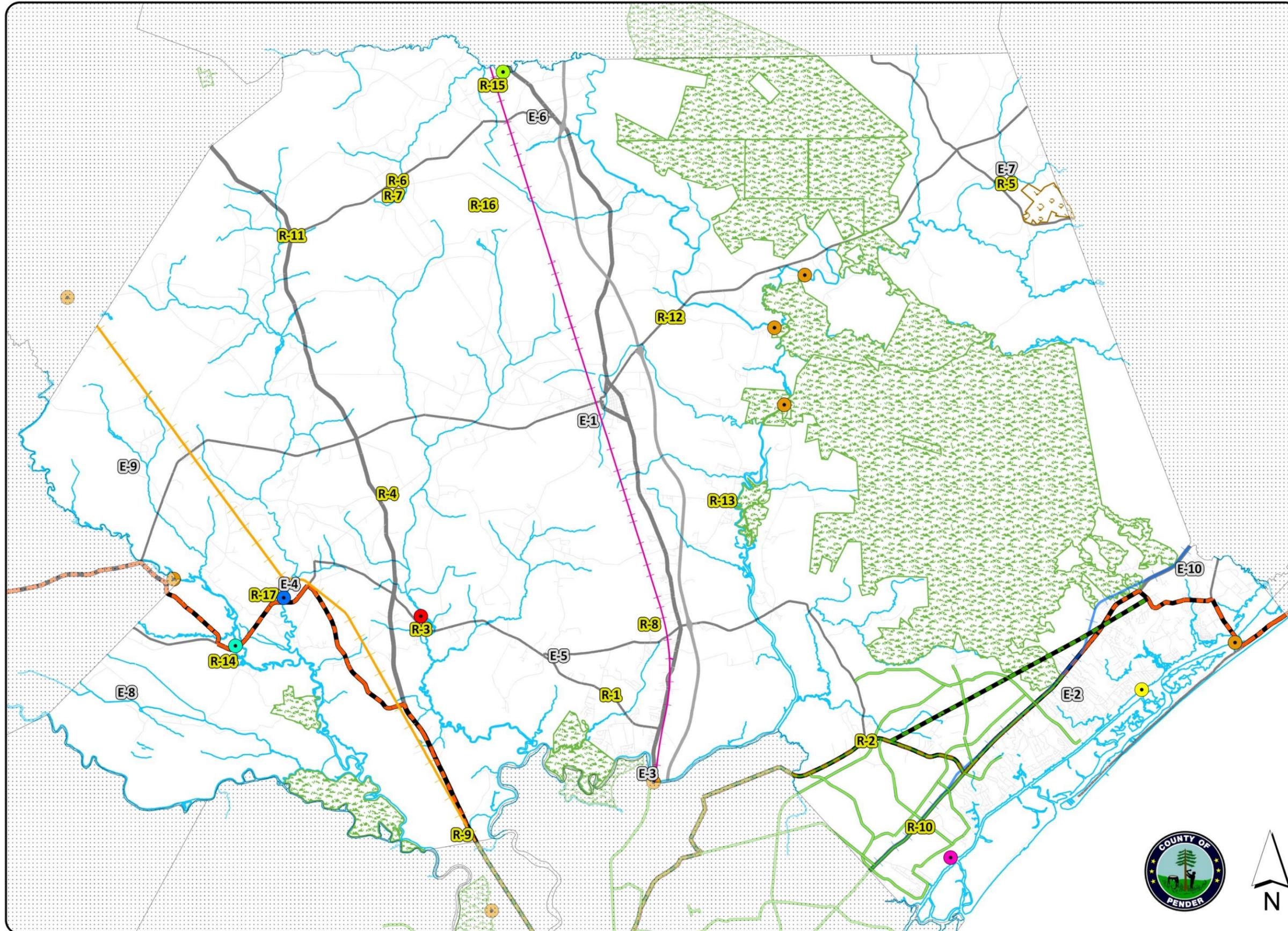
Kevin Reynolds – Chairman  
Rick Garrett – Vice-Chairman  
Malcom Boney  
William P. Marshburn  
Burt Millette  
Christopher Smith  
Hiram Williams

### **Department of Planning and Community Development Staff**

Patrick Davenport, Director  
Ken Vafier, Senior Planner  
Kyle Breuer, Planner II  
Ashley Frank, Planner II  
Dee Turner, Planner II – Parks and Recreation  
Ben Andrea, Planner I

**The Citizens of Pender County**

# Existing, Planned, and Recommended Parks and Recreation Opportunities



**Existing and Planned Parks and Recreation Facilities**

**Existing County-Managed/Partnered Facilities**

- E-1 Pender Memorial Park
- E-2 Hampstead Kiwanis Park
- E-3 Millers Pond Park

**Existing and Planned State-Managed Facilities**

- NC WRC Public Water Access Areas (Existing)
- NC WRC Public Water Access Area (Planned)
- NC DOT Bicycle Routes
- ▨ NC DPR Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area
- ▨ NC WRC Game Lands

**Existing Federally-Managed Facilities**

- E-4 Moores Creek National Battlefield

**Existing and Planned Private Community Centers**

- E-5 Joint Community Development Center
- E-6 Willard Outreach Organization
- E-7 Maple Hill Resource Center
- E-8 Canetuck Community Center
- E-9 Caswell Community Center (Planned)
- E-10 Edgecomb Community Center

**Recommended Parks and Recreation Facilities**

**Recommended County-Managed/Partnered Facilities**

- R-1 Cape Fear Neighborhood Park
- R-2 Island Creek Neighborhood Park
- R-3 Long Creek Community Park
- R-4 Malpass Corner Community Park
- R-5 Maple Hill Community Park
- R-6 Penderlea Community Center
- R-7 Penderlea Community Park
- R-8 Rocky Point Regional Park
- R-9 Sand Ridge Neighborhood Park
- R-10 Scotts Hill Community Park
- R-11 Shiloh Community Park
- R-12 Six Forks Neighborhood Park
- R-13 Stag Park Neighborhood Park
- R-14 Still Bluff Community Park
- R-15 Willard Community Park
- R-16 Cameron Agriculture and Environmental Education Facility
- R-17 Moores Creek Nature Center

**Recommended Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements**

- Coastal Pender Greenway
- Coastal Pender Rail-Trail
- Central Pender Rail-Trail
- West Pender Rail-Trail
- WMPPO-Recommended Bike/Ped Improvements

**Recommended Public Water Access Areas**

- Black River Water Access
- Long Creek Water Access
- Moores Creek Water Access
- Rockfish Creek Water Access
- Scotts Hill Intracoastal Waterway Access

# Contents

Introduction .....	1
Demographic Profile .....	3
Population Trends.....	3
Comparison with Surrounding Counties.....	4
Population by Age .....	5
Population by Zip Code .....	6
Households by Income.....	6
Ethnic Profile.....	8
Transportation .....	8
Employment and Education.....	9
Annual Building Permits.....	10
Summary .....	10
Public Input .....	11
Public Meeting Findings.....	11
Summary of Comments from Individual Public Input Meetings.....	11
General Summary of Public Input Meeting Comments .....	15
Community Survey Findings.....	16
Program and Activity Preferences .....	16
Facility and Program Priorities .....	17
Program Participation .....	17
Satisfaction with Programs .....	18
Park Usage.....	18
Willingness to Contribute to Improving Park Maintenance and Programming .....	18
Funding for Capital Improvements .....	19
Marketing.....	19
Program Registration .....	20
Respondent Demographics.....	20
General Summary of Public Input Survey Results.....	22
Summary of Public Input.....	22
Department Organization and Analysis .....	23
Existing Organizational Structure.....	23
Future Organizational Recommendations .....	24
General Department Issues .....	25
Facility Needs .....	25

Staff Mentoring and Education Recommendations.....	26
Planning and Maintenance Districts .....	26
Marketing and Public Outreach .....	26
Partnerships .....	27
Natural Areas .....	27
Organization Recommendations Summary .....	27
Programming Assessment and Recommendations .....	29
Benefits of Recreational Programming.....	29
Personal Benefits .....	29
Social Benefits.....	29
Economic Benefits.....	29
Environmental Benefits.....	29
Programs and Services Overview.....	30
Core Services Analysis.....	30
Partnerships and Alternative Providers .....	31
Partnership Analysis.....	31
Alternative Providers .....	32
Recreation Trends.....	32
Population-Based Programming .....	32
Activity-Based Programming.....	33
Programming Recommendations Summary.....	34
Facility Assessment and Recommendations.....	35
NRPA Guidelines .....	35
Mini Park.....	35
Neighborhood Park.....	35
Community Park.....	35
Regional Park .....	35
Special-Use Park.....	37
Natural Resource Area/Preserve .....	37
Greenways .....	38
School Park.....	38
Private Park/Recreation Facility.....	38
Diversity of Public Recreation Opportunities.....	38
Individual Parks and Recreation Facility Assessments.....	39
Pender County Facilities.....	40

Municipal Facilities.....	45
Federal Facilities.....	52
State Facilities .....	53
Private Facilities .....	57
Community Centers .....	57
Pender County School Facilities.....	63
Select Other Private Facilities .....	63
Facility Standards and Distribution .....	64
NRPA and Community-Based Standards.....	64
Existing and Planned Park Classifications and Service Areas .....	67
Service Areas for Recommended Parks .....	68
General Park Evaluations, Observations, and Recommendations.....	69
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) .....	69
Playground Safety Standards .....	71
Vandalism.....	71
Facility Design Standards .....	71
Facility Recommendations.....	73
Recommended Park Expansions and Improvements .....	73
Recommended New County-Managed Facilities.....	75
Recommended New County-Partnered Facilities.....	90
Recommended Greenways, Trails, and Other Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements .....	93
Recommended Public Water Access Facilities.....	100
Facility Recommendations Summary.....	102
Budget Analysis and Recommendations.....	103
Current Budget Analysis.....	103
Overall Budget.....	103
Budget Comparisons .....	103
Budget Recommendations.....	106
Recommendations Summary .....	106
Funding Recommendations .....	107
Current Funding Sources and Recommendations .....	107
Current Funding Methods.....	107
Alternative Funding Methods .....	108
Regulatory Tools .....	108
Naming Rights .....	112

Revenue Bonds.....	113
Partnerships .....	113
Grant Opportunities.....	113
Sources for Funding Information .....	121
Funding Recommendations Summary .....	122
Appendix .....	123
Public Input Survey Results .....	123
Public Input Survey .....	165
Public Meeting Sign-in Sheets.....	167
Facility Matrices .....	173
Sample Consent Form/Release .....	176
Related Media Coverage .....	178
Works Cited.....	187

## Introduction

Pender County, a traditional rural and agriculture community, offers county residents limited various recreational opportunities. However, as the population increases and demand for parks and recreation facilities and opportunities intensifies, it is imperative that Pender County initiate development of new parks and recreation facilities as well as enhance existing facilities.

Park and recreation facilities and programs provide a variety of economic, social and health benefits for a community. Parks provide an opportunity for stress relief, exercise, social interaction, and offer a place for families and friends to spend time together. Communities with adequate parks and recreation opportunities are generally more highly valued and are more desired locations for development of homes, neighborhoods, businesses and industry.

As population increases, the demand for parks and recreation facilities also increases. Pender County has been one of the fastest growing counties in North Carolina. Due to its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and the fast growing Wilmington metropolitan region, the county has attracted dramatic population increases since 1990. The NC State Data Center projects population growth for Pender County at 96.1% from 2000 to 2030 – the 11<sup>th</sup> fastest projected growth rate in NC. At the 2000 Census, Pender County ranked 58<sup>th</sup> in population among the 100 counties within the state. If NC State Data Center population growth rates hold true, Pender County will increase to the 39<sup>th</sup> most populous county by the year 2030.

Pender County is currently significantly deficient in public recreational acreage and facility inventory. The 2009-2013 North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) indicates that Pender County ranks 66<sup>th</sup> or below out of the 100 North Carolina counties in 13 out of 14 park and recreation opportunity types, including 99<sup>th</sup> in playgrounds, 97<sup>th</sup> in basketball courts, 96<sup>th</sup> in picnic shelters, and 95<sup>th</sup> in tennis courts. These deficiencies are further reflected in the *Regional Growth Management Plan* prepared by North Carolina's Eastern Region Military Growth Task Force, which indicates that an additional 8-10 acres of neighborhood parks, 13 acres of community parks, and 25-127 acres of district parks are needed just to address the park acreage needed to support the projected military-induced growth in Pender County.

As population continues to increase in Pender County, the landscape of the county will shift from a rural character to a more urban one. As such, the land available for parks and recreation within the county will decrease as development occurs to accommodate the population growth. Without an increase in parks and recreation areas and facilities, existing facilities will become increasingly crowded and negatively impacted by use and surrounding development. New areas need to be identified and steps taken to acquire them prior to their being impacted by or lost to development.

Recognizing the importance to accommodate the recreational needs of current county residents and visitors and adequately plan for future users, the Department of Planning and Community Development initiated a project in 2009 to evaluate existing parks and recreational opportunities, recommend new facilities and improvements and identify possible funding for the recommendations, evaluate the partnerships with private recreational providers, and evaluate the budget, operations, and structure of parks and recreation staff and responsibilities and recommend areas for improvements. The result of the project is the 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Several plans and documents have been prepared in the past that also address parks and recreational opportunities and recommendations, all of which were considered in the creation of this document. These include the *1993 Pender County Waterfront Access Plan*, the *1998 Pender County Recreation and Open Space Plan*, and the *Coastal Pender Collector Street Plan*. Additionally, several other plans and projects were strongly considered during the creation of this plan, including the parks and recreation plans for the towns of Surf City and Burgaw and also the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization's *Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan* and *Bicycle Facilities Study for the Blue Clay Corridor*.

The facilities recommended in this plan were developed based on a variety of information and criteria, including existing service areas, existing park acreage, existing facilities, guidelines set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association, public input, existing county-owned property, user demand, existing and projected population trends, and other factors. Overall, the recommendations were crafted to plan for new facilities that will provide a variety of

recreational opportunities to meet a broad spectrum of users in all areas of the county, and include a total of three park expansions and improvements, one mini-park, five neighborhood parks, seven community parks, one regional park, four new county-partnered facilities, a variety of bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and new public water access areas to the Intracoastal Waterway, the Black River, Moores Creek, and Rockfish Creek. Each of these new facilities was recommended to alleviate the current deficits that exist within the county's parks system, and provide an improved quality of life to the residents and visitors of Pender County.

Public input is a major component of this document. During the project, a public input survey was available to county residents for eleven weeks. This survey was distributed in paper form through a variety of businesses, offices, organizations, and meetings; an online version of the survey was also available for county resident and publicized through emails, the county's website, newspaper articles, and other methods. Public surveys were also distributed at the six public input meetings that were held throughout the county during January and February, at which time further input was gathered from county residents through town-hall type discussion. In total, 327 surveys were returned and over 80 people came to the public input meetings, all contributing to the public input considered for the plan's recommendations. Lastly, the final draft of the plan was made available for public review and comment for a period of three weeks prior to the plan being supported by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, the Planning Board, and the Board of County Commissioners.

This plan is designed to analyze the existing and future conditions of parks and recreation supply and demand in Pender County, the operations related to parks and recreation, and to make recommendations for new facilities, programs, and improvements. The facilities recommended in this plan are not prioritized; a prioritization system based on a variety of criteria shall be created following this plan to prioritize the recommended facilities and improvements. Additionally, this plan is designed to have a 10-year lifespan, with a major update in 2015 and subsequent minor updates annually or as needed.

This plan also serves several additional purposes and intentions. For county residents and visitors, this plan provides an overview of the existing parks and recreational opportunities that are available within the county, and also provides existing and future residents and visitors an overview of the expectations for future facilities and opportunities. Additionally, this plan provides the justification to elected officials for budget requests, and also to grantors for validation and justification of funding requests. This plan should also be utilized when reviewing land use and development project proposals to capture opportunities to enable developer participation in parks and recreation development within the county. Finally, providing a plan for future parks and recreational services and facilities may attract new businesses, industrial development, and county residents.

In summary, Pender County currently has very limited parks and recreation facilities and opportunities and is experiencing trends that will continue to increase demand for such facilities. The 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan is designed to serve as the blueprint for meeting the increasing demand, and demonstrates that Pender County is committed to address that demand by acquiring, developing, and improving parks and recreation facilities for the social, health, economic, and quality of life benefits to its residents.

## Demographic Profile

In order for a county to identify its parks and recreation needs, it is necessary to understand the county's current and future park users through a thorough review and analysis of the county's demographics. By clearly understanding the makeup of the current park users, as well as how the county's growth patterns and demographic trends will affect the composition of the future park users, the county may properly create a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to ensure that park and recreation development will address the needs of the residents of Pender County.

Pender County's geographical makeup is unique in that there is not one large city that dominates growth patterns, but rather several small-sized towns and unincorporated areas, each with its own demographic profile. The coastal area of the county is comprised of the beach-front communities of Topsail Beach and Surf City, as well as the unincorporated area of Hampstead. The Town of Topsail Beach was incorporated in 1963, and had 5.8 square miles within its corporate limits in the 2000 Census. Topsail Beach had a population of 471 in the 2000 Census, and in 2007 the estimated population had grown to 573, a 22% population increase. The Town of Surf City was incorporated in 1949, and had 5.3 square miles within its corporate limits in the 2000 census. Surf City experienced a 30% population increase from 2000 to 2007, increasing from 1,393 to 1,913 during that time period. Hampstead is an unincorporated area located on US Highway 17, nearly eighteen miles from the City of Wilmington. Hampstead has historically been a rural agricultural and fishing community; however, the area has had significant residential and commercial growth in recent years.

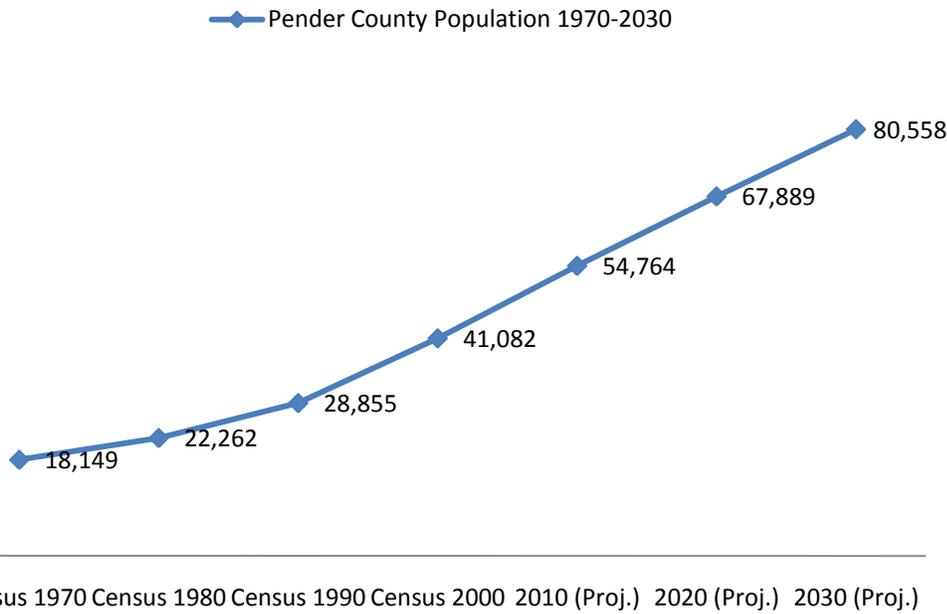
The inland areas of the county include many populated places, both incorporated and unincorporated. The Town of Burgaw is the county seat and located in the center of the county. Burgaw was incorporated in 1879, and had approximately 3.5 miles within its corporate limits in the 2000 census. Burgaw has experienced a 22% population increase from 2000 to 2007, with an estimated 2007 population of over 4,000. The Village of St. Helena incorporated in 1921 and had 5.7 square miles within its corporate limits in the 2000 census. From 2000 to 2007, St. Helena's population grew 24% to 489. The Town of Watha is located north of Burgaw, and was incorporated in 1875. Watha reported 0.9 square miles within its corporate limits in 2000, and experienced a 36% population increase from 151 to 205 during the time period from 2000 to 2007. The Town of Atkinson is located near the western boundary of Pender County, and was incorporated in 1883. In the 2000 Census, Atkinson had approximately 1.0 square miles within its corporate limits, and reported a population of 236 in 2000, which only increased by 4 people from 2000 to 2007. The county's unincorporated inland areas are significantly geographically dispersed, and include, among others, Currie, Malpass Corner, Maple Hill, Penderlea, Rocky Point, Scotts Hill, and Willard.

Collectively, Pender County's demographic profile is unique and interesting. It is important to understand each of the individual areas within the county to best plan for future parks and recreation facilities. Pender County is poised for significant growth, and by observing historical growth trends as well as the characteristics of the population, the county will be able to adequately plan to meet the parks and recreation needs of present and future Pender County residents and visitors. Additionally, it is recommended that subsequent updates to this plan take into consideration future available data, including the 2010 Census.

## Population Trends

Pender County has been one of the fastest growing counties in North Carolina, catalyzed in part by the county's proximity to the fast growing City of Wilmington, as well as the increasingly desirable coastal areas along the Atlantic Ocean. Since 1990, Pender County has seen impressive growth, as strongly demonstrated by the dramatic growth rates of the incorporated areas within the county. The towns of Burgaw, Surf City, and Watha experienced growth rates of 125%, 97%, and 107% from 1990 to 2000, respectively, while St. Helena and Topsail Beach showed moderate growth rates of 52% and 65% during the decade. The Town of Atkinson experienced a slight decrease in population of 3.6% during this time period. Pender County as a whole showed an impressive population growth of 42.3% from 1990 to 2000. Figure 2.1 shows the growth of the county using combined estimates from the US Census and projections from the NC State Data Center.

**Figure 2.1: Pender County Population, 1970-2030**



Source: US Census ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)) and NC State Data Center (<http://sdc.state.nc.us>)

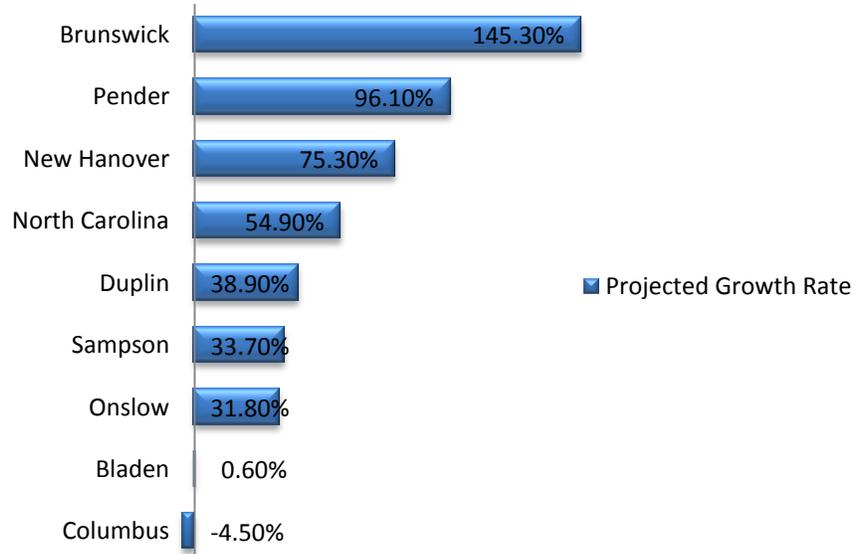
The data shown in Figure 2.1 also shows the significant population growth in the county’s history. Pender County experienced a staggering growth rate of 85% from 1980 to 2000, almost doubling the population from 22, 262 to 41, 082 people. By observing the strong growth in Pender County over recent history, it is easy to understand why the NC State Data Center projects population growth for the County at the 11<sup>th</sup> highest in North Carolina at 96.1% from 2000 to 2030. If the prediction is correct, Pender County will increase from the 58<sup>th</sup> most populated county in the state to 39<sup>th</sup> by the year 2030.

**Comparison with Surrounding Counties**

Pender County is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean on the eastern side and seven counties on the landward sides, including Onslow, New Hanover, Brunswick, Columbus, Bladen, Sampson, and Duplin Counties. Figure 2.2 compares the projected growth rates for Pender County with its surrounding counties and the state, and shows that Pender County is projected to experience above-average growth rates for the region, as well as the entire state.

While Brunswick County’s projected growth rate of 145.30% is significantly higher than the 96.10% projection for Pender County, both counties are projected for substantial growth. The two counties are similar in that they both have been traditionally rural agricultural-based communities but have become increasingly popular for new residents, desired in part for the geographic proximity to coastal resources, as well as increasing development pressure from the urban hub of Wilmington and New Hanover County.

**Figure 2.2: Projected Growth Rates for Pender and Surrounding Counties**



Source: NC State Data Center (<http://demog.state.nc.us>)

## Population by Age

Understanding the population composition by age is an important tool for planning the recreational programming for Pender County. Table 2.1 indicates which segments of the population will experience growth and which segments will decline. By evaluating the data shown in Table 2.1, it is clear that Pender County is a family-friendly place, with over 24% of the population being composed of children, youth, and teens in 2008.

Table 2.1: Population Trends by Age							
	2000	2008	% Change	2018	% Change	2028	% Change
<b>Pender County</b>	41,252	51,834	25.65%	68,223	31.62%	84,372	23.67%
<b>Age Group</b>							
0 to 4	2,408	2,666	10.71%	3,873	45.27%	4,709	21.59%
5 to 14	5,539	6,075	9.68%	7,320	20.49%	9,681	32.25%
15 to 19	2,540	3,770	48.43%	4,158	10.29%	4,949	19.02%
20 to 24	2,136	3,418	60.02%	4,434	29.72%	4,853	9.45%
25 to 34	5,358	6,207	15.85%	9,761	57.26%	12,050	23.45%
35 to 44	6,748	7,606	12.71%	8,743	14.95%	12,245	40.05%
45 to 54	6,006	7,948	32.33%	9,800	23.30%	10,896	11.18%
55 to 64	4,692	6,479	38.09%	9,093	40.35%	10,804	18.82%
65 to 74	3,528	4,393	24.52%	6,498	47.92%	8,736	34.44%
75 to 84	1,827	2,469	35.14%	3,345	35.48%	4,792	43.26%
85+	470	803	70.85%	1,198	49.19%	1,612	34.56%
<b>Preschool (0 to 4)</b>	2,408	2,666	10.71%	3,873	45.27%	4,709	21.59%
<b>Youth (5 to 14)</b>	5,539	6,075	9.68%	7,320	20.49%	9,681	32.25%
<b>Teens (15 to 19)</b>	2,540	3,770	48.43%	4,158	10.29%	4,949	19.02%
<b>Adults (20 to 54)</b>	20,248	25,179	24.35%	32,738	30.02%	40,044	22.32%
<b>Senior (55+)</b>	10,517	14,144	34.49%	20,134	42.35%	25,944	28.86%

*Source: NC State Data Center (www.osbm.state.nc.us)*

Table 2.1 indicates that each age group is projected to increase by 2028. Youth, which are considered the heaviest users of the park and recreation programs, will increase by nearly 60% from 6,075 in 2008 to 9,681 in 2028. Parks and recreation opportunities for youth including league soccer, baseball, and football playing fields and programming must be planned to accommodate the increase. Additionally, an increase in the numbers of preschool aged children of nearly 77% will require adequate planning for new playgrounds within the county. Adults, ages 20 to 54, will increase 59% to over 40,000. The senior population is also expected to exhibit a significant increase in population, increasing 83% from 14,144 to almost 26,000 in 2028. As these baby boomers age, parks and recreation departments are challenged with providing parks and recreation opportunities that adequately meet these users' needs. The seniors can be categorized as either active or sedentary; active seniors generally participate in sports such as tennis, golf, hiking, and bicycling, while less active or sedentary seniors prefer educational opportunities, day trips, and passive park activities such as concerts.

As a percentage of the overall population measured from 2000 to 2028 projections, the preschool, youth, teens, and adults all remain relatively steady. The seniors, however, will increase their percentage of the total population by 3.46% to 30.75% by 2028.

## Population by Zip Code

Pender County has a total of 71 “populated places” according to NC HomeTownLocator (<http://northcarolina.hometownlocator.com/nc/pender/>) and 8 zip codes. The zip codes are represented in Table 2.2 by their population, density of person per acre, median household income and median age. It should be noted that this table does not reflect all of the zip codes in Pender County, as several zip codes used in the county are shared with areas in neighboring counties, including 28466 (Angola Bay area) and 28411 (Scotts Hill/Sidbury Road area).

Zip Code	Nearest Community	2000 Population	Density	Median Household Income	Median Age
28421	Atkinson	1,419	23.9	\$35,294	39.4
28425	Burgaw	9,483	62.7	\$30,722	37
28435	Currie	2,378	25.7	\$25,727	35.3
28443	Hampstead	11,594	85.7	\$44,542	43.1
28454	Maple Hill	2,544	23.9	\$30,222	35.9
28457	Rocky Point	8,047	46.1	\$32,297	34.7
28445	Topsail Beach	4,717	49.3	\$36,311	41.0
28478	Watha	2,257	37.9	\$26,607	38.3
<b>Pender County</b>		41,082	47	\$35,902	38.8

*Source: NC HomeTownLocator (<http://northcarolina.hometownlocator.com/nc/pender/>)*

Table 2.2 is useful for analyzing the character of each zip code area. The areas in the coastal region of the county, including Topsail Beach and Hampstead areas, have higher than average income levels and median ages, as well as higher population densities. The coastal region of the county is an attraction for persons in higher ages with above average incomes. Rocky Point and Burgaw are very similar in

that both indicate population concentration centers, with higher densities. The Rocky Point zip code area boasts the lowest median age based on zip code in the county, indicating that this may be an attractive area for young couples and families. The Atkinson and Maple Hill areas show an identical population density number of 23.9 persons per square mile, significantly lower than the county average and typical for the rural characteristics of these areas.

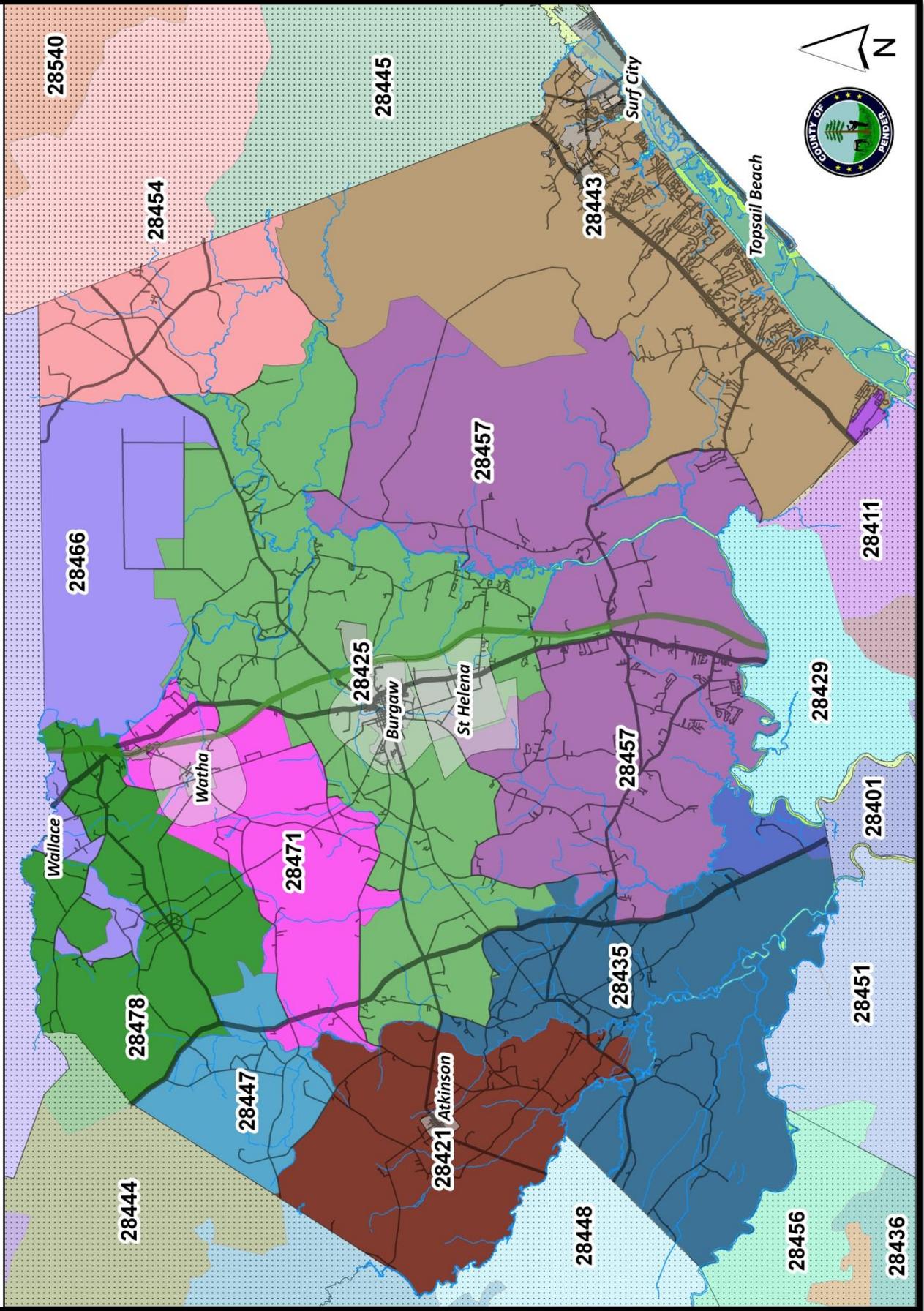
## Households by Income

Observing annual household income within the population of the county is important when considering potential user fees for parks and recreation opportunities, as well as possible additional tax levies that may be imposed on the citizens for parks and recreation funding. The average income of households in Pender County reported in the 2005 to 2007 American Community Survey by the US Census Bureau was \$50,262. Compared to the national 2008 averages of \$68,293 and the state 2008 average of \$59,181, it is apparent that income in Pender County is catching up to the state average, although still somewhat behind. Both the Pender County and state averages are significantly behind the national average, and this should be taken into consideration when calculating proposed user fees for parks and recreation.

<b>Total Households</b>	19,107
Less than \$10,000	8.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.5%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.7%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.8%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.0%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	9.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	7.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.4%
\$200,000 or more	1.0%
<b>Median income (dollars)</b>	41,845
<b>Mean income (dollars)</b>	50,562

*Source: US Census Bureau 2005-2007 American Community Survey ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))*

Figure 2.3: Zip Codes for Pender County and Surrounding Areas



## Ethnic Profile

The ethnic composition of Pender County is similar to that of the entire state of North Carolina, although Pender County is not quite as diversified as the state. Table 2.4 compares the racial composition of Pender County and North Carolina. Pender County's most prevalent race is Caucasian persons, composing nearly 80% of the entire population. African-American persons comprise a significant portion of the population at nearly 20%, and persons of Hispanic or Latino origin make up nearly 5%. Table 2.5 shows the racial composition of the population by zip code. As depicted in the table, the racial diversity of Pender County's population varies greatly by geographical region. The coastal areas of the county are significantly less diverse than the inland areas. Topsail Beach and Hampstead areas have

	<b>Pender County</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>
Caucasian persons	78.4%	74.0%
African-American persons	19.7%	21.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	0.5%	1.2%
Asian persons	0.4%	1.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	<0.5%	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races	0.9%	1.1%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin	4.9%	7.0%
White persons not Hispanic	74.2%	67.5%

*Source: US Census Bureau (www.census.gov)*

<b>Zip</b>	<b>Nearest Community</b>	<b>Caucasian</b>	<b>African-American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Other</b>
28421	Atkinson	59.1%	36.8%	2.9%	1.2%
28425	Burgaw	60.6%	34.4%	4.1%	0.9%
28435	Currie	54.3%	40.7%	3.2%	1.8%
28443	Hampstead	89.5%	8.6%	1.4%	0.5%
28454	Maple Hill	52.2%	45.8%	1.6%	0.4%
28457	Rocky Point	72%	20.1%	7.1%	0.8%
28445	Topsail Beach	93.7%	3.5%	1.8%	1%
28478	Watha	59.4%	35.8%	4%	0.8%

*Source: US Census Bureau (www.census.gov)*

large percentages of persons of Caucasian origin and fewer persons of African-American, Hispanic, or other origins. The rural communities of Currie, Maple Hill, and Watha show a higher level of diversity, with larger percentages of the population being represented by non-Caucasian persons. Rocky Point has the highest percentage of persons of Hispanic origin at 7.1%, and the towns of Burgaw and Watha are represented by around 4% Hispanic populations. Observing the racial composition of Pender County's population as a whole and by geographic area is important because the diversity may present unique recreational needs.

## Transportation

<b>Occupied housing units</b>	<b>19,107</b>	<b>100%</b>
No vehicles available	966	5.1%
1 vehicle available	5,914	31.0%
2 vehicles available	7,390	38.7%
3 or more vehicles available	4,837	25.3%

*Source: US Census Bureau 2005-2007 American Community Survey (www.census.gov)*

Table 2.6 displays the availability of vehicles at occupied housing units in Pender County. Nearly 95% of the county's population has at least one vehicle available, while around 64% of households have 2 or more vehicles. 5.1% of the respondents reported having no vehicle available in their household. Pender County currently does not have a public transportation system; however, park planning should address the public transportation access to recreation facilities. A well-planned network of greenways, trails, and bicycle lanes can also provide a route to parks and recreation facilities, as well as link together schools, shopping opportunities, and residential communities.

## Employment and Education

**Table 2.7: Workforce Composition by Industry in Pender County**

<b>Civilian employed population 16 years and over</b>	<b>20,821</b>	<b>100%</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	347	1.7%
Construction	3,412	16.4%
Manufacturing	2,419	11.6%
Wholesale trade	883	4.2%
Retail trade	3,266	15.7%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	879	4.2%
Information	327	1.6%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1,250	6.0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	1,569	7.5%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3,591	17.2%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation, and food services	1,268	6.1%
Other services, except public administration	725	3.5%
Public administration	885	4.3%
<i>Source: US Census Bureau 2005-2007 American Community Survey (www.census.gov)</i>		

Table 2.7 shows the workforce composition of Pender County's population. The largest percentage of people are employed within the educational services, health care, and social services sectors, many of which are employed by the county's largest employer Pender County Board of Education. Retail trade and construction sectors also employ significant percentages of the population at 15.7% and 16.4% respectively. Many county residents also work in the manufacturing industry, at nearly 12%. Surprisingly, only 1.7% of respondents reported to be employed in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining industries; Pender County has traditionally been an agriculture-based community.

In Table 2.8, the educational attainment of the county's 25 year old and older residents is displayed. Pender County has a higher percentage of high school graduates at 37.8% than either North Carolina or the U.S., at 30.10% and 30.60% respectively. Over 18% of the respondents reported not attaining a high school diploma or equivalent, and less than 4% of the respondents possess a graduate or professional degree.

**Table 2.8: Education Attainment for Pender County Population**

<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	<b>33,355</b>	<b>100%</b>
Less than 9th grade	2,084	6.2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	4,002	12.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	12,604	37.8%
Some college, no degree	6,637	19.9%
Associate's degree	2,775	8.3%
Bachelor's degree	3,993	12.0%
Graduate or professional degree	1,260	3.8%
Percent high school graduate or higher	81.8%	(X)
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	15.7%	(X)
<i>Source: US Census Bureau 2005-2007 American Community Survey (www.census.gov)</i>		

## Annual Building Permits

Analyzing the amount of annual building permits issued in the county is a way to assess housing market trends. Pender County had an overall growth in residential building permits of 18% between 2001 and 2008. Growth spiked 195% in 2004 and continued to increase another 19% in 2005. The county experienced dramatic decreases in building permits in 2006 and 2008, which reflect the slowing economy. Table 2.9 overviews the amounts and types of building permits issued within Pender County from 2000 to 2008.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total Units	200	206	227	447	663	793	448	454	253
Units in Single-Family Structures	200	206	227	433	637	773	448	454	253
Units in All Multi-Family Structures	0	0	0	14	26	20	0	0	0
Units in 2-unit Multi-Family Structures	0	0	0	2	14	8	0	0	0
Units in 3- and 4-unit Multi-Family Structures	0	0	0	12	7	12	0	0	0
Units in 5+ Unit Multi-Family Structures	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0

*Source: HUD – SOCDS Building Permits Database  
(<http://socds.huduser.org/permits/index.html>)*

## Summary

Pender County has experienced impressive growth over the past several decades, and is projected to continue experiencing similar growth in the future along with the other counties in the area. In Pender County, it is projected that the age groups of Preschool (0 to 4), Teens (15 to 19), and Adults (20 to 54) are projected to grow very near to the average of the entire county's growth rate while the age groups of Youth (5 to 14) and Senior (55+) are expected to grow at moderately above-average rates. Both of these groups are significant users of parks and recreation facilities, and it is imperative to plan for the increase in population of these age groups. Pender County's demographics are diversified significantly by geographical area, and it is important to understand that diverse demographics warrant diverse parks and recreation opportunities. The annual income levels in Pender County households are lower than the state and national averages, an important statistic to consider when examining potential user fees and tax levies that may be imposed for parks and recreation funding.

Pender County will continue to grow at a variety of levels including population, average household income, and education. As the county's population grows and morphs, it is important to periodically revisit these statistics in an effort to analyze how the needs of Pender County parks and recreation users are being met.

## Public Input

In order to most effectively plan for parks and recreation facility and program development in Pender County, it was necessary to gather input from county residents to understand what types of recreation they currently participate in, and what types of opportunities they would like to see in the future. Historically, parks and recreation planners utilized a series of standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association that identified the type and quantity of facilities needed in a community based on population size. However, recreational demand is unique between different communities, and therefore parks and recreation planning has shifted to planning for facilities and programs based on the needs expressed through the solicitation of public input.

The public input used to make the recommendations in this plan was gathered in several ways. A public input survey was created and distributed throughout the county which allowed for a detailed assessment of current recreation trends, user demand, and other information. Second, Planning Staff held a series of six public input meetings at a variety of locations in the county at which comments and input was collected by staff, and surveys were also distributed and collected. Finally, the final draft of this plan was distributed and available for public comment from April 27, 2010 to May 14, 2010. Planning Staff welcomed any comment regarding the plan project or Pender County parks and recreation during the creation of this plan, and contact information was widely available to the public to allow for comment submission.

## Public Meeting Findings

During January and February 2010, six public input meetings were held in five locations around the county. The meeting locations of Maple Hill, Penderlea, Hampstead, Malpass Corner, Rocky Point, and Burgaw allowed for county residents in all areas of the county to have an opportunity to attend a public input meeting near their home. More than 80 people came to the meetings to offer their input and opinions on the existing facilities and programs in Pender County, as well as their desired facilities and programs. Similar concerns and requests were mentioned at all meetings, and there was a general desire for an increase in facilities, programs, and partnerships within the county, as well as improvements to existing facilities and programs.

### Summary of Comments from Individual Public Input Meetings

The following provides a summary of the comments received at each public input meeting. Please note that these summaries represent the input gathered from attendees at the public input meetings, and not the opinions of Planning Staff.

#### *Public Input Meeting 1 – Maple Hill – January 7, 2010*

- The ball fields at the Maple Hill Resource Center are makeshift and “primitive”, and because there is no fencing often the balls roll into the street. This can be a safety problem with children going into the street to chase after the balls.
- Unless there is someone at the Resource Center to unlock the doors, the restrooms are not available. The Resource Center cannot afford full-time staff, so often the doors are locked and the restrooms are unavailable.
- The Resource Center receives very little financial assistance from Pender County, and what it does receive from the county is not a fair percentage based on what the other recreation partners receive.
- More community-oriented programs are desired.
- Facilities desired include playground equipment, walking trails, a fitness trail, benches and water fountains along walking trails, and picnic areas and shelters. Additionally, restroom facilities are desired and not portable toilets.
- It would be better to improve upon the existing Maple Hill Resource Center rather than seek new park development. Improvements could include a football field, tennis courts, and a running track.
- The park on NC Highway 41 in Duplin County is a great example of a simple park that would be beneficial and appreciated in the Maple Hill area.
- No organized leagues include the Maple Hill area. An organized adult softball league would be a great addition to the county.

- The proximity of Maple Hill to existing recreation opportunities and schools puts residents at a disadvantage. Some children generally don't get dropped off from the school bus until around 6-7pm, and there is no time left for afterschool sports or recreation. Additionally, for residents, both children and adults, to participate in recreation or go to a park, they have to drive a great distance. Because of these circumstances, children are often not able to participate in middle and high school athletics because they could not participate in the sports from an early age. This can potentially lead to drop-outs and other social problems with the youth. Many parents and grandparents drive great distances to allow for their children to participate in sports and recreational opportunities, and this creates a time and cost burden for the families that could be alleviated by providing opportunities closer to the Maple Hill area.
- Many Maple Hill community members are willing to contribute to recreation and parks through financial donations and volunteering, but assistance from the county is still needed.
- Recreational programs desired by the Maple Hill area residents include programs for both children and adults, including literacy programs, health and wellness education, exercise, first aid, and CPR classes, vocational and computer training, and cooking classes.
- Transportation is a huge impediment to program participation. Children and adults alike are often not able to travel to the available programs, and therefore cannot participate.
- The proposed Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area is an exciting opportunity for the area, and a great chance for a partnership between the county, the state, and the community to provide needed recreational facilities and opportunities.
- An events center would be a great addition to the county, not necessarily in the Maple Hill area, but would provide a venue for special events including concerts, plays, art shows, fairs and carnivals, etc.
- More families are moving to the Maple Hill area as a result of the growth of the military installations in the surrounding areas, and it is necessary to plan ahead to accommodate these future parks and recreation users.



***Image 2.1: Planning Staff held six public input meetings at different locations across the county to solicit input from county residents on parks and recreation.***

### ***Public Input Meeting 2 – Penderlea – January 14, 2010***

- Many recreational facility desires were expressed in the Penderlea/Willard areas, including lighted youth and adult athletic fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, a fitness and wellness center, a senior center with programs, a swimming pool/aquatics center, a spray/sprinkler park, a handball court, a basketball court, nature-oriented facilities, a skateboard park, a rec center with pool tables, weights and exercise equipment, etc., community gardens, picnic areas and shelters with restrooms and grills, areas for the public to go fishing, and an outdoor theater/amphitheater.
- Programming is needed for people of all ages, from pre-school age children to seniors. The programming desires included intramural sports, senior programs, summer athletic programs, boy/girl scouts, activities for younger children while older siblings are participating in their own programs, jazz, ballroom, and other dance classes, afterschool programs that could provide snacks and help kids with homework, computer, arts, crafts, performing arts, health, and wellness classes, and tutoring and mentoring programs.
- Partnerships with existing community centers such as the Willard Outreach Organization would be an ideal way to provide recreational opportunities to county residents.
- New recreational facilities should include emergency call boxes similar to those found on university campuses that could be utilized in case of emergency.

- Lights at parks and fields could be similar to those found at the tennis courts in Burgaw that are run on a coin-operated timer.
- The existing asphalt area around Penderlea School could be used for tennis and basketball courts.
- Boy/girl scouts would definitely use nature-oriented recreational facilities and could be utilized for volunteer resources to assist with development and management.
- Penderlea School currently hosts “open gym” about once per week for pick-up games.
- There is nothing to do for pre-school age children in the Penderlea area.
- The former hosiery mill in Penderlea may be a good place for a new community center.
- The Willard Outreach Center could use rubber walking trails similar to the ones at Moores Creek National Battlefield.
- The younger meeting attendees indicated that a boys/girls club in the area would be great. There are currently not many activities for youth in the area.
- After an overview of the West Pender Rail-Trail project, meeting attendees agreed that it sounded like a good idea.

### *Public Input Meeting 3 – Hampstead – January 21, 2010*

- Overwhelmingly meeting attendees agreed that a community/recreation center was needed in the Hampstead area. This facility could provide space for meetings and classrooms, as well as provide space for recreational programs. Facilities at the center should include indoor basketball courts, tennis courts, and a gym/fitness center.
- Conflicting use of facilities at the schools and at Hampstead Kiwanis Park are causing problems for recreational partners as well as the schools. Topsail Basketball Association continues to grow each year to the point that they are beginning to turn away interested players because of limited facilities and availability. The proposed transformation of the auxiliary gymnasium at Topsail Middle School would eliminate a facility that TBA currently uses, and therefore cause even more problems. Port City Soccer Club’s use of the fields at Hampstead Kiwanis Park is causing the student teams to have to practice late, possibly interfering with family and scholastic obligations. Public use of the tennis courts on the Topsail High School property is a continuing concern that needs to be reconciled.
- Existing and future facilities need lights so that the facilities may be used during non-daylight hours. By lighting the fields, the facilities may be used more and this would help reduce scheduling conflicts.
- Artificial turf fields for multiple sports would be good, despite they cost more upfront, they require less maintenance and last longer than traditional turf fields.
- It would be good to build-out existing facilities such as Hampstead Kiwanis Park before money is spent on developing new facilities.
- Revenue-generating facilities and programs would be beneficial to augment parks and recreation in the county.
- Many families and residents must travel to Wilmington/New Hanover County to participate in recreational and athletic programs and use park facilities.
- Many programs are desired in the Hampstead area, including programs for youth, adults, seniors, persons with disabilities.
- The county would strongly benefit from a large aquatics center. There is not currently a facility in the area large enough to host tournaments, and building a facility in the county would provide a tourism and economic benefit while simultaneously providing recreational opportunities.
- A partnership with YMCA or other private recreational facility could be an option to provide some recreational opportunities.
- Picnic areas and shelters, nature-oriented facilities, and passive recreation facilities were additional desires expressed.
- Several discussions regarding the relationship between Pender County Parks and Recreation and Pender County Schools ensued. Many concerns were raised regarding school facilities, including lack and overuse of existing facilities.
- Pender County and the Hampstead area in particular are projected for strong population growth, and it is important to fill the recreational and parks deficiencies and plan accordingly for the population growth.

#### ***Public Input Meeting 4 – Malpass Corner – February 11, 2010***

- Many people, especially women, currently use the Malpass School campus for walking in the evenings because there is not another safe place to walk in the area. There are no walking trails in the area, and the roads are not safe to walk on due to the lack of shoulders and high speed and count of traffic.
- Playgrounds are needed in the area as well as in the county as a whole. There are not currently facilities in the western areas of the county for residents to enjoy, especially for parents to bring their children.
- Outdoor basketball facilities are needed in the area. The public was formerly allowed to use outdoor basketball facilities at the schools; however, this privilege was revoked because of issues including abuse and destruction of the facilities, and people leaving trash behind.
- The conversion of the abandoned rail corridor on the west side of the county would be a great project to create a multipurpose trail that could be used for walking, running, riding bikes, and possibly even equestrian use. This “rail-trail” concept is quite popular in other areas of the country, and also provides a tourism draw and allows for economic development.
- A facility somewhere in the county that could host large meetings would be a good idea. There is not currently a facility of the sort within the county, and this type of facility could host large meetings and also special events such as carnivals, circuses, and fairs.
- More boating access and public fishing areas are needed in the county, particularly on the west side of the county. Nearby facilities such as Sutton Lake are always crowded and popular places to be for individuals and families, particularly when the weather is nice. There is currently no public water access areas that provide access to the Black and Cape Fear Rivers, and some of the existing areas just outside of the county boundaries are not adequate for certain types of boats and generally do not provide areas for the public to fish from the shore.
- Picnic areas with shelters, restrooms, and grills are needed and would be enjoyed by families.
- Educational, recreational, and athletic programs are desired in the area. Some programs could be offered at the Canetuck Community Center through assistance and/or a partnership with the county. Specific programs could include fitness and self-defense classes, adult softball leagues, and programs for youths and seniors. After school programs for children are desired also, particularly programs that occur not at school but offer help with homework and also offer recreational opportunities.

#### ***Public Input Meeting 5 – Rocky Point – February 18, 2010***

- More recreational opportunities are desired “closer to home”, as currently area residents must travel to Hampstead, Burgaw, or Wilmington to participate in programming or go to a park.
- Playgrounds are needed in the area as well as in other areas in the county; there are currently no places for children to play.
- Multi-use parks are needed and would cater to a variety of users. Greensboro has a great park system and one example of a good multi-use park is Owl’s Roost. Facilities that should be included at the multi-use park include bike trails, picnic shelters, basketball courts, ball fields, cook-out areas, etc.
- Soccer fields are desperately needed in the area. The fields that are currently used are at the schools, and suffer from lack of adequate maintenance, including no nets on the goals.
- Many opportunities exist to develop bicycle facilities, including BMX parks and mountain bike parks/trails. SORBA (Southern Off Road Bike Association) has built and maintains the mountain bike trails on Blue Clay Road in Wilmington, which is working very well, and has an MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) going before the Brunswick Board of County Commissioners soon. This MOA would allow for SORBA to build and maintain mountain bike trails at the Brunswick Nature Park. SORBA would be very interested in pursuing a similar relationship with Pender County, and this relationship and facility would be a draw for bikers all over the state and beyond, and therefore provide an increase in tourism and economic development within the county. Additionally, there is no BMX park in the area at all; the closest park is in Raleigh. Such a facility in Pender County would provide the same tourism draw and potential for economic development as the mountain bike facilities, and also be a revenue-generating venue that would augment the parks and recreation budget.
- Lanes Ferry used to be a great place for families to go to picnic, grill out, have family reunions and parties, etc. but is no longer there. Reviving the facility would be great, and could include amenities such as picnic shelters, grills, kayak and canoe access, etc.

- A swimming pool/aquatics center is needed in the county, and would provide a much needed recreational benefit and also be a revenue-generating facility.
- Areas for people to ride all-terrain vehicles and also equestrian use would be beneficial in the county. These groups could also volunteer to help manage and maintain such facilities.
- When planning for recreational facilities and opportunities, it is also important to plan for facilities and opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- A skateboard park is needed in the county, as there are not currently many places for people to legally go skateboarding. Although there is some liability risk, there are methods to reduce the county's liability such as waivers and staffing. Such parks exist and are working in many other counties and towns.

### ***Public Input Meeting 6 - Burgaw - February 25, 2010***

- More safe places to walk and ride bicycles are needed within the county, and the conversion of the abandoned rail corridor in the western portion of the county to a multi-purpose trail would provide a place for families and individuals to walk, bike, run, and possibly even ride horses. Rail-trails are popular in many places in the country, and provide not only a recreational benefit but also a tourism draw and opportunity for economic development.
- The county-owned property in Rocky Point (Millers Pond Park site) would be a great place for a park, and provide a venue for nature-oriented recreation such as walking, bird-watching, fishing, and passive recreation.
- The lack of recreation opportunities in Burgaw and the county in general is having a bad effect on the youth in the area. By providing more recreational opportunities such as a boys and girls club, a rec center, community center, programs, etc., we may be able to combat the growing obesity problem in our youths as well as adults. Plenty of funding is available through various Recovery Act opportunities, and also through Michelle Obama's new obesity prevention campaign.
- Outdoor basketball facilities should be developed in the county, especially in the Burgaw area. Pender Memorial Park is situated in a low-income area and should provide recreational amenities that cater to all user needs, not specifically to one group.
- Football, soccer, and multi-purpose fields that could be utilized for both sports are needed in all areas of the county. The current recreational programs that use the existing facilities are overwhelming the facilities, and this is leading to a limit of program participants. The schools allow for these programs to use their facilities at a cost, and after this cost is factored in with the other costs of running the program, including paying the referees, the programs are losing money. The existing soccer and multi-purpose fields at Hampstead Kiwanis Park could be used for football practice and play, except that no goalposts exist.

### **General Summary of Public Input Meeting Comments**

Overall, the comments and concerns expressed at the public input meetings were consistent. Similar needs were expressed for both facilities and programs, as overviewed below.

#### ***Facilities***

In summary, the attendees at the public input meetings wished for more facilities in their communities and within Pender County in general. Recreational facilities for all ages should be considered, from playgrounds for children, sports fields and amenities for all ages, and recreational and community centers convenient to everyone. Meeting attendees expressed that existing facilities are severely limited, and what is existing is overused and under-managed. Improvements are needed at existing facilities and new facilities need to be developed to alleviate the deficiencies and support the growing recreational programs in the county. Meeting attendees conveyed many ideas for new facilities and facility improvements, as well as partnership opportunities for facility development, maintenance, and management.

#### ***Programs***

The attendees at the six public input meetings also agreed that there should be more programs within the county. Such programs should cater to persons of all age groups, persons with disabilities, and be available within a reasonable distance to each community. Programs within the county should include not only athletic-oriented programs, but also educational programs such as afterschool and literacy programs, and computer, vocational, self-defense, personal financial management, and other classes and seminars.

## Community Survey Findings

From December 14, 2009 to February 28, 2010, the public input survey was available for county residents to complete. The survey was available in paper version as well as through the online survey tool [www.surveygizmo.com](http://www.surveygizmo.com). Announcements were sent to a multitude of email contacts, including to all Pender County employees and all Pender County Schools employees. The survey was also distributed at all public input meetings and to many community leaders who passed them on through churches, businesses, and other local contacts. In total, 295 surveys were completed online and 32 paper surveys were returned for a total of 327 surveys completed. Using a population estimate of 55,000 for the county, the 327 completed surveys yields a statistical accuracy of 95% with a +/- 5.4% sampling error, or a 99% confidence level with a +/- 7.1% sampling error.

The survey, which may be found in the *Appendix*, contained a total of 19 questions designed to assess a variety of data from the survey respondents, including current recreational trends, desired recreational opportunities, desired methods to fund park and recreation development and improvements, preferred registration methods, and household data. The survey was designed to fulfill the required key elements for the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant application, as overviewed in the North Carolina PARTF 2009-2010 Grant Application. Conversations between Planning Staff and the NCDENR Recreation Resources Service’s Regional Recreation Consultant for Pender County were also beneficial as the survey was developed to ensure that it would meet the requirements for PARTF funding opportunities.

The following section provides a summary of the overall survey responses. A comprehensive review of the survey results is available in the *Appendix*.

### Program and Activity Preferences

The first question on the public input survey provided a list of activities and programs and asked respondents to indicate how often they or any member of their household participated in each. Online respondents could choose between the following frequencies: *Daily*, *A few times per week*, *Once a week*, *A few times per month*, *Once a month*, *A few times per year*, and *Once a Year*, and residents who filled the paper survey out were asked to indicate the number of times of participation during the last year. “Never” was not included as an option as it was assumed that residents that did not participate in an activity would not choose an option.

The following are the top 25 preferred activities based on total responses received for each activity:

Rank	Activity	Responses	Rank	Activity	Responses
1	Swimming in a Pool	193	14	Camping	135
2	Basketball	188	15	Nature Hikes	134
3	Walking in a Nature Area	180	16	Attending a Concert	134
4	Bicycling	169	17	Boating/Sailing	132
5	Baseball/Tee Ball	168	18	Family Reunions	130
6	Eating Lunch in a Park	167	19	Jogging/Running	130
7	Fishing	164	20	Softball	128
8	Walking along a Trail	162	21	Art Show or Festival	121
9	Aerobics/Exercise	160	22	Photography	120
10	Playing at a Playground	160	23	Reading Outdoors	111
11	Picnicking with Family	159	24	Soccer	106
12	Playing Cards/Games	146	25	Using Fitness Trails	106
13	Bowling	143			

## Facility and Program Priorities

Question 2 asked respondents to indicate all of the facilities/activities that they would like to see provided by Pender County. The following are the top 25 preferred facilities/activities based on responses received for each option, with the total responses received for each activity as well as the percentage of total responses for each:

Rank	Activity/Facility	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Rank	Activity/Facility	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1	Walking Trails	169	55.41%	14	After School Programs	113	37.05%
2	Basketball	168	55.08%	15	Volleyball	109	35.74%
3	Playgrounds	163	53.44%	16	Concerts	109	35.74%
4	Baseball/Tee Ball	150	49.18%	17	Tennis	105	34.43%
5	Nature Area	147	48.20%	18	Camping	102	33.44%
6	Swimming in a Pool	146	47.87%	19	Fishing	102	33.44%
7	Softball	131	42.95%	20	Picnic Areas in a Park	100	32.79%
8	Bicycling	127	41.64%	21	Picnic Areas for Families	100	32.79%
9	Nature Hikes	126	41.31%	22	Aerobics/Exercise	97	31.80%
10	Swimming Lessons	126	41.31%	23	Jogging/Running	97	31.80%
11	Day/Summer Camp	116	38.03%	24	Soccer	94	30.82%
12	Fitness Trails	115	37.70%	25	Spaces for Family Reunions	94	30.82%
13	Picnic Areas for Groups	114	37.38%				

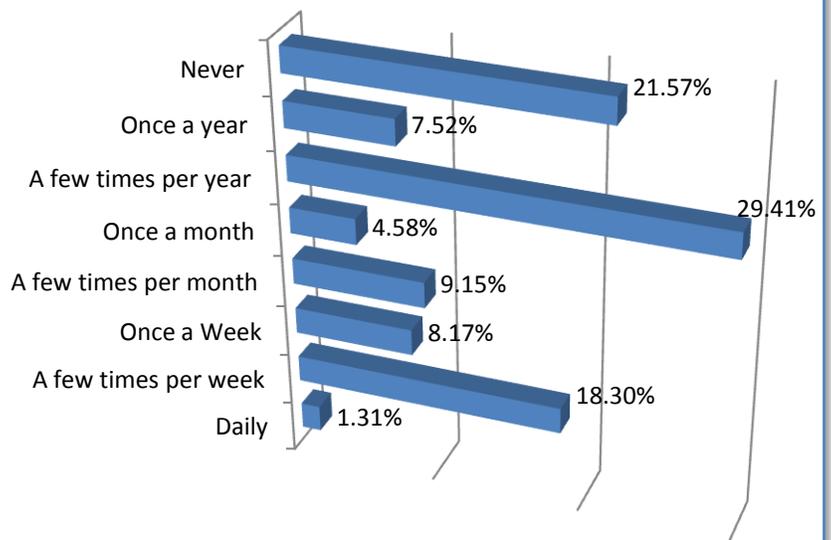
## Program Participation

Question 6 was included on the survey to learn how often respondents or members of their households participate in the programs and services provided by the county. Out of the 306 responses to the question, *A few times per year* received the most responses (90 responses, 29.41%), while *Never* received the second highest number of responses (66 responses, 21.57%). Overall, less than half of respondents indicated that they participate at least once per month, with *A few times per week* receiving 56 responses (18.30%).

The responses for Question 6 indicate that the majority of respondents rarely or never participate in programs and services provided by Pender County, although nearly a fifth of respondents participate a few times per week. The low participation rates

indicated by the results to this question may be attributed to the lack of programs and services currently offered by the county or county residents being unaware of current programs and services. The latter is supported by many of the write-in responses to Question 9 (please see *Marketing* below), with many respondents indicating they are unaware of programs in the county.

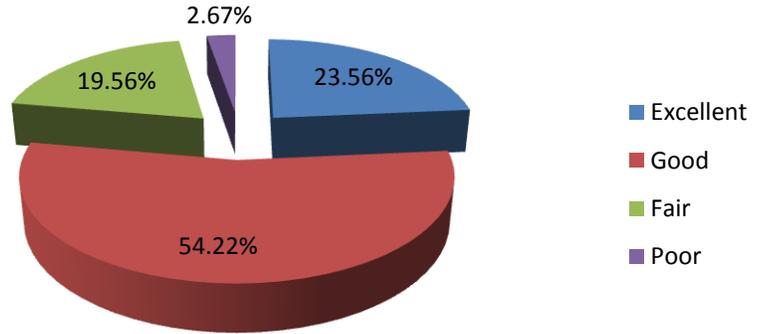
**Figure 2.1: How often do you or a member of your household participate in the programs and services provided by Pender County?**



### Satisfaction with Programs

Question 4 asked *How would you rate the programs that you or any member of your household participated in during the last year?* to gauge survey respondents' satisfaction with the programs offered in the county. The responses indicated an overall favorable level of satisfaction, with nearly 78% of respondents indicating *Excellent* or *Good*. Forty-four respondents (19.56%) rated their experience as *Fair*, while a nominal number of respondents (6, or 2.67%) rated their experiences as *Poor*. These statistics glean that while the majority of respondents were satisfied with their program experiences, there is still some room for improvement.

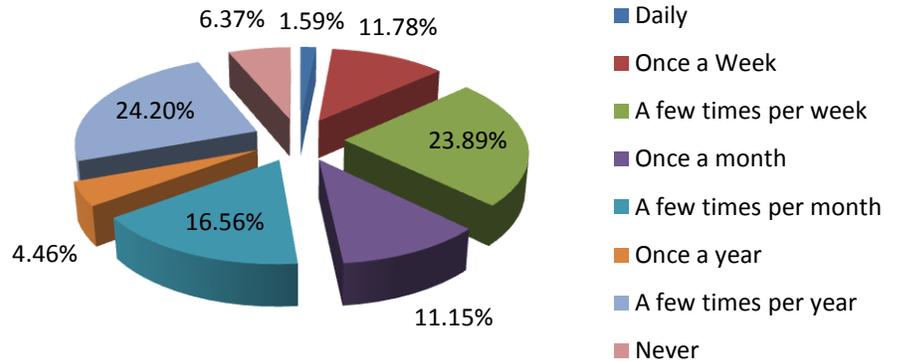
**Figure 2.2: How would you rate the programs that you or any member of your household participated in during the last year?**



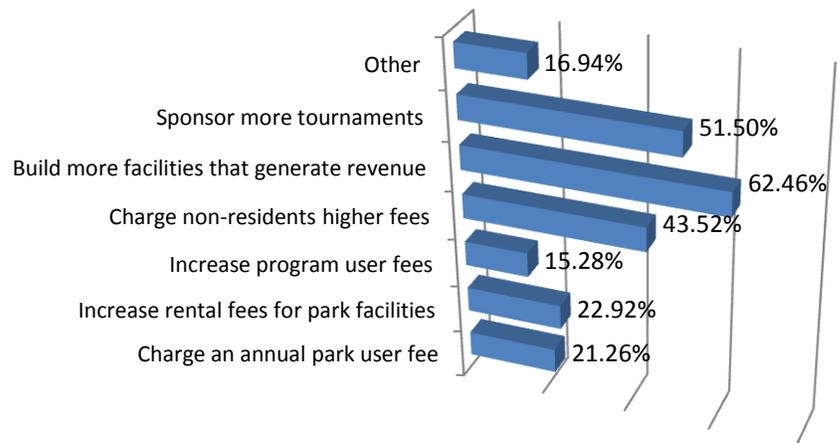
### Park Usage

One question was included on the survey to gauge how often county residents visit any park in the county: *How often do you or a member of your household visit any park in Pender County?* The most responses were for *A few times per year* at 24.2% with 76 responses, followed by *A few times per week* at 23.89% with 75 of the 314 total responses. By grouping the responses together, a better snapshot of park usage can be seen; 37.26% of respondents indicated they go to a park in the county at least once per week, and 65% indicated at least once per month. However, 35% of respondents indicated they rarely or never visit any parks in the county; this group of rare or non-users may be attributed to the lack of parks near their communities.

**Figure 2.3: How often do you or a member of your household visit any park in Pender County?**



**Figure 2.4: In order to generate needed revenue to improve park maintenance and diversify/increase programs offered by Pender County, please indicate ALL options that you would support for increasing funding for parks and recreation.**



### Willingness to Contribute to Improving Park Maintenance and Programming

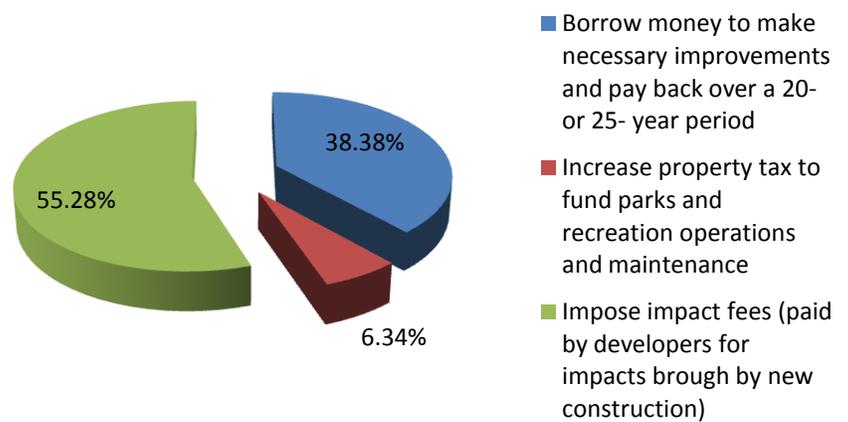
On the public input survey, Question 7 was designed to gather information on the methods preferred by county residents to fund park maintenance and improvements and increase and expand recreation programs. This question allowed respondents to indicate all of the options they support, as well as provided an opportunity for written

input. Collecting funds through revenue-generating facilities was the option with the highest response rate at 188 responses (62.46%), followed by *Sponsoring More Tournaments* with 155 responses (51.50%) and *Charge Non-Residents Higher Fees* with 131 responses (43.52%). Less than 25% of respondents supported charging an annual user fee, or increasing program user fees. As mentioned, this question provided an opportunity for respondents to write in their input for ideas for funding; several responses included ideas such as fundraisers, cash-based services at county parks, grants, a bond referendum, increased allocation towards parks and recreation from the county budget, and a tax increase. Based on the top responses, it may be assumed that the majority of county residents do not support additional financial burden on the tax payer, but rather prefer collecting funding from fee and revenue generation.

### Funding for Capital Improvements

Question 8 on the survey offered respondents an opportunity to select their top choice to indicate their preference for funding needed park renovations, new park development, and other capital improvements. The majority of respondents (157 respondents, 55.28%) indicated that funding for parks and recreation capital improvements should be largely from contributions made from developers for impacts brought by new construction. *Borrowing money for necessary improvements and repaying over a 20 or 25 year period* received the second most responses, with 109 responses or 38.38% of total responses; this information suggests that a bond referendum may be an appropriate tool for funding parks and recreation capital improvements in the future. Finally, increasing property tax to fund parks and recreation capital improvements was an unpopular option, receiving only 18 responses or 6.34% of the total responses.

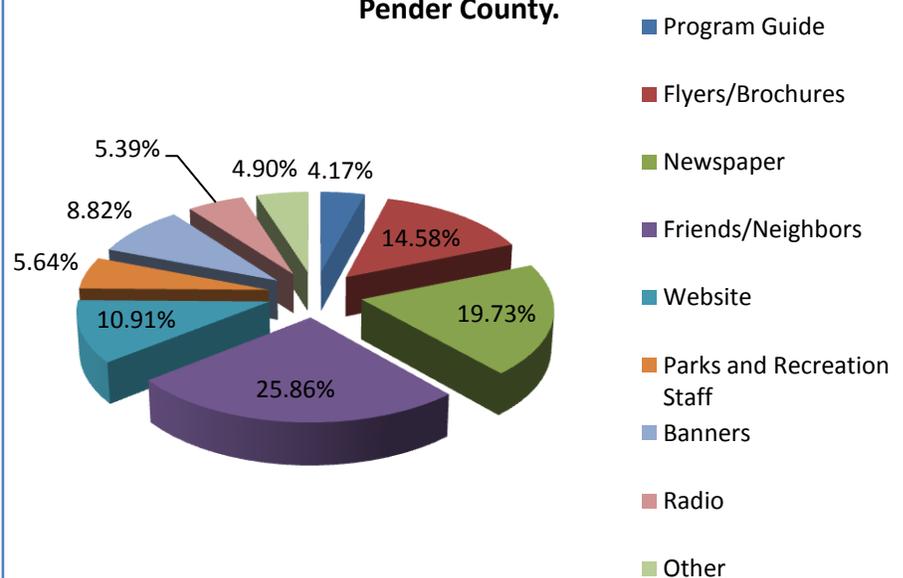
**Figure 2.5: Please indicate your top choice for funding needed park renovations, new park development, and other capital improvements.**



### Marketing

Question 9 on the survey was included to determine how residents currently become aware of parks and recreation programs in the county, and offers respondents an opportunity to select from a list of choices, as well as provide their own input. Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated that they hear of parks and recreation programs through *Friends and Neighbors* (211 responses, 26.98%), *Newspapers* (161 responses, 20.59%), and *Flyers/Brochures* (119 responses, 15.22%). The other response options include *Website* (89 responses, 11.38%), *Banners* (72 responses, 9.21%), *Parks and Recreation Staff* (46 responses, 5.88%), and *Radio* (44 responses, 5.63%). Survey respondents were also provided

**Figure 2.6: Please check all the ways that you learn about parks and recreation programs in Pender County.**

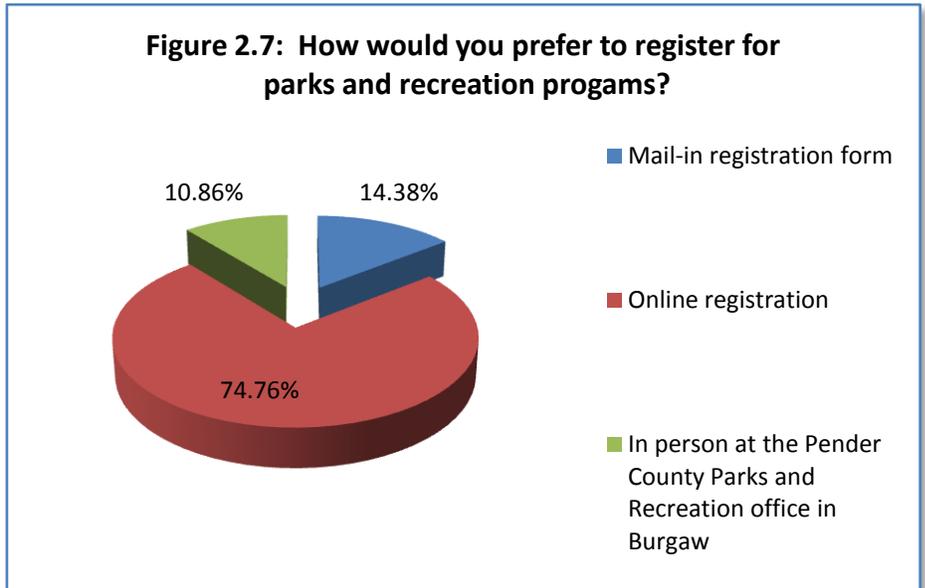


an input opportunity for “other”, in which several responses indicated that residents learned about parks and recreation programs through school, library, and several responses conveying that the survey respondent in fact does not hear about parks and programs at all.

Based on this input, it is clear that the majority of information about parks and programs in the county is spread by word of mouth through family, friends, school staff, coaches, etc. However, it is also clear that other publicity options should be explored, including improving the information available on the parks and recreation website, increasing press contact to improve media coverage, and creating an email newsletter targeted to subscribers who wish to stay abreast of current and special parks events, as well as programs offered in the county.

### Program Registration

Survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated a desire to be able to register online for programs. Out of the 313 responses to Question 10, 234 respondents (74.76%) indicated that they would prefer to register online; followed by 45 respondents (14.38%) preferring to register for programs via mail-in registration forms, and 34 respondents (10.86%) preferred to register in person at the parks and recreation office in Burgaw. Implementing an online registration system that could be used to register for programs as well as reserve park facilities should be considered a top priority; such a system would provide more convenience to county residents, streamline the registration and reservation process, and free up staff resources that are currently devoted to fielding calls for program registration and facility reservation.

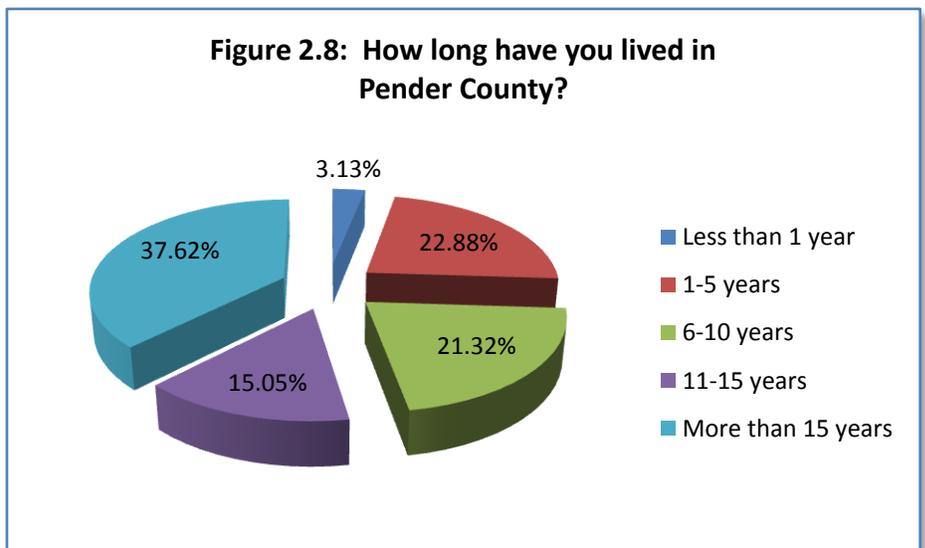


### Respondent Demographics

Several questions were included on the survey to gather demographic information of the respondents and their households. In summary, a broad cross section of the population is represented by the survey results, and the following highlights some of the demographic information ascertained by the public input survey.

#### Duration of Pender County Residency

Question 11 asked *How long have you lived in Pender County?*, and respondents were given options to answer with: *Less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and More than 15 years.* The option with the majority of responses (120 responses, 37.62%) was *More than 15 years*, however, the combined response count of the other options indicates that the majority of survey takers that responded to Question 11 have lived in Pender County for less than 15 years. Only a small percentage of respondents (10 responses, 3.13%) indicated that they have lived in the county for less than one year.



### Responses by Zip Code

Question 12 asked respondents for their zip code, and was the only required question on the survey. This question was made required so that Planning Staff could break down survey responses by zip code to better analyze the data, particularly the activities and facilities preferred. Because parks and recreation development is based largely on user needs, it was important to be able to filter the survey responses by zip code to better gauge the desired facilities and programs in different communities and populated areas within the county. By being able to review the responses filtered by zip codes, specific facilities and programs that are proposed in particular areas of the county may be better planned and will ultimately be more utilized.

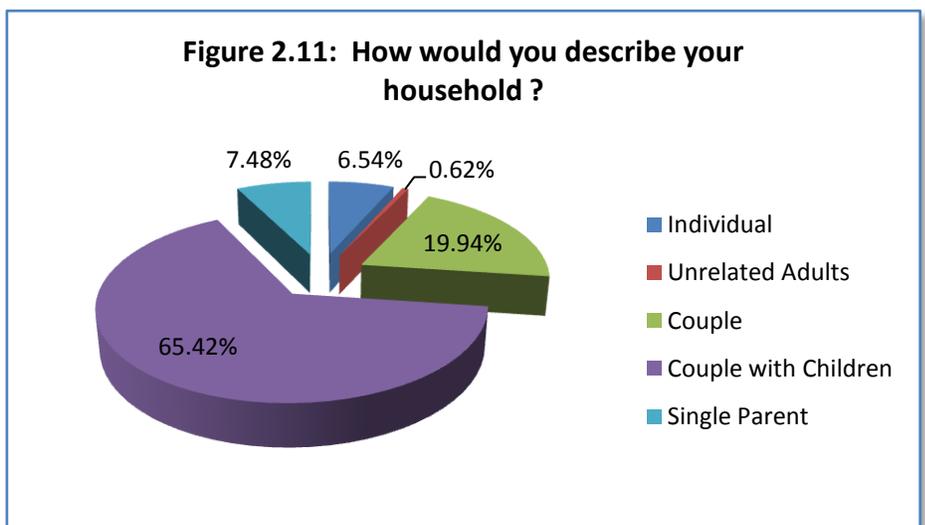
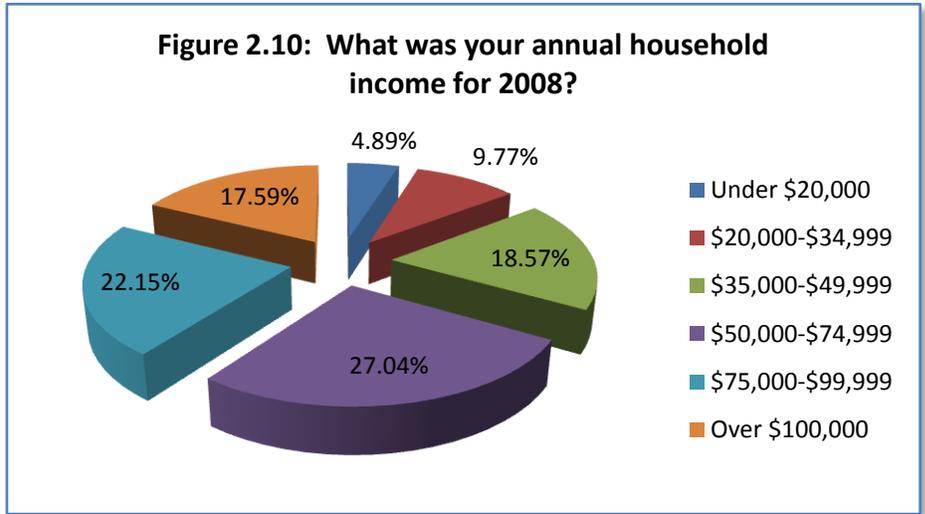
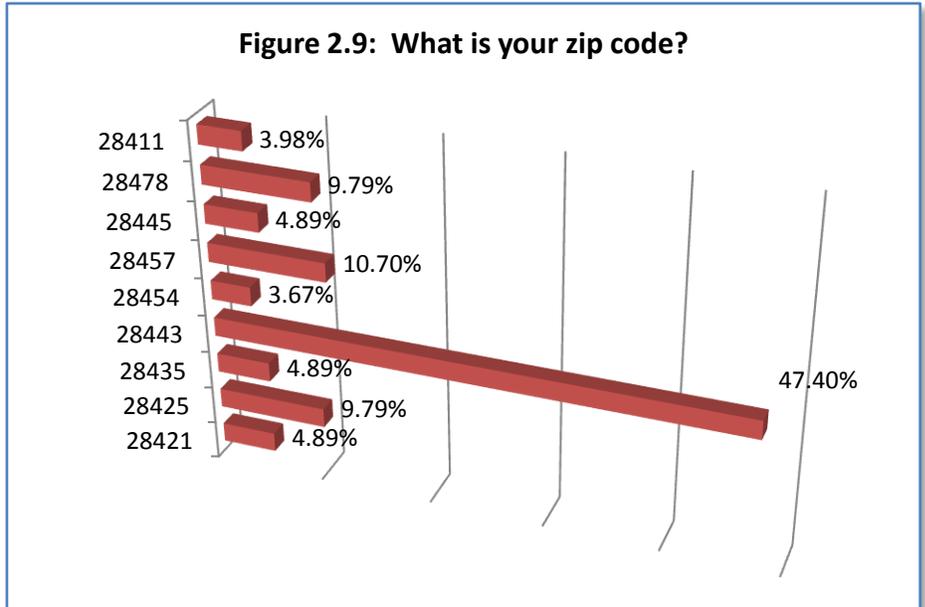
Nearly half of survey responses indicated their zip code as 28443 (155 responses, 47.40%). The zip codes with the other highest number of responses are 28457 (35 responses, 10.70%), 28425 (32 responses, 9.79%), and 28478 (32 responses, 9.79%). The remainder of the zip codes received comparable responses, between 12 and 16 respondents for each. A zip code map for Pender County may be found on Page 7 of this plan.

### Annual Household Income

Question 15 on the survey allowed respondents to provide information on their annual household income, offering response choices of different income brackets. The income bracket that received the highest number of responses was \$50,000 - \$74,999, with 83 responses, or 27.04% of total responses. The lowest two income brackets received the lowest responses, with *Under \$20,000* receiving only 15 responses (4.89% of total responses).

### Composition of Household

Question 16 provided respondents an opportunity to describe their household composition. Overwhelmingly, *Couple with Children* received the highest number of responses, with 210 responses or 65.42% of total responses. With 64 responses (19.94% of total responses), *Couple* was the second most selected responses to Question 16.



## **General Summary of Public Input Survey Results**

Following is a brief summary of the public input survey results. A detailed overview of the survey results may be found in the *Appendix*, including all written-in comments.

### ***Facilities***

In summary, the facilities desired as conveyed in the public survey results are consistent with the preferred activities of the survey respondents. Walking trails, natural areas, basketball facilities, aquatics facilities, bicycling trails and routes, picnic areas, playgrounds, fishing areas, and baseball and softball facilities are among the amenities most desired within county parks.

Current park usage in the county is fairly split between rare and non-users and frequent users. Thirty-five percent of survey respondents indicated that they rarely or never visit any park in Pender County, while 37% conveyed that they visit a park in the county at least once per week. In total, 65% of respondents indicated that they visit a park in the county at least once per month.

### ***Programs***

Survey respondents indicated desires for various programs in Pender County, including nature hikes, swimming lessons, day and summer camps, after school programs, and fitness classes. Program participation is split between non- or rare users and frequent users; while 58.5% of survey respondents indicated participating in programs less than once per month, 41.5% indicated that they participate in programs and services offered by the county at least once per month. The majority of respondents rated the programs that they have participated in as excellent, good, or fair, with only a small percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction with the programs they had participated in.

## **Summary of Public Input**

The input received residents at the public input meetings and through the survey conveys very similar concerns and desires from county residents. Residents have expressed desires for similar facilities and programs in their communities and in Pender County in general. Residents are concerned about the current lack of facilities and programs near their communities and generally within the county, and have concerns how the projected population growth will impact existing and future facilities and programs. Residents expressed concerns for the overuse and conflicts between users of the existing facilities and how the overuse and conflicts are exacerbated by the current limited parks facilities and recreation opportunities. Residents conveyed similar interests for new facilities and programs, and offered their input on the funding mechanisms they would prefer. Based on the number of survey responses received, it may be assumed that the input gathered through the survey and meetings provides a fair representation of the entire population of Pender County.

## Department Organization and Analysis

Parks and Recreation in the unincorporated areas of Pender County is a function of the Pender County Government. Prior to FY 09-10, Parks and Recreation was a separate department, and included the Director of Parks and Recreation and two full-time maintenance worker positions. In May 2009, the County Manager made personnel and organizational changes impacting the Department of Parks and Recreation. The Director of Parks and Recreation position was reclassified to a Planner II-Recreation Planner position and placed within the Department of Planning and Development, and the two maintenance positions were placed under the County Public Works Department where the overall county maintenance activities are located.

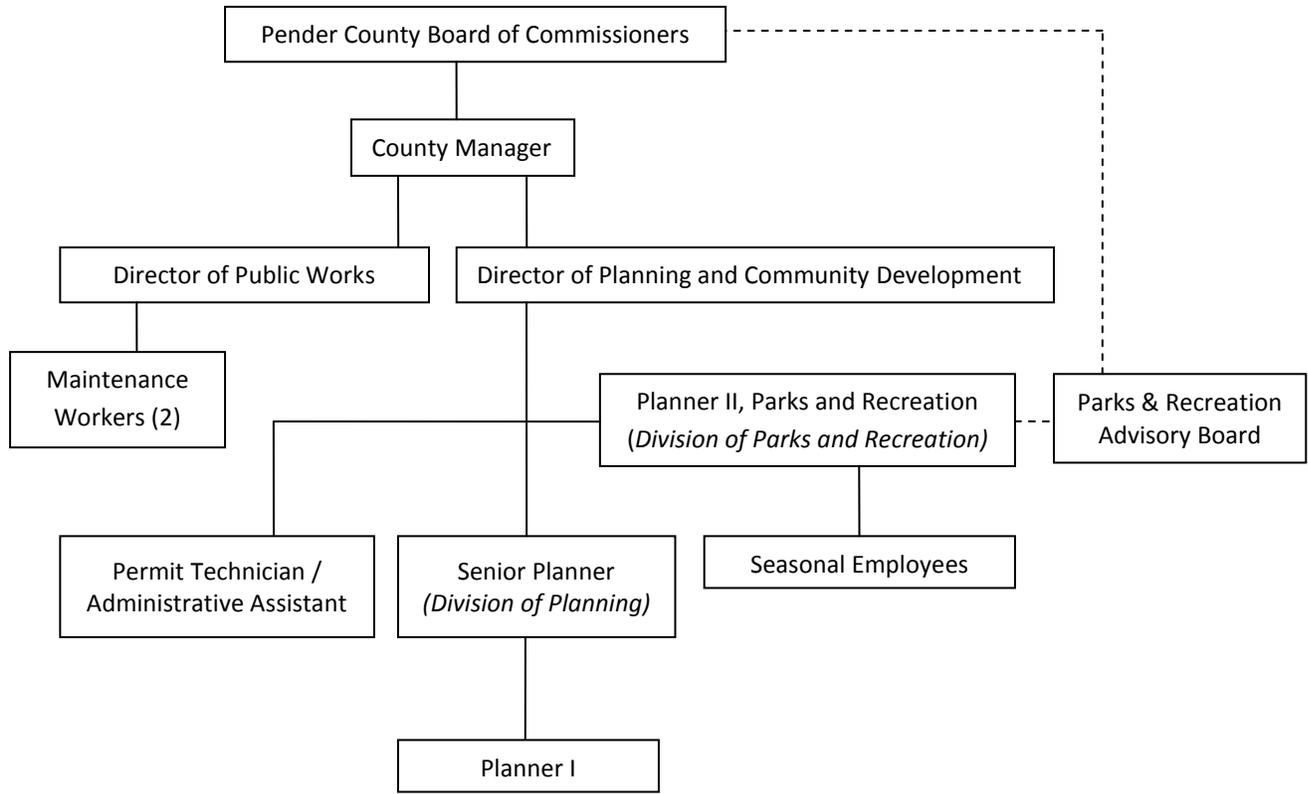
The purpose of the changes was to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the use of limited resources. The larger Department of Planning and Community Development provided staff and technical resources and support for needed long-range planning activities previously not available to the Director, such as the development of this plan. As well, the larger Department of Public Works provided additional resources and coordination to effectively address parks maintenance issues and needs. In making these changes, the County Manager expressed that as the county embarked on developing additional parks and recreational facilities county-wide, the need for a separate Parks and Recreation Department in the future would become necessary.

## Existing Organizational Structure

Figure 4.1 depicts the current organizational structure among all Pender County staff that contribute to parks and recreation duties. The delegation of parks and recreation duties and responsibilities across two departments requires positive collaboration and coordination. The Recreation Planner position reports directly to the Director of Planning and Community Development. Technical assistance and support is provided by other professional planners and support staff. As a result, planning assistance has been provided on projects like Millers Pond Park, in forging relationships with community members and staff of local, state and federal parks and facilities, and in the development of this parks and recreation master plan.

The two maintenance positions report to the Director of Public Works, who is responsible for the maintenance of all county facilities including parks. This arrangement allows the Director to allocate additional resources and equipment to parks projects or maintenance as required.

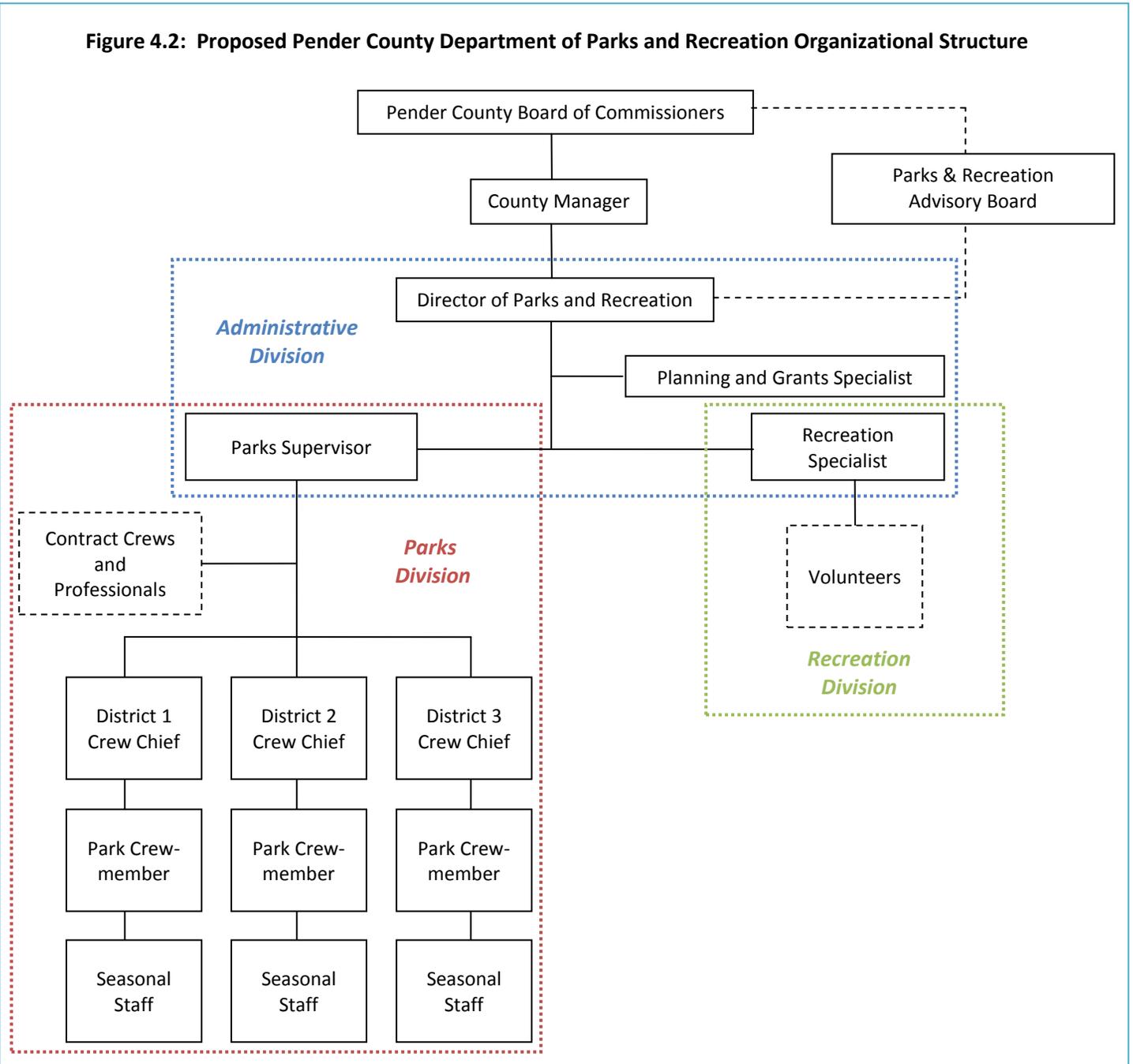
**Figure 4.1: Existing Organizational Structure of Pender County Staff that Contribute to Parks and Recreation**



**Future Organizational Recommendations**

As Pender County embarks successfully on developing and opening new parks and recreation facilities and broadens programming, re-establishment of a separate Pender County Parks and Recreation Department will be necessary for more effective and efficient operations and management. The timing of such is dependent upon facility and program growth, and should be based upon specific criteria that provide clear justification for increasing personnel and resources. A standard future organizational structure is depicted in Figure 4.2, which reflects a Director of Parks and Recreation managing three separate functions: parks, programming, and administrative. Parks functions includes park supervision and maintenance duties and responsibilities. Programming functions includes working with volunteers and recreation partners to program a variety of recreation programs across the county. Administrative functions include overall parks and recreation program administration including planning, budget management, and resource development.

**Figure 4.2: Proposed Pender County Department of Parks and Recreation Organizational Structure**



## General Department Issues

### Facility Needs

As the Department of Parks and Recreation grows, it will be necessary to provide a facility with adequate office space and room for storage, and a maintenance/equipment facility. The draft Pender County Government Campus plan prepared by Warren Wilson, Architect P.C. proposes that in the future administrative functions of Parks and Recreation be located within the administrative offices on the campus. The plan also provides for a new public works/maintenance facility to be constructed in the adjacent industrial park, which will be designed to facilitate parks and recreation maintenance and equipment operations as well.

## Staff Mentoring and Education Recommendations

### *Internship Program*

Internships are generally the first step of successful careers for students. It is recommended that the department create and manage an internship program with positions that can be either paid or non-paid positions, and would be mutually beneficial for the department as well as the intern. The University of North Carolina at Wilmington has a Parks and Recreation Management program (<http://uncw.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/parksrec.htm>) that provides a source for talented, motivated, interested, and educated internship candidates. Students are often given academic credit for internships and these internships would provide students with hands-on real world experience that prepares them for careers in the field of parks and recreation. These interns would also provide extra staff with minimal resource dedication from the department.

### *Training, Certification, and Education*

Many training, certification, and education opportunities exist for professionals in the field of parks and recreation, particularly through the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association (NCRPA) annual conferences and National Recreation and Park Association individual workshops. Training and education of staff members should be encouraged because it is very important to staff and allows the department to function in a professional capacity. Proper training for equipment, chemicals, and supplies used within the department is crucial to ensure safety of staff and parks and recreation users. It is recommended that staff should hold certifications including *Certified Parks and Recreation Professional*, *Certified Playground Safety Instructor*, *Public Operator Pesticide Applicator's License*, *First-Aid/CPR Certification*, and others depending on the staff position.

### *Planning and Maintenance Districts*

Pender County is very geographically unique in that it contains many natural features in its nearly 900 square miles. As such, the populated areas of the county that are served by the Department are vastly spread and require significant driving time to transit from one area to another. As more parks and recreation facilities are developed in the county, it will be increasingly difficult and inefficient to have one parks crew maintaining all facilities in the entire county. Establishing several parks districts may be considered as an option to allow for more efficient maintenance and planning. By utilizing a district approach, the Department may better plan, evaluate, and maintain parks facilities and recreational programming to ensure that equal opportunity is being granted in each district. Implementation of the district planning and management approach will become more appropriate as new programs and facilities are created in the county.

### *Marketing and Public Outreach*

There is ample room for improvement in marketing and public outreach for the Department, including creating a website, a unique logo for department branding, and performing more outreach and advertising for programming and special events.

Pender County Parks and Recreation would strongly benefit from a unique website that allows for residents to stay updated on parks facilities, recreational programming, other news, and the ability to register for programs and reserve facilities online. Survey respondents overwhelmingly indicated that they would prefer to register for parks and recreation programs online, and creating such an online registration system would allow for better data management and staff efficiency. The current website does allow for residents to find contact information on recreation partners, county parks facilities, park ordinances, and staff contacts, but has great room for improvements. The Pender County Tourism Department recently launched a new website ([www.visitpender.com](http://www.visitpender.com)) that has an attractive look and welcoming user interface, and a similar website for Parks and Recreation should be pursued within 6 months of this plan adoption.

The Department would also benefit from a unique branding. The logo previously used by the department was "retired" several years ago, and creating and utilizing an updated, refreshed logo would help to brand the department. Both the Pender County Department of Public Utilities and Tourism Department have recently created and begun using updated logos that immediately have become the branding for both departments.

Finally, more attention to outreach and advertising for programming and special events should be pursued, especially as more programs and events are undertaken by the Department. Regular publications and website updates should be performed to ensure that residents are aware of the programs and facilities offered by the Department. All flyers, brochures, special announcements, and other publications should retain a unified look to strengthen departmental branding.

### Partnerships

Partnerships are an efficient method to provide parks facilities and recreational programming. As Pender County continues to strive to become more progressive, innovative, and efficient, partnerships should be pursued to allow for a more effective provision of parks facilities and recreational programming. Potential partnerships may include, but are not limited to, civic clubs, schools, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Club, and other private organizations, state and federal agencies, community organizations, non-profit organizations, and others. As discussed further later in this plan, the existing partnerships for parks and recreation providers in Pender County should be evaluated, and additional partnerships should be pursued as parks and recreational facilities and programs are developed in Pender County.

### Natural Areas

Pender County is host to a tremendous amount of natural areas that are extremely biodiverse and unique. Many areas of the county are held in perpetual conservation easements by public and private entities including the Nature Conservancy, the Coastal Land Trust, the Audubon Society, various departments of the State of North Carolina, and others.

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program has published the *Natural Area Inventory of Pender County, North Carolina* which identifies many natural areas, biological communities, and rare species throughout the county. Strong consideration should be given to conserving and preserving the areas indicated in the document, as these areas will serve as destinations for ecotourism and educational tours. Efforts to retain these natural areas may include partnerships with conservation and environmental organizations as well as state and federal departments. Additionally, nature-based programs utilizing these unique natural areas are a tremendous opportunity for new programming by the Department; these programs generally would be revenue generating and would help the economic stability of the Department. Survey respondents indicated very strong interest in these types of activities and programs within the county.

### Organization Recommendations Summary

- Review the need for the creation of a larger organization and district planning and management approaches on an annual basis, and implement changes as necessary to deliver efficient and effective services.
- Work with UNCW and other schools and universities to create and manage an internship program.
- Create a new logo for Pender County Parks and Recreation to increase departmental branding, and utilize similar styles of signs, publications, and materials to create a sense of branding for the department.
- Work with the Information Technology Services to create a website with a unique domain name that provides an easy to use interface for county residents to stay up to date and involved with parks and recreation in the county. Also create an online registration system for parks facilities and recreational programs.
- Increase outreach and advertising efforts to ensure residents are aware of facilities, programs, and special events in the county.
- Evaluate existing partnerships for reciprocity and pursue additional partnerships for facilities and programs.

This page is intentionally left blank.

## **Programming Assessment and Recommendations**

Programming provides a variety of benefits to community residents, and should therefore be a key focus of the parks and recreation department. Since the establishment of a devoted parks and recreation department in Pender County in 1996, the department has offered limited recreational programming opportunities, with some programs being managed wholly by the county and partnerships created to manage other offerings. The purpose of this section is to examine some of the recreational program offerings within the county and recommend new programs that should be pursued based on the deficiencies revealed through the assessment and the needs expressed during the public input period.

### **Benefits of Recreational Programming**

Recreational programming offers community residents many benefits, typically categorized into four types: personal, social, economic, and environmental. Many studies and facts exist to support the benefits that are realized through parks and recreation offerings, and the following summarizes some of the benefits in each of the categories.

#### **Personal Benefits**

Recreational opportunities provide a number of benefits on the personal level. Recreation provides persons of all ages and backgrounds opportunities for relaxation, rest, and revitalization through leisure activities, all of which are important for stress management in today's hectic and demanding society. Recreational activities provide individuals with positive self-esteem and self-image, and a sense of satisfaction and improved quality of life. Recreation provides a host of health benefits, including reducing an individual's risk for heart disease, diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, cancer, and also improves the immune system. America's growing trends of less physical and more sedentary and car-oriented lifestyles are directly correlated with increasing obesity, heart disease, and other health problems that may be prevented through increased physical activity. Recreational opportunities also provide alternatives to self-destructive behavior and negative lifestyle choices that can deter one's ability to live a full, balanced, and satisfying life.

#### **Social Benefits**

A variety of social benefits may be realized through a well-rounded parks and recreation system. Recreational programs offer residents opportunities to interact with fellow community members and strengthen their sense of community while simultaneously promoting ethnic and cultural harmony. Family bonds may be strengthened through recreation, which arguably provides the foundation for a stronger society. Community recreation also reduces alienation, loneliness, and criminal and anti-social behaviors, all of which may be linked to depression within a community. In summary, parks and recreation opportunities provide substantial social benefits to communities.

#### **Economic Benefits**

A community's investment in parks and recreation also yields many direct and indirect economic benefits. Parks and recreation opportunities often catalyze the tourism industry; the American Hotel and Lodging Association reported that Americans spent over \$150 billion on leisure-related stays in 2000, or over 59% of the total national hotel/motel industry for the entire year. The availability of parks and recreation opportunities also influence the location decisions of major businesses and industries; communities with ample and varied parks and recreation opportunities are more highly favorable for business relocation and expansion. Also, the presence of parks and open spaces generally increase property values in a community. Other economic benefits of parks and recreation that may be realized by a community include reduction in criminal activity, preventative health care, and increased productivity of the community's work force.

#### **Environmental Benefits**

Parks and recreation can also provide a variety of environmental benefits. Primarily, lands utilized for recreation are often held in perpetual conservation and therefore provide areas for natural buffers and habitats that retain or enhance a host of environmental functions including biodiversity, surface and groundwater protection, flood and fire prevention and mitigation, and others. Parks and recreation facilities that promote bicycle and pedestrian use within a community reduces the vehicle-miles traveled, resulting in a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the negative effects associated with them. Finally, parks and recreation areas provide venues for environmental education, instilling environmental responsibility in community members and insuring a healthy environmental future.

## Programs and Services Overview

Pender County Parks and Recreation currently offers a very limited selection of programs and special events to county residents and visitors, with the majority of the programs being managed by recreation partners. Programs offered are focused towards youth, with opportunities for children to participate in organized league play for baseball, softball, basketball, football, and soccer. Pender County Parks and Recreation currently offers summer day camps in several areas of the county, and plans to offer summer day camp opportunities in supplemental areas in the future.

### Core Services Analysis

The recreational program opportunities offered or partnered by the county are very limited in both the types of programs and the target market they service. Recreational opportunities are largely focused on providing organized team sports for youth, which are geographically limited to certain areas within the county. Limited funding, staff resources, and existing facilities within the county are contributing to the programming needs within Pender County Parks and Recreation.

Through the public input solicited during this project, county residents expressed similar needs for more recreational programming opportunities, and indicated desires for programs that cater to users of all ages and interest. Residents also indicated desires for programs to be offered in more areas in the county, as long commutes or lack of available transportation prohibit some residents from participating in the existing recreational program offerings. Some of the program ideas indicated by residents during the public input process include afterschool programs, literacy programs, arts and crafts, health and wellness education, fitness and exercise classes, self-defense classes, first aid and CPR classes, vocational and computer training, cooking classes, and many others.

Despite the consensus of the public input indicating a desire for additional recreational programs, survey respondents indicated a general satisfaction with programs that they had participated in. However, a large percentage of respondents also indicated that they never participate in programs and services provided by the county. Many residents also indicated through written-in survey responses that they were unaware of any programs and services offered by the county at all.

Funding and staffing limitations within the department also impair the ability to expand the recreational offerings. While an increase in recreational programs would warrant the justification for additional staff positions within the department, it has proven challenging to increase the program offerings without additional staff resources to implement and facilitate new programs. Similar to the development of new parks and recreational facilities in the county, the implementation of new recreational programs offered by the county will require the county to invest in additional staff resources as well as adequately allocate funding for the programs. More information on organizational recommendations may be found in the previous chapter, *Department Organization and Analysis*.

### Fitness

Fitness-based recreation opportunities are available through several alternative recreation providers in the county, such as Fitness Fusion, Second Wind Fitness, Curves, and others. It may be feasible for Pender County Parks and Recreation to pursue a partnership with these recreation providers to ensure that fitness-oriented programs are available to a wide user group and in all areas of the county. Additionally, it may be feasible to explore Pender County-sponsored fitness programs within the existing private community centers in Pender County.

### Athletics

Organized team sports opportunities are available through Pender County's recreation partners, who provide leagues for youth soccer, football, cheerleading, baseball, softball, and basketball. Games are played at Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Pender Memorial Park, Rouse Field in Hampstead, or utilizing some of the schools' athletic fields and gymnasiums.

### Senior Programs

Many opportunities for recreation are available for senior residents in the county through Pender Adult Services, Inc. This group operates programs at the Heritage Place in Burgaw, the Topsail Senior Center in Hampstead, and the Maple Hill Recreation Center in Maple Hill. A variety of classes, programs, and support groups are available at the centers

during the weekdays, including arts and crafts classes such as basket making and oil painting, fitness and health classes such as yoga and Weight Watchers, and other recreation such as bingo and pinochle.

Pender Adult Services, Inc. also sponsors the annual Spring Senior Games in April and May, which take place in various locations in the county. The Heritage Place, Topsail Senior Center, Fitness Fusion, Olde Point Golf Club, and Second Wind Fitness Center help register participants and provide assistance for the games, which are available to community residents ages 55 and up. The games include outdoor events such as croquet, horseshoes, bocce ball, basketball shot, and spin casting. Throughout the week, seniors have the opportunity to participate in tennis, golf, track and field, swimming, and bowling. Also, the Silver Arts events held during this time gives seniors a chance to display their crafts, handiwork, visual and literary artwork, as well as their performing talents. Crafts displayed include quilts, baskets, woodcarving, knitting and crochet; Visual Arts category includes paintings, sculptures, and photography. Literary arts included in the games are poetry, short stories, and life experiences; seniors with musical talent or interest in dance or drama may participate in the Performing Arts.

### ***Special Events***

In April 2010, Pender County Parks and Recreation in cooperation with Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Inc. held the first annual Pender County Earth Day Festival at Hampstead Kiwanis Park. The festival turned out to be a great success, including games and activities for children, arts and crafts, music from local performers, various exhibits, an art contest for Pender County students, vendors and concessions, and much more. Parks and Recreation Staff along with Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Inc. look forward to improving and expanding this new special event in Pender County, as well as exploring other special event opportunities.

### ***Persons with Disabilities***

Limited recreational opportunities are available for county residents with disabilities, including the Pender County Special Olympics, which are held each spring and winter. The Special Olympics are coordinated and implemented by Pender County Schools, with assistance in past years provided in part by Pender County Parks and Recreation.

While the Special Olympics offers an opportunity for recreation for persons with varying disabilities, it should be a priority to provide additional programs and recreational opportunities for this unique group of residents with specialized needs. As more parks and recreation facilities are developed within the county, the possibilities for recreation opportunities for persons with disabilities will increase; for instance, the development of an ADA-accessible overlook at Millers Pond Park will provide persons with disabilities opportunities for enjoying and interacting with the natural environment within the park. As further detailed in *Facility Assessments and Recommendations*, existing parks within Pender County should be evaluated for ADA compliance and accessibility, and future facility should be planned to accommodate users with special needs.

## **Partnerships and Alternative Providers**

### **Partnership Analysis**

Pender County Parks and Recreation relies heavily on recreation partners to provide structured recreational opportunities to county residents, with the majority of opportunities available to youth. Some of the partnerships include:

- Burgaw Dixie Youth
- Eastern Pender Pop Warner Association
- Pender Adult Services
- Pender Youth Basketball Association
- Pender Youth Football and Cheerleading Association
- Pender Youth Soccer Association
- Pender United Football and Cheerleading Association
- Port City Soccer Club
- Topsail Ball Club
- Topsail Basketball Association
- Topsail Girls Softball Association

These recreation partners generally receive funding support from the county, as well as the use of parks and recreation facilities at Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Pender Memorial Park, and the gymnasiums at several Pender County schools. Additionally, Pender County Parks and Recreation provides staff support for program implementation and coordination, as well as grounds and facility maintenance. While Pender County receives the benefit of program opportunities for county residents, the county receives no revenues from the programs to help offset the resources devoted to each recreation program. It is recommended that a complete cost-benefit analysis be performed to evaluate the relationship between Pender County Parks and Recreation and the private recreation partners.

### **Alternative Providers**

Aside from the programs offered through Pender County Parks and Recreation and its recreation partners, a number of recreational opportunities are available through private and non-profit as well as other public organizations and agencies. As program opportunities are explored by Pender County Parks and Recreation, consideration should be given to the opportunities available through these alternative recreational providers to maximize opportunities and avoid duplication of efforts.

### **Private and Non-Profit Providers**

Many private and non-profit organizations provide recreational opportunities within Pender County, including many churches, community groups, and private businesses. Some of these opportunities include fitness and exercise classes, dance, martial arts, gymnastics, paintball, and charter fishing opportunities. *Facility Matrix 2: Existing Private Facilities*, found in the *Appendix*, includes a list of many of the private recreational providers in Pender County. It is recommended that Pender County Parks and Recreation focus particularly on strengthening partnerships with the community centers within the county to expand and improve program offerings and other recreational opportunities.

### **Municipal Parks and Recreation Departments**

Of the six municipalities in Pender County, only the Town of Surf City provides recreation program opportunities to residents and non-residents. These programs include various cards and games programs, writing forums, several dance classes, three yoga classes, Pilates, aerobics, martial arts, tennis lessons, personal training, and several other fitness and non-fitness oriented programs. More information on Surf City's recreational opportunities may be found on the town's website at [www.townofsurfcity.com](http://www.townofsurfcity.com).

## **Recreation Trends**

The recreational needs within a community are often changing, and programming opportunities should be flexible to account for variation in the community's recreational need. A multitude of factors influence the type of recreation programs desired in a community, including individual, community, and national trends.

### **Population-Based Programming**

#### **Youth**

After-school activities, whether team-oriented such as basketball, soccer, or baseball, or individual-oriented such as crafts, dance, or painting, have been proven to reduce juvenile crime and violence, decrease drug, alcohol, and tobacco use, and reduce teen pregnancy. Families are also increasingly looking to parks and recreation agencies to fill the void resulting from waning budgets supporting physical and arts education in public schools. Reduced physical education in schools combined with increased sedentary lifestyle and poor eating habits have led to sharp inclines in a variety of health problems, including obesity, diabetes, attention deficit disorder, and others. Related, a variety of grant opportunities have been created that may be utilized by Pender County Parks and Recreation to create and facilitate programs to combat these aforementioned problems.

#### **Retirees and Seniors**

Americans are retiring younger, healthier, and wealthier than past generations, therefore having more time, money, and energy to devote to leisure activities. A growing number of older Americans and retirees are taking part in physically-oriented programs, educational classes, travel, as well as other recreational leisure activities that allow them to interact with other persons from their generation in a fun and challenging environment.

### ***Special Needs Populations***

Like parks and recreation facilities, recreational programs should also cater to persons with unique needs or disabilities. Parks and recreation agencies can play an active role in providing opportunities for recreation and leisure activities for persons with disabilities or special needs, as opportunities for community interaction and recreation for these persons are not readily available outside of the school environment. Investment in facilities and opportunities for special needs populations should be a focus to ensure this user group is not overlooked in Pender County.

### ***Activity-Based Programming***

#### ***Less Time for Recreation***

Americans' recreational habits have changed in recent times as a result of less available time for recreation after taking care of daily obligations. As such, recreational programs are changing to cater to this trend by becoming less structured and more flexible to accommodate the varying schedules of individuals. Consideration should be given to the scheduling and availability of current and future programs to ensure that opportunities are available at a variety of times and locations.

#### ***Drop-in Programs***

"Drop-in programs" are programs that require no advance registration or monetary commitment from attendees. These types of programs allow individuals to participate in a recreational program at their discretion, which is beneficial to those with hectic schedules or who do not want to commit to several weeks of a program, but instead prefer to attend as their schedule permits. It may be feasible to allot several drop-in slots within each recreational program, offering individuals the option to pay per class rather than per semester.

#### ***Alternative Sports and Activities***

Participation in alternative sports and activities has increased over the past several decades. Often referred to as "extreme", these sports include skateboarding, in-line skating, rock climbing, adventure racing, mountain biking, and BMX racing. As participation in these sports and activities increase, it is necessary to ascertain Pender County's residents' need for special facilities and programs to accommodate these sports and activities. Often, specific clubs and organizations are willing to build, manage, and maintain facilities under an agreement with the county; Planning Staff was approached by the local chapter of the Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association (SORBA) during one of the public input meetings to begin preliminary discussions on mountain bike trails that the organization would be willing to build and maintain within a county park. A similar request was made for a radio-controlled car race track. These types of partnerships prove beneficial by empowering the interest group to invest in and maintain their facility or program, while the county benefits by providing the facility or program opportunity to the residents and visitors.

#### ***Environmental and Outdoor-based Recreation***

Domestically and worldwide, there has been a strong interest in environmental issues in recent years. Consumers are making more purchasing and lifestyle choices based on their environmental impact, and these choices are transferring over to recreational activities. Environmental education and outdoor-based recreation opportunities are of high demand, as apparent in the public input survey results that indicate Pender County's citizens' desires for nature areas, camping and fishing opportunities, and other outdoor-based recreation. Fortunately, Pender County is host to a variety of significant natural areas that may be utilized for environment-based recreation and education.

#### ***Fitness and Obesity Concerns***

Obesity rates, largely attributed to less time spent exercising and participating in recreation, are increasing for nearly every age group in the nation, and Pender County residents adhere to the trend. According to *Eat Smart Move More NC* statistics obtained from the Pender County Health Department, 60 to 65% of adult Pender County residents are obese and 45 to 50% are not meeting the recommended activity requirements. Over 25% of children in the county are overweight, while an additional 16% of children in Pender County are at risk of becoming overweight. Nearly 40% of teens and young adults (ages 12-18) in Pender County are overweight, while another 15% are at risk of becoming overweight. Obesity rates have also been rising in younger children; according to the *North Carolina Statewide and County Trends in Key Health Indicators* report for Pender County, the prevalence of obesity in children ages 5 to 11 has risen from 18% in 2000 to 36.8% in 2008. As mentioned, reduced rates of physical activity and recreation may be attributed to the increasing obesity rates; the 2009 North Carolina Child Health Care Report Card reports that only 44.3%

of students grades 9 through 12 across the state are physically active for a total of 60 minutes or more per day five or more days per week.

These alarming statistics support the need for opportunities for physical activity and recreation to be available to county residents of all ages. Pender County should continue to encourage residents to partake in physical activities and recreation to ensure a healthier, happier, and more productive population.

### **Programming Recommendations Summary**

The recreational program opportunities offered by the county through the parks and recreation division as well as through the recreation partners provide limited opportunities for a small segment of the county's population. County residents strongly expressed the desire for more of a variety of programs for residents of all ages, capabilities, and interests, as well as a desire for these programs to be offered in additional locations within the county. Many local and national trends should be taken into consideration when the county approaches expanding the available program opportunities, including the need for programs for youth residents as well as the older adults living in the county. The limited existing parks and recreation facilities within the county also create an impediment to creating new programs within the county, as the limited facilities are already experiencing signs of exhausted use. Additionally, in order for the county to adequately expand and improve recreational program opportunities, it will be necessary to provide appropriate funding and staff resources for program implementation and coordination. Because of the limited program opportunities currently offered in Pender County, there are many opportunities for expanding program offerings in order to diversify the types of programs available and increase the population segments targeted for programming. It is recommended that a future plan update include a more detailed recreational programming implementation and expansion plan once the county is better positioned to hire additional staff and once additional facilities become available.

## Facility Assessment and Recommendations

As part of the comprehensive parks and recreation master plan project, individual site-based assessments and inventories were conducted on existing parks and recreation facilities in the county, including the facilities within the jurisdictions of the towns in Pender County. These facilities were examined for facility diversity, distribution patterns, maintenance practices, age, condition, and compliance with the accessibility requirements of the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Following the assessments, recommendations were made based on the standards set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines, as well as the input received from the public at the open meetings and through the survey.

### NRPA Guidelines

Minimum standards for parks and recreation facilities in communities are often assessed using the guidelines set out in the 1995 book *Park, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines* by James D. Mertes, Ph.D, CLP, and James R. Hall, CLP or from the 1990 book *Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* by Roger A. Lancaster. These books, published by the NRPA, outline typical park classifications, the amount of acreage a system should have, and service levels that are recommended based on population of a community. Guidelines such as those highlighted in the books have historically been used to assess a community's parks and recreation needs; however, since the mid-1990's, the practice has shifted to assessing the park and recreation needs of the residents through surveying public input. This shift in practice is a result of the realization that local trends and demographics generally dictate the need for particular facilities in a community.

*Park, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines* suggests that a minimum of 6.25 to 10 acres of developed open space per 1000 residents should serve as the central system of park lands. These types of parks can be classified as mini parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, special-use parks, and greenways. Table 6.1 provides a matrix of these parks classifications, but following is a description of each:

#### Mini Park

Mini parks, also called "pocket parks," are the smallest types of parks, typically no more than five acres. Mini parks are designed to attract residents who live within a quarter mile of the park. Park users typically walk to or bike to the park, and no parking facilities for motor vehicles are typically incorporated into the park. Mini parks' are typically passive, limited activity park facilities due to their size, and serve generally .25 to .5 acres per thousand residents. Common park features include playgrounds, benches, and picnic tables set within an attractive landscape, sometimes designed to enhance and preserve the surrounding area. Mini parks are not designed to include fields for league play or large community events.

#### Neighborhood Park

Commonly found in most county and municipal park systems, neighborhood parks are typically 5 to 20 acres in size and serve residents living within ½ mile of the park. Neighborhood parks typically maximize recreational activities and facilities within their limited size, and commonly include features such as playgrounds, shelters, walking paths, playing fields, parking facilities, and restroom and concession facilities. Parking standard for neighborhood parks is typically a minimum of seven spaces for the first ten acres, and one additional space for each additional acre. These standards may vary based on the types of activities or facilities incorporated into the park. Neighborhood parks typically serve between 10,000 and 20,000 residents, or one to two acres per thousand people.

#### Community Park

Community parks are large parks generally ranging from 20 to 75 acres in size, with a service area anywhere from 50,000 to 80,000 people, or 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 people. These parks are designed to address all users' recreation needs and interests, including both day and night activities. Large indoor fitness/recreation centers, multi-field sports complexes, and other large-scale facilities are common within community parks.

#### Regional Park

Regional parks are the largest park type found within a park system. These parks range in size from 50 to 250 acres depending on the types of activities offered and the degree of use of the facilities. Regional parks are designed to service residents within one hour of driving time from the park. Regional parks are generally designed in a manner that

they are accessible by hiking and biking trails, as well as motorized vehicles. Because of the size of these parks, it is common for regional parks to have unique recreation areas within the park facility, such as an aquatic facility in addition to natural areas.

**Table 6.1: Recommended Classification System for Recreational Open Space**

<b>Component</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Desirable Size</b>	<b>Acres per 1,000 Population</b>	<b>Desirable Site Characteristics</b>
<b>Mini-Park</b>	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.	0.75 mile radius	5 acres or less	0.25 to 0.5 acres	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse developments, and housing for the elderly.
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.	0.75 to 0.5 mile radius	5-20 acres	1 to 2 acres	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population and geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school park facility.
<b>Community Park</b>	Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational activities, such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.	1 to 2 mile radius	20-75 acres	5 to 8 acres	May include natural features such as water bodies and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.
<b>Regional Park</b>	Area of natural or ornamental quality for outdoor recreation such as picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, camping, and trail uses; may include play areas.	1 hour driving time	50-250 acres	5 to 10 acres	Contiguous to or encompassing natural resources.

Component	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres per 1,000 Population	Desirable Site Characteristics
<b>Special Use Park</b>	Areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, nature centers, zoos, conservatories, or areas that preserve, maintain, and interpret buildings, sites, and objects of archaeological significance. Also plazas or squares in or near commercial centers, boulevards, and parkways.	No Application Standard	Variable depending on desired size	Variable	Within communities.
<b>Natural Resource Area/Preserve</b>	Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment with recreation use as a secondary objective.	No Application Standard	Sufficient to protect the resource	Variable	Variable, depending on the resource being protected.
<b>Greenway</b>	Area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel such as bicycling, walking, and hiking. May include active play areas.	No Application Standard	Sufficient width to protect the resource and provide maximum use.	Variable	Built or natural corridors, such as utility rights-of-way, bluff lines, vegetation patters, roads, and existing and abandoned rail corridors that link other components of the recreation system or community facilities such as schools, libraries, commercial areas, and other park areas.
Sources: Lancaster, 1990 Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, Page 56 and Mertes Ph.D., CLP, James D. and James R. Hall, CLP; Park, Open Space, and Greenway Guidelines					

### Special-Use Park

Special-use parks such as a golf course or a museum are tailored to satisfy the needs of a particular user group. Typically, these types of facilities are considered good sources of revenue from user fees, as long as the facility is properly maintained and staffed. Special-use parks vary in size depending on its focus and the community's demand for the activity.

### Natural Resource Area/Preserve

Natural resource areas are lands acquired for the preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, buffers, and visual aesthetics. These lands may include protected land such as wetlands or shorelines along surface waters, or lands that are not suitable for development such as seasonal flood plains or former landfills but offer

significant natural resources. Natural resource areas and preserves are important because they may maintain the natural amenities of the area and contribute to the open space acreage in a community.

### Greenways

Greenways can be described as paths or networks of trails designed for non-motorized transportation. Greenways serve many benefits, and are becoming popular tools to link communities, schools, shopping centers, and even cities and counties. Greenways offer health benefits to the community by providing safe and convenient places for residents to walk, jog, or bicycle. Increased tourism usually occurs as a result of greenway development, and subsequently serves as an economic driver to communities. Greenways serve as a resource for environmental protection and educational opportunities as well.

Greenways are typically 10 to 12 feet wide, and may be constructed of a paved or natural surface. Rail-trails are a specific type of greenway that is developed along an abandoned rail corridor. Greenways should be developed in a manner that provide convenient areas for users to access the facility, as well as provide connections to ecological, cultural, and recreational elements in a community.

### School Park

By locating new parks facilities on existing and planned school sites, the county may utilize new and existing resources and provide concentrated facilities that serve the community. The type of school, such as elementary, middle, or high school, generally will have an effect on the amount of adjacent land available for park development. Middle and high schools typically are developed with athletic fields to support team sports, while playground and multi-use fields are more common at elementary schools. It is recommended that parks and recreation staff work closely with school system staffs to determine suitable existing and future school sites that are compatible for parks and recreation development and use.

### Private Park/Recreation Facility

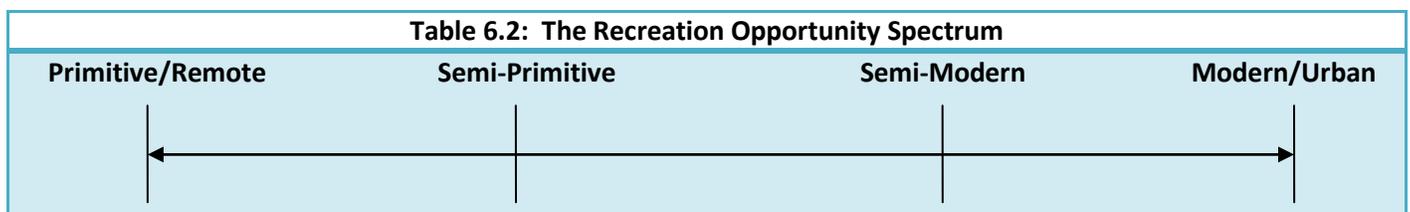
According to the NRPA, private park and recreation facilities are developed generally in a residential area for the exclusive use of residents and are usually maintained through a neighborhood association. For-profit establishments such as golf courses and amusement parks may also be classified as private parks and recreation facilities.

Private park and recreation facilities may either be entirely privately-owned, or be a joint venture between a private organization and a public entity. Utilizing these types of partnerships is a method to create programs and facilities at a reduced cost to the public sector.

### Diversity of Public Recreation Opportunities

The outdoor environment offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities, from county parks to pristine wilderness. The public’s recreational interests and needs are equally diverse; community residents expect recreational opportunities and facilities to satisfy their particular interest, challenge their abilities, and meet their expectations of a particular activity and setting. The relationship between expectations and actual settings has been long recognized by recreation researchers, and it is expected that a range of opportunities be offered within a parks system to best serve the diversity of public expectations.

The US Department of Agriculture Forest Service developed a useful tool for assessing, planning, and managing recreation resources by creating the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) in accordance with the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974. The core principle of the ROS was that quality in recreation is best assured by providing a diverse set of recreational opportunities within a parks system.



The ROS categorizes recreation settings on a continuum ranging from primitive/remote to modern/urban, as depicted in Table 6.2 above. Each position along the spectrum represents distinctive recreational opportunities, and Table 6.3 below describes the settings and experiences appropriate for each end of the spectrum.

<b>Table 6.3: The Outdoor Recreational Activities Spectrum</b>		
	<b>Modern/Urban</b>	<b>Primitive/Remote</b>
<b>Settings</b>		
<b>Proximity</b>	Close to home	Far from home
<b>Size</b>	Less than 100 acres	Several thousand acres
<b>Facilities</b>	Extensive facilities	Limited or no facilities
<b>Natural Resources</b>	Man-made environment dominates; natural resources secondary	Natural environment dominant; little or no development
<b>Activities</b>	Facility dependent	Natural resource dependent
<b>Experiences</b>		
<b>Leisure Time</b>	Participation in short time periods possible	Substantial blocks of time required for participation
<b>Management Controls</b>	Regimentation and controls obvious and numerous	On-site regimentation low, with controls primarily off-site
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Large numbers of users on-site and in nearby areas	Few people encountered per day
<b>Character of Experience</b>	Opportunities for competitive and spectator sports and for passive uses of highly developed parks are common; experiencing natural environment-related challenges and risks and using outdoor skills are relatively unimportant; contact with other people is prevalent, as is convenience of sites and opportunities.	High probability of experiencing isolation from sights and sounds of humans; independence; closeness to nature; tranquility and self-reliance through the application of primitive outdoor skills in an environment that offers challenge and risk.
<i>Source: 2008-2013 NC SCORP, NC Dept. of Parks and Recreation</i>		

It is important that Pender County provide a wide range of settings within the parks and recreation system in order to ensure that the needs of the broadest segment of the population are met. As such, the recommendations made for facility development and renovations in this plan account for providing a variety of settings.

### **Individual Parks and Recreation Facility Assessments**

An important component of a parks and recreation master plan is a full evaluation of the parks and recreation facilities that exist in Pender County. For this section, all facilities within the county were assessed, including facilities that are operated or managed by the county, municipalities, and state and federal agencies, as well as private recreation opportunities. Recommendations were made only on the Pender County managed and partnered facilities. *Facility Matrix 1* in the *Appendix* contains a complete inventory of public parks and recreation facilities in Pender County.

## Pender County Facilities

Pender County is responsible for two existing parks, and will soon be opening a third county park. Both Hampstead Kiwanis Park and Pender Memorial Park were developed and are operated with assistance from partners; Millers Pond Park will be Pender County's first exclusively county developed and operated facility.

### *Pender Memorial Park*

Located along near South Smith and West Hayes Streets in the Town of Burgaw, Pender Memorial Park was first developed for use as the fairgrounds for the area, and then as the site of the athletic fields for the former Burgaw High School (now Burgaw Middle School). In the 1970s, Burgaw Dixie Youth leased the land from the county and developed an athletic complex to support their baseball games. Five fields were eventually built, and the complex was operated and managed by Burgaw Dixie Youth until the early 2000s. At that time, Pender County began performing a more active role in the operations and maintenance of the complex, including taking over the some of the operating and utility costs.

In 2006, the county was awarded a \$280,000 PARTF grant that was utilized to develop two additional youth baseball/softball fields, three multi-purpose soccer/football fields, a new concession stand, a playground, parking lot, and various other improvements. During the same period, Burgaw Dixie Youth supported a variety of improvements, including the replacement of the aged concession stand and restroom building, fencing, irrigation, and other improvements and renovations.

Pender Memorial Park consists of three parcels totaling 25.75 acres. Along South Smith Street, a 13-acre county-owned parcel hosts the older section of the park, consisting of three baseball/softball fields, three batting cages, a restroom and concession building, parking areas, a picnic shelter, and ingress/egress drives. The adjacent 2.25-acre parcel is leased by Burgaw Dixie Youth from a private owner and hosts two youth baseball/softball fields. Finally, the county-owned 10.5-acre parcel along West Hayes Street was the tract to receive the recent development leveraged by the PARTF grant described above.

While the recent improvements have added to the attractiveness and diversity of Pender Memorial Park, Planning Staff noticed several issues during the field visit. Primarily, the development of the new phase of the park has created some issues with interconnectivity for pedestrians, and particularly for persons with disabilities. Also, there are plenty of opportunities for landscaping improvements



***Image 6.1: The new concession stand/restroom building stands proud as a testament to the commitment of Burgaw Dixie Youth to Pender Memorial Park.***



***Image 6.2: Landscaping and driveway improvements within Pender Memorial Park would not only make the park more visually appealing, but also provide needed shady areas for visitors to enjoy.***

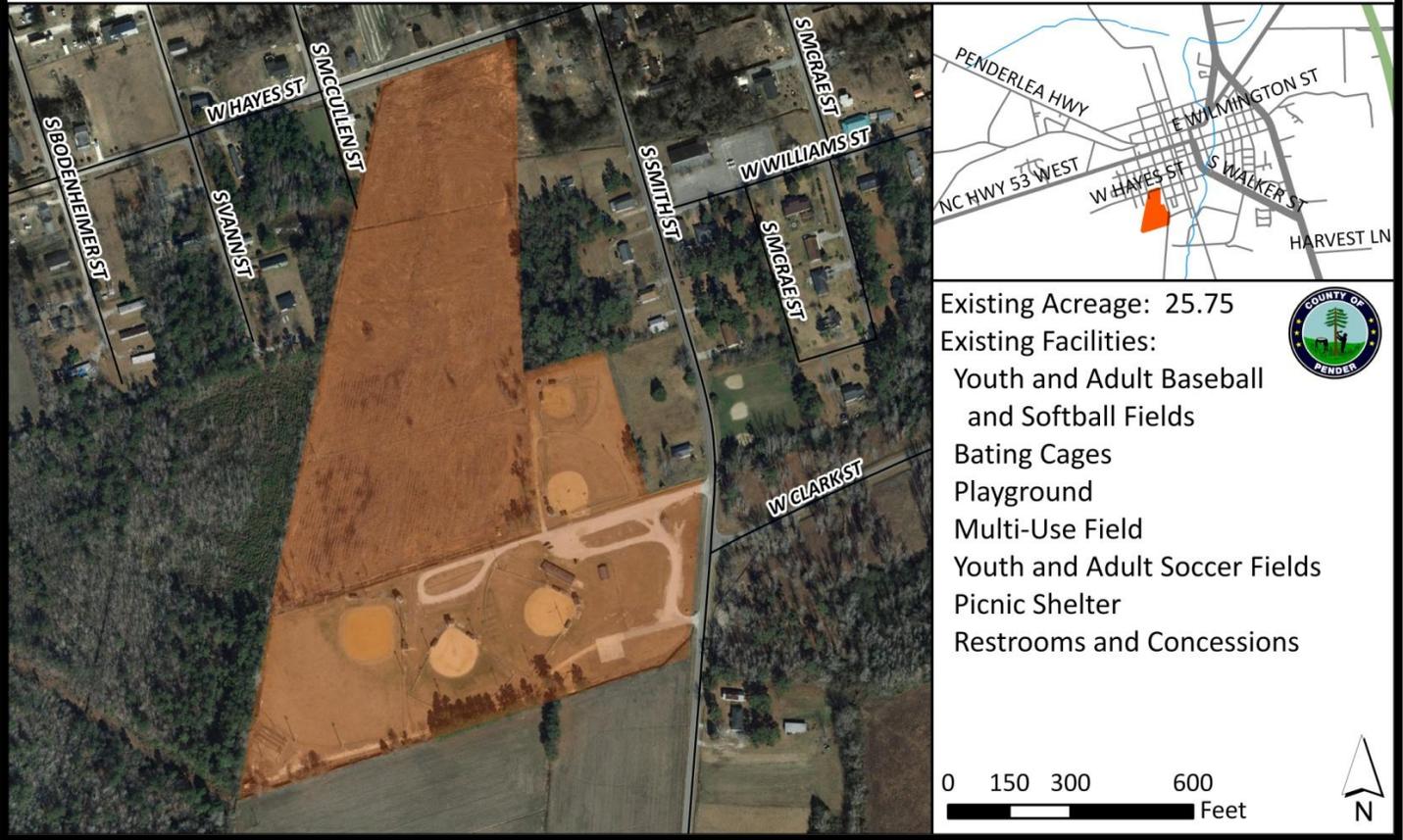
within the park; such improvements would provide a more aesthetically appealing facility, as well as provide shaded areas for visitors to enjoy. Finally, there is a disconnected storm drain pipe along the driveway to the batting cages that is causing accelerated erosion of the road surface; the disconnected pipe should be repaired before the erosion leads significant damage or safety issues. Additionally, the park may benefit from the placement of more trash receptacles around the park; many studies have shown that increasing the number of trash cans in public areas decreases the amount of litter accumulation.

This park is maintained by both Pender County and Burgaw Dixie Youth. Pender County maintenance workers perform the landscape maintenance, while Burgaw Dixie Youth maintains the athletic fields and facilities; this management technique appears to be working effectively, but both parties recognize that park enhancements would create an improved facility.



Pender Memorial Park offers limited recreational opportunities to area residents, made possible in part by the proud volunteers and supporters of Burgaw Dixie Youth. Pender County should continue to focus on improving the park to meet the recreational needs in the area, as further discussed later in this section.

**Figure 6.1: Pender Memorial Park**



### *Hampstead Kiwanis Park*

In 2002, over 82 acres of property along Sloop Point Loop Road in Hampstead were donated to the Hampstead Kiwanis Club by the Tommie Little and Bill Clark Families for the creation of a park to serve the greater Hampstead community. Since then, Hampstead Kiwanis and Pender County have worked together to develop and maintain the park, leveraging grant money, donations, and appropriations from the general fund to create a well-used and appreciated recreation facility in eastern Pender County.

In 2004, Pender County received \$250,000 from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) that was combined with \$150,000 from the county and significant private donations for the development of Phase I of the park. This first phase included a baseball field, a multi-purpose field, restrooms, concession stand, a playground, picnic shelter, and grading and irrigation work. After a groundbreaking ceremony in late August 2004, an army of volunteers as well as paid contractors commenced work on Phase I development.



***Image 6.4: Hampstead Kiwanis Park was made possible through a unique and mutually-beneficial partnership between the Hampstead Kiwanis Club and Pender County.***

Two years later, work commenced on Phase II of the park, made possible in part by another PARTF grant for \$395,000, as well as through private donations and volunteers. Ingress and egress improvements coincided with the Phase II improvements, including turning lanes on Sloop Point Loop Road which allowed for safe motor vehicle access into the park. Like the earlier phase, matching for the PARTF grant came by way of land donation from Hampstead Kiwanis to Pender County; land may be utilized for the required matching funds for PARTF projects. Phase II development was being completed during the creation of this plan, and includes two additional youth baseball/softball fields, one multi-purpose field, a paved walking trail, and an additional parking lot, among other improvements.

Hampstead Kiwanis Park is maintained by the Pender County Public Works maintenance workers, who take much pride in the appearance of Hampstead Kiwanis Park and the other facilities they maintain. The Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Inc. President indicated to Planning Staff during an interview how pleased he and the other Board members were with the maintenance and upkeep of the park, but also cautioned that as the responsibilities of the maintenance workers increase with the addition of new county-managed parks and recreation facilities, adequate staff will be necessary to accommodate the additional labor hours. Related to park and field maintenance, the lack of adequate practice fields at the schools in the Hampstead area is creating field maintenance difficulties for the Hampstead Kiwanis Park. Between the use by school teams and private recreation organizations, several of the fields within the park are overused to the point that maintenance issues have arisen. The development of additional fields not only within the park but also at the schools would alleviate the overuse.



***Image 6.5: The concessions/restroom building and playground were part of the amenities developed for Phase I with a grant from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.***

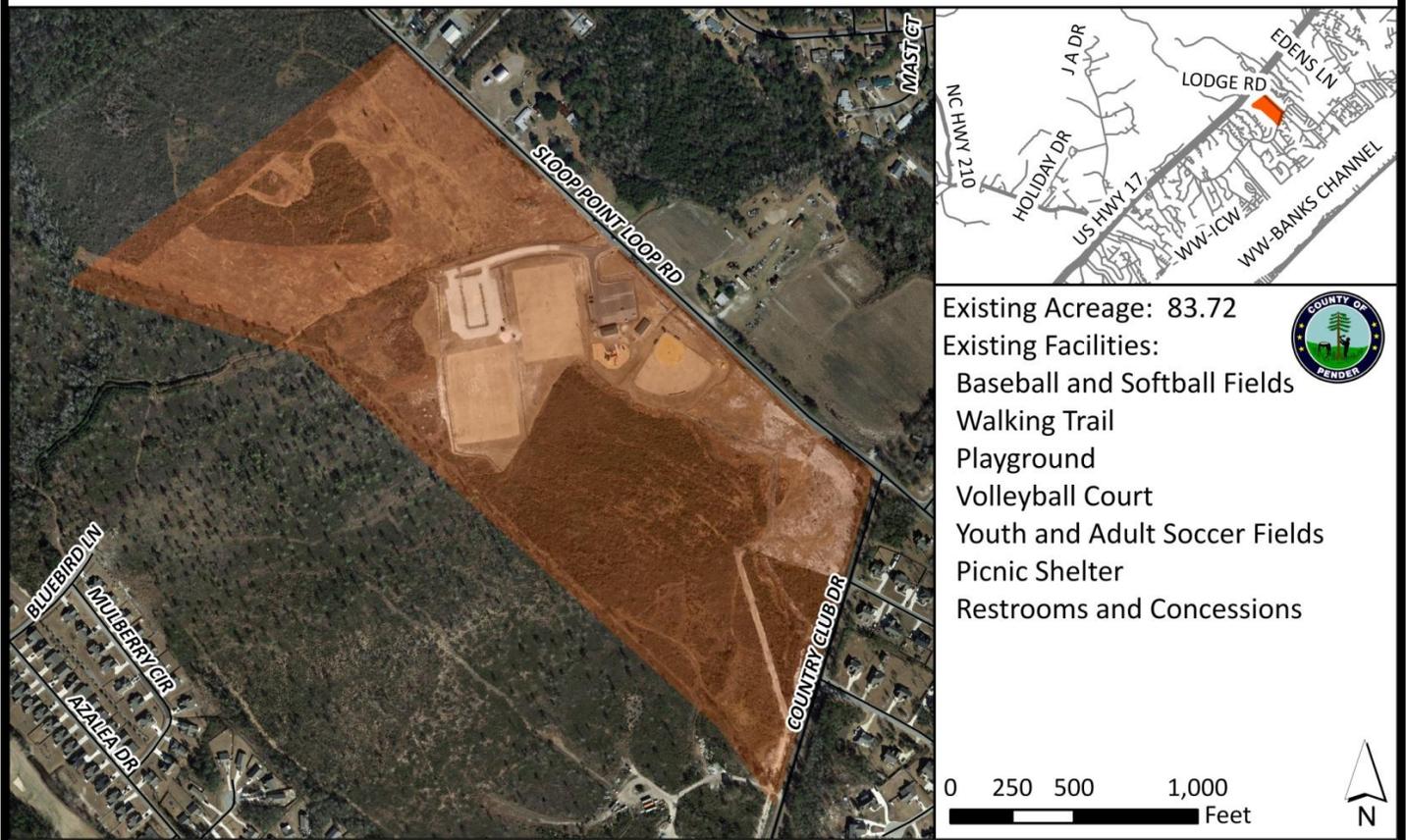
The park is utilized by a variety of residents and visitors, as well as numerous special interest organizations. The coordination of the use of the amenities within the park has proved difficult at times, and the implementation of an online registration system would help to alleviate scheduling conflicts and overbooking. Additionally, conflicting use of park amenities has been a noted safety concern that could easily be resolved by developing and utilizing a more coordinated scheduling of park amenity use as well as the development of additional park amenities.

While a master plan has been created for the overall concept of Hampstead Kiwanis Park, it is recommended that the master plan be updated to reflect the current park and recreation needs in the Hampstead community. More on the recommendations for Hampstead Kiwanis Park may be found later in this section.



**Image 6.6: Hampstead Kiwanis Park features a large picnic shelter that may be reserved for birthday parties, group picnics, and other special events.**

**Figure 6.2: Hampstead Kiwanis Park**



### Millers Pond Park

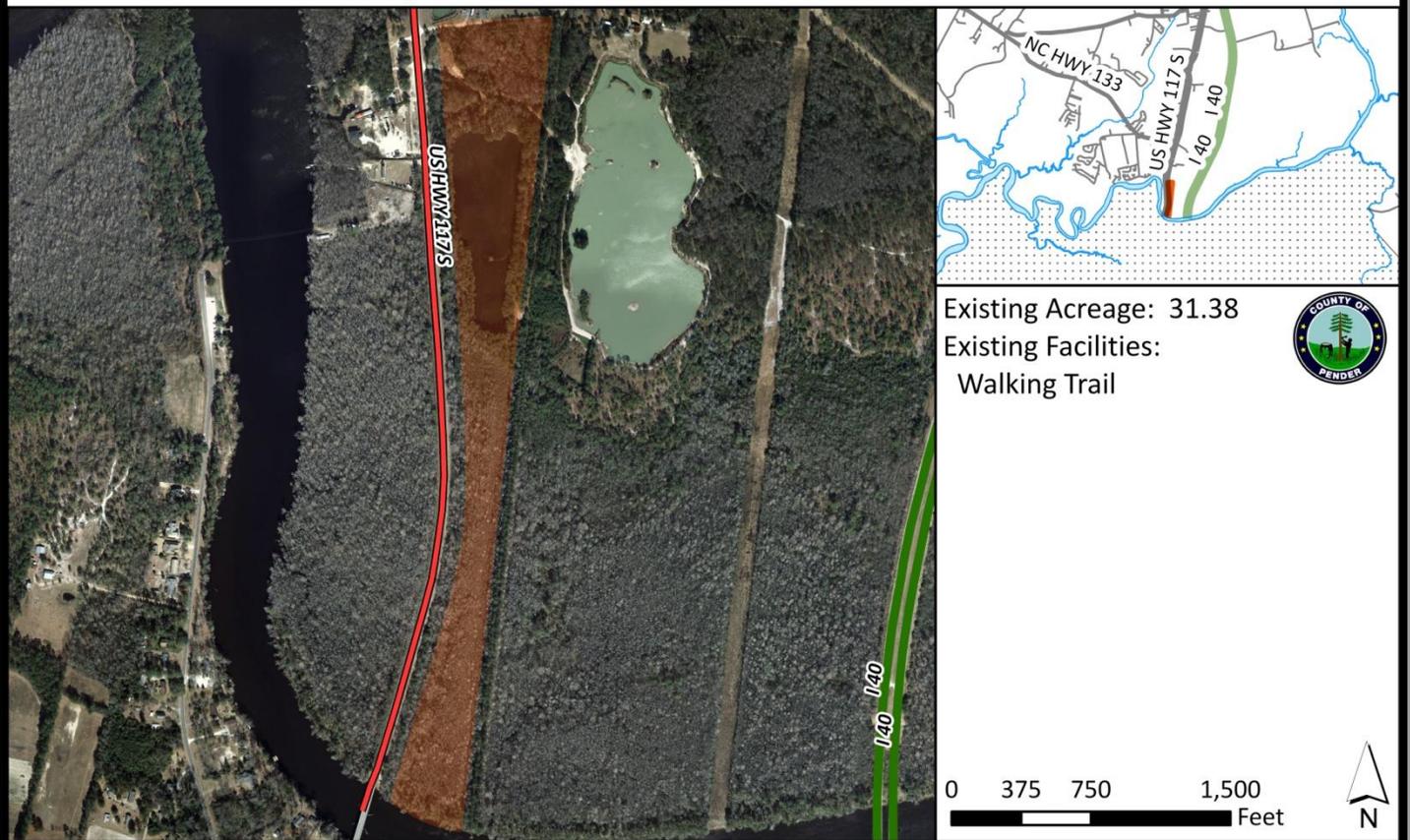
Although still under development at the time of publication of this parks and recreation plan, the Millers Pond Park is included in this assessment as an existing facility. Millers Pond Park is situated between US Highway 117, the railbanked rail corridor, and the Northeast Cape Fear River. The 31.38-acre site was used by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as a source of fill dirt for a transportation improvement project, and the mining of fill resulted in the seven acre freshwater pond that now adorns the property. NCDOT eventually sold the property to Pender County, and the site will be the next park facility opened by Pender County.

Phase I of Millers Pond Park schedule to open in 2010 as a passive recreation area and will initially have limited facilities including a parking area, 0.53-mile long nature trail, a pond overlook, as well as bench seating and informational kiosks. Future phase designs are pending review of the wetlands delineation; additional amenities may include picnic shelters, a canoe and small boat launch area, an ADA-accessible overlook, a nature and education center, and restroom facilities.



**Image 6.7: Millers Pond Park was under development during the creation of this plan, and will be opened as a nature-oriented passive recreation park.**

**Figure 6.3: Millers Pond Park**



## Municipal Facilities

During the facilities assessment for this plan, Planning Staff also examined the parks facilities in the six municipalities within Pender County. The only town in Pender County with a dedicated parks and recreation department is the Town of Surf City, which offers several parks with various amenities and some recreational programming opportunities. While the other five municipalities in Pender County do not have dedicated parks and recreation departments, some of the localities still offer recreational facilities.

### Town of Surf City

The Surf City Department of Parks and Recreation operates three impressive parks as well as a community center, which is utilized to host a variety of special events and wellness programs. The programs and events held at the community center in Surf City are a great example of revenue-generating opportunities that Pender County Parks and Recreation is currently lacking. These events and programs are available to residents for a nominal user fee, which helps to increase the economic sustainability of the department.

Soundside Park, shown in Figure 6.4, also hosts a public water access managed by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. At the time of publication of this plan, the public water access in Soundside Park provided the only public access to the Intracoastal Waterway, as the access on Lewis Road was still in the planning stages. More on public water access areas may be found later in this section.

Surf City also has some acreage devoted for conservation. These include an 8.5-acre parcel behind Family Park identified as Pender County PIN 4234-57-1254-0000 that is not depicted on Figure 6.5. Additionally, the town owns an 11.9-acre parcel (PIN 4245-12-5810-0000) reserved for conservation area; this parcel was donated to the town by a developer several years ago.

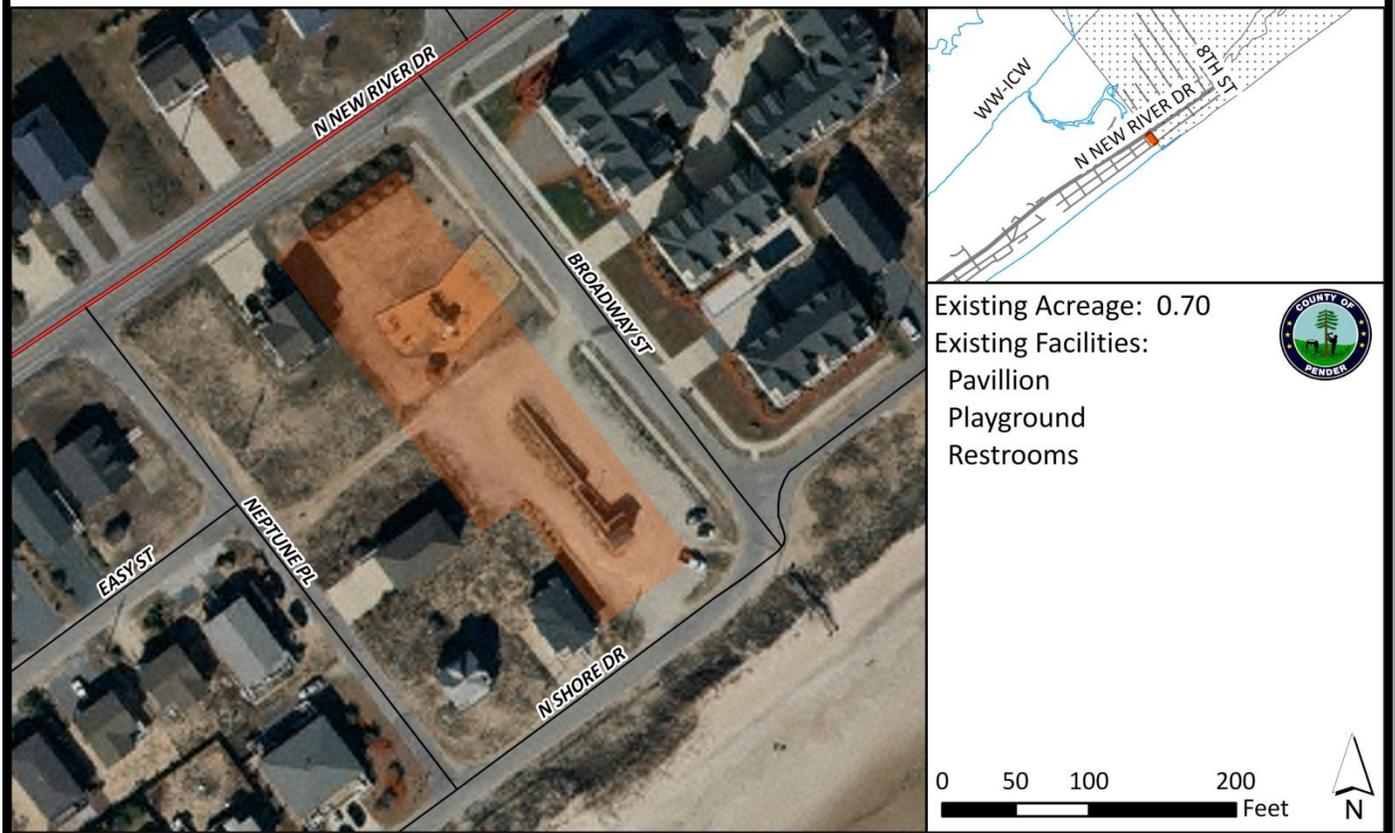
**Figure 6.4: Soundside Park (Town of Surf City)**



**Figure 6.5: Family Park (Town of Surf City)**

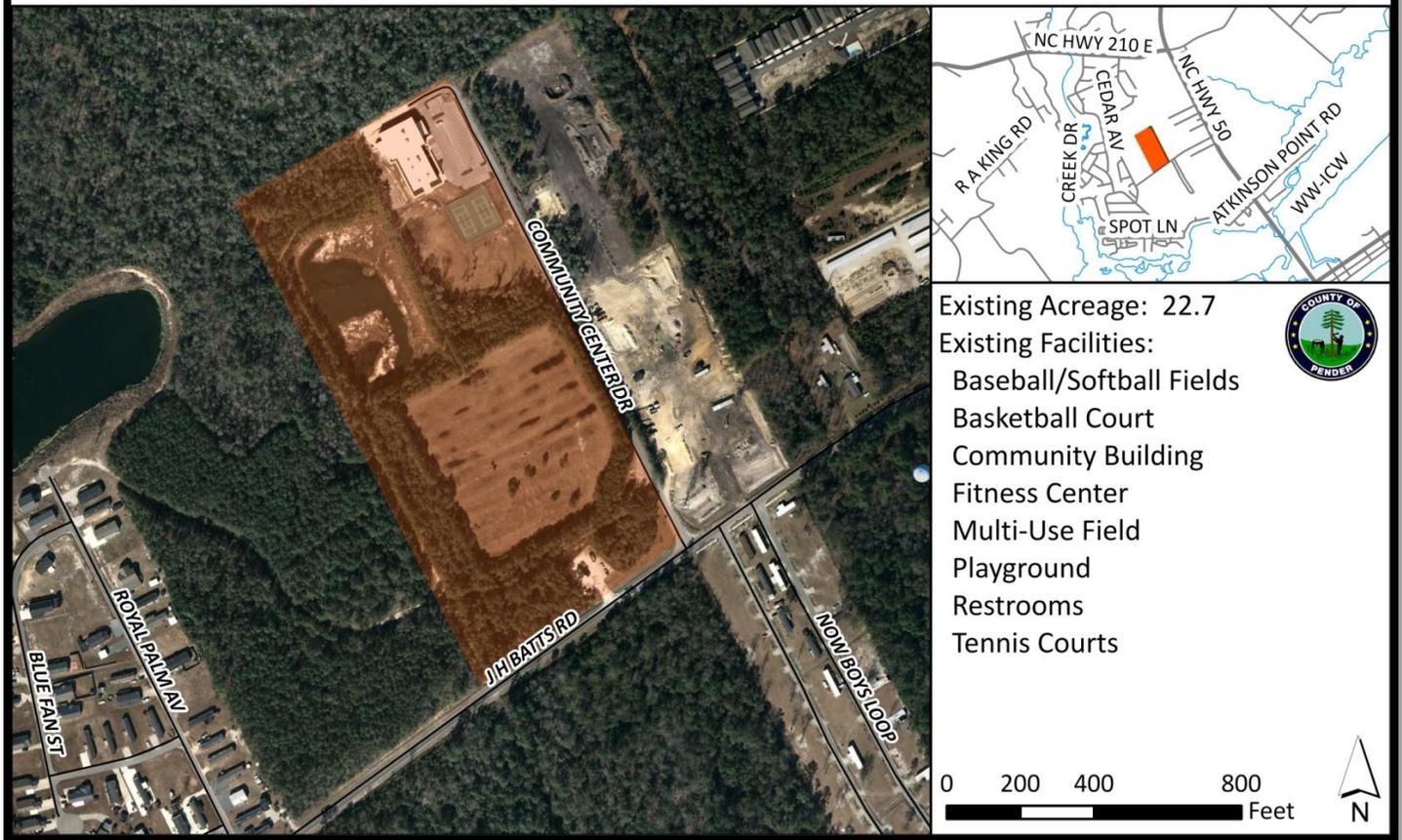


**Figure 6.6: Albury Recreation Area (Town of Surf City)**



According to the *Town of Surf City Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan* completed in 2007, the town has several parks and recreational facilities projects prioritized, including the Community Center Recreation Fields and Nature Trail, as well as the Progress Energy Transmission Line Easement Greenway. Surf City's Community Center is situated on a 22 acre parcel, of which contains 8 acres of capped landfill that was properly closed in the 1980s. These 8 acres are not suitable for development of any major structures, and therefore two youth baseball/softball fields and a soccer/football field is planned for the site, along with additional walking/biking trails around the facility.

**Figure 6.7: Surf City Community Center (Town of Surf City)**



Surf City has identified the existing 100-foot Progress Energy Transmission Line Easement as suitable and feasible for development of an earthen or gravel nature trail or paved multi-purpose path. The transmission line easement runs from Jacksonville to Castle Hayne; Progress Energy's easement restricts the development of anything that would prevent access to the servicing of the transmission lines and structures in the easement. A greenway along this easement would serve a crucial connection between the preferred alternative identified in the *Bicycle Facilities Study for the Blue Clay Corridor*, prepared in March 2008 for the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization. As identified in the study, the preferred alternative for Blue Clay Corridor bicycle facility will terminate on Holly Shelter Road, and the project identified in this plan as the Coastal Pender Greenway will provide the link between bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the City of Wilmington and New Hanover County and the facilities planned in the Town of Surf City.

As the Town of Surf City continues to grow, Pender County should explore and facilitate a relationship with the town's planning and parks and recreation staff for the coordination and partnering support for new facility and program development, and to avoid duplication of efforts.

### Town of Topsail Beach

The Town of Topsail Beach operates a public marina that includes eight wet slips available for rent, and a boating access ramp. These facilities require user fees; a wet slip may be rented for the rate of \$25 per night, \$150 per week, or \$295 per month, and the cost to use the boat ramp is \$10 per day, with seasonal rates available. The marina is staffed during the summer months, and remains open yet unstaffed other times, including at night.

Topsail Beach also hosts several neighborhood and local beach access points within the town's jurisdiction. Additionally, the town offers a wheelchair that can be used on the beach by persons with disabilities that impede their ability to walk on the sand. The wheelchair is available free of charge on a first-come, first-serve basis by contacting the town's police department, and may only be used within the town's limits.

At the time of publication of this document, Topsail Beach did not have any additional parks and recreation facilities existing or planned.



**Image 6.8: The Town of Topsail Beach offers a wheelchair to persons with disabilities for use on the beach within the town's limits.**

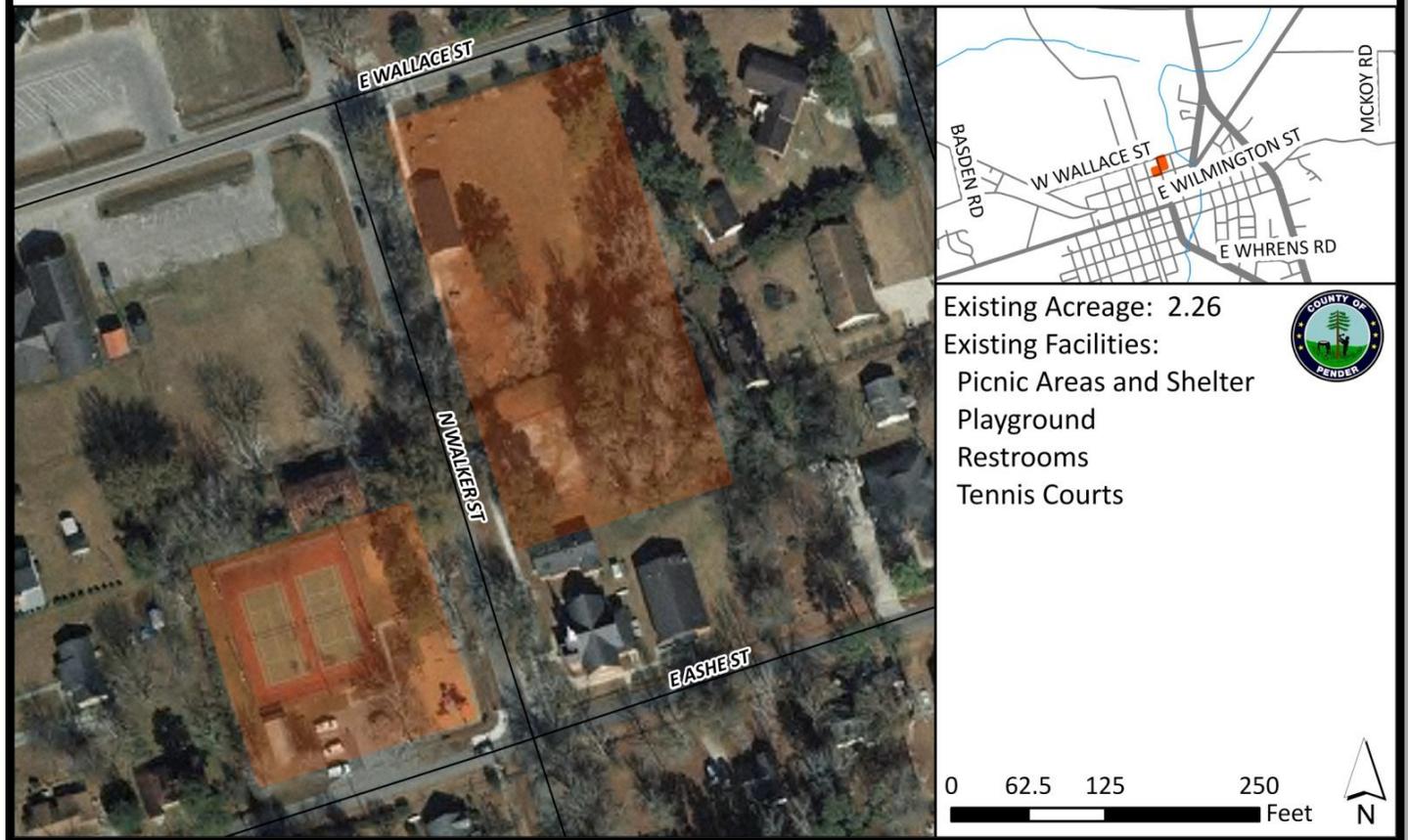
**Figure 6.8: Bush Marina (Town of Topsail Beach)**



## Town of Burgaw

The Town of Burgaw offers two parks that are located very close to each other, Bishop Rayford Hankins Memorial Park and W. Ross Harrell Memorial Park, both located on North Walker Street in the town. Hankins Park consists of a large open area with ample picnic tables and benches, a grill, and beautiful mature trees. There is also a lighted covered area that includes four large picnic tables and restroom facilities. A large gravel parking lot with approximately 12 spaces serves the passive recreation-oriented Hankins Park. Across the street lies Harrell Park; this park features a large, fenced play area with 3 swing sets, a large playground, a quant gazebo, and several benches and picnic tables. Also within Harrell Park there are two lighted, fenced tennis courts and a tennis/racquetball wall. Visitors to Harrell Park may use the large, paved parking lot or lock their bike to the provided bike rack. Although some minor repairs could be performed at Harrell Park, both Burgaw parks appear well maintained.

**Figure 6.9: Hankins and Harrell Memorial Parks (Town of Burgaw)**

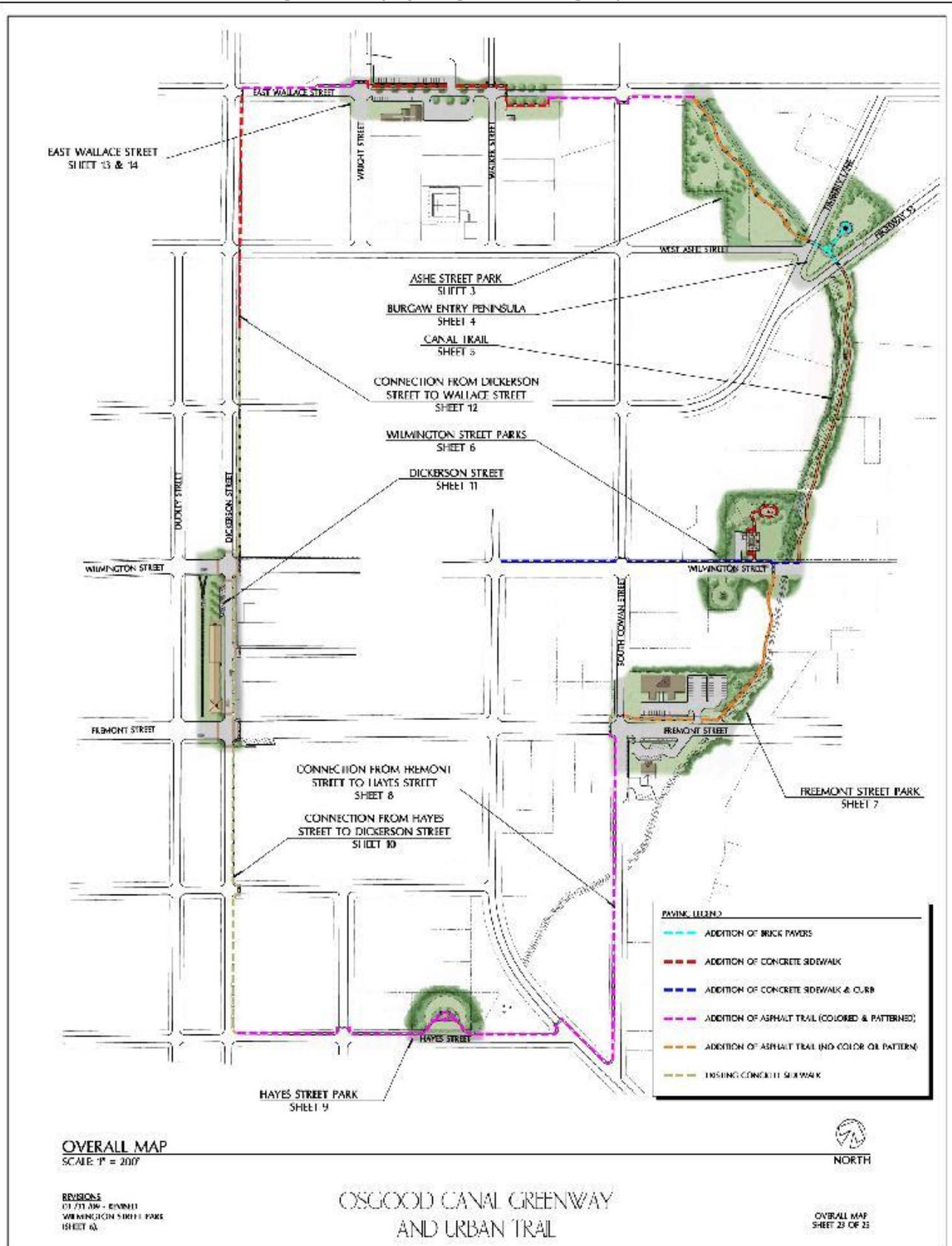


The Historic Burgaw Depot is also in the Town of Burgaw. This facility provides meeting space to 3 fundamental community groups: the Burgaw Area Chamber of Commerce, Pender County Arts Council, and the Burgaw Historical Preservation Foundation. The meeting room is available to these tenants free of charge, but is available to be rented by any community group. The newly renovated depot houses a small Art History Museum, an Event and Meeting Center, and a Commercial Kitchen Small Business Incubator. Use of the space and resources of this facility are available for usage with hourly rent. The building's spaces are also utilized by the North Carolina Blueberry Festival Planning Committee during the planning process and the delivery of the major annual weekend event.

During the development of this plan, Burgaw completed work on the first section of the Osgood Canal Greenway and Urban Trail. The trail was funded through PARTF monies leveraged with a town match, and three-quarters of a mile of paved pathway was completed in October 2009. When completed, the project will feature a two-mile network of greenways and sidewalks, and six new small parks. County efforts to develop an extended network of non-motorized

multi-use trails and greenways should include spurs that connect to the Burgaw area facilities, including a spur from the Pender County Government Campus on South Walker Street.

**Figure 6.10: Osgood Canal Greenway and Urban Trail and Planned Burgaw Parks**  
*Image courtesy of Burgaw Planning Department*

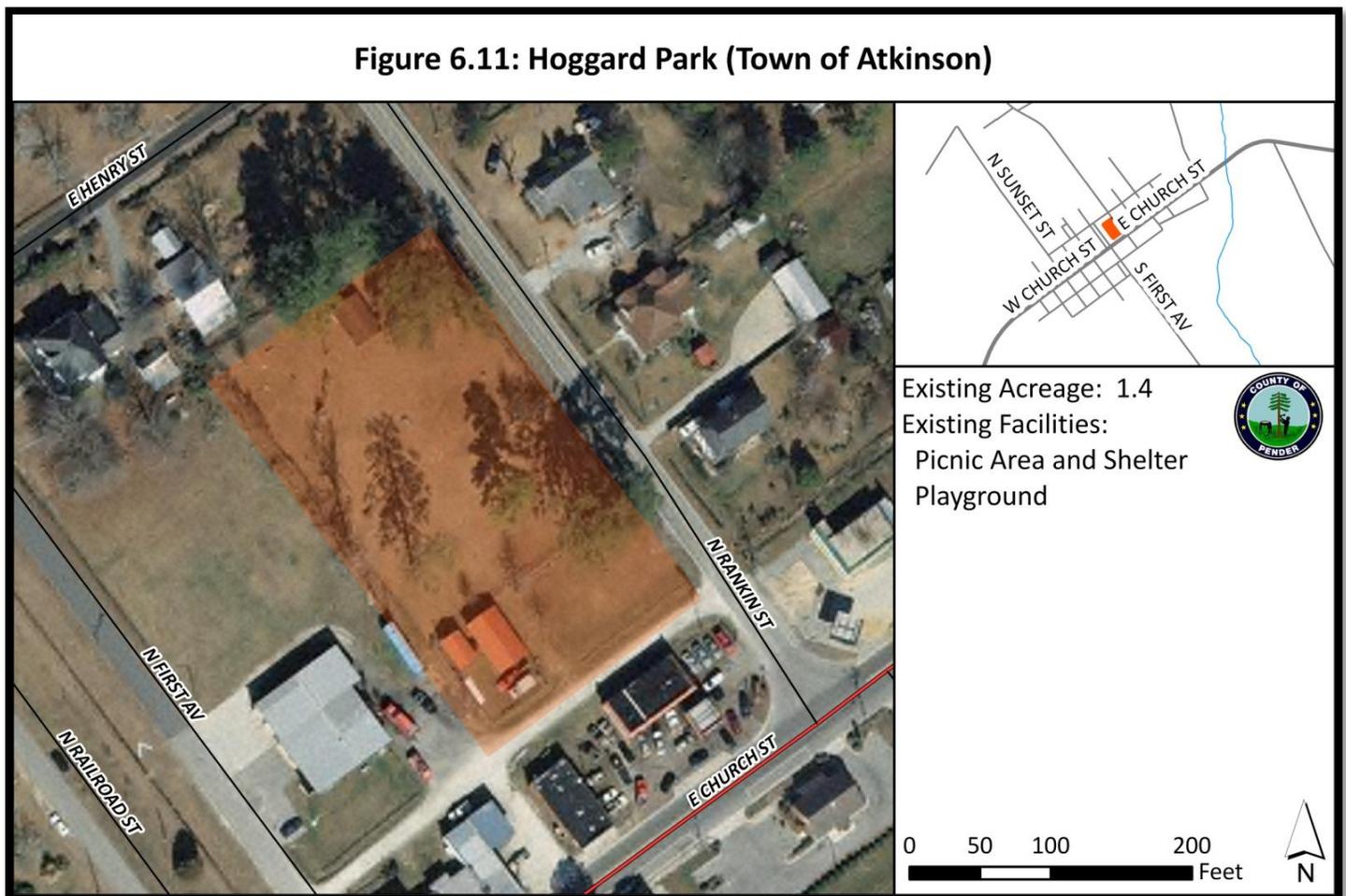


### *Town of Atkinson*

While Atkinson does not have a department dedicated to parks and recreation, the town does own and manage a 1.4 acre municipal park. Hoggard Park is located on the corner of East Church and North Rankin Streets, and features playground equipment including a jungle gym, several swing sets, multiple picnic tables, and a large open field. The park is enclosed in a chain link fence with a locking gate, and several lights were noted during the field assessment. Hoggard Park features an ample, grassed parking area for approximately 30 vehicles, and the landscaping consisted of natural mature pine trees and grassy areas. Interestingly noted during the field assessment was that the gate to the park was locked during the middle of the day.

The Town of Atkinson also retains ownership of the former Atkinson School adjacent to the town hall. The town leases the school building out to a private company that uses the building for retail purposes, but several recreational amenities are available for public use, including the gymnasium, and limited playground and exercise equipment.

**Figure 6.11: Hoggard Park (Town of Atkinson)**



### *Town of Watha*

The only facility noted in the Town of Watha during the facility assessment was the building used for the town hall and community center. Watha does not currently offer any recreational programming or additional facilities.

### *Village of St. Helena*

At the time of preparation of this document, the Village of St. Helena did not have any existing or planned parks and recreation facilities.

## Federal Facilities

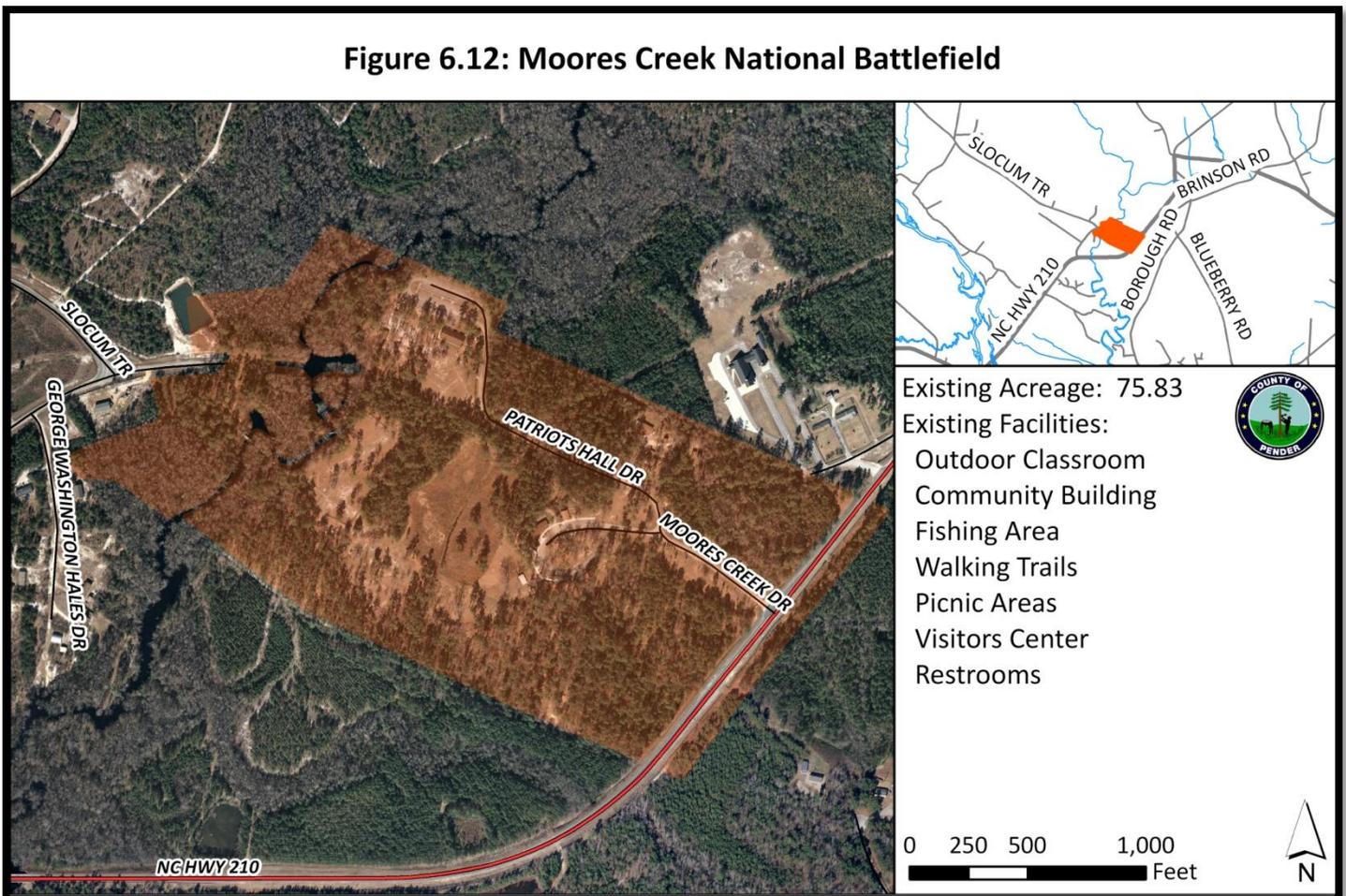
### National Parks Service - Moores Creek National Battlefield

The historic Battle of Moores Creek Bridge forever ended British rule in the colony when 1,000 North Carolina Patriots defeated over 1,600 Loyalists in February 1776. The site of this important battle is now home to the Moores Creek National Battlefield, a 76-acre area managed by the National Parks Service (NPS). The battlefield is located in the rural area of Currie, and features various programs including historic presentations, walking tours, and colonial music and demonstrations, particularly in summer months. The battle is commemorated annually during the last full weekend in February, and features living history encampments, weapons demonstrations, military music, and a wreath laying ceremony.

The battlefield attracts more than history buffs, however, as the area's expanse encompasses a variety of landscaped ranging from dry pine forests to a small, wet-pine savanna. The park is part of the NC Birding Trail, and the tidally-influenced "black water" of Moores Creek serves as a favorable location for birders to view migrating spring warblers. The park also features approximately one mile of walking trails and a large picnic area with a covered shelter, tables, charcoal grills, and restroom facilities. Fishing in the deep, black water of Moores Creek is allowed in the picnic area.

Moores Creek National Battlefield Staff is excited about the anticipated development for Moores Creek, including the Lillington-Caswell Education Center and a bio-learning center. Both facilities will feature new programs and educational opportunities. Battlefield Staff also indicated the importance of support and cooperation between Pender County and the National Parks Service at Moores Creek on future parks and recreation projects. Possible projects include public access to Moores Creek near the battlefield, and the West Pender Rail-Trail project. County Staff should encourage and facilitate dialogue in order to forge a strong partnership with the National Parks Service at Moores Creek for development of parks and recreational opportunities in the Currie area.

Figure 6.12: Moores Creek National Battlefield



## State Facilities

### NC Wildlife Resources Commission - Game Lands

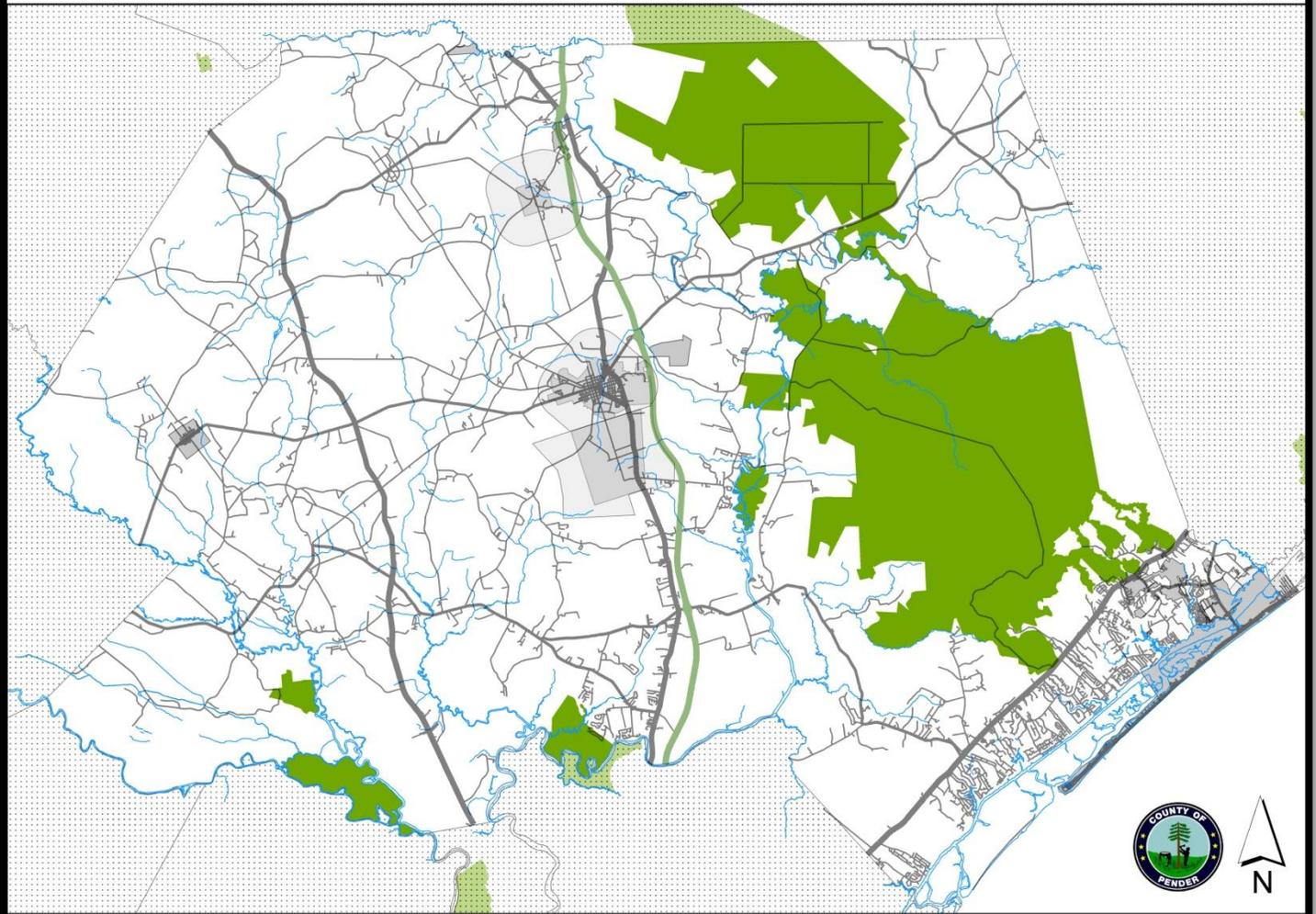
Pender County is host to almost 95,000 acres managed by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) as state game lands. These areas include the Angola Bay Game Land (24,483 acres), Holly Shelter Game Land (64,743 acres), and the Cape Fear River Wetlands Game Land (5,281 acres, some within New Hanover County). While the game lands are used primarily for hunting purposes, other recreational opportunities are allowed in the game lands such as bird watching, bicycling, and nature photography. The Holly Shelter Game Land also features a camping area near Shaw Highway.

While the recreational opportunities within the game lands are limited, potential for partnership with the Wildlife Resources Commission is still feasible. Possibilities include a collaborative effort to host a large marathon, biathlon, or triathlon event, and communication between Planning Staff and WRC Staff during the preparation of this plan indicated eager support from both parties on such a venture. The county should continue to explore possible events and programming that may be feasible within the game lands.



***Image 6.9: The WRC-managed game lands offer the county over 145 square miles of open space used for hunting, but also serves environmentally beneficial for biodiversity and flood mitigation.***

**Figure 6.13: Game Lands in Pender County**

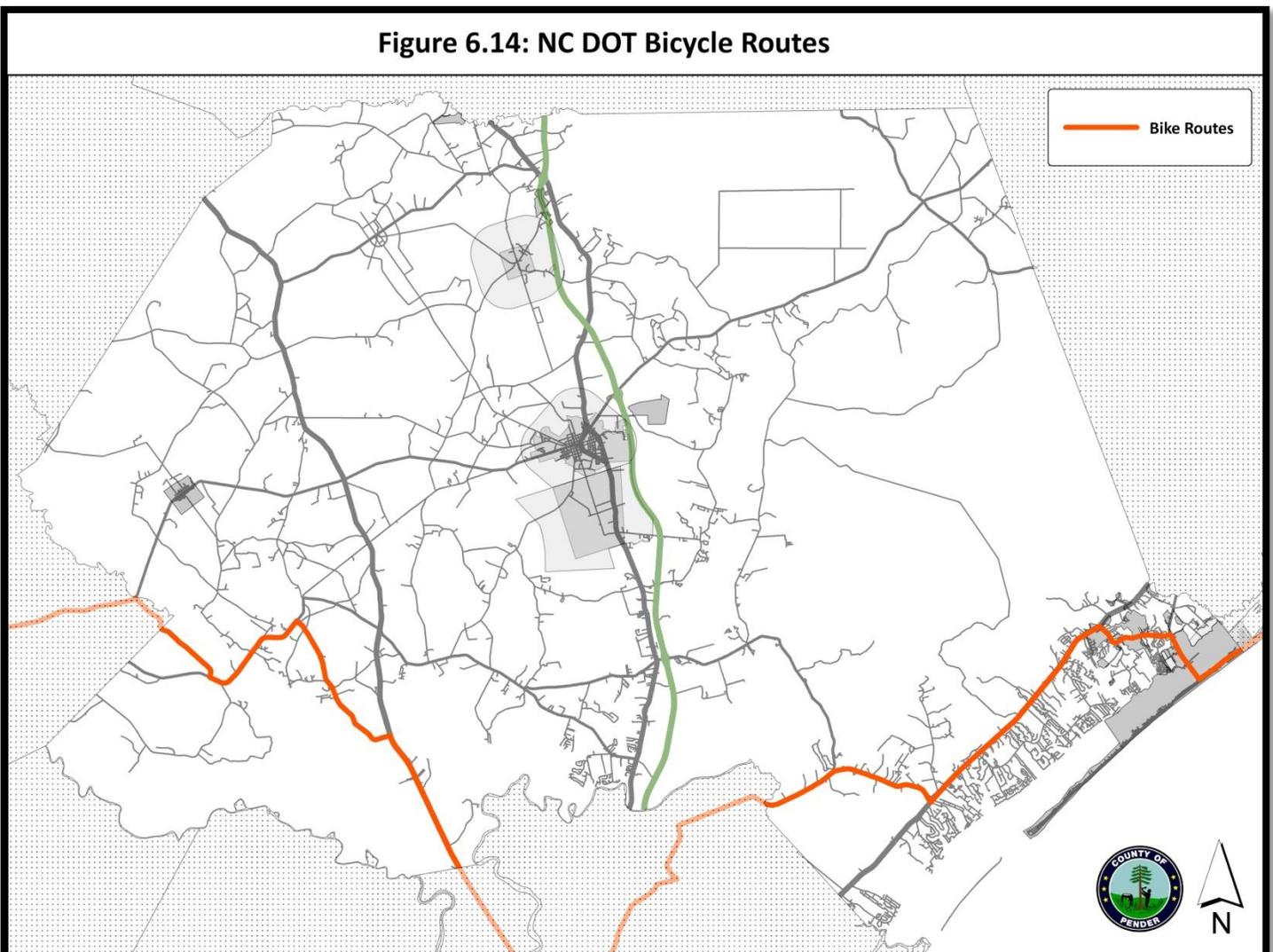


### NC Department of Transportation - Bicycle Routes

As depicted in Figure 6.14, Pender County is host to two NC DOT Bicycle Routes, *Route 3 – Ports of Call* and *Route 5 – Cape Fear Run*. Route 3 is a 300-mile route that runs from South Carolina to Virginia and takes users to all the major ports of the colonial era, including Southport, Wilmington, New Bern, Bath, and Edenton. From New Hanover County, the route travels from Holly Shelter Road into Pender County, at which point the road turns into Island Creek Road; the route then continues east and southeast on NC Highway 210. Route 3 continues northeast on NC Highway 210/US Highway 17 through Hampstead, then follows NC Highway 210 to Topsail Island. The route continues north on NC Highway 210 on Topsail Island into Onslow County.

Route 5 is a 160-mile route that roughly parallels the Cape Fear River through southeastern North Carolina. Traveling north from New Hanover County, the route follows US Highway 421 into Pender County until the route merges west onto Blueberry Road. At the terminus of Blueberry Road in Currie, the route then follows NC Highway 210 west to Morgan Road, and continues into Bladen County. Route 5 is also the current alignment of the East Coast Greenway.

It is recommended that Pender County work with NC DOT to improve the safety conditions of both of these bicycle routes, as well as publicize and encourage their use. Pender County Parks and Recreation should create downloadable cue cards, maps, brochures, and other hand-outs to inform users of the routes and appropriate safety precautions to be taken by riders, as well as campaign to motorists of the existence of these routes and their responsibility to share the road with bicyclists. According to NC DOT, Pender County currently ranks 55<sup>th</sup> in the state for the number of crashes within the county where at least one crash unit was a bicycle from 1997 to 2007, with a total of 34 crashes during this period. Safe bicycling and motoring habits should be educated and encouraged to county residents to limit crash incidents and create an environment within the county that is conducive to safe bicycling.



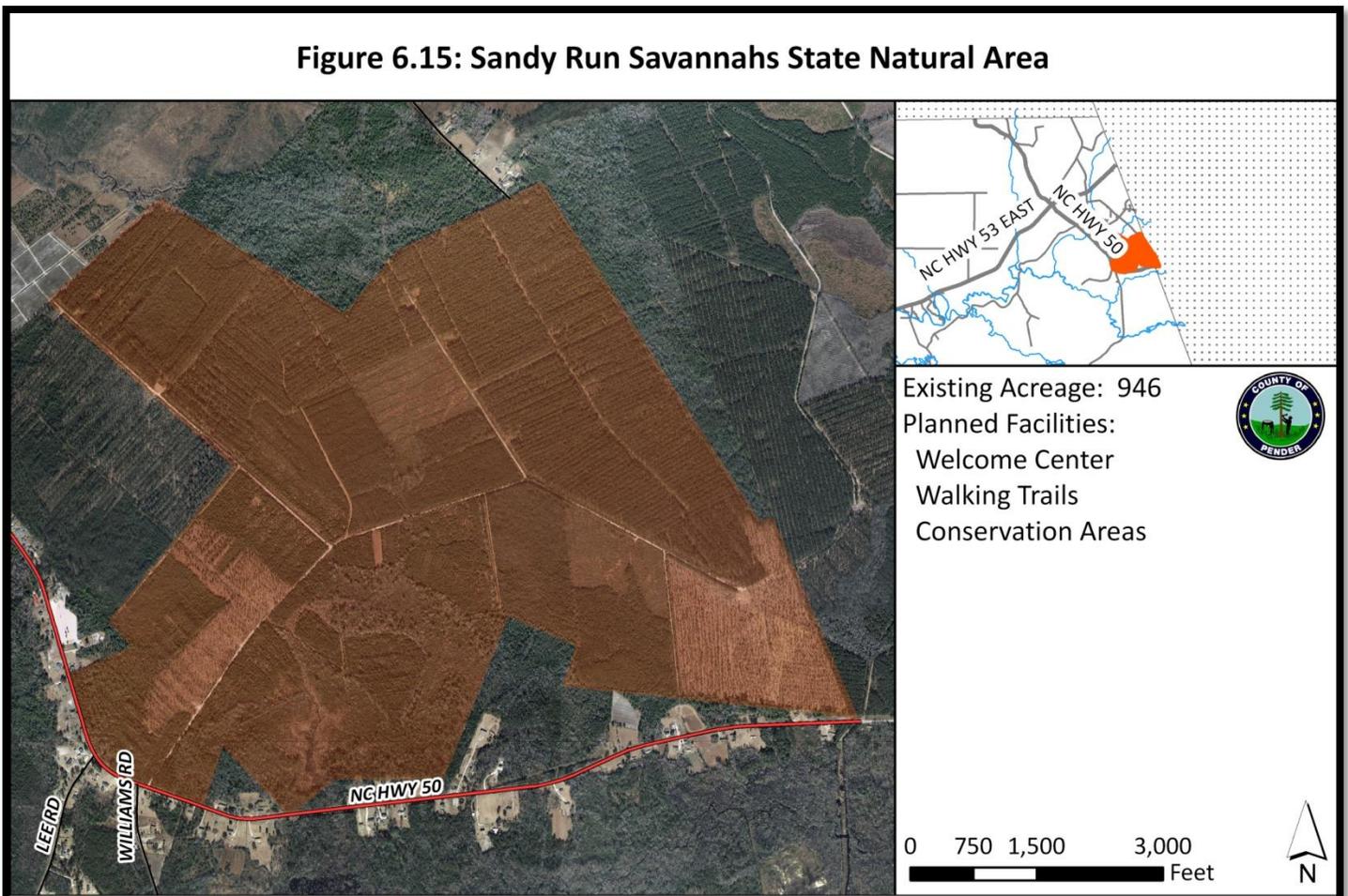
**NC Division of Parks and Recreation - Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area**

During the 2006 North Carolina General Assembly, legislators authorized two new areas into the state parks system, including the Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area in Pender and Onslow Counties. Within Pender County, twelve parcels totaling 1609.27 acres were purchased by the state from the Nature Conservancy for inclusion in the new state natural area.

According to information provided by the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area has much potential for scientific research, interpretation, and educational activities, but little potential for construction of recreational facilities. This is due to the wet characteristics and ecologically sensitive nature of the majority of the land. Additional land more suitable for facility development may be pursued in the future to enable additional recreational opportunities, specifically picnic shelters and other passive-recreation oriented facilities.

There is great potential for a partnership between Pender County and the NC Division of Parks and Recreation for recreational development and management in the future at Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area, and this partnership was preliminarily discussed during the creation of this plan. There is currently a deficiency of parks and recreation facilities in the Maple Hill area, and a joint effort between the county and the state could fill this void. Pender County should continue exploring this mutually-beneficial partnership.

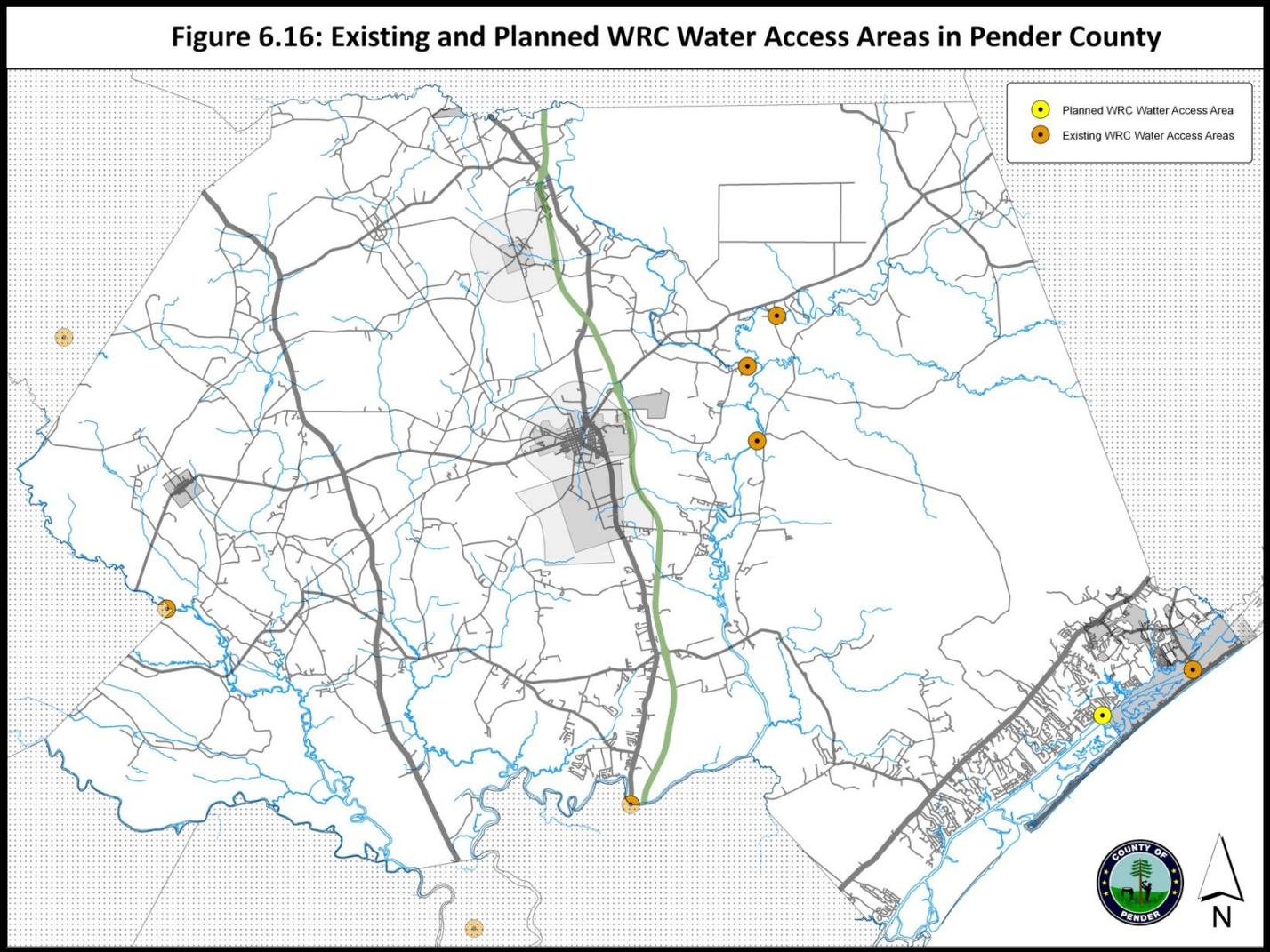
**Figure 6.15: Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area**



### NC Wildlife Resources Commission - Water Access Areas

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission manages several public boating access areas in and around Pender County. The Northeast Cape Fear River may be accessed by two locations in Pender County, Sawpit Landing and Holly Shelter, and also by one location near the Pender – New Hanover County border in Castle Hayne. Currently, only one public boat access area to the Intracoastal Waterway exists in Pender County, and is located within Soundside Park in Surf City. At the time of publication of this plan, an additional public boat access area at the terminus of Lewis Road in the Hampstead area was in the planning stages. No public water access is available to the Black and Cape Fear Rivers in Pender County, although both Samson and Bladen Counties host boating access areas that provide access to the Black River.

As population growth and development ensues in Pender County, it is necessary to work with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to plan for new boating access areas within the county. A portion of the population growth projected is composed of people moving to Pender County because of the attractive water resources in the area, and it is important to ensure that these needs will be fulfilled. Additional water access areas within the county will relieve the burden of the existing boating access areas, as the service levels may become exhausted with increasing levels of use. More information on the recommended NC Wildlife Resources Commission-managed boating access areas may be found under *Facility Recommendations* later in this section.



## Private Facilities

A variety of private recreational facilities and opportunities exist within Pender County. Some of the opportunities available include camp grounds, golf courses, dance studios, gyms and fitness centers, martial arts programs, aquatics center, arts and scrapbooking studios, and charter fishing. A complete matrix of private recreational facilities may be found in the *Appendix (Facility Matrix 2)*.

## Community Centers

As mentioned in the *Funding Recommendations* section, Pender County should explore and encourage a partnership with existing and future community centers. A partnership with these community centers will provide a mutually-beneficial relationship, utilize and improve on existing facilities, and avoid duplication of programming and facilities. Currently, there are five existing community centers in the county, and one that is in the planning stages. More information on each is highlighted below, and a detailed inventory of the existing facilities at the community centers is incorporated into *Facility Matrix 2* in the *Appendix*.



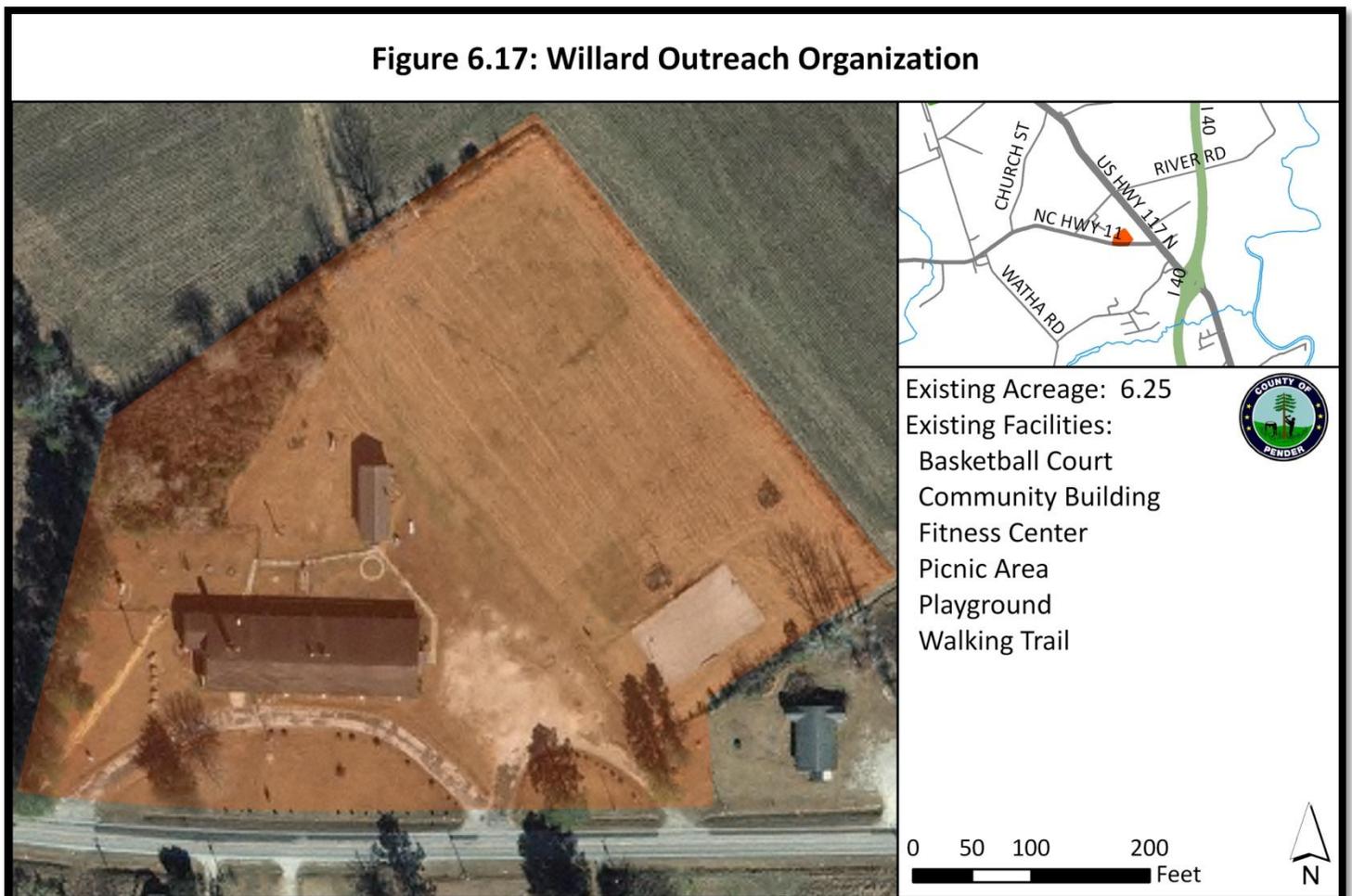
***Image 6.10: Private community centers in the county offer recreation opportunities through the amenities and programs available. Strengthened partnerships with each community center should be explored to maximize available resources and avoid duplication of facilities and programs.***

### *Willard Outreach Organization*

The Willard Outreach Center is located near the intersection of NC highway 11 and US Highway 117 in Willard. The facility is a former school building, and is located on a 6.25 acre tract. During the field assessment, Planning Staff had the opportunity to meet with Willard Outreach Center staff members to discuss a potential partnership for funding pursuit and programming, of which both parties expressed a sincere interest. The amenities existing at the facility include the building, an outdoor basketball court, a large field used for walking trails, a nice picnic area, and a significant fenced-in playground area. The building itself is in need of some renovation and repairs, particularly to the climate control system and roof. Additionally, some updating and upfitting is desired and needed at the facility, such as driveway improvements, ADA accessibility improvements, and restroom renovations.

While the recommended Willard Community Park would fill a portion of the deficiency of recreational facilities in the Willard area, a partnership with the Willard Outreach Center would create a facility for recreational programming, in addition to the established and motivated, community-oriented staff of individuals excited about the possibility of such a partnership. During meetings between Planning Staff and Willard Outreach Center Staff, the Center Staff expressed a strong desire for additional programming for obesity prevention and education, senior activities, youth activities, and a variety of specialized programs including computer and technology classes for community residents. Currently, the Center offers programming including martial arts, fitness and nutrition classes, sewing classes, and bible study programs. A partnership between Pender County and the Willard Outreach Center is recommended and encouraged.

**Figure 6.17: Willard Outreach Organization**

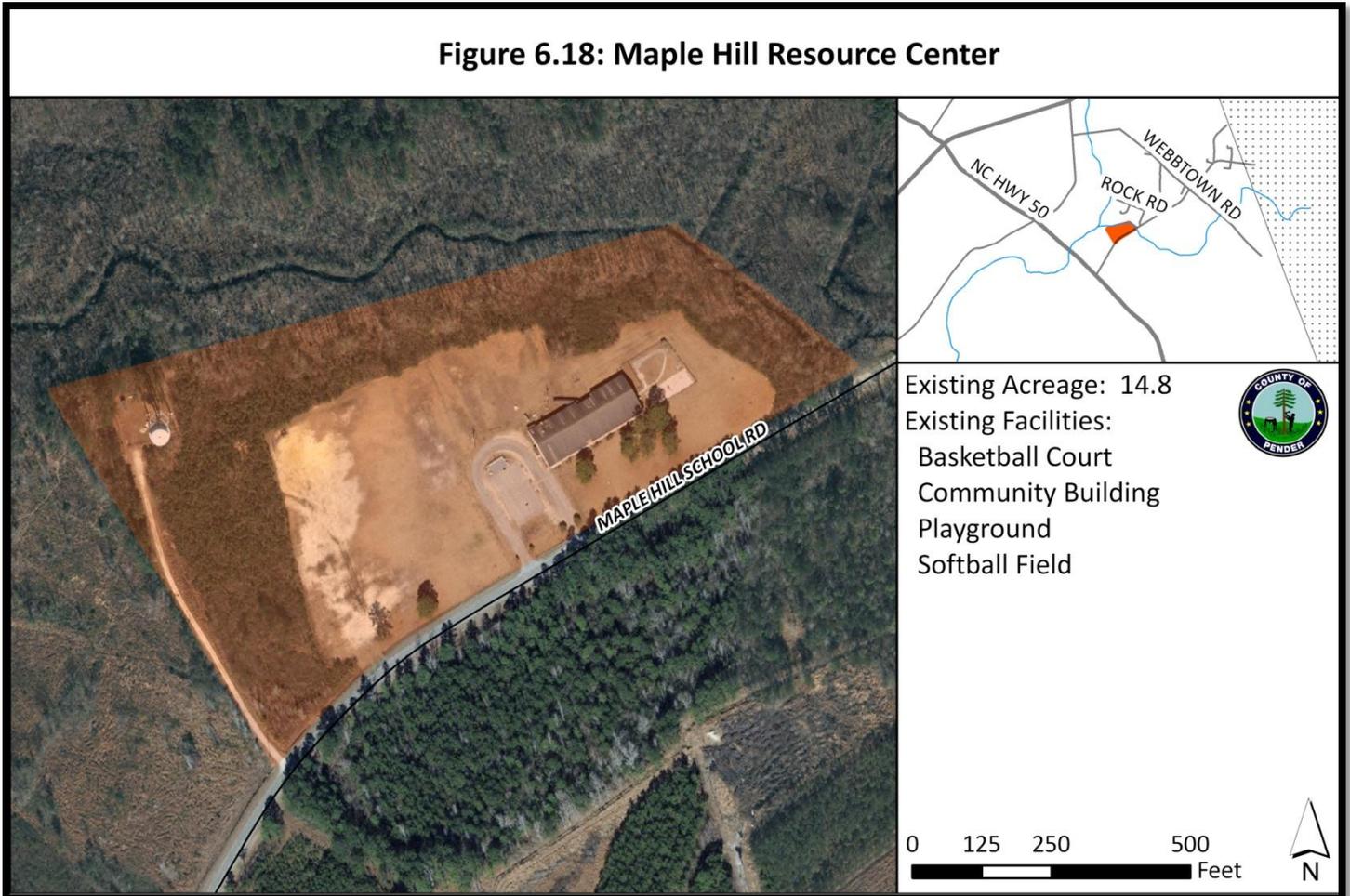


### Maple Hill Resource Center

The Maple Hill Resource Center is located on Maple Hill School Road in the unincorporated area of Maple Hill in the northeastern part of Pender County. Like the Willard Outreach Organization, the Maple Hill Resource Center is located within a former Pender County school building, although the parcel consists of 14.8 acres. The Resource Center serves as a community gathering place for Maple Hill area residents, and features recreational amenities including an outdoor basketball court, a softball field, a playground, as well as the community building.

A deficiency of parks and recreational opportunities currently exists in the Maple Hill area, with the Resource Center providing the only opportunities, which are limited. This deficiency was a point of frustration for the Maple Hill residents that attended the public input meeting in the area, and community members overwhelmingly indicated a willingness to contribute to programming and facility development and management. More specifics of the needs expressed at the Maple Hill public input meeting may be found in the *Public Input* section. The geographical location of Maple Hill also serves to be a disadvantage for residents, as they currently must travel to Burgaw or into Onslow County to participate in recreation programs or enjoy park facilities. Although county staff currently works with the Maple Hill Resource Center, strengthening this partnership further by providing guidance and resource support would serve to alleviate the deficiency of facilities and opportunities in Maple Hill.

Figure 6.18: Maple Hill Resource Center



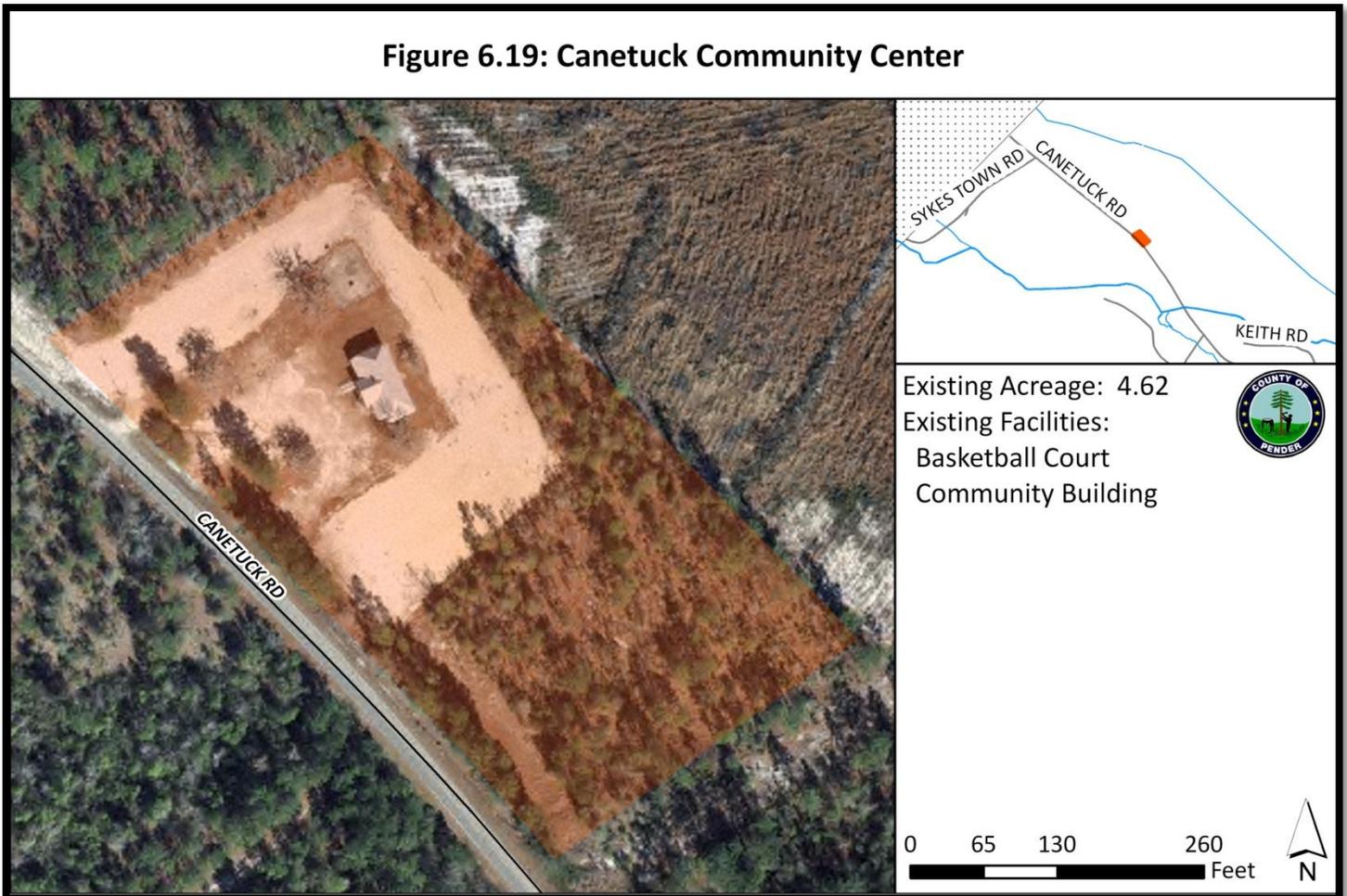
### Canetuck Community Center

The Canetuck Community Center is located in the southwestern portion of the county, along Canetuck Road near the Pender – Bladen County border. The Canetuck Community Center is unique in that the building is a historic Rosenwald School. Between 1917 and 1929, Pender County obtained support from the Rosenwald Fund for 19 buildings on 15 school sites, with funding coming from a grant program set up by Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald to fund the development of up to 100 schools in the southeast. Prior to the 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan project, Planning Staff met with Canetuck Community Center staff and other interested parties to facilitate procurement of grant money for building renovation and preservation, and Canetuck Community Center staff and private parties remain in pursuit of necessary funding required to meet several objectives for the community center.

The Canetuck Community Center currently serves as the community center for the Canetuck area, as well as the voting precinct for the area. Recreational opportunities are limited, and the site currently hosts only an outdoor basketball court that is in need of refurbishing. Canetuck Community Center staff indicated a desire for many improvements to the facility, including landscaping, walking trails, picnic shelters, fitness equipment, minimal playground equipment, fencing and other security improvements, and even a vehicle for transporting community members, particularly elders. Programming desires were also expressed, including programs such as fitness and wellness programs, music and computer classes, and others.

Recreational opportunities in the Canetuck area are virtually nonexistent, and a partnership between the center and Pender County is recommended and encouraged to fill the deficiency in the area.

**Figure 6.19: Canetuck Community Center**



### *Joint Community Development Center*

The Joint Community Development Center is located on highway 210 in Rocky Point. Built and opened in the early 1960s as a senior center, the center was open daily to serve a lunch meal and frequently offered scheduled recreational activities. Although the center's community building is neither unlocked nor open to the public any longer on a regularly scheduled basis, the multi-use fields are kept up regularly and the undeveloped spaces are available for daily recreational use. Softball fields are used regularly for small pick-up games and leagues, and two grass basketball courts are also located at the center. When the community center is open for an event, several amenities are available for use including a kitchen, restrooms and a multipurpose room. A wide variety of community members use this facility for a plethora of activities including birthday parties, family reunions, and as a meeting space for an array of civic interest groups. Many children's day camps have also been hosted at the center in the fall, summer, and spring seasons by the Development Center itself, and have also been sponsored by the local Boys' and Girls' Club. This facility has served the community well for about 50 years, and the Joint Community Development Center coordinators hope for future improvements on the softball field, basketball court, and handicapped accessibility in their facility, in addition to a walking trail and playground equipment that would to increase the center's recreational opportunities for community members of all ages.



***Image 6.11: The Joint Community Development Center offers a variety of recreational opportunities to residents of the Rocky Point area.***

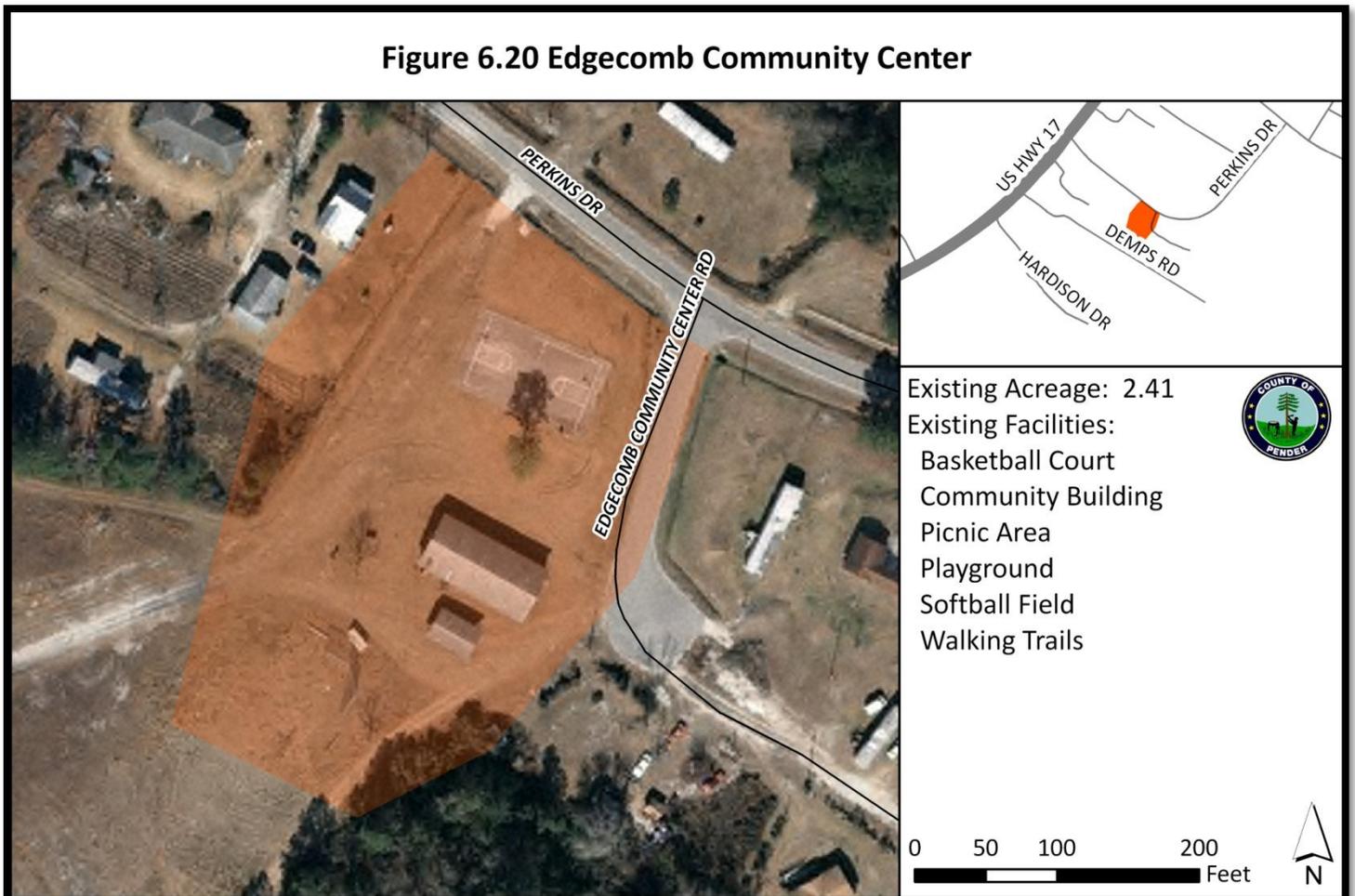
### *Caswell Community Center*

During the preparation of this plan, Planning Staff was approached by a representative from the Caswell Community Center for assistance in developing the facility. The Caswell Community Center has acquired and cleared a 5.29 acre tract of land on Slocum Trail, outside of Atkinson. Caswell Community Center staff indicated that the organization would like to have a community center building, outdoor basketball and adult softball facilities, parking area, and some other amenities, potentially including a playground, picnic shelter with picnic tables, and walking trails. The Caswell Community Center's proximity in the northwestern quadrant of Pender County makes the facility prime for an ideal partnership with Pender County for facility development and management, as well as programming opportunities in an area of the county with a deficiency of recreational facilities and programming opportunities. It is recommended that Pender County continue to explore, encourage, and facilitate this mutually-beneficial partnership.

### Edgecomb Community Center

Located off of Highway 17 in northern Hampstead, the Edgecomb Community Center features a mature community building, a softball field, basketball court, picnic shelter, playground equipment, a walking trail, and open areas. The community building features restrooms and a multi-purpose room, and is used by members of the community for parties, family reunions, and group meetings. The building is also utilized by children for afterschool and summer activities; building reservations may be made by contacting the Center's president.

Figure 6.20 Edgecomb Community Center





## Facility Standards and Distribution

A major component of the parks assessment was to examine the level of service provided under the current county parks and recreation system, as well as make recommendations for future service levels. The facility matrix in the *Appendix* was completed for all of the existing county parks, and evaluated based on existing NRPA standards. Finally, the evaluations to NRPA standards were compared to the community trends and desires.

### NRPA and Community-Based Standards

The NRPA recommended levels of service standards are based on numbers, acres, or miles of parks and recreation facilities per a certain number of persons, and have been used to determine the need for each type of facility for many years. However, since the mid-1990's, the method to determine what type and number of facilities should be planned for a particular community has shifted to be based more largely on the input expressed from community residents. As such, the recommendations in this plan for existing park renovations and new parks and facilities were based largely on the desired level of service expressed by the residents of Pender County through information gathered from the public input meetings and survey. Table 6.4, the facility inventory executed by Planning Staff during this project, was used to develop the recommendations for new facilities and existing facility renovations.

### Facility Surplus/Deficit

Planning Staff conducted an inventory of the facilities in the Pender County parks system, which may be found under *Facility Matrix 1* in the *Appendix*. This inventory includes the facilities at Hampstead Kiwanis Park and Pender Memorial Park, including improvements and upgrades that were being planned and performed during the preparation of this plan. Additionally, the acreage and amenities planned for Phase I of Millers Pond Park were included within the existing facilities because park development was underway and funded during the preparation of this plan.

Table 6.4 uses Pender County's 2010 and 2015 population estimates obtained from the US Census Bureau to determine where deficiencies and surpluses exist within the county's park system. The totals for existing facilities were derived from a complete inventory of Pender County parks and recreation facilities, and the facility surplus/deficit calculations were derived from the NRPA recommended levels of service standards in the top portion of the table. In the bottom portion, the NRPA recommended levels of service were adjusted to reflect community-based desired levels of service, based on the feedback received during the public input period. As explained earlier in this section, these NRPA recommended levels of service, and the adjusted community-based desired levels of service, are merely used as a basis to gauge the Pender County park system's facility inventory. Particular amenities at recommended new parks and park expansions should be determined based on the specific community's public input, as well as further public input meetings during the planning and design process for each new facility and facility expansion.

An important note to consider is that the deficiencies shown in Table 6.4 account only for parks and recreation facilities managed by Pender County, including Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Pender Memorial Park, and Millers Pond Park. The figures do not account for facilities under private ownership or operated by municipalities within Pender County. If such facilities were included, the deficiencies within the county would be less. However, while privately owned facilities such as church, school, and privately-owned facilities alleviate the necessity for some amenities, they often have limited or restricted access and therefore do not provide the same opportunities and accessibility for the community as public park facilities do.

**Table 6.4: Pender County Parks and Recreation Facility Surplus/Deficit**

Using NRPA-Recommended Levels of Service						
	Existing Number of Pender County Park Facilities	NRPA Recommended Level of Service	Current Facility Need Based on Estimated 2010 Population (55,237)	Current Facility Deficit/Surplus	2015 Facility Need Based on Estimated 2015 Population (63,479)	2015 Facility Deficit/Surplus
Acreage	140.85	10/1,000	552	-412	667	-526
Outdoor Basketball	0	1/5,000	11	-11	13	-13
Tennis	0	1/2,000	28	-28	32	-32
Volleyball	1	1/5,000	11	-10	13	-12
Baseball/Softball	9	1/5,000	11	-2	13	-4
Football	5	1/20,000	3	2	3	2
Soccer	6	1/10,000	6	0	6	0
Aquatics/Pools	0	1/20,000	3	-3	3	-3
Running Track	0	1/20,000	3	-3	3	-3
Trail System	1.5	1 mile/3,000	18	-17	21	-20
Playground	2	1/1,000	55	-53	63	-61
Recreation Center	0	1/50,000	1	-1	1	-1
Picnic Pavilion	2	1/2,000	28	-26	32	-30
Skate Park	0	1/100,000	1	-1	1	-1
Using Community-Based Desired Levels of Service						
	Existing Number of Pender County Park Facilities	Community-Based Desired Level of Service	Current Facility Need Based on Estimated 2010 Population (55,237)	Current Facility Deficit/Surplus	2015 Facility Need Based on Estimated 2015 Population (63,479)	2015 Facility Deficit/Surplus
Acreage	140.85	10/1000	552	-412	635	-494
Outdoor Basketball	0	1/3,000	18	-18	21	-21
Tennis	0	1/3,000	18	-18	21	-21
Volleyball	1	1/5,000	11	-10	13	-12
Baseball/Softball	9	1/4,000	14	-5	16	-7
Football	5	1/15,000	4	1	4	1
Soccer	6	1/8,000	7	-1	8	-3
Aquatics/Pools	0	1/20,000	3	-3	3	-3
Running Track	0	1/20,000	3	-3	3	-3
Trail System	1.5	1 mile/2,000	28	-26	32	-30
Playground	2	1/1,000	55	-53	63	-61
Recreation Center	0	1/20,000	3	-3	3	-3
Picnic Pavilion	2	1/2,000	28	-26	32	-30
Skate Park	0	1/100,000	1	-1	1	-1

Population Estimate Data Source: US Census Bureau (www.census.gov)

As detailed in Table 6.4, by comparing Pender County’s park system inventory to the NRPA recommended levels of service, the county’s inventory is deficient in each of the selected comparison areas except for one. These comparisons are concurrent with the consensus of the public input that more facilities are needed within the county, particularly basketball, walking trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and football fields. When planning and developing new facilities, existing user trends and public input should be used to decide what specific amenities should be developed within each new park or park expansion, rather than arbitrarily developing facilities in an effort to bring the system inventory in line with the historically-used NRPA recommendations.

Table 6.5 below uses the NRPA-based recommendations to determine the current and future acreage needs based for three types of parks typically found within a parks system. The current and 2015 acreage needs are calculated by multiplying the recommended acres per 1,000 population by the current and 2015 population estimates obtained from the US Census Bureau. The current and 2015 acreage deficit/surplus is calculated by subtracting the acreage needs from the existing acreage for each park type. As depicted in Table 6.5, deficiencies exist within the Pender County parks system for each of the three park types. Again, these surplus/deficit calculations are simply a benchmark to compare the system’s inventory with the recommendations set by the NRPA; actual park acreage needed within the parks system for the county varies by the user demand. Additionally, as mentioned earlier in this section, the NRPA does not have an application standard for acreage recommendations for special use parks, natural resource areas and preserves, and greenways and trails, and thus these park types were omitted from Table 6.5.

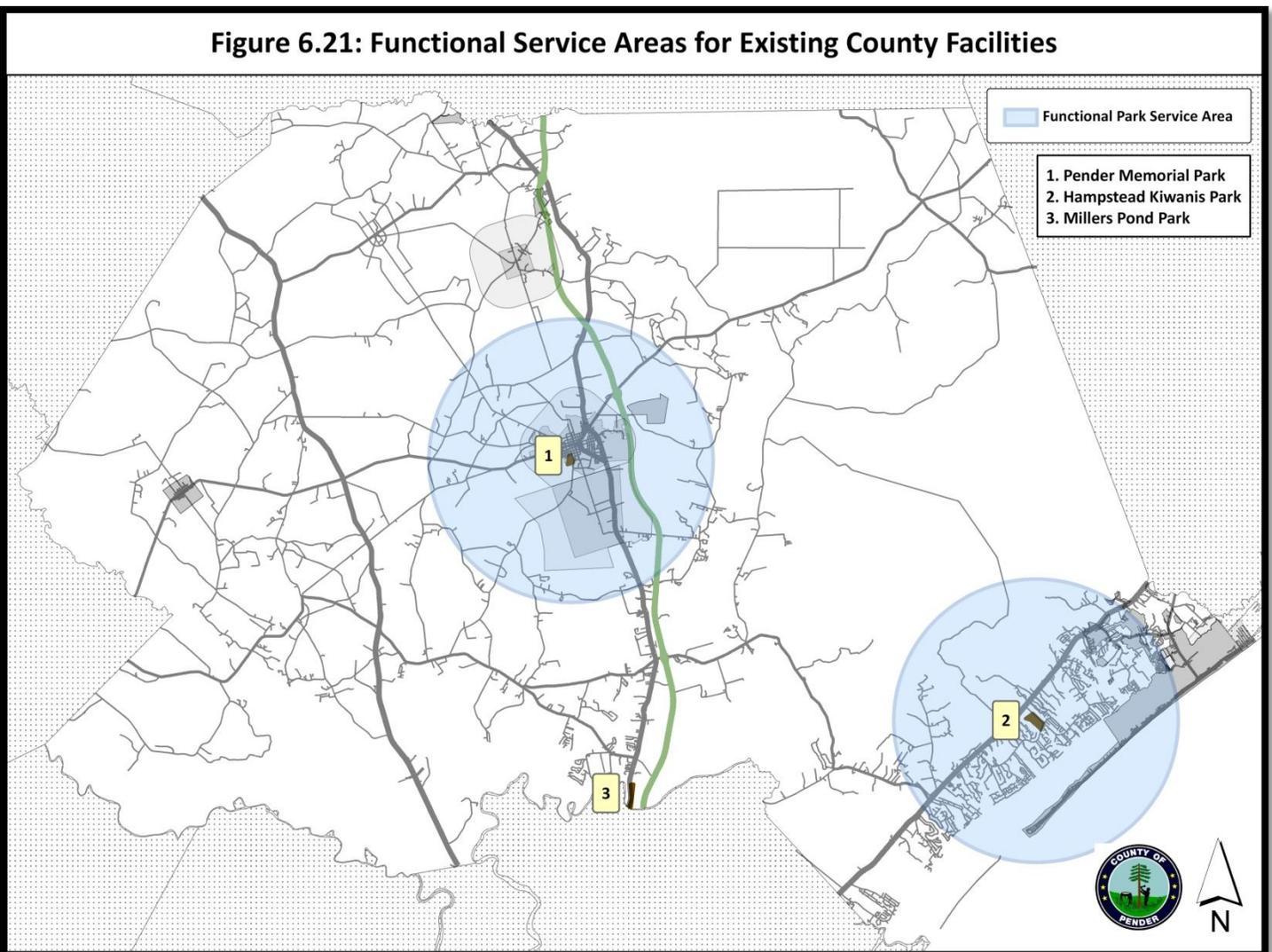
<b>Table 6.5: Pender County Parks and Recreation Acreage Surplus/Deficit</b>						
	<b>Existing Acreage</b>	<b>Recommended Acres per 1,000 Population</b>	<b>Current Acreage Need Based on Estimated 2010 Population (55,237)</b>	<b>Current Acreage Deficit/ Surplus</b>	<b>2015 Acreage Need Based on Estimated 2015 Population (63,479)</b>	<b>2015 Acreage Deficit/ Surplus</b>
<b>Mini-Park</b>	0	0.25 to 0.5	13.8 to 27.6	<b>-13.8 to -27.6</b>	15.9 to 31.7	<b>-15.9 to -31.7</b>
<b>Neighborhood Park</b>	0	1 to 2	55.2 to 110.5	<b>-55.2 to -110.5</b>	63.5 to 127.0	<b>-63.5 to -127.0</b>
<b>Community Park</b>	109.5	5 to 8	276.2 to 441.9	<b>-166.7 to -332.4</b>	317.4 to 507.8	<b>-207.9 to -398.4</b>
<b>Regional Park</b>	0	5 to 10	276.2 to 552.4	<b>-276.2 to -552.4</b>	317.4 to 634.8	<b>-317.4 to -634.8</b>
<b>Totals</b>	109.5	11.25 to 20.5	621.4 to 1,132.4	<b>-511.9 to -1,022.9</b>	714.1 to 1,301.3	<b>-604.7 to -1,191.8</b>
<b>Population Estimate Data Source: US Census Bureau (www.census.gov)</b>						

## Existing and Planned Park Classifications and Service Areas

After reviewing the existing parks in the county and their facility inventories, the parks were given classifications based on the NRPA-recommended guidelines as overviewed in Table 6.1. Pender County currently oversees three existing parks, comprised of two community parks and one natural resource area, and Table 6.6 shows the recommended park classifications.

Park	Classification
Pender Memorial Park	Community Park
Hampstead Kiwanis Park	Community Park
Millers Pond Park	Natural Resource Area

Table 6.6 displays the three existing county parks and their NRPA-recommended service areas. While the NRPA standard service radius for community parks is one mile, due to the rural population and large area of the county, this radius is more likely to be around 5 miles for Pender County. Figure 6.21 displays the location of the three parks and their functional service areas. As observed in Figure 6.21, the service areas covered by the three existing parks leaves a vast majority of the county left out of a service radius of an existing facility. Severe deficiencies exist in the western area of the county, including the population centers of Currie and Penderlea, as well as the Maple Hill area in the northeastern area of the county. Additionally, the Scotts Hill and Brown Town areas are also underserved. The populated area of Rocky Point is another area with a severe deficiency of parks and recreation facilities. While Millers Pond Park is indicated on Figure 6.21, the lack of active recreational amenities limits the service provided to the Rocky Point area. Additionally, the NRPA does not indicate a recommended service area for parks classified as natural resource areas.

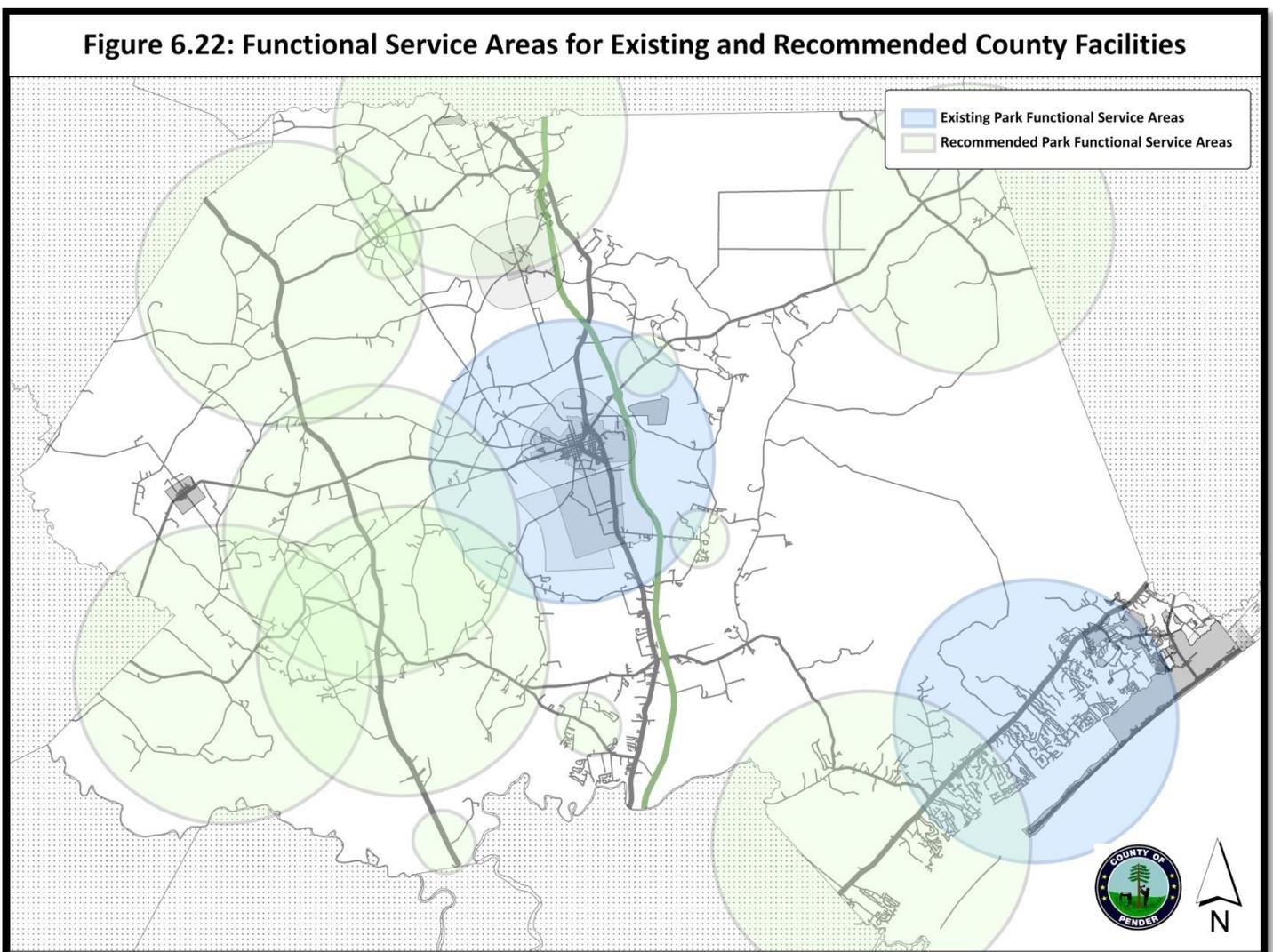


### Service Areas for Recommended Parks

As displayed in Figure 6.21, the majority of the county's area remains outside of the functional service areas of the existing facilities within the Pender County parks system. The majority of the county's populated areas are not served by public parks and recreation facilities, leaving large service gaps within the system.

Figure 6.22 below displays the existing parks' functional service areas, as well as the functional service areas for the projects recommended in this plan. As depicted in Figure 6.22, the development of the recommended projects will alleviate the majority of the existing service gaps in the county, leaving only small gaps in geographic areas that are not particularly densely populated, or areas that are currently served by municipal parks and recreation facilities. While the NRPA standards indicate a service radius of  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles for neighborhood parks, a service radius of 1 mile is more appropriate for Pender County due to the geographic distribution of populated areas.

Additionally, the service radius of the recommended Rocky Point Regional Park is not portrayed on Figure 6.22. The NRPA-recommended service radius for regional parks is one hour driving time, and the location of the recommended regional park can be accessed easily within one hour from anywhere within Pender County. As such, the functional service area for the recommended Rocky Point Regional Park covers Pender County entirely. The service gap in the Rocky Point area that appears on Figure 6.22 will be alleviated with the development of Rocky Point Regional Park.



## General Park Evaluations, Observations, and Recommendations

### Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Access to parks and recreation facilities for disabled patrons should be examined at existing facilities and incorporated into new projects and renovations. Access for persons with disabilities is a large issue facing parks and recreation providers, and legislation requires that primary park amenities be free from barriers. The US Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (ATBCB) defines primary access routes in the following excerpt from the “Recommendations for Accessibility Guidelines: Recreation Facilities and Outdoor Developed Areas”:

*Outdoor recreation access routes are the paths that connect the primary developed spaces and elements that are basic to the recreation experience being offered at the site. For example, the outdoor recreation access routes at a picnic ground are the paths linking the parking area, restrooms, picnic units, and water hydrants. While many of these elements – parking area, restroom, and water hydrant – are not the primary reason for a person to visit the site, they are basic developed elements that serve all visitors. Designers and managers, in consultation with users, must determine which of the developed activities and elements at a recreation site are basic to the recreation experience being offered. Further, they must secure that there is a comprehensive system of outdoor recreation access routes that connect all primary elements and spaces with each other and with accessible parking spaces and facility entrances. This determination should be based upon visitor expectations as well as the level of development at the site.*

While the ADA regulations for design standards seemingly have room for interpretation when applied to some parks facilities, the requirements are very specific in regards to restroom and pathway design. While Hampstead Kiwanis Park provides for adequate ADA accessibility, Pender Memorial Park struggles to offer any pedestrian interconnectivity, let alone ADA accessibility; a pedestrian and ADA renovation plan should be created to improve pedestrian interconnectivity and ADA accessibility within Pender Memorial Park. Prior to renovation of old facilities or new facility development, the parks and recreation department should seek counsel from the county attorney and/or ADA compliance staff to review and interpret the ADA requirements to ensure that new projects and renovations are able to be enjoyed by all users. Accessibility should be examined at the existing parks and accessibility plans should be created.



**Image 6.13: Existing parks should be evaluated for ADA-accessibility and compliance; future parks and amenities should incorporate designs to enable use by persons with disabilities.**

Table 6.7 is a checklist developed to serve as a tool to evaluate a facility’s accessibility for people with disabilities. The checklist has been created based on the *Checklist for Existing Facilities version 2.1*, as revised in August 1995 by the Adaptive Environments Center, Inc. for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. The complete checklist may be found at <http://www.ada.gov/racheck.pdf> . These questions in Table 6.7 should be considered when planning new facility development or existing facility renovation.

**Table 6.7: ADA Accessibility Checklist**

**Parking**

- Are parking spaces available for individuals with physical disabilities?
- Are parking spaces near the building entrance?
- Are parking spaces easily accessible to the front entrance by a level or ramp path at least 4 feet wide and free of obstruction?
- Is the surface of the parking lot smooth and firm, but not slippery?

**Route**

- Is the surface of the parking lot smooth and firm but not slippery?
- Are walks leading to the facility level or nearly so?
- Are there curb cuts at crosswalks?

**Entrance**

- Are walks leading to the facility level or nearly so?
- Are there curb cuts at crossways?
- Is at least one primary entrance usable to individuals who use wheelchairs?
- Do all doorways have a clear opening of at least 32 inches?
- Are doors operated by a single effort?
- Is the door light enough for a person with a disability to open it?

**Ramps**

- Are sharp inclines or abrupt changes in level avoided at thresholds?
- Are ramps provided where there are stairs?
- Do ramps conform to the standard of not more than 1:12 slope?
- Do ramps have non-slip surfaces with a 32 inch handrail on at least one side?

**Bathrooms**

- Do all bathroom doors provide a minimum of 32 inches of clear opening?
- Is the bathroom floor the same level as the floor outside of the bathroom?
- Does the bathroom contain a floor clearance area of at least 5 feet by 5 feet to permit a person in a wheelchair sufficient turning space?
- Is there at least one bathroom stall usable by people in wheelchairs?
- Are sinks, mirrors, and dispensers usable by people in wheelchairs?
- Are there handrails in the toilet and shower area?
- Is there sufficient turning and maneuvering space in the bath for a wheelchair?
- Are hanging rods for clothing located within 48 inches of the floor?

**Miscellaneous**

- Do public telephones have volume control devices?
- Are TTYs available?
- Are water fountains available and have a clearance of 28 inches?
- Are tables convertible to wheelchair use with floor clearance of 28 inches?
- Is the meeting space accessible and usable by persons with disabilities?
- Are all common areas accessible to all people?
- Is help available for those who might need assistance?
- What is the general attitude of personnel towards persons with disabilities?

*Derived from the Checklist for Existing Facilities Version 2.1, Adaptive Environment Center, Inc., 1995*

## **Playground Safety Standards**

Several organizations have established safety standards for playground equipment, including the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and the International Play Equipment Manufacturers' Association (IPEMA). These organizations' proposed standards are designed to serve as a guideline to assist in creating atmospheres that are safe and minimize the potential for injury.

Various materials on the market that are utilized in playground equipment have been measured for their performance in regards to safety, and guidelines have been established by the aforementioned agencies. Existing and future facilities should be evaluated to examine whether their equipment achieves the safety guidelines.

## **Vandalism**

Although not expressly predominant during the individual facility assessments, vandalism is a common problem in parks. Graffiti is an ordinary problem in most parks, although at this time not a significantly prevalent problem in the Pender County Parks. Regardless, most parks and recreation departments across the country have a zero-tolerance policy for graffiti, meaning that any area vandalized with graffiti must be painted over within 24 hours of a report. It is recommended that Pender County adopt a similar zero-tolerance policy.

Other recommendations may be implemented to reduce problems from vandalism and other illicit behavior. Additional lighting may be practicable, as well as clearing out thick vegetative growth to improve visibility into and around the parks. Careful thought should go into sight planning to reduce low-profile areas that may be hiding or congregation areas for vandals and other criminals. Increasing visitor traffic by offering amenities for a diverse user group would produce an environment that would potentially cut back on criminal actions. Additionally, materials and construction methods used in the park facilities should be resistant to destruction to reduce the frequency of repair or replacement. Security cameras should be installed in park facilities that are experiencing frequent problems from vandalism, and park gates may be feasible at some facilities such as the planned Millers Pond Park.

## **Facility Design Standards**

By incorporating design standards for county parks and recreation facilities, a strengthened sense of community should occur and park recognition will be easier for visitors. Design guidelines and standards that may be considered include architectural, athletic amenity standards, general site amenity standards, site development standards, and signage and promotional materials standards.

### ***Architectural***

Implementing architectural standards will serve to create an identity for the built structures that exist within a park system. These architectural standards should include construction materials, roofing materials, paint colors, furnishings, and hardware selections. Additionally, by utilizing similar materials at all facilities within the park, maintenance and repair costs could potentially decrease as materials may be purchased in bulk for reduced quantities, and maintenance workers will require less time for repair duties because the workers will become more familiar with the materials and hardware.

### ***Athletic Amenity Standards***

The elements that make up athletic fields and facilities such as bleachers, fencing and gates, lighting, irrigation equipment, dugouts, basketball goals, spectator seating, and concession and restroom buildings should be standardized throughout the parks system. By using standardized features and amenities, the parks system's image is further strengthened by creating uniformity. Similar to the architectural standards, implementing athletic amenity standards could also potentially reduce development and maintenance costs by utilizing uniform equipment and systems.

### ***General Site Amenity Standards***

General site amenity standards include landscape planting, trash receptacles, lighting, playground equipment, and fencing and gates, and these standards are very cost feasible to implement. Utilizing similar site amenities additionally strengthens the parks system image and reduces development and maintenance costs.

## Site Development

When planning for new parks facilities, many factors should be considered in the site development. Several of these factors include:

- Orient and locate features and amenities as to maximize natural light and shade as applicable.
- Provide a balance of wooded and open areas.
- Ensure that amenities are located as to avoid offensive sounds and smells.
- Provide shaded areas along walking paths and in playgrounds.
- Locate restrooms in easily accessible and central locations within the park.
- Locate parks along proposed trails and greenways.
- Separate incompatible activities and locate compatible activities within close proximity.
- Minimize use of pavement and reduction in tree canopy and natural vegetation.
- Utilize native plants to minimize maintenance and also attract indigenous wildlife.
- Design park and included amenities into the natural landscape to avoid vegetation removal, grading, and soil compaction.
- Utilize self-sufficient features such as solar-powered lights and solar-heated water for restroom facilities.
- Ensure picnic areas are naturally or artificially shaded from late-morning until around 5:00 pm.
- Utilize pervious pavers and minimize and disconnect impervious surfaces to reduce stormwater volume and pollutant concentration.
- Utilize stored stormwater from ponds and rain barrels for irrigation.
- Utilize materials and colors that mimic the natural surroundings.

Some additional factors should be considered when designing parking lot layouts:

- Utilize natural topography and existing soil conditions to avoid grading and soil compaction.
- Ensure adequate landscaping is provided to minimize the visual impacts of large parking areas.
- Incorporate stormwater best management practices such as bioswales and retention areas into landscaping.
- Use right-angled parking for increased space efficiency.
- Provide overflow parking on permeable pavers, stable turf, or lawn areas.

## Signage and Promotional Materials Standards

Signs within and near parks serve an invaluable purpose by providing directions, park identification, and general information. As such, careful thought should be applied to where and how signs are located, as well as their design. All county parks should utilize similar sign designs to create an identity for the parks system. A uniform design should be created for all new parks facilities. The existing signs at Pender Memorial Park and Hampstead Kiwanis Park greatly differ, and the parks system image may be strengthened by replacing these existing signs with the new uniform design as more parks are developed within the county. Additionally, signs should be placed on nearby roads to alert potential users of the existence of each park, as well as directions to the park.

Promotional materials such as park maps and brochures should also be created for the existing parks and all future facilities, and utilize a uniform design. A great example is the brochure/park map for each park in the North Carolina State Parks system, in which the brochure for each park has unique content but designed using a similar layout.



**Image 6.14: Park signs serve to welcome park visitors and provide information. Utilizing uniform signs for all future parks will increase departmental branding.**

## Facility Recommendations

The facility expansions and improvements, new county-managed facilities, and county-partnered or supported facilities recommended in this plan were developed based on a variety of information and criteria, including existing service areas, existing park acreage, existing facilities, NRPA-based guidelines, public input, existing county-owned property, user demand, existing and projected population trends, and other factors.

Overall, the recommendations were created to plan for new facilities that will provide a variety of recreational opportunities to meet a broad spectrum of users in many areas of the county, and include a total of three park expansions, one mini-park, five neighborhood parks, seven community parks, one regional park, four new county-partnered facilities, a variety of bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and new public water access areas to the Intracoastal Waterway, the Black River, Moores Creek, and Rockfish Creek. Each of these new facilities is recommended for development in order to alleviate the current deficits that exist within the county's parks system, and provide an improved quality of life to the residents and visitors of Pender County.

### Recommended Park Expansions and Improvements

Public parks are considered fluid facilities and should be in a constant state of assessment for expansions and improvements. Both Hampstead Kiwanis Park and Pender Memorial Park incrementally developed, and as such, problems exist in both parks that may be remedied through the creation of a master plan that will address issues specific to each park. Additionally, the acquisition or lease of specific properties adjacent to existing facilities should be pursued for expansion of the existing parks.

#### Pender Memorial Park

While Pender Memorial Park offers many softball/baseball fields, a playground, picnic area, and soccer fields, the recreational amenities offered within the park cater to a limited user group. Additionally, the park was developed over the years without the benefit of a long-range vision, and the result is a park with severe limitations for pedestrian interconnectivity, ADA-accessibility, and adequate parking and drive areas. Pender Memorial Park also features some wetland areas that have restrictions on development as pursuant to the Clean Water Act.

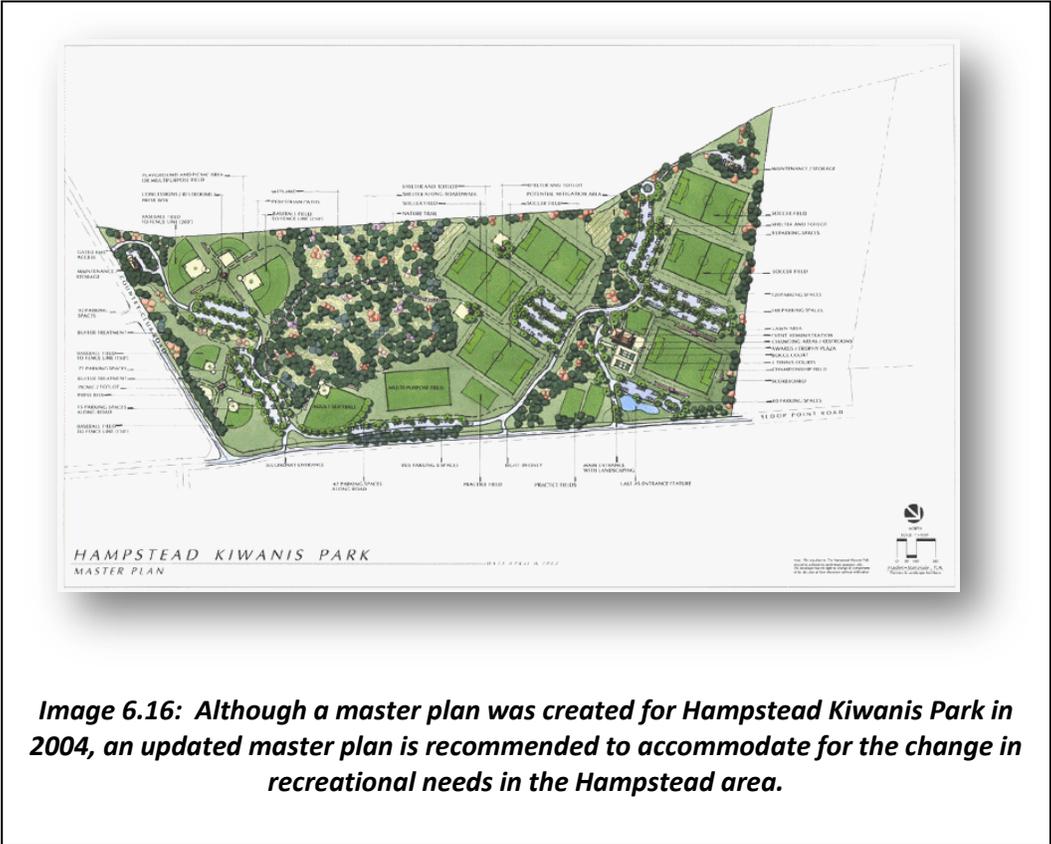
It is recommended that staff develop a park renovation and expansion master plan to address these issues, including ADA-compliance and accessibility, pedestrian interconnectivity, parking and driveway improvements, stormwater management, facility renovations, and additional amenities. Because of the park's location within the Town of Burgaw, it is recommended that a partnership be pursued between the county and the town to work together for future expansion and improvements, as Pender Memorial Park caters to residents both within and outside of the town's boundaries.



***Image 6.15: The development of Pender Memorial Park has created restrictions for pedestrian interconnectivity, ADA-accessibility, parking, and other issues that may be addressed through the creation of a park renovation and expansion master plan.***

### **Hampstead Kiwanis Park**

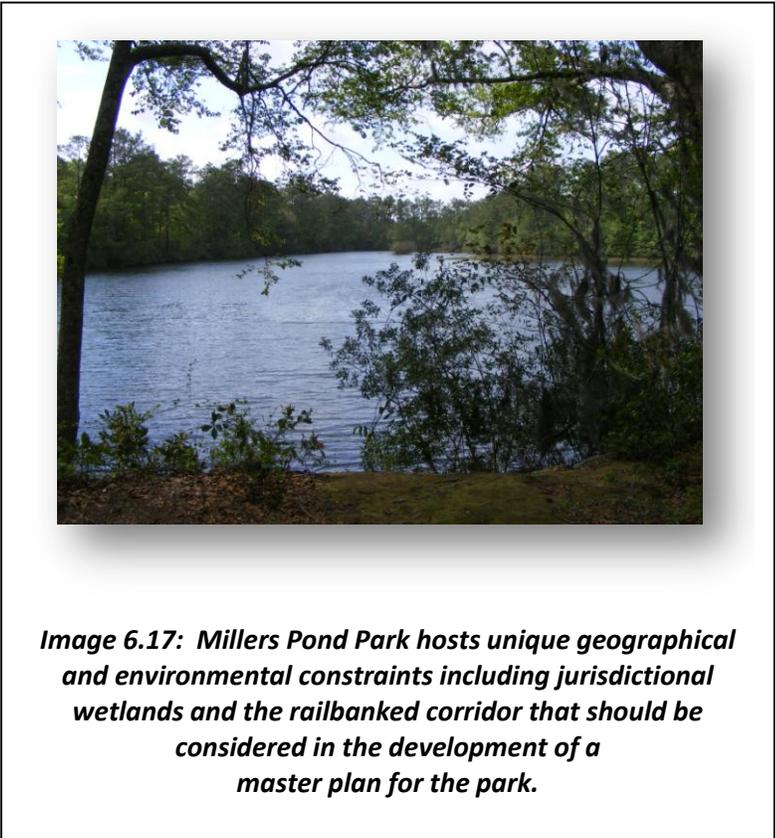
Although a master plan was created for Hampstead Kiwanis Park, it is recommended that staff develop a park renovation and expansion master plan that incorporates the existing and future phases to address issues including overall layout, landscaping, pedestrian and vehicle interconnectivity, stormwater management, facility improvements, ADA-compliance and accessibility, and potential expansion and additional amenities. Focus should also be given to a streamlined and user-friendly amenity reservation system that would lessen conflicting uses and overbooking. Additionally, the relationship between Pender County Parks and Recreation and the Hampstead Kiwanis Park Board should be revisited and evaluated to ensure that future development, management, and maintenance of Hampstead Kiwanis Park is amenable for all parties involved.



**Image 6.16: Although a master plan was created for Hampstead Kiwanis Park in 2004, an updated master plan is recommended to accommodate for the change in recreational needs in the Hampstead area.**

### **Millers Pond Park**

Due to the unique geographical and environmental constraints at Millers Pond Park, there are limitations to developable areas and recreational uses of the park. However, a master plan should be developed for the facility that depicts the overall built-out concept and probable phasing. Consideration should be given to the rail corridor that serves as the eastern boundary of the park, as it is likely that this corridor will be utilized in the future for passenger and freight rail use. As such, the master plan should include adequate safety measures to keep park visitors from straying onto and near the corridor, as well as provide significant buffers to maintain the natural serenity that the park currently offers. Additionally, the resurrection of the rail line will require the development of a new railroad trestle over the Cape Fear River; it is recommended that Pender County partner with New Hanover County and the Wildlife Resources Commission to lobby for the new trestle to include a bicycle and pedestrian lane. This would allow users of the WRC-managed public boat access area and nearby residents and visitors a safe method to cross the river to access and enjoy Millers Pond Park.



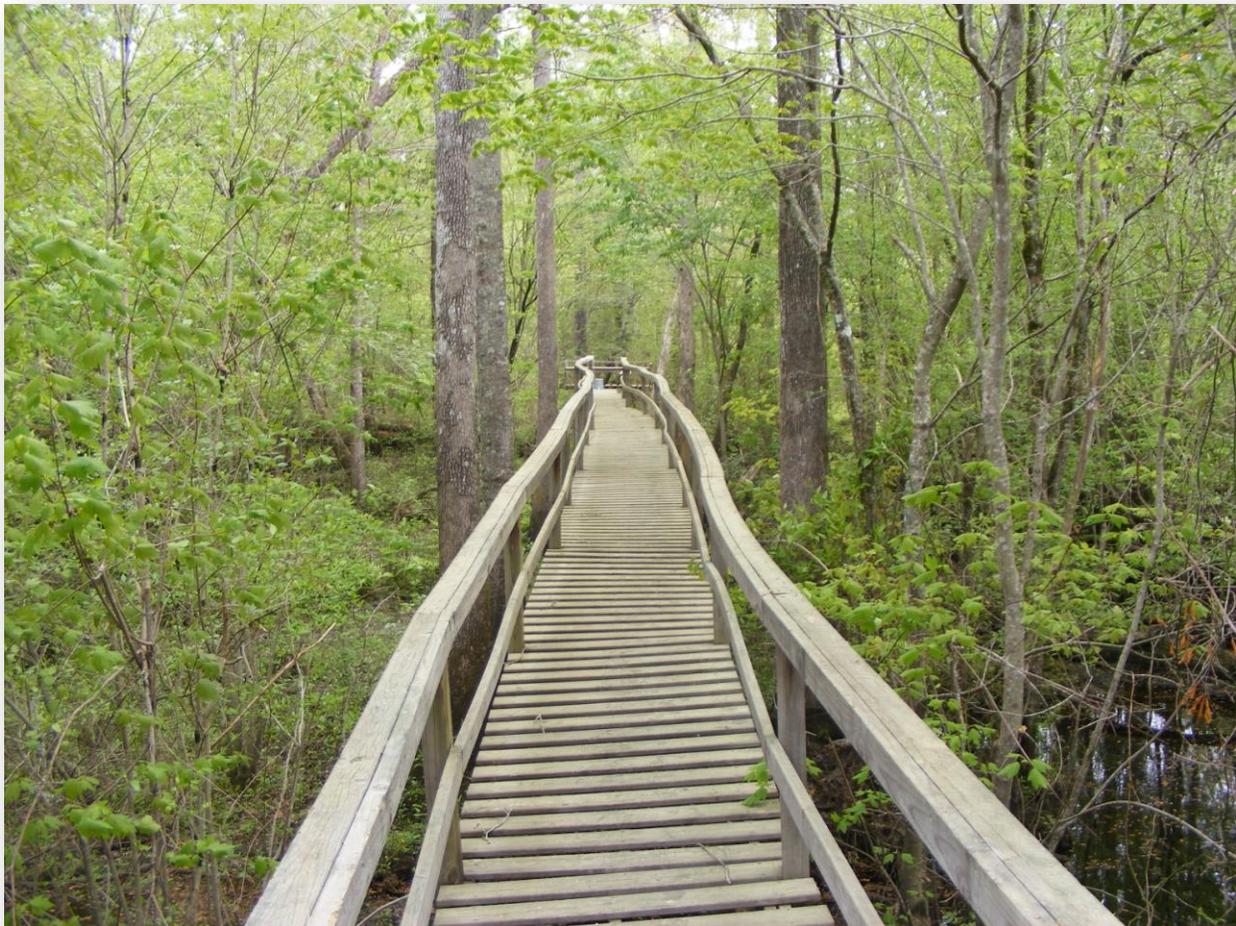
**Image 6.17: Millers Pond Park hosts unique geographical and environmental constraints including jurisdictional wetlands and the railbanked corridor that should be considered in the development of a master plan for the park.**

## Recommended New County-Managed Facilities

Several new county-managed facilities are recommended in this plan to address the deficiencies that exist in Pender County's parks system. Some of these recommended facilities are site-specific, while others are recommended in an area or community but a specific site is not chosen.

It is recommended that as each new county-managed facility is planned and developed, public input meetings be held in the community near the planned facility so that Staff may solicit further input from residents on the proposed amenities within the facility. Following the public input solicitation, a master plan for the facility should be created which should be followed by the engineered design of the facility and subsequent field work. Future phases of each facility should be representative of the master plan design, and all existing and planned facilities should be evaluated during the 5-year plan update or as necessary as the parks and recreation needs of county residents will change over time.

The following pages overview the recommended new county-managed facilities, but not in a prioritized order. Following this plan, Planning Staff will work with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to create a prioritization system and rank the recommended projects. Project priorities should be evaluated at least on an annual basis as budget, development, and recreational need conditions change.



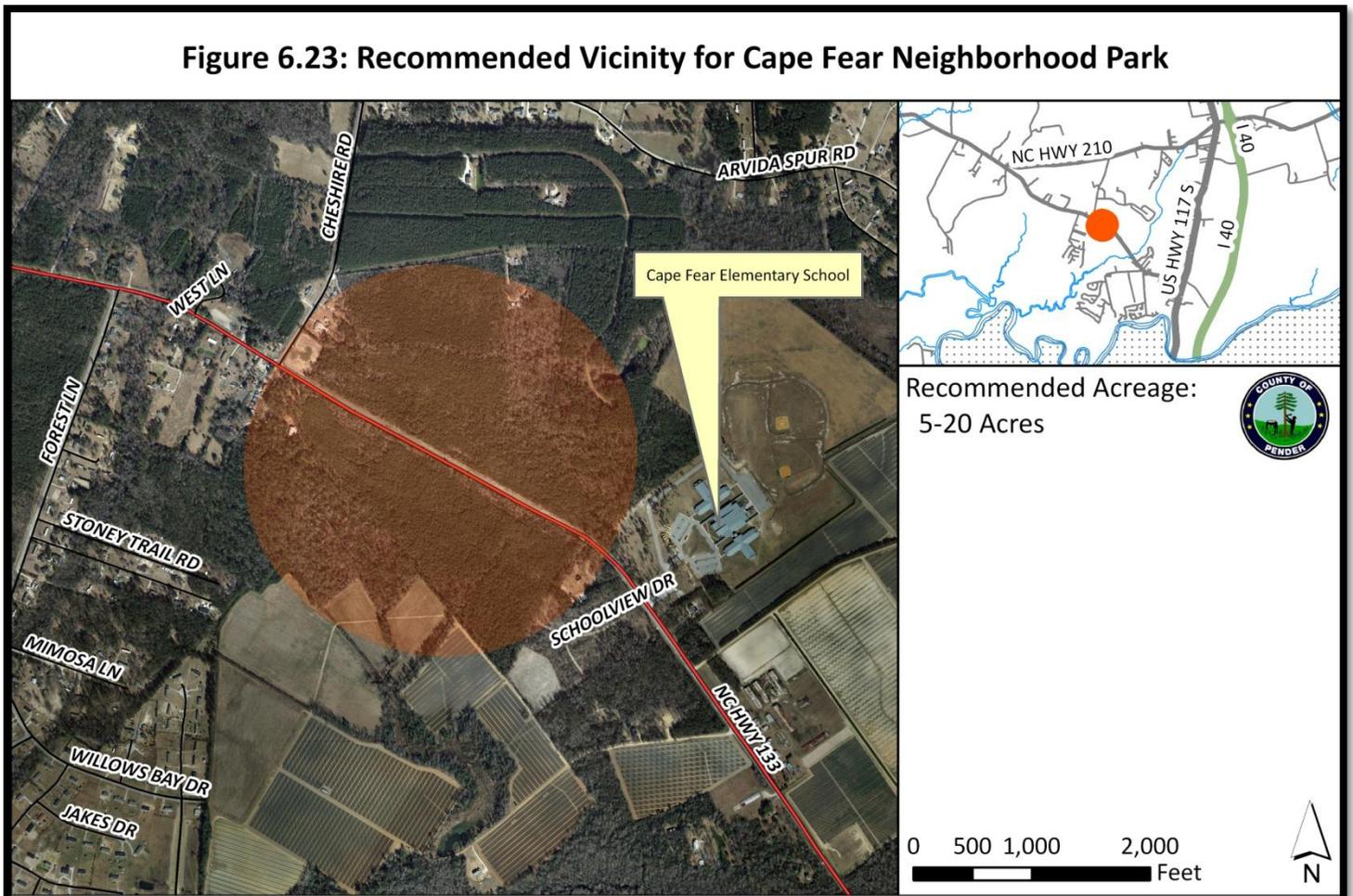
***Image 6.18: Several new facilities are recommended on existing county-owned parcels such as the Long Creek Community Park, which features an existing boardwalk in a pristine setting for access to Long Creek.***

### Cape Fear Neighborhood Park

Cape Fear Neighborhood Park is a 5-20 acre park recommended for development near Cape Fear Elementary School, east of Rocky Point on NC Highway 133. There are several privately-owned vacant and undeveloped parcels within walking and bicycling distance from the school that would be suitable sites for the Cape Fear Neighborhood Park. Based on the input received from the public input meeting in Rocky Point, as well as the survey results for zip code 28457, suitable amenities for the Cape Fear Neighborhood Park should include passive recreation amenities including walking trails, natural areas, and picnic shelters, and active recreation amenities including a playground area and softball and basketball facilities.

Development of the Cape Fear Neighborhood Park will help to alleviate some of the existing deficiencies within the county's parks system. As shown in Table 6.5, the county's park system has a current acreage need of 55 to 110 acres for neighborhood parks; this is based on the NRPA recommendation of 1 to 2 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 county residents. As the county's population increases, the acreage deficits will also increase; based on the 2015 population estimate for Pender County, the county should have between 63.5 and 127 acres of neighborhood parks within the parks system by 2015. Additionally, the amenities developed with the Cape Fear Neighborhood Park will help reduce the facility deficits depicted in Table 6.4.

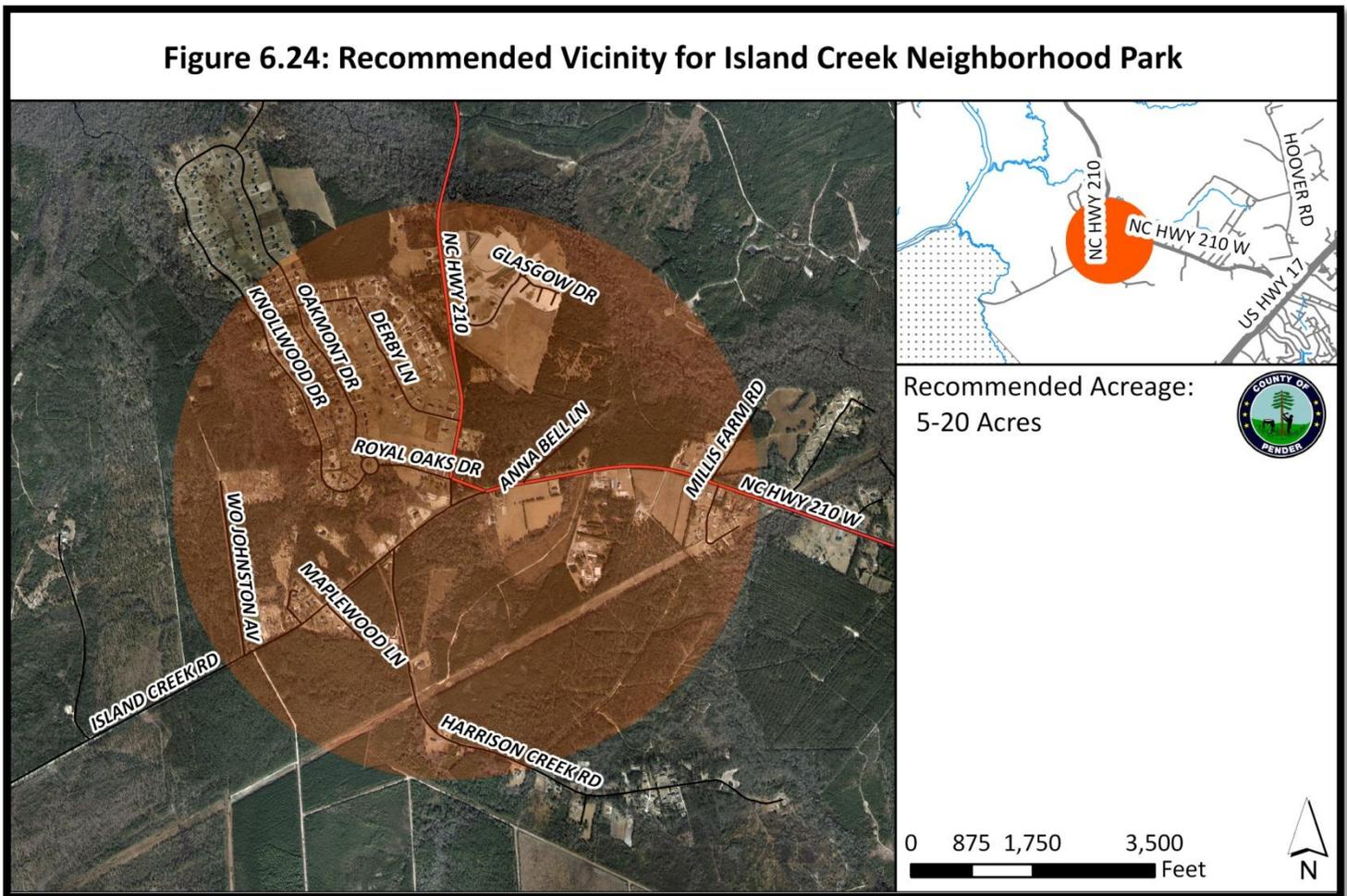
Figure 6.23 below shows the recommended vicinity for the Cape Fear Neighborhood Park. Rocky Point and the surrounding areas are poised for substantial residential development in the near future; an example of this development is the 21-unit subdivision currently under development across from Cape Fear Elementary School. As previously mentioned, it is important to appropriately plan for population increase in the county to accommodate the increased parks and recreation demand.



### Island Creek Neighborhood Park

Island Creek Neighborhood Park is a recommended new county-managed park recommended as a 5 to 20 acre park in the vicinity of the intersection of NC Highway 210 and Island Creek Road, as depicted in Figure 6.24 below. This park should be located within easy bicycle and pedestrian access to the Coastal Pender Greenway, as this greenway and Island Creek Road would serve as a pedestrian and bicycle link between the City of Wilmington’s planned Blue Clay Corridor bicycle facilities and the planned Town of Surf City’s bicycle facilities. This park is also situated along NC DOT Bicycle Route 3, and could serve as a rest stop for bicyclists traveling the route. Island Creek Road and a portion of NC Highway 210 bisect the zip codes 28443 and 28457; however, the desired facilities indicated on the public input survey by respondents in the two zip codes are very similar. Suitable amenities for the Island Creek Neighborhood Park include walking trails, natural areas, picnic areas, playground equipment, and softball and basketball facilities. Development of Island Creek Neighborhood Park and the subsequent amenities will help to ease park acreage and facility deficits, as well as provide recreational opportunities to another area of the county situated for strong residential growth.

**Figure 6.24: Recommended Vicinity for Island Creek Neighborhood Park**



### Long Creek Community Park

The county-owned parcel identified as PIN 2295-04-6767-0000, situated at the terminus of Montague Road at NC Highway 210 is a 22.23 acre parcel suitable for the recommended Long Creek Community Park. Pender County acquired this parcel in 2003 through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Acquisition Program, in which funds appropriated from the Stafford Act were used to acquire properties in areas prone to hazards such as flooding.

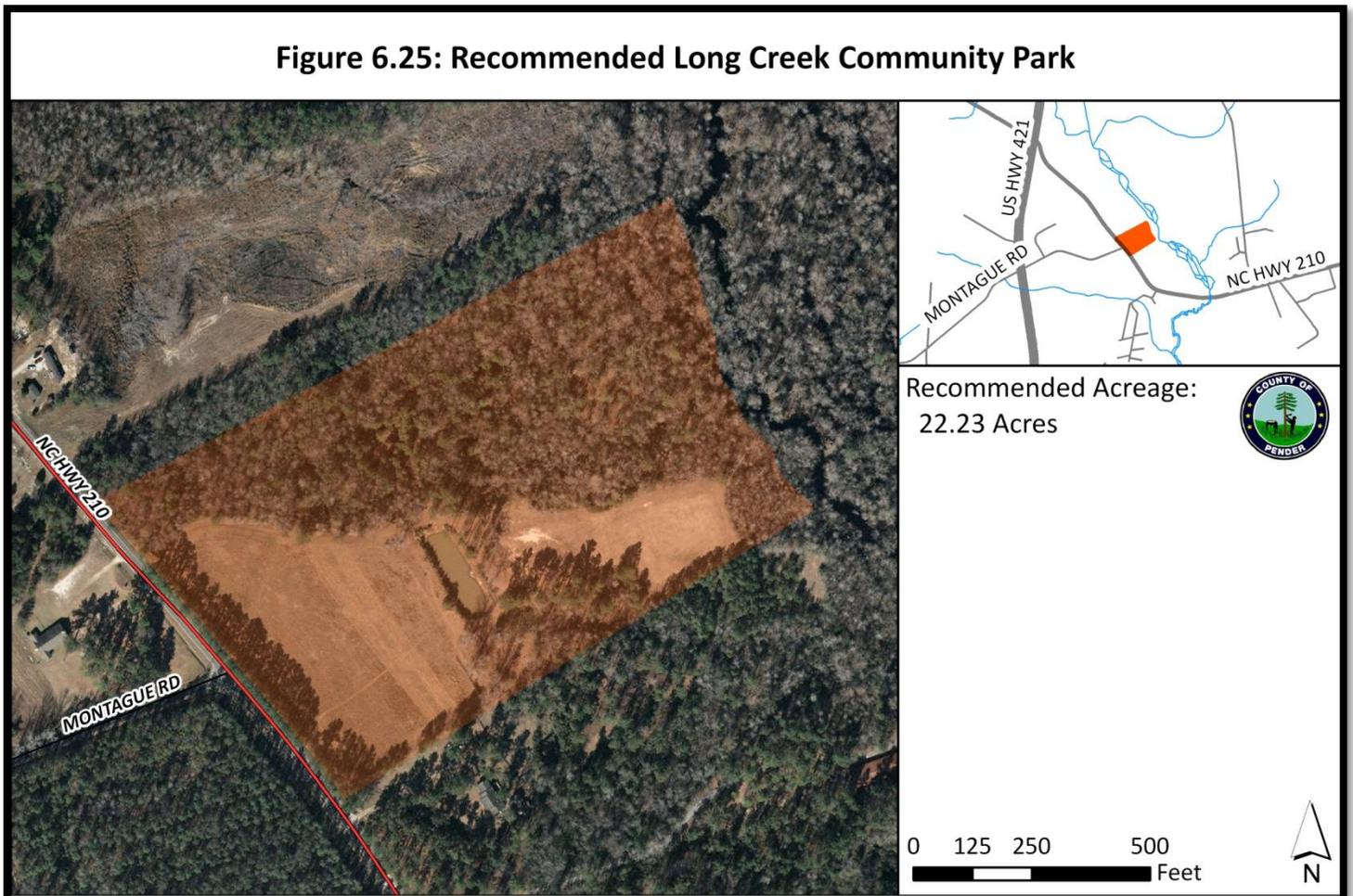
Pursuant to the deed restrictions and covenants, there are limits to the uses allowed on properties acquired through the Hazard Mitigation Acquisition Program. The restrictions for this subject parcel, recorded under Book 2148, Page 098 at the Pender County Register of Deeds, state that the parcel must be dedicated and maintained in perpetuity for uses

compatible with open space, recreational purposes, or wetlands management practices. The development of structures on the parcel are limited to public facilities that are open on all sides and functionally related to a designated open space or recreational use, a public restroom, or a structure that is compatible with open space, recreational, or wetlands management usage and proper flood plain management policies and practices, which must be approved by the FEMA Director in writing prior to the construction of the structure. Structures built on the property must be located to minimize the potential for flood damage, be flood proofed, or be elevated to the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) plus one foot of freeboard. Allowable uses on the parcel are limited to open space, recreational, and wetland management uses, including parks for outdoor recreational activities, nature reserves, camping, unimproved, permeable parking lots, and buffer areas.

As depicted in Figure 6.25 below, the subject parcel is situated between NC Highway 210 and Long Creek across from Montague Road, which connects NC Highway 210 with US Highway 421. As such, the location of this parcel is ideal for access by the surrounding communities, including Rocky Point and Currie; Figure 6.25 displays the 5-mile radius functional service area for the park. The property is currently being utilized by private parties for kayak and canoe access to Long Creek, on which a motivated paddler could access the Northeast Cape Fear River and beyond.

Based on the desired facilities expressed by survey respondents from the 28457 and 28435 zip codes, in addition to the site-specific characteristics and restrictions, suitable amenities at the Long Creek Community Park include natural areas, picnic areas/shelters with permanent grills, public restroom facilities, walking trails, playground equipment, canoe/kayak access, fishing areas, and active recreational amenities including basketball and volleyball courts, baseball/softball fields, and soccer/multipurpose fields.

**Figure 6.25: Recommended Long Creek Community Park**

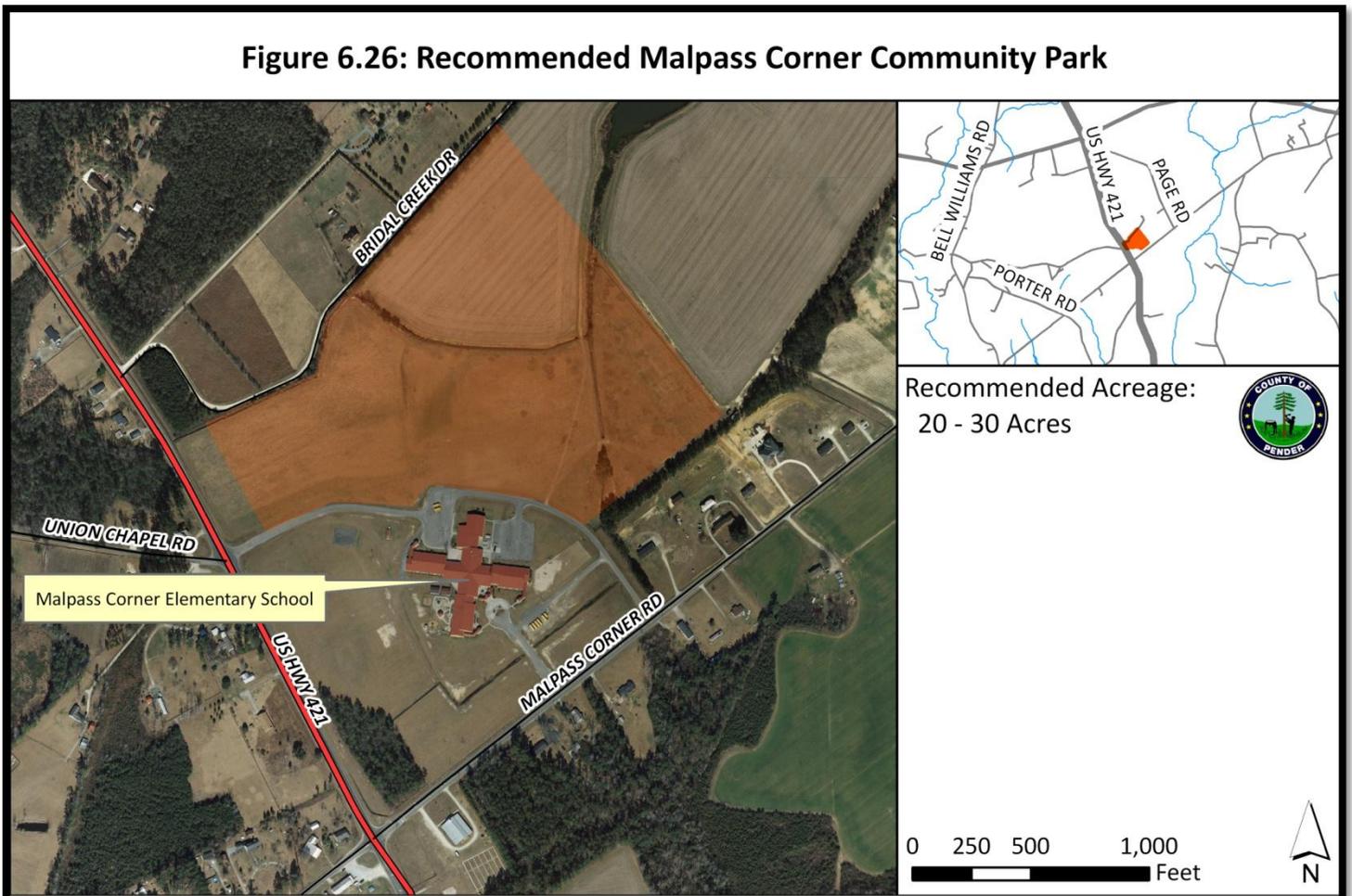


### Malpass Corner Community Park

The Malpass Corner Community Park is a new facility recommended to be developed adjacent to Malpass Corner Elementary School, at the intersection of US Highway 421 and Malpass Corner Road. The county-owned properties identified by PINs 2287-46-7776-0000 and 2287-45-8702-0000 total approximately 68.39 acres, with a portion of the tracts hosting the elementary school. The remaining acreage of the parcels is suitable for parks and recreation facility development, contingent on an environmental review of the properties. The location of the parcels is ideal for access by the surrounding communities, including Currie, Atkinson, Burgaw and St. Helena.

US Highway 421 divides zip codes 28425 and 28435, but based on the input received from the survey respondents in these zip codes as well as the information gathered at the Malpass Corner public input meeting, suitable amenities for this project include walking trails, picnic areas, playground equipment, and active recreational amenities such as basketball courts, volleyball courts, and other athletic facilities. Because of the proximity to the elementary school, planning and development of this project should include input from school staff, parents, and even students to determine the most desired and appropriate amenities to develop. This park should also be designed in a manner that limits park users from access to school grounds for safety and security reasons. Vehicle access points should be separate from the existing ingress and egress utilized by school staff and parents so that park and school traffic does not conflict.

Figure 6.26: Recommended Malpass Corner Community Park



### ***Maple Hill Community Park***

The Maple Hill Community Park is a recommended new 20 to 75 acre county-managed facility in the Maple Hill area. Though a specific site has not been determined, it is recommended that this facility be located in close proximity to the Maple Hill Resource Center, which will ensure that the new facility is within easy bicycle and pedestrian access from the Maple Hill residential community. Also, by locating the new community park near the existing community center, a shared use and management agreement may be pursued.

Despite the existing community center and recently created Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area, Maple Hill remains currently underserved by parks and recreation opportunities. As indicated by the survey responses and public input meeting that was held in the community, Maple Hill residents are eager to see more opportunities in their community. As overviewed earlier in this section, the existing community center building and recreational amenities are in need of improvements, and additional recreational acreage and facilities are needed in the area to decrease the deficits that exist in the county's parks system. While the new state-managed natural area will preserve a large amount of land as open space, the development of both passive and active recreational amenities within the natural area will be minimal, if any. Based on the projected population increase in the area as a result of the growth of the military installations in Onslow County, it is important to plan for providing recreational opportunities in the Maple Hill area. Additionally, due to the proximity of the Maple Hill community to Onslow County, the planning and development of the recommended new community park may be pursued as a partnership between Onslow and Pender Counties, as the new facility would serve residents of both counties.

Based on the input received at the public input meeting in Maple Hill and the survey results for zip code 28454, the amenities desired by the Maple Hill community include picnic areas and shelters, playground equipment, basketball courts, softball fields, bicycle paths, natural areas, walking trails, fitness trails, and multi-purpose fields, among others. The Maple Hill Resource Center property currently features an outdoor basketball court and softball field, both needing renovations and improvements. However, revitalizing these existing amenities and supporting improvements at the community building in addition to developing additional desired amenities would be more effective than duplicating efforts to develop the facilities desired by the community. As such, it is appropriate that new facilities be developed adjacent or in close proximity to the existing community center.

### ***Penderlea Neighborhood Park***

The Penderlea Neighborhood Park is a new 5 to 20 acre facility recommended in the Penderlea community, though a specific site has not been determined. Between Penderlea School Road and the terminus of Penderlea highway is approximately 12.5 county-owned acres that are suitable for park development, including an existing baseball field that could be incorporated into the new neighborhood park. Another feasible option is to develop the Penderlea Neighborhood Park in conjunction with the Penderlea Community Center, which is detailed later in this section.

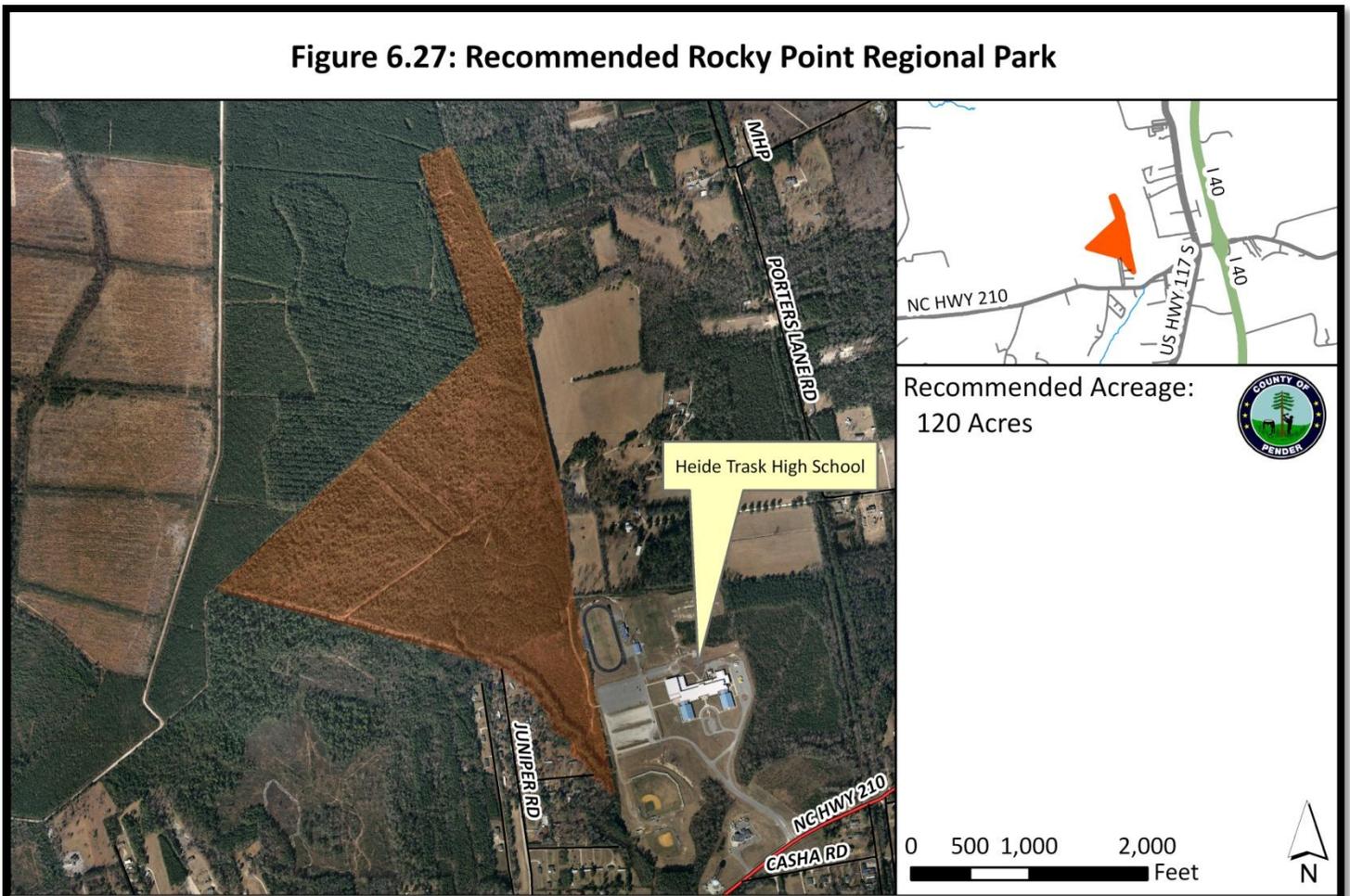
The facility desires expressed by the Penderlea community at the public input meeting and based on the input received from the zip code 28478 public input survey respondents include lighted tennis and basketball courts, softball and baseball fields, playground equipment, picnic areas/shelters, walking and fitness trails and other exercise-related amenities. Like other recommended new park facilities, more public input should be sought as planning for this neighborhood park progresses.

### Rocky Point Regional Park

Located adjacent to Heide Trask High School in Rocky Point, Rocky Point Regional Park is recommended as a large regional park that will have amenities that cater to a variety of parks users. The site is currently owned by the county, and is composed of approximately 120 acres suitable for parks and recreation facilities. The surrounding area is poised for significant residential and commercial development in the near future, and the development of Rocky Point Regional Park will serve to fill the deficiency of recreation opportunities in the Rocky Point area.

The development of Rocky Point Regional Park will help to lessen the deficiencies that currently exist in Pender County's parks system. The 120 acres of new park land will reduce the deficiency of park acreage in the county system, which is currently about 412 acres deficient based on recommended levels of service defined by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). The NRPA also recommends that a parks system should include from 5 to 10 acres of regional parks per 1,000 population; using the 2010 population estimate for Pender County of 55,237, the county is currently 276 to 552 acres below the recommended acreage for regional parks. The amenities developed within the park will help to reduce the facility-specific deficiencies in Pender County's parks system, particularly with various athletic fields and courts, walking and biking trails, playgrounds, and picnic shelters. Rocky Point Regional Park may also be a feasible location for a large indoor recreation center when budgetary support is available due to the availability of water and sewer capacity in the area.

Figure 6.27: Recommended Rocky Point Regional Park



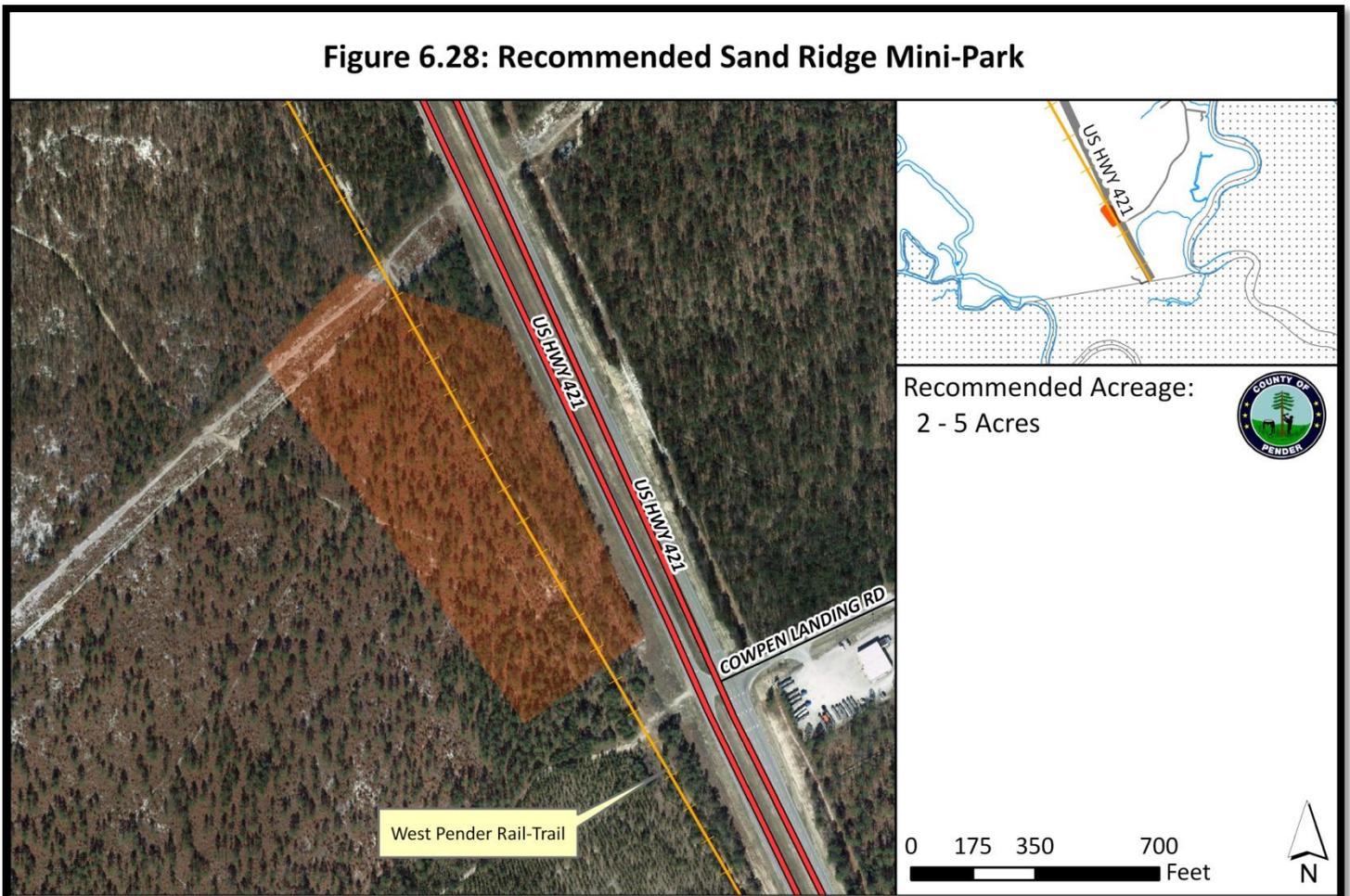
### Sand Ridge Mini-Park

Located within the Pender Commerce Park, the Sand Ridge Mini-Park is recommended primarily as a trailhead park for the West Pender Rail-Trail. This 2 to 5 acre facility should include limited amenities that are oriented to serve trail users as well as future employees of commerce park tenants, such as adequate parking for trail users, restroom facilities, picnic areas, benches, and playground equipment. Educational and informational materials and signage should be included to guide trail users.

During the creation of this plan, the Pender Commerce Park was still in the planning and design phases, with infrastructure including roads, sidewalks, and water and wastewater treatment facilities being drafted by the Pender County Department of Public Utilities. The development of the Sand Ridge Mini-Park should be concurrent with the development of commerce park, and adequate acreage reserved for this new facility at the northern portion of the parcel.

The Sand Ridge Mini-Park, named after the significant natural area called the 421 sand ridge, would not only serve as a needed trailhead for the West Pender Rail-Trail, but also as a draw to prospective commerce park tenants. According to *Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenway Corridors; A Resource Book*, published by the National Parks Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program, site locations near rivers, trails, and greenways are more attractive to prospective tenants than sites that lack such amenities. This is because the increased quality of life due to recreational amenities encourages employee fitness and well-being, resulting in lower absentee rates and decreased medical and disability costs. Additionally, greenways and trails help reduce the commuting costs for employees because they provide opportunities for commuting by foot or bicycle. In short, the recreational amenities recommended within and near the Pender Commerce Park will serve as a draw for prospective commerce park tenants.

Figure 6.28: Recommended Sand Ridge Mini-Park



### **Scotts Hill Community Park**

While the Hampstead Kiwanis Park offers limited recreational opportunities, the population growth that is projected for coastal Pender County and northern New Hanover County will exhaust the existing and planned facilities at Hampstead Kiwanis Park. As such, adequate parks and recreation development should be pursued in the coastal Pender area. The Scotts Hill Community Park is a recommended 20 to 75 acre park facility located along US Highway 17 in the Scotts Hill area.

Although a specific parcel has not been identified, there are several large, undeveloped tracts with access to US Highway 17 that would be ideal for the park. This project could coincide with the recommended Scotts Hill Intracoastal Water Way public

water access facility recommended later in this section, as the two projects would be mutually beneficial. Additionally, the recommended proximity of the Scotts Hill Community Park may yield a partnership with New Hanover County, as this park would serve residents in both counties.

While Hampstead Kiwanis Park provides recreational opportunities to the Hampstead area, the functional service area of the park excludes the Scotts Hill and surrounding communities. The development of the Scotts Hill Community Park would offer opportunities to these underserved areas, and also alleviate some of the competing and exhausting use of Hampstead Kiwanis Park. During the public input process for this plan, Hampstead area residents indicated frustrations with lack of available parks facilities and recreation programs in their communities, indicating at both the public input meeting and on the survey that they must travel to Wilmington so they or their family may enjoy a park or participate in recreation programs or classes.

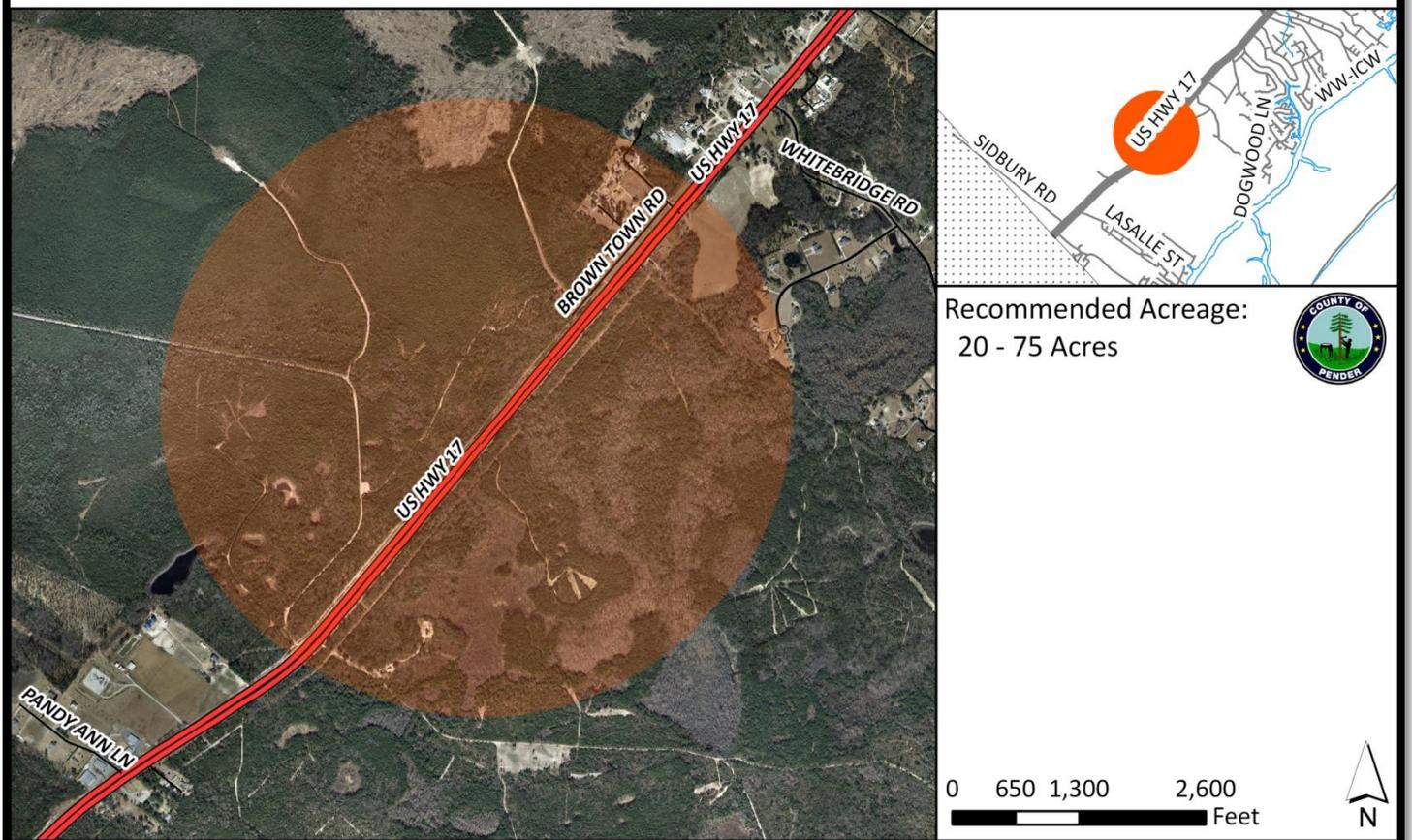
The Scotts Hill Community Park should include a variety of amenities that would offer recreational opportunities for county residents of all ages and interests. Athletic fields including basketball courts, baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, and tennis courts should all be included at the Scotts Hill Community Park, as well as other non-athletic amenities including playgrounds, picnic areas and shelters, nature and walking trails, and a dog park. This park may be a feasible site for a community center with a pool facility; these facilities were strongly desired by Hampstead community residents during the public input process, and developing these facilities at Hampstead Kiwanis Park is probably not feasible due to specific site conditions. However, the development of these facilities at the Scotts Hill Community Park would provide these opportunities to Hampstead area residents, as well as provide a venue for many revenue-generating programs and special events that would augment the development of the facilities and the parks and recreation budget in general.



***Image 6.19: While Hampstead Kiwanis Park offers recreational opportunities to Hampstead area residents, the projected population growth for the area will soon exhaust the existing park. Additional parks and recreation development will be needed in coastal Pender County to accommodate the population growth.***

The Scotts Hill Community Park site should be selected and developed so that it may be accessed by bicycles and pedestrians, as well as motor vehicles, including where feasible trail spurs to the Coastal Pender Rail-Trail, the Coastal Pender Greenway, Sidbury Road, and Island Creek Road.

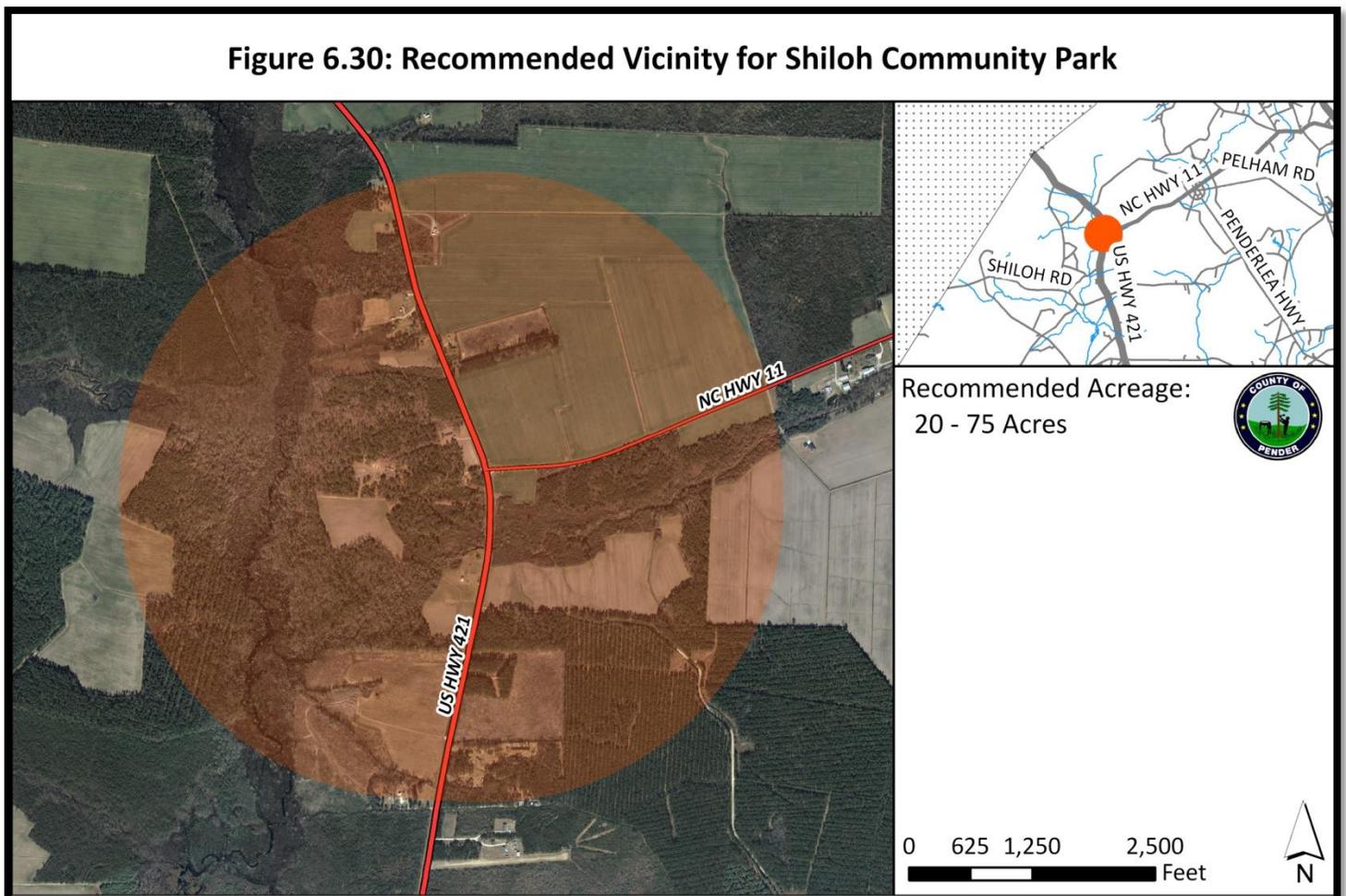
**Figure 6.29: Recommended Vicinity for Scotts Hill Community Park**



### Shiloh Community Park

Recommended to serve the needs of residents in northwestern Pender County, the Shiloh Community Park should be developed in the vicinity of the intersection of US Highway 421 and NC Highway 11. Though the surrounding area is currently mostly rural, a 20 to 75 acre community park in the future will be necessary to serve county residents as population increases. The suitable facilities at the Shiloh Community Park include athletic fields, walking trails, bicycle trails, picnic areas and shelters, and restrooms; the specific amenities developed at this site should be contingent on future public input and needs assessment during the park planning process.

Figure 6.30: Recommended Vicinity for Shiloh Community Park

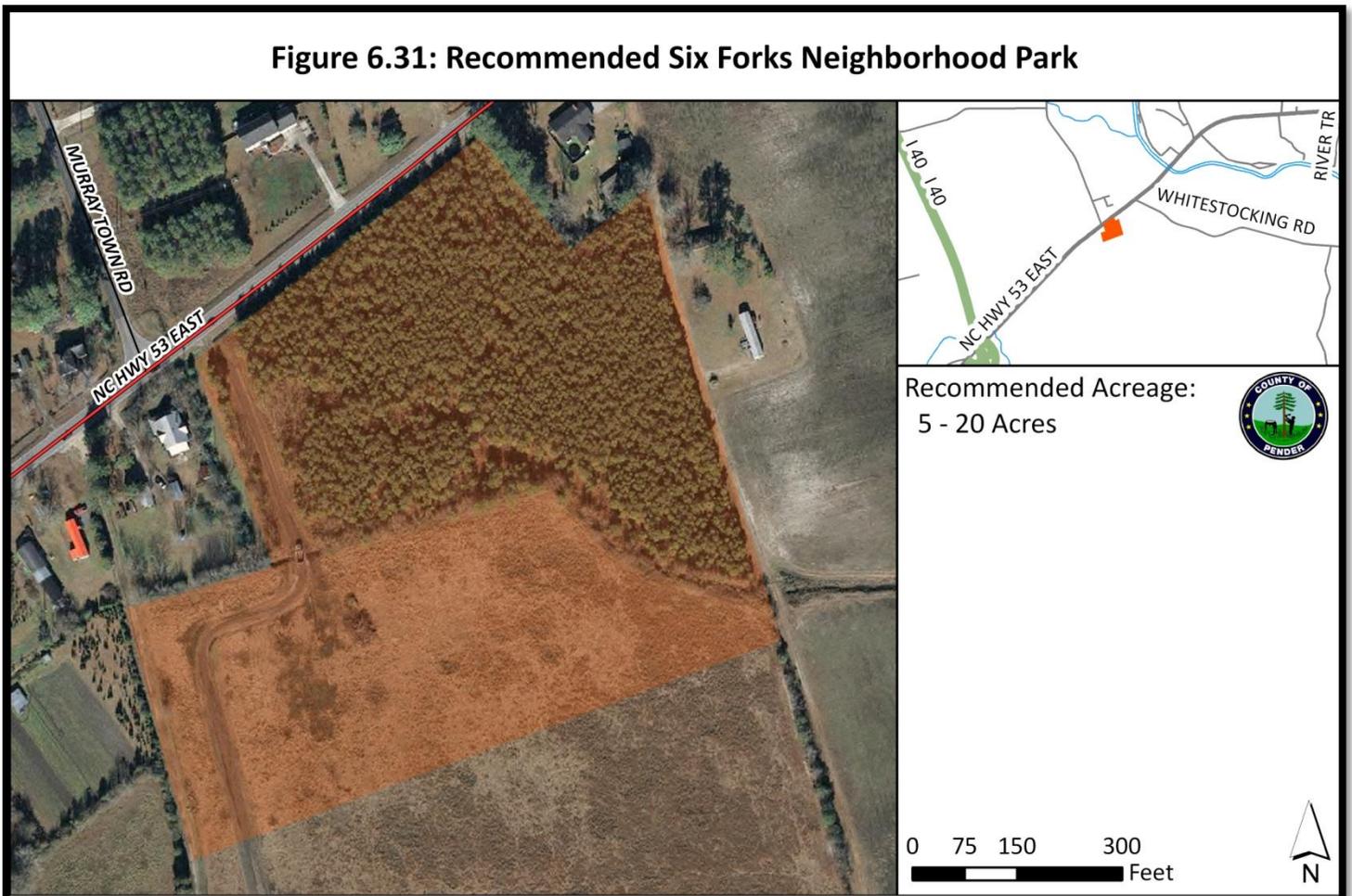


### Six Forks Neighborhood Park

On NC Highway 53 West, the Pender County Board of Education owns a 58.62-acre parcel just across from Murraytown Road that would be suitable for a 5 to 10 acre neighborhood park. According to communication with Board of Education Staff, the parcel may be utilized for the development of a bus garage and storage facility in the future, but plans for development are still being discussed. The Pender County Sheriff's Office currently has a lease on the property for the use of the southern portion of the parcel for an emergency services communication tower, and there are restrictions on what may be placed or developed in the tower's fall zone. However, the subject parcel's remaining acreage should provide ample room for the Board of Education's bus garage and storage facility as well as the recommended Six Forks Neighborhood Park.

The recommended neighborhood park should be designed to serve residents in a one to two mile radius, and feature amenities including picnic areas, playground equipment, a multi-purpose field, and walking trails. Due to this park's proximity to Pender Memorial Park, which is oriented to support organized athletic programs, the amenities developed at Six Forks Neighborhood Park should be limited to non-athletic oriented facilities and amenities. It is recommended that Pender County Parks and Recreation Staff work with Board of Education Staff to pursue the development of Six Forks Neighborhood Park in conjunction with the proposed bus garage and storage facility.

**Figure 6.31: Recommended Six Forks Neighborhood Park**

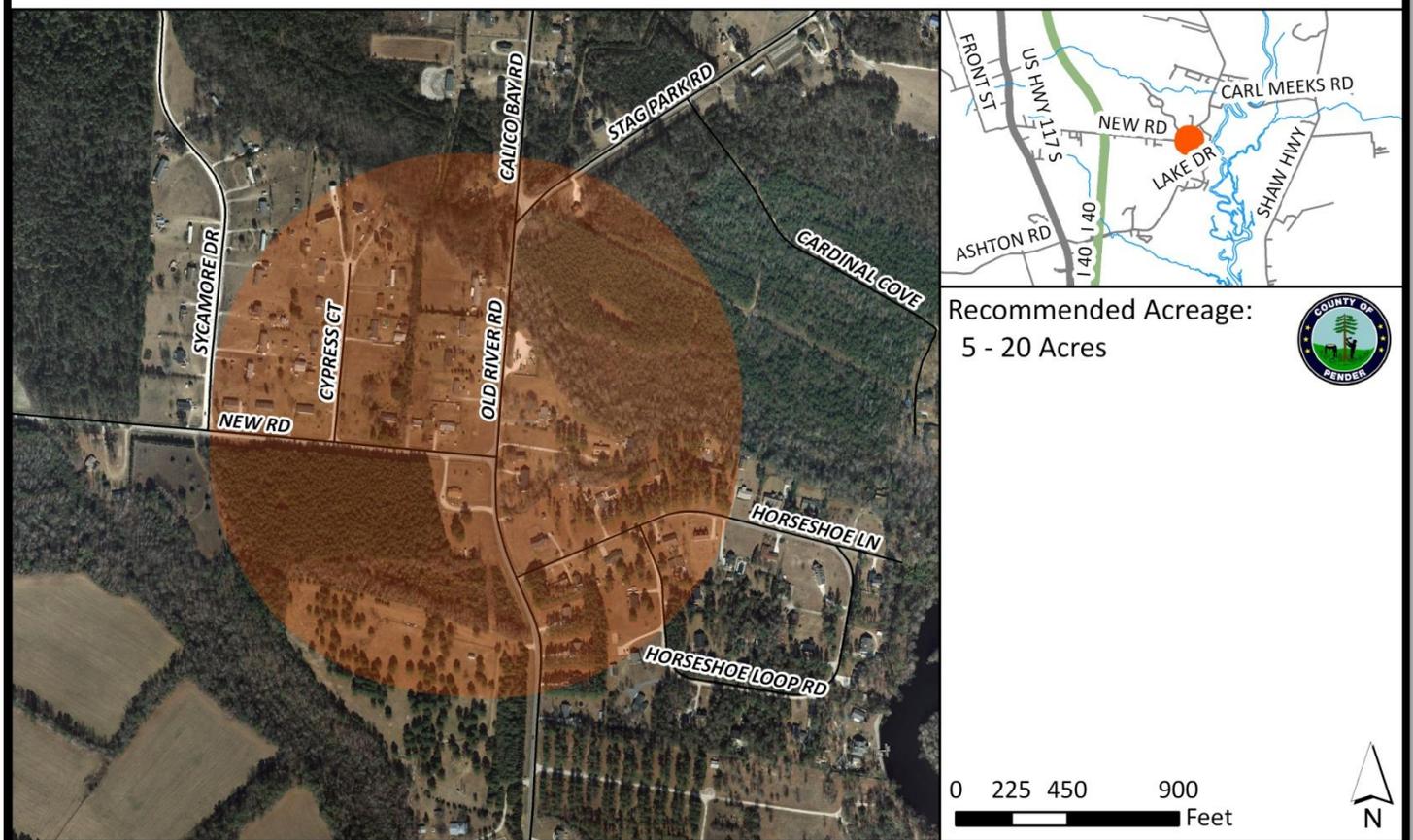


### Stag Park Neighborhood Park

Located east of St. Helena, the community of Stag Park is geographically isolated from the service areas of the existing and recommended parks and recreation facilities, as depicted in Figure 6.32. However, this area of the county currently hosts residential development, and development in this area will continue to be residentially focused. As such, it is recommended that a neighborhood park be developed in the community to provide parks and recreation opportunities to current and future residents.

Stag Park Neighborhood Park is recommended as a 5 to 20 acre park in the vicinity of the intersection of Old River Road and New Road. This location would allow for residents in the neighborhoods along Old River Road, Stag Park Road, and Sycamore Drive to enjoy a park close to their homes. Suitable amenities for this park include picnic areas/shelters, playground equipment, walking trails, and also athletic facilities as warranted by future additional public input meetings during the planning phase for the park.

**Figure 6.32: Recommended Vicinity for Stag Park Neighborhood Park**

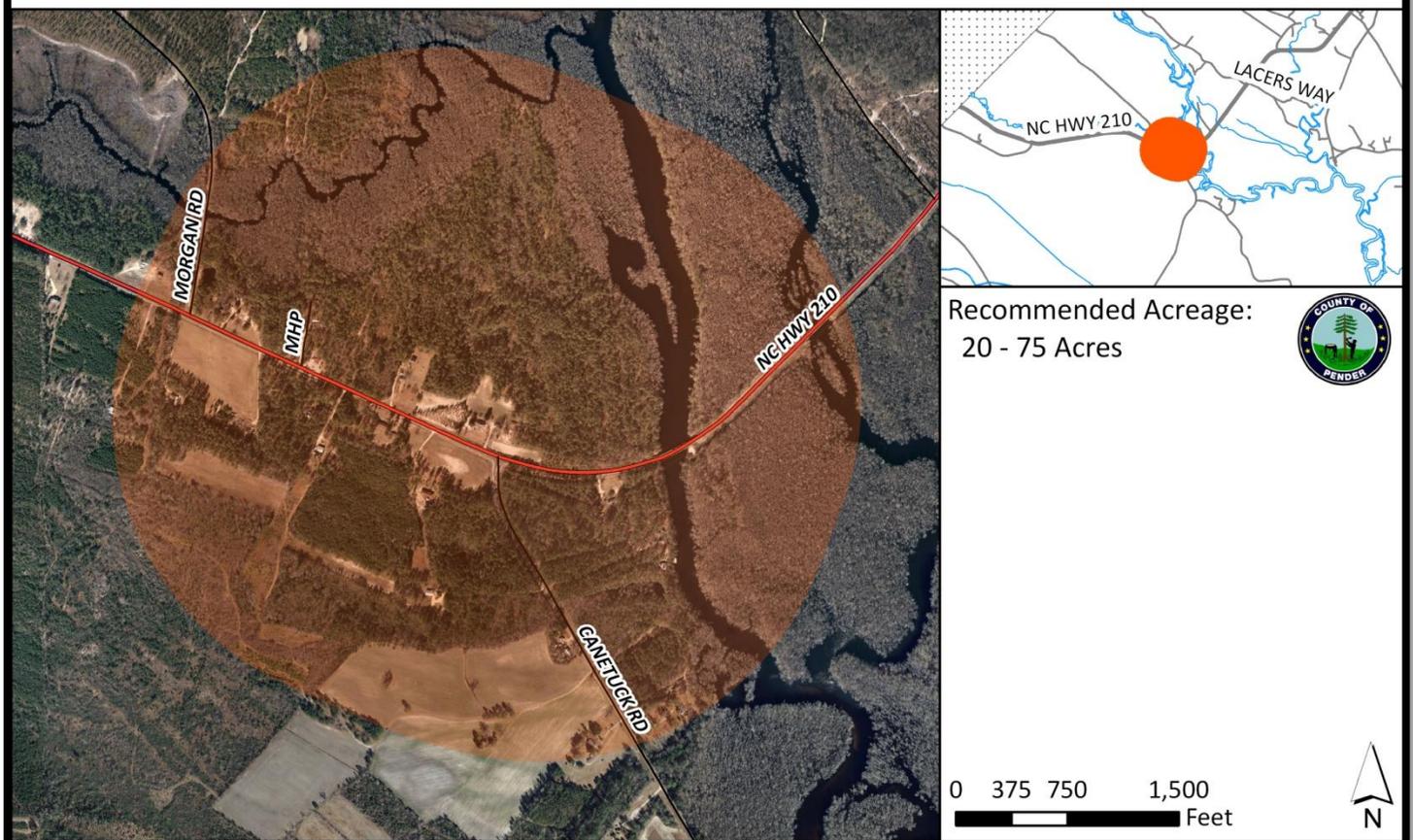


### Still Bluff Community Park

The Still Bluff Community Park is a 20 to 75 acre park recommended for development in the vicinity of the junction of NC Highway 210 and the Black River, near the intersection of NC Highway 210 and Canetuck Road. This park should be developed in conjunction with the Black River Water Access, as described later in this section. While some athletic amenities may be appropriate, site-specific conditions may limit development of such amenities due to possible presence of wetlands, depending on the site chosen. However, Still Bluff Community Park is recommended to fill a service area gap as depicted on Figures 6.21 and 6.22, and the specific amenities developed within the park are contingent on future public input from area residents.

The site selected for Still Bluff Community Park should be easily accessible from NC Highway 210 and have water frontage along the Black River. Several privately-owned parcels exist in the vicinity that may be suitable for the development of this project. Additionally, bicycle/pedestrian trail spurs should extend from the Still Bluff Community Park to nearby parks and recreation facilities, including the West Pender Rail-Trail, Moores Creek National Battlefield and Nature Center, and the Canetuck Community Center. Future county blueway and greenway plans should address water and bicycle/pedestrian interconnectivity of park and recreation facilities within Pender County.

**Figure 6.33: Recommended Vicinity for Still Bluff Community Park**



### *Willard Community Park*

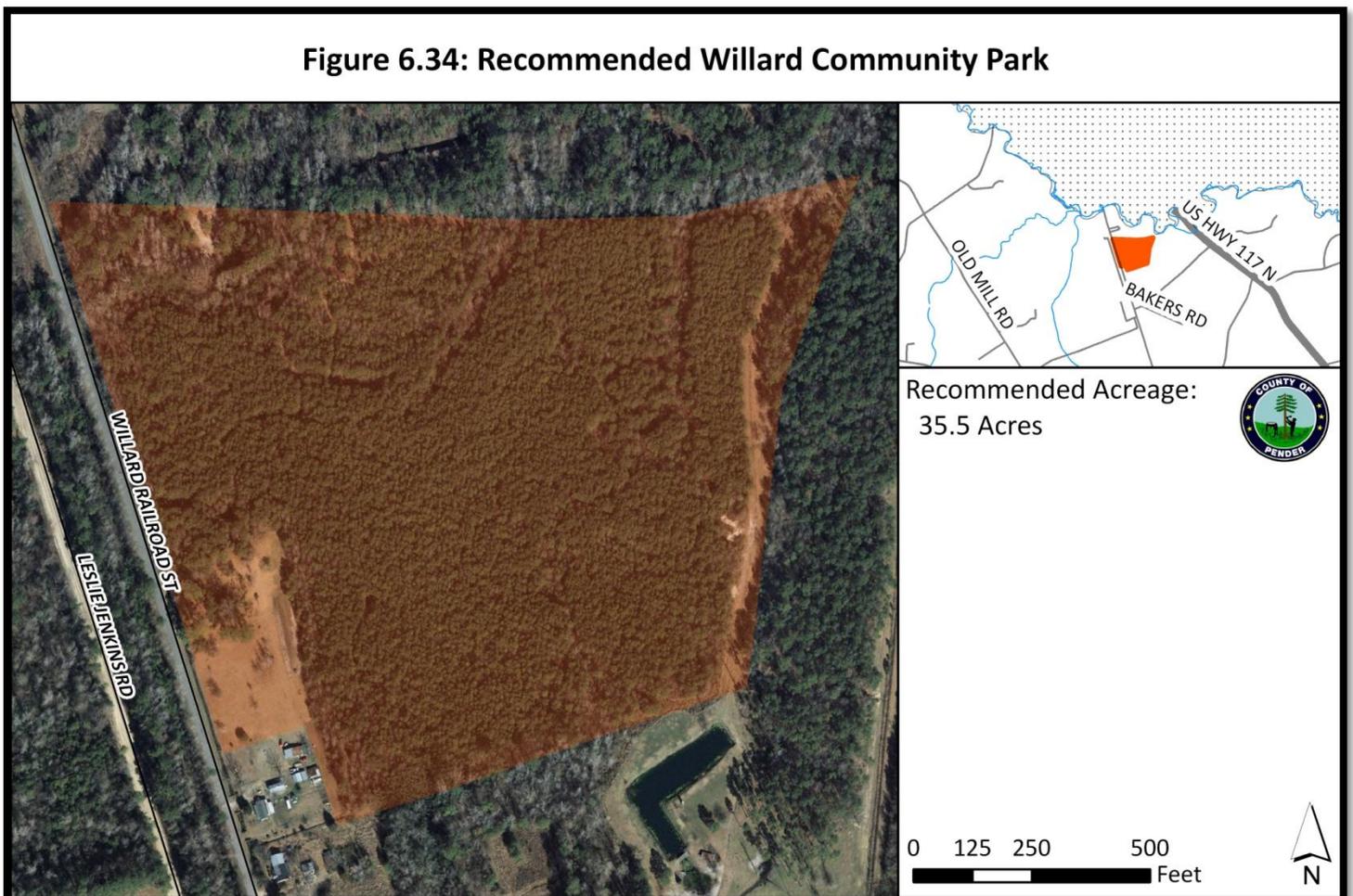
Located on Willard Railroad Street, the Pender County-owned parcel identified as PIN 3305-41-7624-000 is a 35.49 acre parcel recommended for the development of the Willard Community Park. This parcel was originally purchased under the Duplin County 2000 HMGP/CHAF Project, which used FEMA monies to purchase flood-prone parcels. The subject parcel was subsequently transferred from Duplin to Pender County, and has been under Pender County ownership since July 2003.

Similar to Long Creek Community Park as detailed earlier in this section, the parcel recommended for the development of Willard Community Park is limited by restrictive covenants as recorded at the Pender County Register of Deeds Map Book 1749, Page 029.

The Willard Community Park would provide recreational opportunities to the Willard and Watha communities, as well as the Town of Wallace and other southern Duplin County residents. As such, a partnership for park development may be feasible between the two counties and the Town of Wallace.

Suitable amenities for the Willard Community Park include youth and adult softball/baseball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, walking and nature trails, playground equipment, picnic areas and shelters, and public restrooms. This park should be developed in conjunction with the recommended Rockfish Creek Water Access described later in this section. While this parcel does not have frontage on Rockfish Creek, negotiations should be pursued with adjacent property owners to gain usage rights to allow for access to Rockfish Creek.

**Figure 6.34: Recommended Willard Community Park**

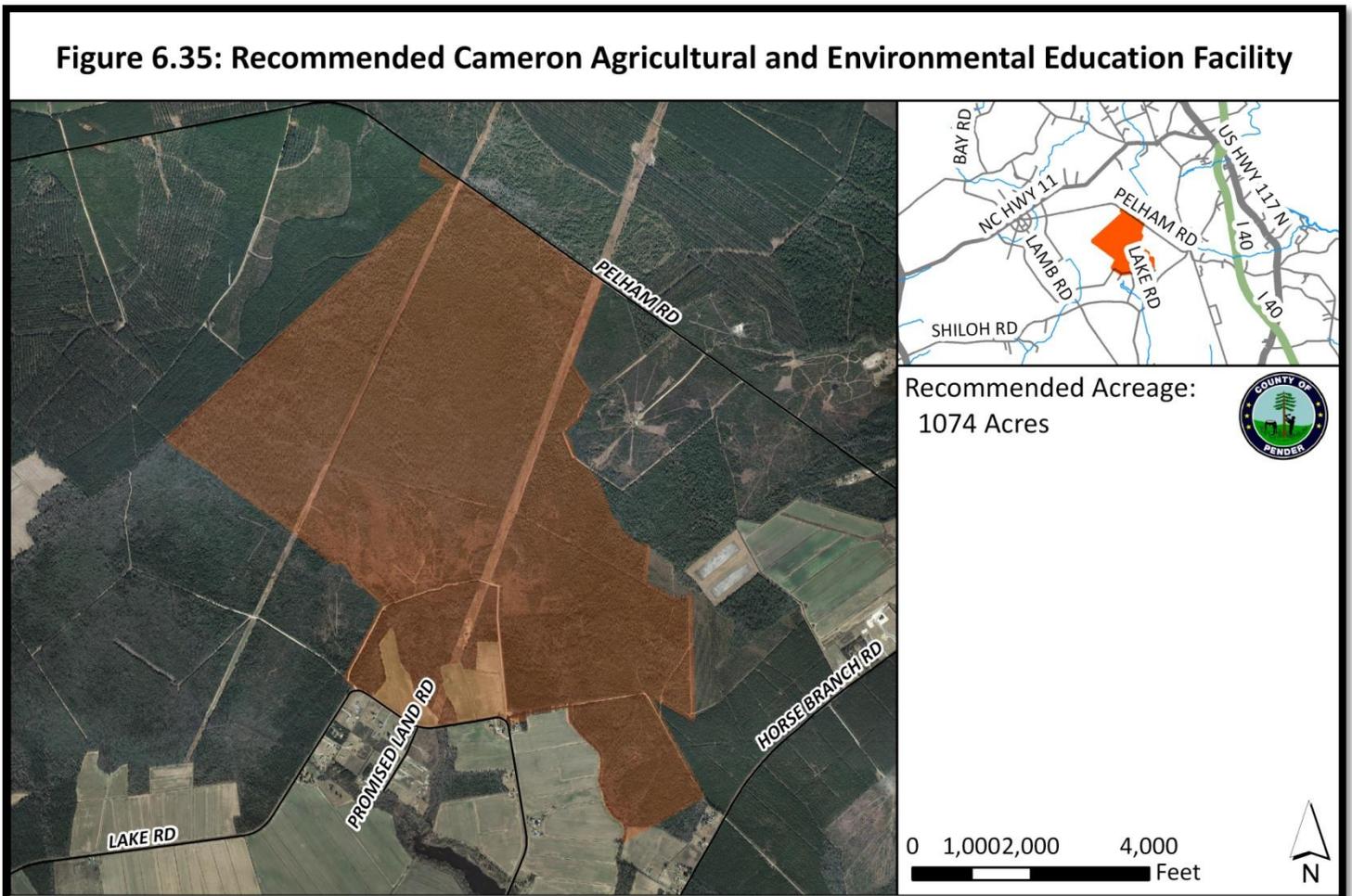


## Recommended New County-Partnered Facilities

### *Cameron Agriculture and Environmental Education Facility*

The Bruce Barclay Cameron Foundation currently owns several tracts totaling approximately 1074 acres west of Watha that may be suitable for multipurpose conservation and recreational uses. Planning Staff has received a willing seller letter from the property owner. The parcels are undeveloped at this time, although significant acreage of the southern parcel is currently in agricultural use. This site is suitable for a partnership with NC State University, the NC Division of Forest Resources, the NC Cooperative Extension, the US Department of Agriculture, and similar agencies to develop experimental forestry projects. Currently, there are three experimental forests in the state, which serve to represent a specific ecosystem for conducting experiments on stand management and regeneration, restoration of wildlife and plant populations, watershed management, and the effects of pollution, climate change, and timber harvest. An experimental forest at this site may also host educational opportunities and recreational activities, such as hiking trails, camping, hunting, and educational tours and programs, similar to the other experimental forests in the state. The southern parcel may be appropriate for an agriculture experimentation station and community garden. Turnbull Creek Educational State Forest is a model that could be applied to the Cameron Facility.

The development of the recommended Cameron Agriculture and Environmental Education Facility would serve many benefits to the residents of Pender County. The surrounding communities of Watha, Willard, and Penderlea currently lack significant recreational opportunities, and the deficiency in parks and recreation opportunities can be correlated to problems for residents, including health and wellness deficiencies, lower levels of educational attainment, and other poverty related issues contributing to a lower quality of life. The development of this recommended project will also catalyze tourism, educational and economic development opportunities in the area, additionally contributing to a betterment of the quality of life for area residents.



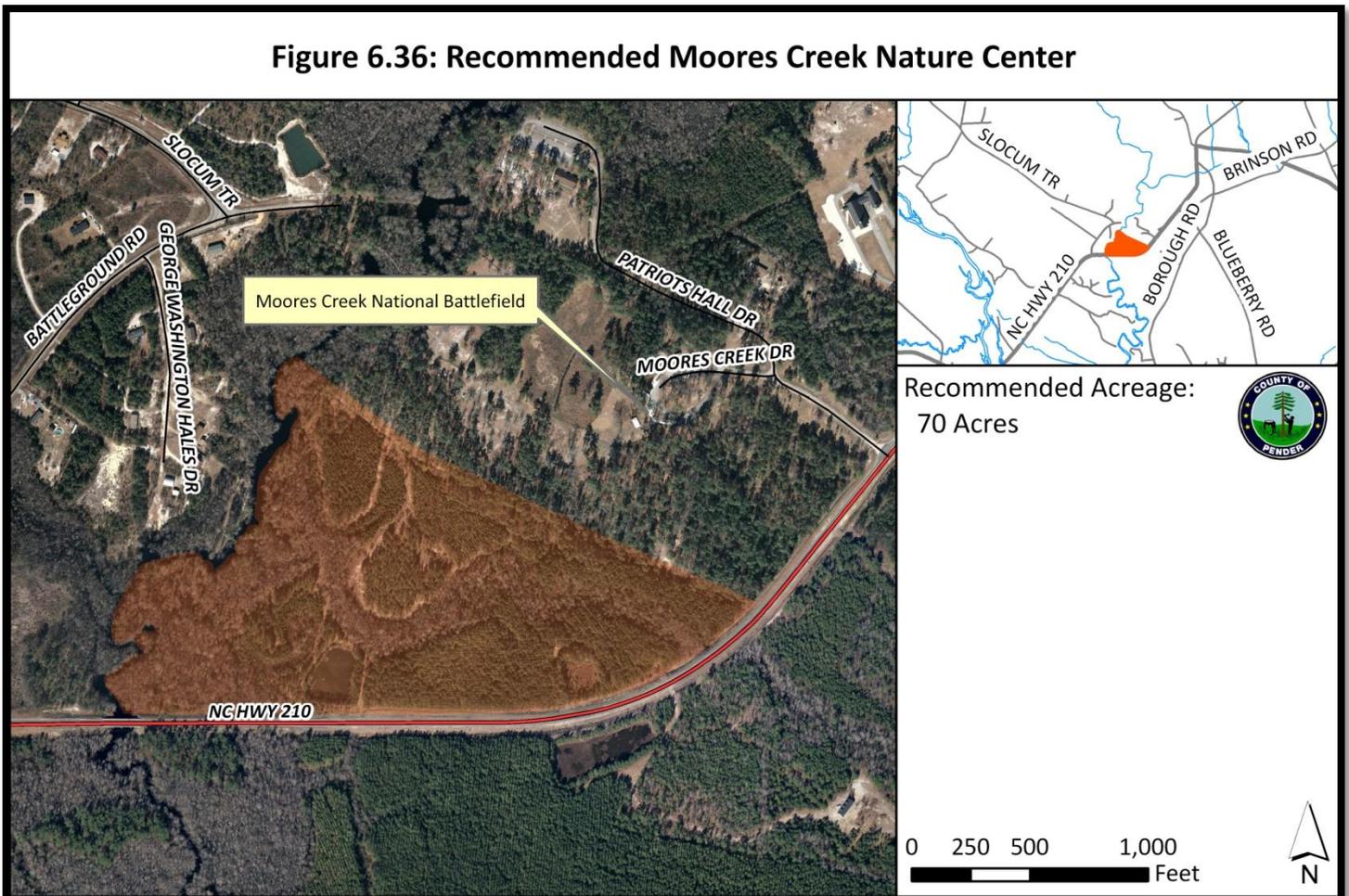
### Moore's Creek Nature Center

In December 2009, Planning Staff met with several interested parties including Pender County Board of Education Staff, Pender County Soil and Water Conservation District Staff, Moore's Creek National Battlefield Staff, and interested citizens to discuss the possibility of developing an ecological-based nature and education center adjacent to Moore's Creek National Battlefield. Since the initial meeting, a non-profit organization has been formed called the Moore's Creek Conservation Alliance to assist with pursuing the development of the Moore's Creek Nature Center.

The Moore's Creek Nature Center would provide a facility for nature-based education and recreation, including use by local schools and universities, the Moore's Creek National Battlefield, Pender County Parks and Recreation, and other organizations for field trips and educational programs. Additionally, the site would host other recreational amenities, potentially including a canoe and kayak launch to Moore's Creek, public fishing areas, picnic areas, a ropes course, and nature/walking trails. This site would be the location of the recommended Moore's Creek Water Access as overviewed later in this section. The recommended site for the Moore's Creek Nature Center is on a portion of a privately-owned parcel identified as Pender County PIN 2265-77-4124-0000. The site consists of approximately 70 acres, situated next to the National Battlefield, and has frontage along both Moore's Creek and NC Highway 210. The site has been used for light timbering purposes, but currently features mature growth and other natural features including a small pond. In the legislation that created Moore's Creek National Battlefield it stipulates that the Battlefield is authorized up to 100 acres, of which currently 76 acres are currently utilized. As such, the additional authorized acreage may be used to acquire a portion of the recommended site and possibly leveraged for grant funding. A willing seller letter has been obtained by Planning Staff from the owner of the subject parcel.

Development and management of this facility would ideally be through a partnership between Pender County Parks and Recreation, Pender County Board of Education, Pender County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Moore's Creek National Battlefield. Like other partnerships, a clear understanding of each entity's role should be understood and clarified in a Memorandum of Agreement or similar document.

**Figure 6.36: Recommended Moore's Creek Nature Center**

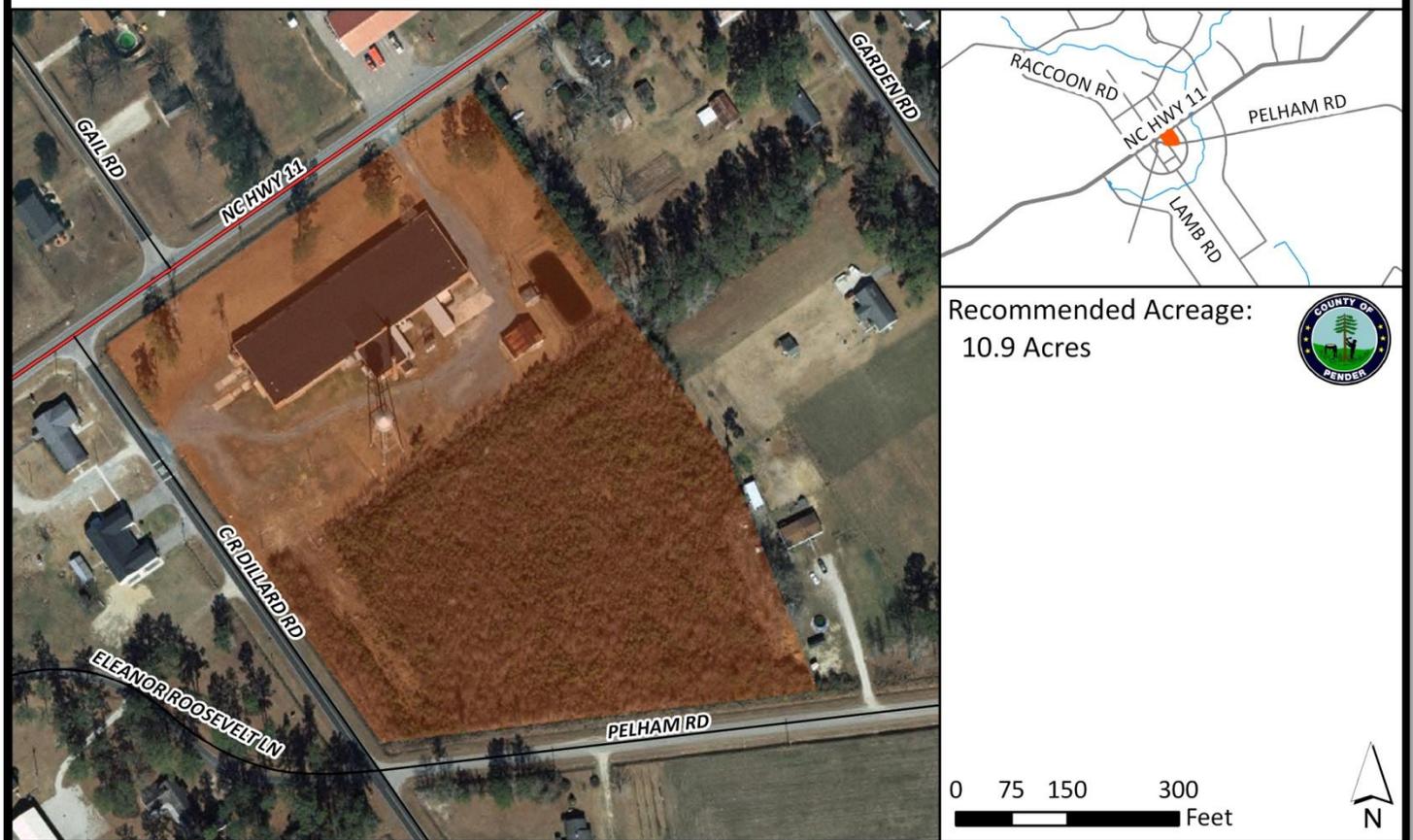


### *Penderlea Community Center*

Penderlea Homestead Farms was the first of 152 homestead projects developed under President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal in 1934, which was created to help bankrupt and unemployed farmers with a means of making a living during the Great Depression. In 1938, Penderlea was selected as one of only five sites in the country to be financed by the Farm Security Administration for the development of a hosiery mill. Since then, the hosiery mill building in Penderlea has changed ownership several times and remained operational until March 2005, when Holt Hosiery decided to shut the plant down, and it has been vacant ever since.

The 33,477 sq. ft. building and the 10.9 acre tract it occupies is a suitable location for a community center and other ventures. This unique building features 1,177 sq. ft. of office space and 32,300 sq. ft. of open workspace that could be transformed and utilized for a variety of uses, including a parks and recreation district office, a Sheriff's department substation, a fire department substation, classrooms, a library, indoor gymnasium, or for leasing to other organizations and businesses. The facility could also feature outdoor recreational amenities such as playground equipment, walking trails, picnic areas, and storage for parks and recreation equipment and staff and customer parking.

**Figure 6.37: Recommended Penderlea Community Center**



### ***Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area***

During the 2006 North Carolina General Assembly, legislators authorized two new areas into the state parks system, including the Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area in Pender and Onslow Counties. Within Pender County, twelve parcels totaling 1609.27 acres were purchased by the state from the Nature Conservancy for inclusion in the new state natural area.

According to information provided by the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation, Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area has much potential for scientific research, interpretation, and educational activities, but little potential for construction of recreational facilities. This is due to the wet characteristics and ecologically sensitive nature of the majority of the land. Additional land more suitable for facility development may be pursued in the future to enable additional recreational opportunities, specifically picnic shelters and other passive-recreation oriented facilities. The great biodiversity that exists in the Sandy Run Savannahs also provides a great opportunity for education for all ages, and could be utilized for school field trips, university studies, ecotourism, and other environment-based education and recreation.

There is great potential for a partnership between Pender County and the NC Division of Parks and Recreation for recreational development and management in the future at Sandy Run Savannahs State Natural Area, and this partnership was preliminarily discussed during the creation of this plan. Maple Hill residents were strongly supportive of a simple facility in their community that could support activities such as picnics, family reunions, and family-oriented activities. The recommended bicycle and walking trails would provide community residents areas to safely exercise, which would improve health conditions and lessen the prevalence of diseases and conditions including as heart disease, diabetes, and cancer. The Maple Hill community is currently underserved by parks and recreation, and a partnership between Pender County and the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation to develop and manage a facility in the Maple Hill area would fill this deficiency.

### **Recommended Greenways, Trails, and Other Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements**

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities offer communities a variety of benefits, including opportunities for recreation as well as an alternative to motor vehicle transportation by linking together communities, schools, and shopping centers. Pender County is unique in that there are three former rail corridors that transverse the county, two that have been abandoned and one that remains under ownership of the North Carolina Department of Transportation. These former rail corridors would provide unique and safe trails for bicycle and pedestrian use with minimal site work required. Other bicycle and pedestrian improvements and projects are recommended in this plan, including utilizing an existing power line easement for a greenway and improving the existing NC DOT bicycle routes. A comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan is recommended to further scope the recommended projects.

As development ensues along each recommended trail and greenway route, the trail corridor or a close feasible alternative should be reserved for future trail use, and the construction of the trail should occur with any new development project. Existing development along the trail corridors should be evaluated and retrofitted to allow an uninterrupted trail. Planning and funding assistance should also be pursued to enable the development of each recommended project.

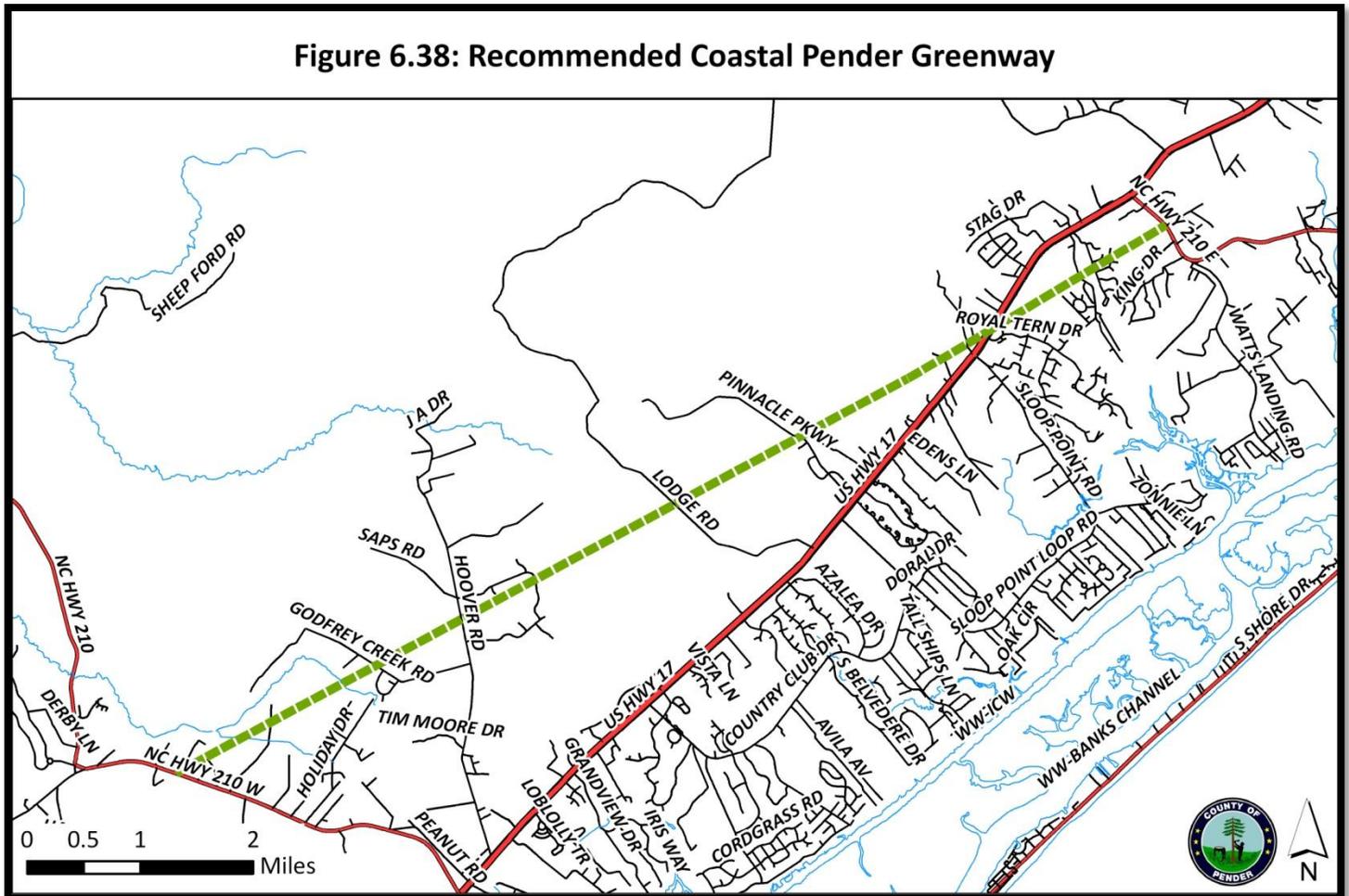
## Coastal Pender Greenway

As previously mentioned, the recommended Coastal Pender Greenway would serve as a valuable connection between the preferred alternative identified in the *Bicycle Facilities Study for the Blue Clay Corridor*, prepared in March 2008 by the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization. As identified in the study, the preferred alternative for Blue Clay Corridor bicycle facility will terminate on Holly Shelter Road, which turns into Island Creek Road when traveling east. The Coastal Pender Greenway would utilize the existing Progress Energy Company's easement from NC Highway 210 near Surf City to NC Highway 210 near Island Creek Drive, although an alternate route would need to be negotiated through or around Castle Bay Golf Course. At the southern end of the Coastal Pender Greenway, trail users would then utilize the existing NC DOT Bicycle Route 3 – Ports of Call, which follows Island Creek Drive to Holly Shelter Road in New Hanover County, and through to Blue Clay Road where users could link with the planned Blue Clay Corridor bicycle facilities.

Use of the Progress Energy Company's easement is limited to uses that do not interfere with maintaining power lines, facilities, and rights-of-way. Detailed planning of the Coastal Pender Greenway will require cooperation with Progress Energy Company staff to ensure the project conforms to Progress Energy Company's Transmission Line Right-of-Way Use Guidelines.

An alternative route may be pursued in conjunction with the Hampstead Highway 17 Bypass, which is an NC DOT project still in the planning stages. The Highway 17 Bypass, also known as NC DOT Transportation Improvement Project R-3300, will bypass the Hampstead area from Caison Drive north of Hampstead and connect to the Wilmington Bypass in New Hanover County. The development of a bicycle/pedestrian lane or trail may be feasible during the construction of the bypass.

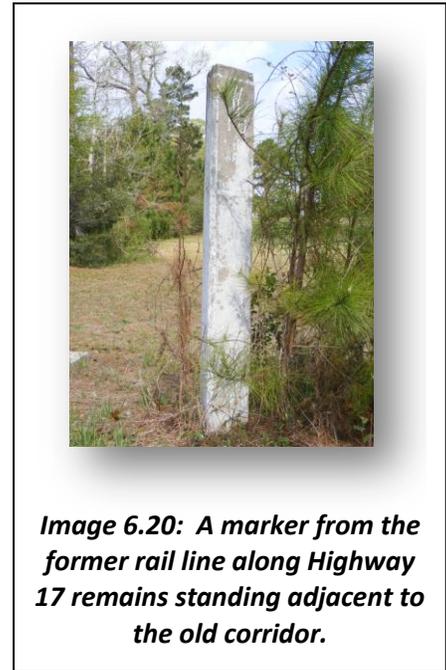
Figure 6.38: Recommended Coastal Pender Greenway



### Coastal Pender Rail-Trail

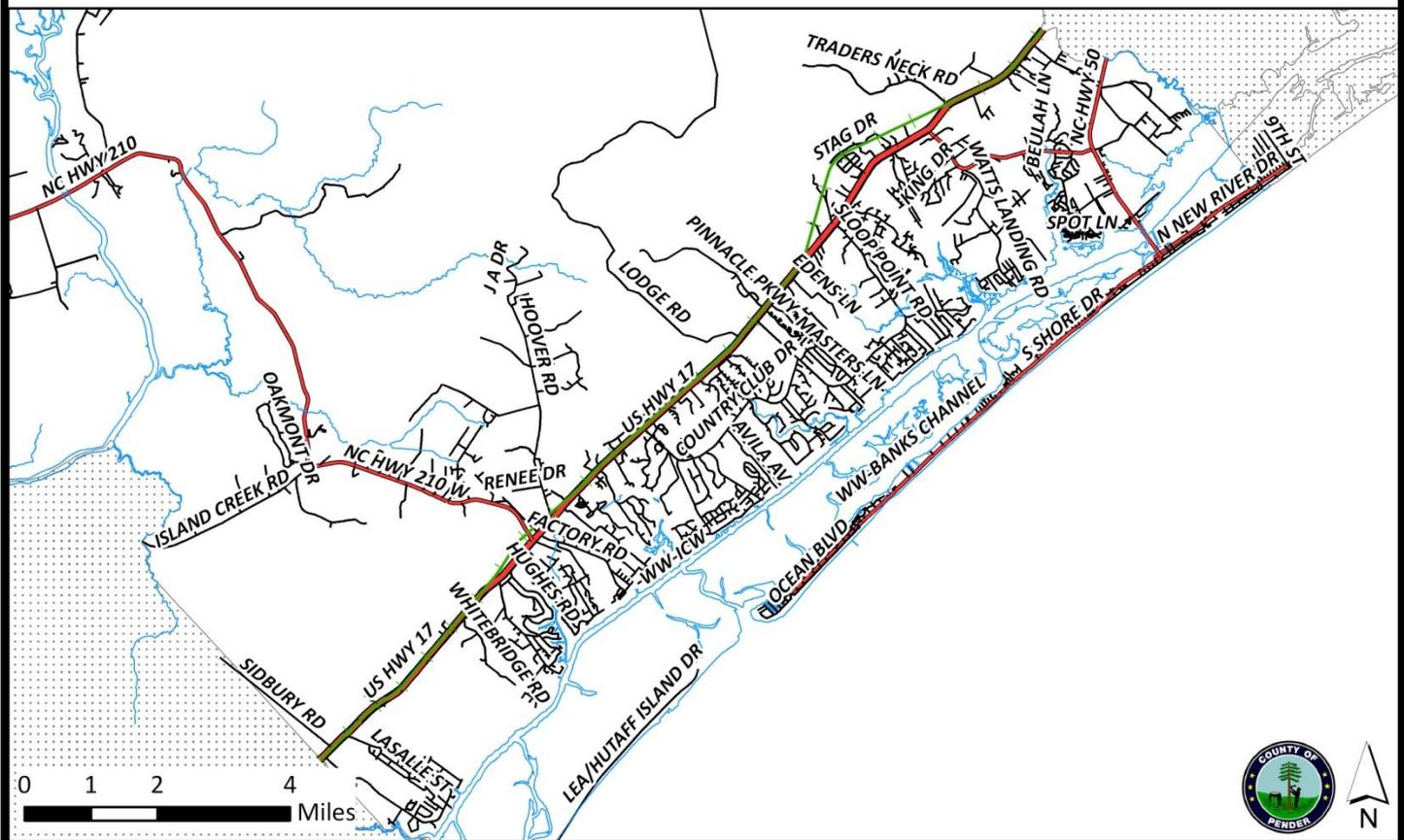
Beginning in the late 1890s, Wilmington once served as an important rail center served by five rail lines, four of them owned by the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (ACL), and three of them running through Pender County. Over time, mergers of rail and air lines took place and all of the ACL rail lines running to Wilmington were abandoned and the tracks were removed. Under NC state statutes, the ownership of these former rail corridors have reverted back to the adjacent property owners (with the exception of the former Wilmington to Weldon line running through central Pender County, which is now owned by NC DOT and reserved for future rail use), but the former ballasts mostly remain and would serve as ideal trail corridors.

One former ACL line ran 87 miles from Wilmington through Jacksonville to New Bern, and was opened in 1891 as the Wilmington, Onslow, and East Carolina Railroad. Most of the tracks and cross-ties were removed from this corridor in September and October 1985, and all of the trestles, signals, and highway crossings were gone by December 1986. During 2004 and 2005, US Highway 17 was improved along the Hampstead corridor, utilizing the former rail ballast in certain areas.



The Coastal Pender Rail-Trail would provide a much-needed pedestrian and bicycle route along the busy US Highway 17. This facility would link together residential areas, shopping, schools, libraries, churches, Hampstead Kiwanis Park, and Scotts Hill Community Park. Development along this facility should include a bicycle/pedestrian connection to adjacent properties utilizing the former rail corridor where possible, and subdivisions along this facility should include an easement reserving the use of the former rail corridor or another route where feasible.

**Figure 6.39: Recommended Coastal Pender Rail-Trail**



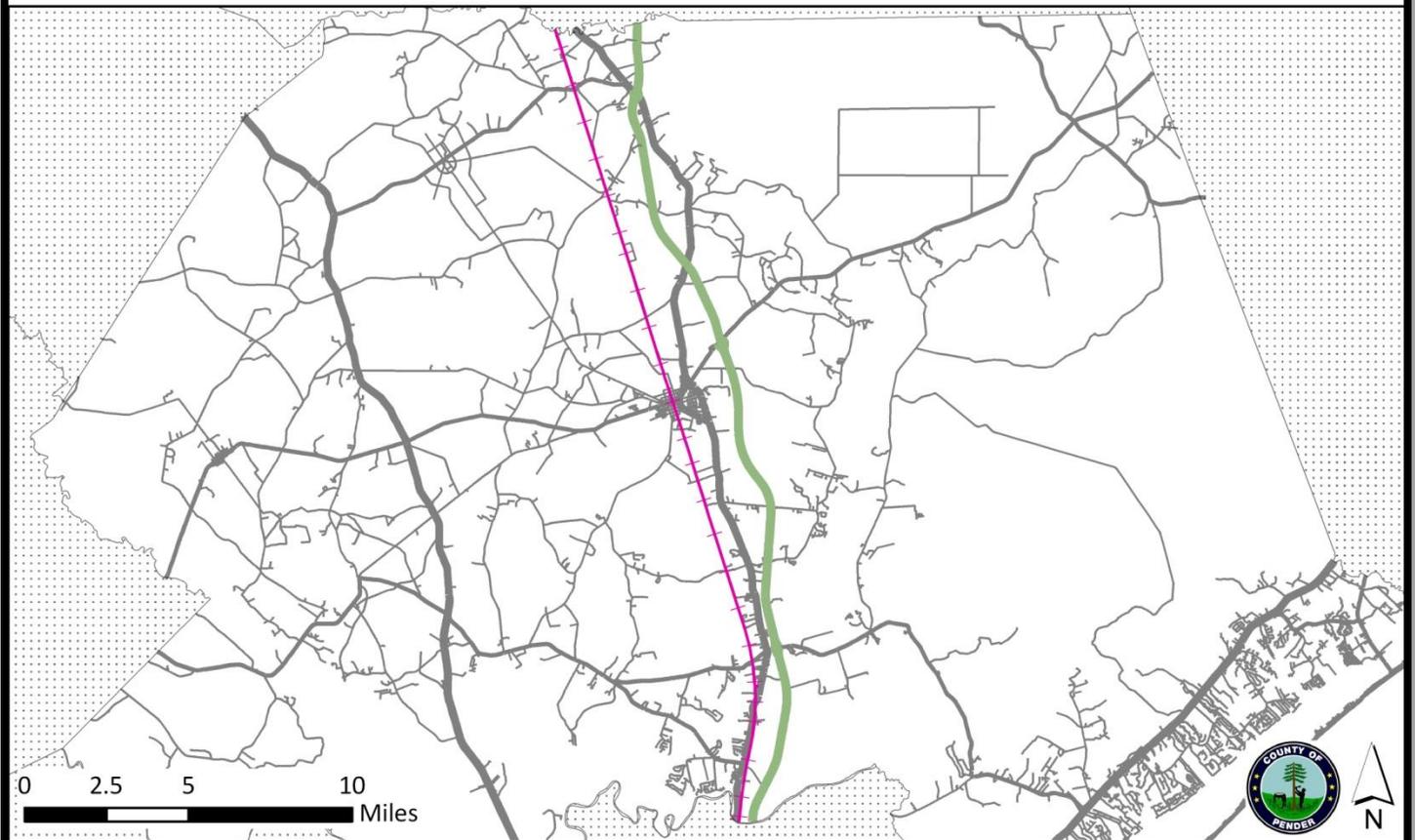
### Central Pender Rail-Trail

Although railbanked by the NC Department of Transportation, the former rail corridor that transverse the central region of Pender County should still be considered for use as a rail-trail if the corridor is not pursued for rail resurrection in the future. Pender County should pursue railbanking the corridor should NC DOT determine that they are not going to pursue the reestablishment of the rail, which is presently being considered and largely contingent on the development of the Southport port project.

The rail corridor, often referred to as the CSX rail line or the Castle Hayne – Wallace line, was identified for rail-trail use in both the 1993 Waterfront Access Plan and the 1998 Recreation and Open Space Plan. This trail would provide a 26-mile bicycle and pedestrian friendly route that would link many communities as well as existing and potential future parks and recreational facilities. The corridor transverse Rocky Point, Ashton, St. Helena, Burgaw, Watha, Willard, and Wallace; north of Wallace, the rail corridor remains active for transportation of freight including grain for animal feeding operations in the region. This rail-trail could also link together Millers Pond Park, Rocky Point Regional Park, Pender Memorial Park, the Cameron Agriculture and Environmental Education Facility, the Willard Outreach Organization, and the Willard Community Park, as well as various schools and businesses along the corridor.

Planning Staff should continue to stay abreast of NC DOT’s decision to reestablish the rail line or abandon the rail corridor and be prepared to take action to obtain corridor usage rights should rail service resurrection prove an infeasible option. If the rail corridor is utilized for rail service in the future, Staff should work with NC DOT and other interest parties to develop a rail-with-trail along the corridor; a rail-with-trail is a trail that runs parallel to the railroad corridor, often separated by a fence and buffer for safety precautions.

**Figure 6.40: Recommended Central Pender Rail-Trail**



### West Pender Rail-Trail

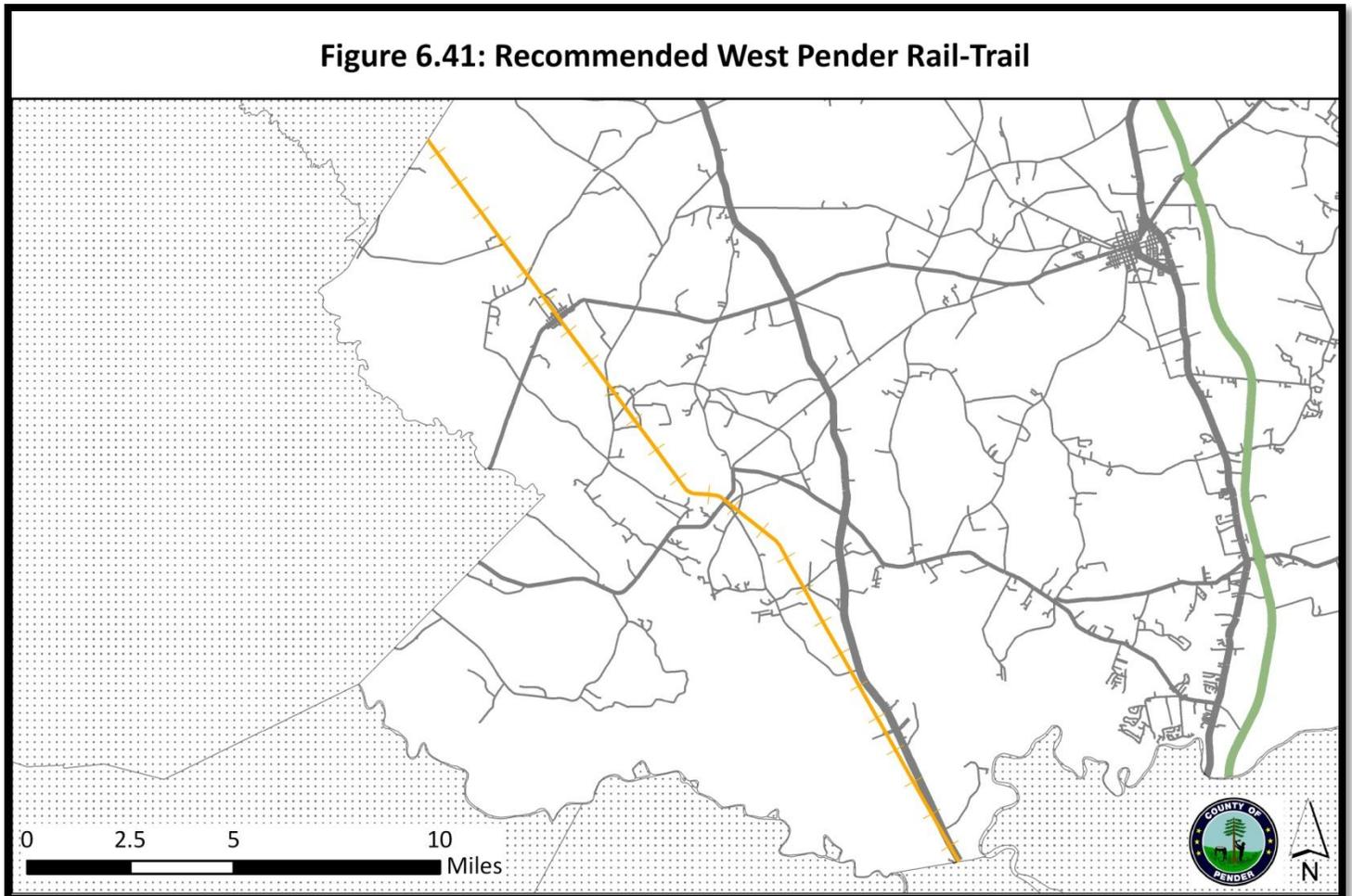
Another former ACL line ran from Wilmington to Mount Airy, with stations in Pender County at Richards, Currie, and Atkinson. Seaboard Coast Line (which formed after the merger of Atlantic Coast Line and Seaboard Air Line) abandoned the section from Roseboro to Wilmington in the mid-1970s, after which the property reverted back to adjacent land owners as prescribed under North Carolina General Statutes.

Since 2009, Planning Staff has been working with the National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the North Carolina Rail-Trails organization, the West Pender Rail-Trail Alliance, and others to plan for development and procurement of funding for development and maintenance for the rail-trail. The project has gained support by a multitude of agencies and organizations, including the Wilmington MPO and Cape Fear Council of Governments RPO. Planning Staff has also been working closely with Pender County Department of Public Utilities to ensure that the former rail corridor within the Pender Commerce Park is reserved for trail use, and advocating the development of the trail segment within the commerce park during park infrastructure development.

The first phase of the West Pender Rail-Trail would provide a trail for non-motorized use that would extend approximately 12 miles from Pender – New Hanover boundary to the Moores Creek National Battlefield in Currie. Future phases would extend northwest from the battlefield through Rooks and Atkinson, and beyond into Sampson County. Overall, the West Pender Rail-Trail would comprise a 22-mile segment of a 90-mile trail that would stretch from Wilmington to Fayetteville.

Like the Coastal Pender Rail-Trail, development along this facility should include a bicycle/pedestrian connection to adjacent properties utilizing the former rail corridor where possible, and subdivisions along this facility should include an easement reserving the use of the former rail corridor or another route where feasible.

**Figure 6.41: Recommended West Pender Rail-Trail**



## East Coast Greenway

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is envisioned by the East Coast Greenway Alliance as a 3000-mile traffic-free trail to connect cities and towns from the Canadian border at Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida. The ECG will provide a safe route for exercise, recreation, and transportation along publicly-owned, firm-surface trails. The project involves 15 states plus the District of Columbia, 25 major cities, and many smaller cities, towns, villages, and counties. To date, about 20% of the ECG is on traffic-free paths, including waterfront esplanades, park paths, abandoned railroad corridors, canal tow-paths, and highway corridors. The remainder of the route temporarily follows streets and roads to link these completed trail sections together. While the East Coast Greenway Alliance does not build or fund trails, it promotes the vision for connection local trails and provides strategic assistance for states, counties, and municipalities that develop and manage trails. As of January 2008, 99 individual trails have been designated as part of the East Coast Greenway.

In Pender County, the current ECG Spine Route alignment mimics the NC DOT Bicycle Route 5 along US Highway 421, Blueberry Road, NC Highway 210 West, and Morgan Road (See Figure 6.14 for NC DOT Bicycle Routes in Pender County).

It is recommended that Planning and Parks and Recreation Staff work closely with the East Coast Greenway Alliance to ensure that trail and greenway projects in Pender County are suitable alignments for the ECG, as this project will provide not only recreational and health benefits to county residents, but also tourism and economic development benefits to the county and region.



**Image 6.21: The East Coast Greenway is a project to create a 3000-mile trail from Maine to Florida, and will route directly through Pender County.**

**Image Courtesy of the East Coast Greenway Alliance**

**Other Recommended Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements**

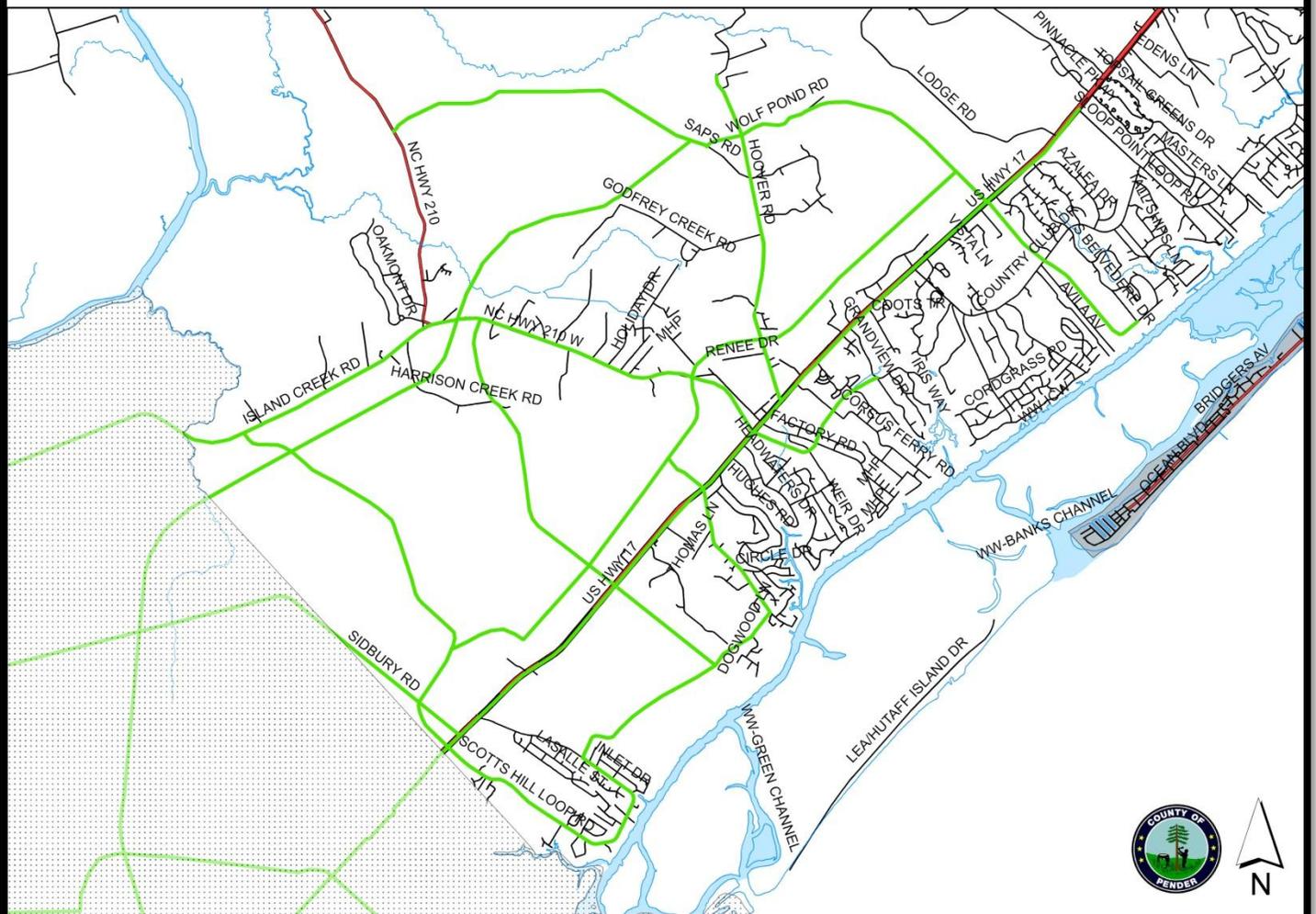
In order to create a safe and efficient network of bicycle and pedestrian trails and greenways, it is recommended that Pender County work with the NC Department of Transportation, the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Cape Fear Council of Governments Rural Planning Organization, as well as the surrounding counties and area municipalities to create a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan. This plan should address improvements to existing DOT bicycle routes, feasible future DOT bicycle routes, planning for Pender County’s segment of the East Coast Greenway, and incorporating existing, planned, and future parks and recreation facilities into future bicycle and pedestrian improvements. This plan should also incorporate the bicycle facilities recommended by the Wilmington MPO in the Coastal Pender Collector Street Plan and the Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan, which are depicted in Figure 6.42.



**Image 6.22: Island Creek Road serves as NC DOT Bicycle Route 3 and an important link between several planned bike and pedestrian improvements, but lacks adequate room for bicyclists and pedestrians.**

Between 1997 and 2004, there were 82 counts of pedestrian crash incidents and 32 counts of bicycle crash incidents in the county, with the majority of both types of incidents occurring in non-municipal areas. Improving existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, developing new facilities, and education and outreach to bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists may all contribute to reducing crash incidents and creating a safer environment for county residents.

**Figure 6.42: Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Recommended Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements**



## **Recommended Public Water Access Facilities**

Boating, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, and other water-dependent recreation were indicated by county residents during the public input period as activities that they currently participate in and wish to see more opportunities for. Pender County is fortunate to have a number of beautiful rivers, creeks, and coastal waters that can provide such opportunities to county residents, as well as visitors to the area. It is recommended that the county work independently and with the NC Wildlife Resources commission to create new facilities and opportunities for public enjoyment of the county's water resources.

### ***Black River Water Access at Still Bluff***

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) currently operates only two facilities at which the public may access the Black River, both of which are outside of Pender County. Hunt's Bluff is located off of Longview Road in Bladen County, and provides parking for 15 vehicles. Amenities are limited to parking and a paved boat ramp; no access for canoe or kayaks, handicap access, or restrooms are featured at this facility. Further upriver in Sampson County, the Ivanhoe boat access area provides an unpaved boat ramp into shallow water, parking for 10 vehicles, but no access for canoes/kayaks or disabled persons or restroom facilities.

It is recommended that Pender County work with WRC to develop a regional public water access area at the junction of the Black River and NC Highway 210 near Still Bluff in conjunction with the Still Bluff Community Park. This site should feature a paved boat access facility, canoe and kayak launch, and handicapped boater access. Shared, ADA-accessible restrooms and parking would serve the park and boat access facility. Public fishing areas should also be considered at this facility such as a boardwalk or stabilized shore areas to allow for residents to fish from the shore.

A water access facility in this vicinity was identified as a recommended project in the *1993 Pender County Waterfront Access Plan* and the *1998 Pender County Recreation and Open Space Plan*. As described in the Recreation and Open Space Plan, the land on the western side of the river at this vicinity appears more suitable for recreation and boating access development. The parcel on the eastern side of the Black River at the NC Highway 210 bridge crossing is currently owned by the Nature Conservancy, and comprises 64 acres of the 3016-acre Black River Preserve. As such, a boating access area in this location would provide residents access to a section of the Black River that remains virtually undisturbed, making it suitable for nature-watching, educational purposes, and recreational enjoyment.

### ***Long Creek Water Access***

Water access to Long Creek was suggested in the *1993 Pender County Waterfront Access Plan*, and it is further suggested that the County continue to pursue this opportunity. This public water access should be limited to small boats such as canoes and kayaks. This facility could be developed in conjunction with the Long Creek Community Park, which is a recommended park on a county-owned parcel that features an existing boardwalk to access Long Creek. Alternatively, a public water access point to Long Creek could be developed in conjunction with NC DOT's planned project to replace the NC Highway 210 bridge over Long Creek; Planning Staff suggested to NC DOT that this recreational facility be developed in conjunction with the bridge replacement project. Like the other recommended water accesses, this recommended project should be further detailed in a blueway master plan for Pender County.

### ***Moore's Creek Water Access***

A public access facility to Moore's Creek was also identified as a recommended project in the *1993 Pender County Waterfront Access Plan*. It is recommended that in conjunction with the Moore's Creek Nature Center, the county also develop a non-motorized boat (canoe and kayak) access facility to Moore's Creek. This facility would provide county residents and visitors access to the pristine and historic Moore's Creek that could be used for recreation, fishing, nature-watching, and educational purposes. This concept is supported by both staff at the Moore's Creek National Battlefield and the members of Moore's Creek Conservation Alliance, and it is recommended that a partnership be pursued to develop and manage this facility in conjunction with the Moore's Creek Nature Center.

### ***Rockfish Creek Water Access***

Public access to Rockfish Creek near the Pender – Duplin County border was also recommended in both the *1993 Waterfront Access Plan* and the *1998 Recreation and Open Space Plan*, and it is recommended that this facility be developed in conjunction with the Willard Community Park. Willard Community Park is recommended for development

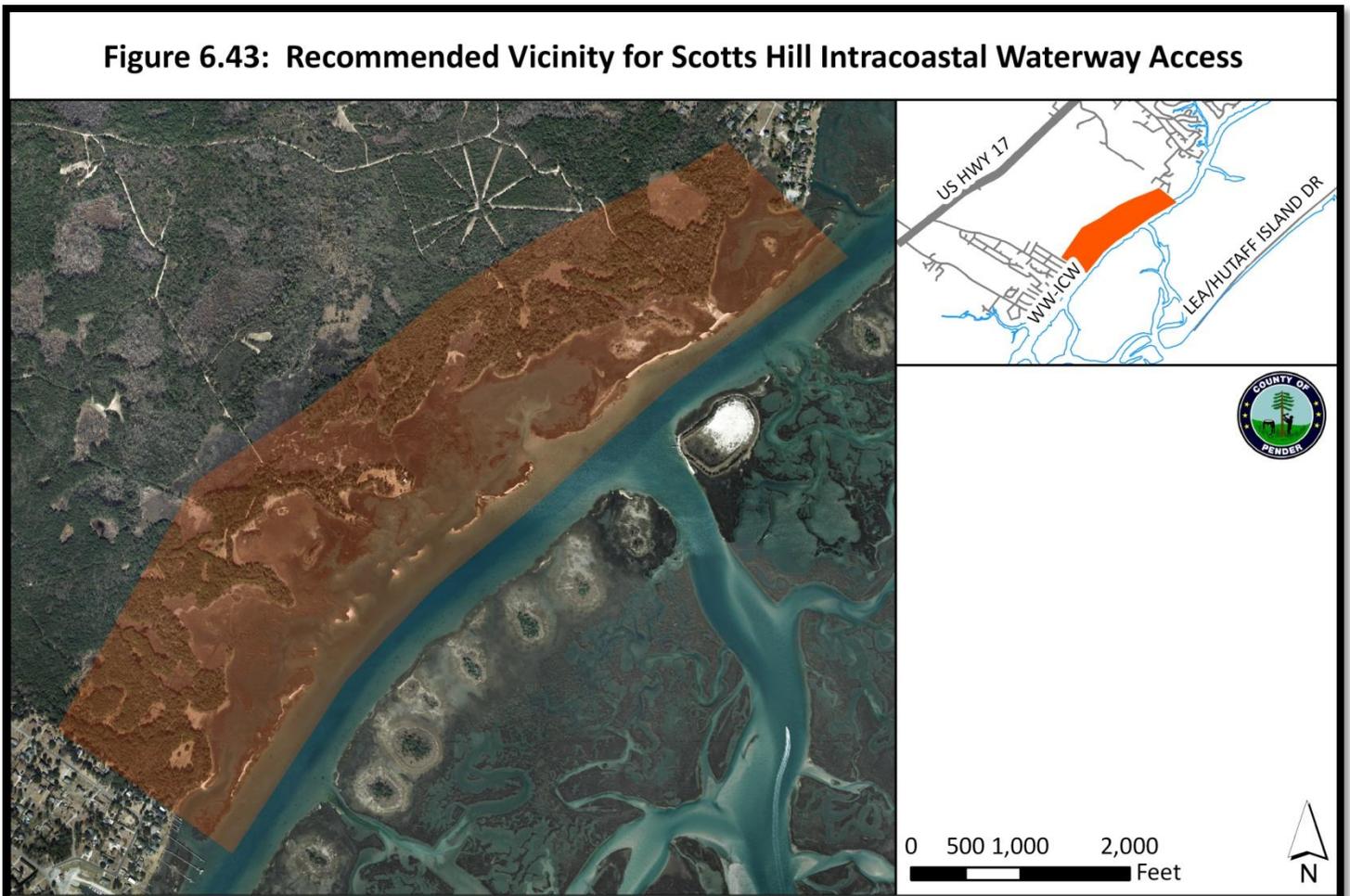
on a 35.49 county-owned parcel that was acquired via a 2000 FEMA program that used federal money to purchase flood-prone parcels from property owners. The parcel recommended for Willard Community Park does not have riparian access to Rockfish Creek, but the county should pursue negotiations with adjacent property owners so that water access from the recommended Willard Community Park parcel is obtained.

The Rockfish Creek Water Access at Willard Community Park would provide non-motorized boat (canoe and kayak) access to Rockfish Creek for water-dependent recreation. Parking for this facility would be shared with the park, as well as ADA-compliant restroom facilities. As mentioned in the recommendation for Willard Community Park, the proximity of the recommended facility may deem appropriate a partnership with Duplin County and the Town of Wallace to develop and manage the facility.

### *Scotts Hill Intracoastal Waterway Access*

During the preparation of this plan, Pender County received a \$2.8 million Waterfront Access and Marine Industry Fund grant to assist with the development of a new, WRC-owned and managed public water access facility in the Hampstead Area. North Carolina's Waterfront Access and Marine Industry (WAMI) Fund was created by the 2007 General Assembly to acquire waterfront properties or develop facilities for the purpose of providing, improving, and/or developing public and commercial waterfront access. This facility will provide the only other access to the Intracoastal Waterway in Pender County besides the facility in Surf City on Topsail Island. It is recommended that the county work with WRC to pursue development of another facility in the Scotts Hill area, which, by the time it is developed, will alleviate the overuse of the existing facilities in Pender County, as well as the access area in Wrightsville Beach. The area identified in Figure 6.43 is ideal for the Scotts Hill facility, as it will provide boating access to the Intracoastal Waterway and also to the Atlantic Ocean via Rich Inlet. A WRC/county-run public dock may also be a suitable amenity, which could provide fee-based pump-out and transient docking slips for boaters traveling up and down the east coast. As North Carolina's coastal areas continue to become more popular places to live and visit, it is imperative that adequate water access areas such as the Scotts Hill Intracoastal Waterway Access be planned and developed to accommodate future needs.

**Figure 6.43: Recommended Vicinity for Scotts Hill Intracoastal Waterway Access**



## Facility Recommendations Summary

The facilities recommended in this plan were derived based on a variety of information. The recommendations were created to plan for new facilities that will provide a variety of recreational opportunities to meet a broad spectrum of users in many areas of the county. The recommended facilities include a total of three park expansions, one mini-park, five neighborhood parks, seven community parks, one regional park, four new county-partnered facilities, a variety of bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and new public water access areas to the Intracoastal Waterway, the Black River, Moores Creek, and Rockfish Creek. Each of these new facilities will help to alleviate the current deficits that exist within the county's parks system, and provide an improved quality of life to the residents and visitors of Pender County.

While some facility recommendations include suitable amenities based on the feedback received through the public input surveys and meetings, it is recommended that more public input be conducted during the planning phases for each new facility. The public input process undertaken during this plan has provided a basis for developing the facility recommendations, and will also serve to provide justification for grants and other funding requests; however, the design of each new facility should be based strongly off of the input received during public project planning and scoping meetings.

On March 15, 2010, the Pender County Board of Commissioners adopted the *2010-2012 Priority Implementation Plan* which sets forth the priorities and strategies for the county for the next two years, and the action necessary to achieve the objectives. In regards to the facilities recommended in this plan, the Priority Implementation Plan states:

*The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will use citizen surveys and other public input methods to develop a ranking or priority system for the projects identified in the 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan in a manner to ensure equitable development of parks and recreational facilities throughout the county, to be accomplished no later than December 31, 2010.*

As previously mentioned, the recommendations for facility expansion and new facilities in this section are in not in order of project priority. The prioritization of projects will be a result of the ranking and prioritization system developed by Staff and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, which will subsequently be adopted as an amendment or update to this plan. Additionally, the project priorities should be revisited at least annually, as funding, user need and demand, and other conditions will have an effect on the prioritization of the recommended projects.

In addition to developing a prioritization system to rank the recommended projects, the Priority Implementation Plan also states that a scoping plan for each recommended project will be created:

*For each project identified in the plan, the Advisory Board will develop an implementation plan which will include but not be limited to a site plan, ownership, operational and programming opportunities, estimated budget, potential community or other partners, and potential funding/financing resources. This will be accomplished no later than June 30, 2011. This plan will serve as a basis securing resources and grant funds, and partnership development as opportunities for implementation of a project come about.*

As such, the implementation plans for each recommended facility will be created by Staff and should be taken into consideration in future project prioritization.

In summary, the facilities included in this section are non-prioritized recommendations for parks and recreation facility development in Pender County. The recommended facilities will serve to fill deficiencies and service gaps that currently exist in the county's parks system, provide parks and recreation facilities in virtually all areas of the county and to a wide user group, and provide the framework for a functional parks system that is needed to accommodate the forecasted population growth for Pender County.

# Budget Analysis and Recommendations

## Current Budget Analysis

### Overall Budget

The overall budget for Pender County Parks and Recreation has risen gradually since the 2007-2008 fiscal year. Table 7.1 below shows the actual budgets from fiscal years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, as well as the proposed budget for the 2009-2010 fiscal year, all of which include funding allocations for operations, maintenance, and capital development. The 16% increase in the appropriated budget from '07-'08 to '08-'09 fiscal years can be attributed to significant capital improvement projects undertaken during the 2007-2008 fiscal year, as well as an increase in the allocation for salaries for the department due to a county-wide pay study that occurred during that year. The appropriated budget for 2009-2010 increased nearly 5% over the prior year's actual operating budget.

'07-'08 Actual	'08-'09 Actual	% Change '07-'08 to '08-'09	'09-'10 Proposed	% Change '08-'09 to '09-'10
\$268,647	\$312,355	16.27%	\$327,668	4.90%
<i>Source: Pender County Finance Department</i>				

### Budget Comparisons

Analyzing the funding committed to a community's parks and recreation department serves as a valuable method to observe how a community values its parks and recreation services. For the purposes of this section, several comparison communities were also observed to compare how the funding contributed to Pender County parks and recreation stacks up against counties and municipalities in North Carolina of similar population size, as well as the counties surrounding Pender County. These communities, as well as statewide averages, are overviewed in more detail below.

### North Carolina Statewide Comparison Data

Each year, the Recreation Resources Services at North Carolina State University along with North Carolina State Parks publishes the *North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study* (MCPRSS). The study provides a comparison of North Carolina's county and municipal parks and recreation departments, with a study focus on different areas each year. The study classifies each community based on population estimates calculated by the North Carolina State Treasurer's Office. Prior to 2010 and for the purposes of budget data comparison in this section, Pender County falls into "Class C," or a department that serves a population between 25,000 and 49,999 residents. However, in 2010 Pender County's population will increase to over 50,000, and the county will be classified as a "Class B" county.

Counties	\$1,995,296
Municipalities	\$2,935,311
Class C Counties	\$1,470,163
Class C Municipalities	\$4,006,235
Pender County	\$265,072
<i>Source: MCPRSS (FY 2008-2009), Executive Report</i>	

Table 7.2 overviews the average operation and capital expenditures for parks and recreation departments across the state as well as for Pender County. During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the counties in North Carolina spent an average of nearly \$2 million in parks and recreation operating and capital expenditures, while municipalities across the state averaged spending nearly \$3 million. Class C counties in North Carolina spent less than the statewide county expenditure average, while Class C municipalities averaged nearly \$1 million more than the state average for municipality expenditures on parks and recreation. Pender County reported spending \$265,072 during this fiscal year, including \$95,019 on salaries, \$108,451 on all

other direct spending, \$59,808 on construction, and \$1,794 on land, equipment, and existing structures. Pender County's reported operation and capital expenditures for 2006-2007 were significantly less than the average for Class C counties and Class C municipalities, as well as the averages of all counties and municipalities in North Carolina.

An additional method to gauge how Pender County compares in overall spending is to review per capita spending. Table 7.3 displays the actual total funding for the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 fiscal years, as well as the proposed funding for FY 2009-2010. By dividing the total department spending by the county's population, we can observe the dollars spent on parks and recreation by the county per resident. According to the M CPRSS (FY2008-09), the per capita spending statewide for FY 2007-2008 was \$64.41, or \$59.06 higher than the per capita spending in Pender County. The statewide average of \$64.41 was calculated by dividing the total statewide spending by the state population. Comparing the per capita spending on parks and recreation in Pender County to the statewide average, it is clear that the County is not devoting the same level of resources to parks and recreation as other departments in the state. The state average per capita spending for is over 12 times the Pender County per capita spending for FY 2007-08. There is clearly room for improvement in this area, and such an improvement would result from an overall increase in the amount allocated to parks and recreation from the general fund.

Budget Year	Total Funding*	Per Capita
09-10	\$327,668**	\$6.12**
08-09	\$312,355	\$6.06
07-08	\$268,647	\$5.34

*Source: Pender County Finance Department and North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management*

*\*These figures include revenue generated by the department  
\*\*Proposed*

Budget Year	Total Operating	Revenue	% Recovery
09-10	\$299,668*	\$28,000*	9.34%*
08-09	287,488	24,867	8.65%
07-08	234,035	34,612	14.79%
3-Year Average	273,730	29,160	10.93%
FY 2007-08 Statewide Average			13%

*Source: Pender County Finance Department and M CPRSS (FY 2008-2009), Executive Report*

*\*Proposed*

A method to evaluate the department's overall operating cost burden is to evaluate the revenue generated by the department by user fees, and how the revenue generation compares to the total operating budget. Table 7.4 shows the actual operating budgets for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 fiscal years, as well as the proposed 2009-10 fiscal year operating budget. Additionally, Table 7.4 displays the revenue generated during these fiscal years, with a projected revenue generation for FY 2009-10 of \$28,000. The percent recovery is calculated by dividing the revenue generated by the total operating budget for each year.

Pender County remains below the statewide average for cost recovery, as highlighted in Table 7.4. Lower cost recovery percentages directly correlate with increased operating costs for the department, and this trend can be attributed to a lack of revenue generating programs and facilities in the county. The operating costs for the department have increased, but the revenue generated from fees and charges has not increased, partially attributed to a decrease in revenue generating programs available. When evaluating the budgets obtained from the Pender County Finance Department, there was no increase in projected revenues for the department for each fiscal year available; the original appropriation for each fiscal year for revenue generation was \$28,000. Focus should be given to increasing the amount of revenue generated by the department each year, and the addition of new fee-based programs and facilities should lead to an improvement in cost recovery for the department. The department should concentrate on evaluating existing pricing policies and develop a cost recovery strategy to bring the department's percentage of cost recovery up to the state average and beyond. According to Dr. John Crompton of Texas A & M University, the national average for cost recovery of parks and recreation departments is approximately 34%. Increasing the percentage of cost recovered by the department through user fees and charges will ultimately lead to an increased economic sustainability for the department.

### **Comparison Community Departments**

In an effort to observe how Pender County's parks and recreation funding compares to other counties and municipalities, data was gathered on funding for other Class C counties and municipalities, as well as the seven counties that surround Pender County. Table 7.5 below compares the total funding for Pender County with three counties and two municipalities in North Carolina with similar population sizes for the fiscal years 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007. Table 7.5 displays the total budget, population estimate at the beginning of each fiscal year, and the per capita

spending for each community. By comparing this data, we can observe that Pender County's reported spending is significantly less than communities of similar population sizes. Per capita spending is calculated by dividing the budget amount by the population estimate. Pender County's parks and recreation spending per resident has been very low compared to each comparison community, as well as the averages of the selected comparison communities.

**Table 7.5: Comparison "Class C" Community Departments' Total Funding**

Community	2006-2007			2005-2006			2004-2005			
	2006-2007 Budget	Pop.	Per Capita	2005-2006 Budget	Pop.	Per Capita	2004-2005 Budget	Pop.	Per Capita	
Burlington	\$5,498,932	47,692	\$115.30	\$5,339,318	47,295	\$112.89	\$5,273,858	47,295	\$111.51	
Wilson	\$4,478,801	48,562	\$92.23	\$4,324,914	47,911	\$90.27	\$4,891,596	47,815*	\$102.30	
Henderson-Vance	\$2,121,990	43,920	\$48.31	\$1,630,853	43,624	\$37.38	\$1,236,537	43,624	\$28.35	
Watuga County	\$827,518	43,410	\$19.06	\$818,292	42,934	\$19.06	\$758,113	42,934	\$17.66	
Hoke County	\$569,372	42,202	\$13.49	\$429,406	40,696	\$10.55	\$281,868	39,709*	\$7.10	
McDowell County	\$345,679	43,410	\$7.96	\$522,785	43,175	\$12.11	\$932,475	43,175	\$21.60	
Average Spending Per Capita			\$49.39				\$47.04			
Pender County	\$265,072	48,724	\$5.44	\$380,097	46,538	\$8.17	\$442,263	45,823*	\$9.65	
<i>Source: M CPRSS (FY 2008-09), Executive Report</i>				<i>Source: M CPRSS (FY 2007-08), Executive Report</i>			<i>Source: M CPRSS (FY 2006-07), Executive Report</i>			
<i>*Population Data from US Census Bureau</i>										

To ascertain how Pender County's parks and recreation spending compares to other counties in the area, Table 7.6 displays similar data as Table 7.5 above, but compares the seven counties that surround Pender County. While the populations are significantly less among the counties, this comparison shows that Pender County parks and recreation spending per capita is similar to Columbus, Bladen, Onslow, and Duplin counties. However, Pender County's per capita spending remains significantly lower than the average of the seven surrounding counties' per capita parks and recreation spending.

**Table 7.6: Surrounding County Departments' Total Funding**

County	2006-2007			2005-2006			2004-2005			
	2006-2007 Budget	Pop.	Per Capita	2005-2006 Budget	Pop.	Per Capita	2004-2005 Budget	Pop.	Per Capita	
New Hanover	\$9,597,517	184,120	\$52.13	\$3,039,000	180,358	\$16.85	\$5,327,713	180,358	\$29.54	
Brunswick	\$2,984,509	94,964	\$31.43	\$4,711,240	89,463	\$52.66	\$2,428,354	89,463	\$27.14	
Columbus	\$486,190	54,046*	\$9.00	\$401,949	54,524	\$7.37	\$419,772	53,848*	\$7.80	
Bladen	\$209,299	32,870	\$6.37	\$195,777	32,866	\$5.96	\$173,202	32,588*	\$5.31	
Sampson	\$860,191	64,057	\$13.43	\$912,191	63,566	\$14.35	\$959,695	63,566	\$15.10	
Onslow	\$1,587,184	161,212	\$9.85	\$1,035,448	157,748	\$6.56	\$954,486	157,748	\$6.05	
Duplin	\$220,837	52,979*	\$4.17	\$221,077	51,920	\$4.26	\$237,772	51,664*	\$4.60	
Average Spending Per Capita			\$19.42				\$16.91			
Pender County	\$265,072	48,724	\$5.44	\$380,097	46,538	\$8.17	\$442,263	45,823*	\$9.65	
<i>Source: M CPRSS (FY 2008-09), Executive Report</i>				<i>Source: M CPRSS (FY 2007-08), Executive Report</i>			<i>Source: M CPRSS (FY 2006-07), Executive Report</i>			
<i>*Population Data from US Census Bureau</i>										

In general, by comparing the spending allocated to parks and recreation in Pender County to counties of similar size, as well as the neighboring counties in the region, we can observe that the amount allocated to parks and recreation in Pender County has room for significant improvement. It should be a goal of Pender County to increase the per capita spending to at least the average of the counties in the region in the short term (1 to 5 years), and then focus on improving per capita spending to the Class B community average in the long term (6 to 10 years). Annual evaluation of these goals should be a priority of the county.

## **Budget Recommendations**

In summary, the amount of money allocated to parks and recreation in Pender County is in need of improvement. By observing the comparisons mentioned in this section, we can infer that Pender County falls short in every budget comparison area. The overall operation and capital expenditures for parks and recreation in Pender County is significantly lower than the statewide averages for all counties and municipalities, as well as the averages for Class C counties and municipalities. Additionally, the dollars spent per county resident, referred to as “per capita spending” is severely lower than counties across North Carolina with similar populations, as well as the seven counties that surround Pender. Finally, the amount of cost recovered through revenue generated from user fees and charges for Pender County parks facilities and recreation opportunities is slightly behind the statewide and significantly behind the national average.

In order to improve these figures, several issues should be addressed. First, parks and recreation spending within Pender County should be increased to bring the per capita spending figures more up to par with the averages for the counties in the region, and continuously increased to reach the goal of per capita spending in Pender County closer to the figures of what counties of similar populations are spending per capita. Secondly, the department should focus on improving the revenue generated from user fees and charges. This may be pursued through a two-pronged approach, including assessing whether the existing fees and charges for parks facilities and recreation opportunities have room for increases, and developing new facilities and programs that would improve revenue generation for the department. New programs such as arts and crafts classes, adult athletics, and senior programs are examples of programs that are currently lacking within Pender County and would be significant revenue generators for the department. New facilities such as recreation centers, aquatics facilities, golf courses, rental facilities, and other fee-based facilities would also contribute to improved cost recovery for the department.

It is imperative to realize that the development of new facilities and programs must have a perpetual and substantial commitment to funding of adequate maintenance, personnel, and long-term capital budgeting.

## **Recommendations Summary**

- Increase spending to bring per capita figures closer to those of the counties in the region and communities of similar populations.
- Ensure future capital improvement projects include a balance between revenue generation facilities and non-revenue generating facilities.
- Increase revenue generation within the department to bring the cost recovery closer to the state average.

## Funding Recommendations

Although the condition of the national economy at the time that this plan was prepared was rather dismal, economic conditions should begin to improve during the lifespan of this master plan and allow for incremental improvements to funding commitments for parks and recreation projects and programs. The existing deficits in the parks facilities and recreational programs in the county warrant an increased commitment to filling these service gaps. Pender County will continue to experience significant growth in the future, and must work to provide new facilities, maintain existing facilities, and operate a Parks and Recreation department that will continue to grow and expand. In this section of the plan, we examine the current funding sources for parks and recreation and explore new funding sources that would greatly benefit parks and recreation development within Pender County.

## Current Funding Sources and Recommendations

The funding sources for Pender County parks and recreation currently include property tax levies, program user fees, state grants, and donations.

As overviewed in the *Budget Analysis and Recommendations* section, the funding committed to parks and recreation development and operations is below average when compared to similar departments in the area and across the state. Per capita funding for parks and recreation in Pender County falls short of the state average, as well as the average of the seven counties surrounding Pender in southeastern North Carolina. Additionally, the per capita average is lower than Class C departments in the state that have similar populations. Revenue generation by parks and recreation is lower than the state average also, largely due to a lack of revenue-generating facilities and programs in the county. Pender County should make a commitment to improving how the county compares in spending and revenue generation as indicated in the Budget Recommendations.

## Current Funding Methods

### Property Tax

The Parks and Recreation Division, like other Pender County departments, is primarily funded by general fund dollars generated through the county's property tax levy. These funds are allocated to all departments within the county based on historic spending levels and the amount requested by the department for each budget cycle. While the Department of Parks and Recreation was incorporated into the Department of Planning and Community Development at the beginning of the 2009-2010 fiscal year as a division, the Division of Parks and Recreation maintains an operating budget separate from the other divisions within the Department of Planning and Community Development. For the 2009-2010 budget year, the approved operating budget for the Division of Parks and Recreation was \$327,668, which is a 4.9% increase over the prior fiscal year's actual operating budget. In total, \$299,668 will be allocated from the general fund, and the remaining \$28,000 is projected to come from revenue generated by the department from user fees and charges. Additionally during this budget cycle, the county committed \$25,000 from the general fund for initial site work and development of Millers Pond Park; this appropriation was allocated to the Capital Improvement Project budget managed by the Department of Public Works rather than the parks and recreation division.

### Program User Fees

The department recovers some of its operating costs through revenue collected by user fees, including program registrations and entry fees. Table 8.1 displays the actual expenses and revenues for the 2007-08 and 2008-09 fiscal years, as well as the appropriated budget and projected revenue generation for FY 2009-10. As mentioned in the budget analysis section, the statewide average of cost recovery for parks and recreation departments is around 13%. In the 2007-08 fiscal year, the department collected over \$34,000 in revenues from user fees, which offset nearly 15% of the actual expenses for that year. The following year, the percent recovered through revenue generated by the department fell sharply to less than 9%. The steep decline can be attributed to the sharp increase in spending during the 2008-09 fiscal year and a decrease in the amount of fees taken in. At the beginning of FY 2009-10, the amount appropriated to the department was

Budget Year	Expenses	Fees Collected	% Recovery
2009-10	\$299,668*	\$28,000*	9.34%*
2008-09	\$287,488	\$24,867	8.65%
2007-08	\$234,035	\$34,612	14.79%
<i>Source: Pender County Finance Department</i>			
<i>*Projected</i>			

\$299,668, and the department is projected to recover 9.34% of these expenses by collecting \$28,000 in revenue during the budget cycle. Again, the department should evaluate the existing user fee schedule and make it an objective to improve the cost recovery of the department. Projected revenue generation should be gradually increased each year, with the goal of a 15% cost recovery through parks and revenue generation by year 2015, and 20% recovery by year 2020. *Budget Analysis and Recommendations* overviews more specifically how this objective may be reached.

## **Grants**

Pender County has had some success in acquiring grant awards for parks and recreation. The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant program has been utilized by Pender County for several years for development of Hampstead Kiwanis Park and Pender Memorial Park. PARTF grants match local government dollar-for-dollar and can be used for acquiring and/or developing parks and recreation projects and facilities. It is recommended that Pender County continue to pursue PARTF funding in the future, as well as concentrate on applying for additional state, federal, and private grant funding. Some potential grant opportunities are listed later in this chapter.

## **Alternative Funding Methods**

### **Regulatory Tools**

A variety of regulatory tools may be used to help develop and maintain parks and recreation facilities including mandatory land dedication for public parks and open space, payments into park development funds in lieu of open space requirements for new development, and right-of-way dedication for greenways and multi-use trails. These regulatory tools are particularly effective in communities that are experiencing significant population growth, such as Pender County.

### ***Land Use Plans, Policies, and Development Regulations for Pender County***

Concurrent with the *2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, Pender County also adopted the *Pender County Comprehensive Land Use Plan* and *Pender County Unified Development Ordinance*. Both of these documents serve vital purposes in shaping and regulating the growth and development within Pender County; these documents also coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to set forth policies and tools for the reservation and development of open space, parks, and other recreational features within the county.

### **Pender County Comprehensive Land Use Plan**

The *Pender County Comprehensive Land Use Plan* is the official land use policy statement for Pender County, and should be used faithfully and consistently to facilitate orderly growth and development. As a roadmap for growth, the plan should be used by county leaders, staff, citizens, and private land owners and developers as the basis for evaluating short-term actions against long-term goals. The plan should be used as a guide in developing and approving land development proposals and for setting capital improvement plans and priorities. Overall, the plan is the major statement of community values that set the framework for achieving a more sustainable future.

The *Pender County Comprehensive Land Use Plan* contains specific policies necessary to achieve eleven categories of goals. The following are the goals and policies found in the Land Use Plan that are relevant to parks and recreation development within Pender County:

**Growth Management Goal 1A.1** – Manage the physical growth and development of Pender County by promoting more intensive land uses in key locations identified for such growth while preserving and protecting the unique physical character and social assets of the predominant rural lifestyle and coastal environment that makes the county a unique place to live.

***Policy 1A.1.6** – Use conditional zoning process to enable developers to contribute to addressing the impact of developments on capital facilities and other resources; incorporate regulations into new Unified Development Ordinance to enable a small project to address specific impacts to an existing adjacent community.*

**Schools Goal 2C.1** – Ensure adequate enrollment capacity in Pender County Public Schools and encourage co-location of community facilities.

**Policy 2C.1.2** – *As Pender County Public Schools purchase properties for new schools, consider having other local governments participate in the land purchase in order to co-locate other public facilities, such as parks and libraries, on or near school sites.*

**Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Waterway Access Goal 7A.1** – Ensure adequate, appropriately located parks, recreation, and open spaces to serve the needs of Pender County residents and visitors.

**Policy 7A.1.1** – *Prepare a new, updated Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.*

**Policy 7A.1.2** – *Ensure that the updated plan adequately reflects current and future recreation needs. Adopt implementation measures to acquire and develop parks, recreation areas, and open spaces.*

**Policy 7A.1.3** – *Coordinate with Pender County Board of Education and partner with civic groups to co-locate parks and recreation sites on or adjacent to school property as appropriate.*

**Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Waterway Access Goal 7B.1** – Increase the amount of land available and the funding for parks, recreation, and open spaces to serve Pender County residents and visitors.

**Policy 7B.1.1** – *Adopt regulations requiring construction of appropriate recreational amenities for large residential developments and provide a “fee in lieu of” option to enable the enhancement of amenities of nearby park facilities.*

**Policy 7B.1.2** – *Encourage the use of conservation subdivision development to preserve open amenities within new development.*

**Policy 7B.1.3** – *If practical, require development plans to arrange open space/amenities adjacent to other open space areas, county parks and recreation facilities, or state, federal, or other protected lands.*

**Policy 7B.1.4** – *If adjacency is not possible, require development plans to enable pedestrian and wildlife corridor connections to nearby open spaces.*

**Policy 7B.1.5** – *Ensure that park and recreation set asides include usable upland open space.*

**Policy 7B.1.6** – *Ensure UDO regulations include clearly defined open space standards, which include reasonable and quantifiable areas of open space to be provided outside of wetlands, stormwater ponds, and clustered or community sewage disposal areas.*

**Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Waterway Access Goal 7C.1** – Increase the number of public boat ramps available within unincorporated Pender County.

**Policy 7C.1.1** – *Pender County will encourage not only the State of North Carolina, but also area local governments to diligently pursue the acquisition and development of waterfront properties for public use, particularly regarding boating access.*

**Policy 7C.1.2** – *Work with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC) Boating Infrastructure Program to identify and acquire land for public boat ramps and ancillary parking facilities to public trust waters.*

**Policy 7C.1.3** – *Consider co-location of other appropriate recreational amenities at future boat ramps.*

### **Pender County Unified Development Ordinance**

While the *Pender County Comprehensive Land Use Plan* sets forth the goals and policies to guide development in the county, the *Pender County Unified Development Ordinance* provides the regulations necessary to meet the goals outlined in the Land Use Plan.

Article 6 of the Unified Development Ordinance specifically addresses open space requirements, beginning with *Article 6.18 – Open Space*:

### 6.18.1 Requirements

- A. Every subdivider of land for residential purposes shall dedicate a portion of such land, as set forth herein, for the purpose of providing, active and passive recreation areas to serve the residents of the immediate neighborhood within the subdivision.
- B. Open Space Areas Can Be Defined By Active Or Passive Open Space As Follows:
  - 1) Active Open Space consists of areas such as park land chosen without regard to natural features for the explicit purposes of enhancing design, such as village commons, or providing space for outdoor recreation activities which may include, but not be limited to, tennis courts, ball fields, swimming pools, and tot lots with play equipment.
  - 2) Passive Open Space areas must consist of undisturbed, unique and sensitive natural features when available, that may include streams, floodplains, wetlands (excluding tidal marsh) conservation resources, and natural heritage areas if identified. These natural spaces will be characterized by undisturbed soils and natural vegetative cover for wildlife habitat. Passive Open space may become part of designated County greenways. Amenities such as walking paths, piers, picnic areas and other passive recreational uses will be allowed with minimal disturbance of the vegetation.
- C. Required Open Space: All new residential subdivisions shall provide open space in the amount of 0.03 acres per dwelling unit within the subdivision. No more than 50% of the required open space shall be designated as passive open space. 50% or more of the required open space shall be designated as active open space.
- D. Exemptions to Open Space
  - 1) Density calculations of a development that is one unit per acre or greater in the RP and RA Zoning Districts.
  - 2) Developments consisting of 10 units or less.
- E. Standards for Park, Recreation and Open Space Areas: Except as otherwise approved by the Planning Board, all park, recreation and open space areas shall meet the following criteria:
  - 1) Unity - The dedicated land shall form a single parcel of land, whether or not the subdivision is developed in phases or sections, except where it is determined by the appropriate governing body, that 2 or more parcels would be in the best interests of the residents of the subdivision and the public; and in such case, the appropriate governing body, may require that such parcels be connected.
  - 2) Shape - The portion of dedicated land to be used for active recreation shall be of such a shape to be usable for active recreational facilities including but not limited to tennis courts, racquetball courts, swimming pools, exercise rooms, clubhouses, athletic fields, basketball courts, swings, slides and play apparatus.
  - 3) Greenways - If open space is a greenway, the land shall be a continuous linear parcel through the subdivision of at least 30 feet in width.
  - 4) Location - The dedicated land shall be located so as to reasonably serve the recreation and open space needs of residents of the immediate neighborhood within the subdivision for which the land dedication is made and can be combined with an adjacent park.
  - 5) Access - All dwelling units in the subdivision shall have suitable, safe, and convenient ingress and egress to and from the park, recreation and open space areas provided within the development by means of improved streets or dedicated walkways. Rights-of-way for such access shall be shown on the preliminary plans and final plats.
  - 6) Required Stormwater Detention/Retention Facilities - Required stormwater detention/retention facilities shall not be accepted to fulfill the requirements set forth by this section. However, the County may allow significant natural water bodies (SNW's) such as lakes and streams to be counted as qualifying active open space provided that public ancillary features such as docks, piers, launching facilities, or paddle trails, or other aquatic amenities are provided. Such facilities shall be reviewed and approved by appropriate state agencies and the Planning Board at the time of Master Plan approval.
  - 7) Landscaping - Park, recreation and open space areas which include amenities such as tennis courts, racquetball courts, swimming pools, exercise rooms, clubhouses, athletic fields, basketball courts, swings, etc. shall be landscaped and shall be provided with sufficient natural or manmade screening or buffer areas to minimize any negative impacts upon adjacent residences
  - 8) Encroachments - The park, recreation and open space areas required by this Article shall exclude roadways, parking areas and other accessory uses except for areas associated with recreational facilities.
  - 9) Consistency with Pender County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan - If any portion of any subdivision proposed for residential development lies within an area designated on the officially adopted Plan as a park, such area shall be included as part of the area set aside to satisfy the requirements of this Article up to the maximum requirement of open space calculations. This area shall be reserved for public use.
  - 10) Procedure for Dedication of Land:
    - a) Designation of Land to Be Dedicated - Subdivider shall designate on the Master Plan, the area or areas to be dedicated pursuant to this Article.
    - i) Review of Land to Be Dedicated - Upon receipt of the Master Plan, the Administrator shall submit a copy thereof to the appropriate governing agency for review. The appropriate governing agency shall submit any and all recommendations concerning the land to be dedicated to the Planning Board at its next scheduled meeting.

- ii) Ownership - The type of ownership of land dedicated for park, recreation or open space purposes shall be selected by the owner, developer, or subdivider, subject to the approval of the Planning Board. Provided, however, any of such areas included in the master parks plan shall be dedicated to the county. The type of ownership may include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:
  - a. The county, subject to the acceptance by the Planning Board;
  - b. Other public jurisdiction or agencies, subject to their acceptance;
  - c. Appropriate non-profit agencies, subject to their acceptance;
  - d. Property owner, condominium or cooperative associations or organizations.

**6.18.2 Recreational Units**

All developments not meeting the criteria set forth in Article 6.18.C and contain 34 units or more will be required to provide recreational units equivalent to credits established in the following table. Recreational units are intended to serve the subject development itself but may be suitable or planned to serve the surrounding community. The facilities shall be in a configuration and location that is easily accessible to the dwelling units that they are designed to serve and may be placed within active or passive open space required areas. The design and amount of facilities shall be approved by the Planning Board, Administrator, and Parks and Recreation representative to the TRC at the time of Master Plan approval. Recreational units are assigned a financial unit to be achieved via installation on the subject property or through a payment in lieu of in conjunction with the approved Pender County Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The timing of the installation or payment in lieu of installation shall be confirmed on the master plan.

Dwelling Units	Recreational Unit(s)	Financial Unit
34-99	1.0	\$10,000
100-150	1.5	\$15,000
151-200	2.0	\$20,000
201-250	2.5	\$25,000
251-300	3.0	\$30,000
301-350	3.5	\$35,000
351-400	4.0	\$40,000

\*The figures referenced above shall be carried up to 1,000 dwelling units/10.0 recreational units or \$100,000. Developments exceeding 1,000 dwelling units shall not be required to exceed the maximum of 10 recreational units.

**6.18.3 Payments in Lieu of Dedication**

- A. General Provisions - When the Planning Board determines (upon the recommendation of the Administrator) that the park, recreation and open space requirements of a subdivision of 11-33 lots can be adequately met by capital facilities constructed or to be constructed on county-owned property or property to be acquired by the county within a reasonable time that is located close enough to such subdivision to reasonably serve its residents, the Planning Board may authorize the subdivider to make a payment to the county in lieu of dedication. The Planning Board may also authorize a combination dedication and partial payment in lieu of dedication when such is determined to be in the best interest of the citizens of the area to be served. Any public dedication is subject to review and acceptance by the Planning Board.
- B. Procedure - The subdivider shall include with the application for Master Plan approval, a letter requesting approval to make a payment in lieu of dedication. The letter shall include the proposed per acre value and the basis for the determination of such value. Upon receipt of the Master Plan, the Administrator shall submit a copy thereof with the letter requesting a payment in lieu of dedication to the Planning Board. The Administrator shall submit any recommendations concerning the request to the Technical Review Committee.
- C. Amount of Payment - If the County approves a payment in lieu of dedication, the amount of such payment shall be the product of the number of acres to be dedicated as outlined in subsection (B) above, and twice the average fair market value per acre of the land being subdivided at the time of the submission of the Master Plan. The Tax Department shall determine the average fair market value of the land based on the value of the land for property tax purposes, the information submitted by the subdivider and other relevant information.
- D. Use of Payments in Lieu of Dedication - All monies received by the county pursuant to this Article shall be used only for the acquisition or development of recreation, park, or open space areas that will benefit the new subdivision residents.
- E. Required Payment in Lieu of Dedication - In the event the County finds that a land dedication does not meet the long range plans of the county it shall require payment in lieu of a dedication.
- F. Time of Payment - If a payment in lieu of dedication is authorized, such payment shall be made before recording the final plat for the subdivision. If a subdivision is developed in phases, a payment relating to each phase must be made prior to the recording of a final plat for each phase.

#### 6.18.4 Flexibility in Administration Authorized:

- A. The requirements set forth in this subsection concerning the amount, size, location and nature of park, recreation and open space areas to be provided in connection with residential developments are established by the County as standards that preemptively will result in the provision of that amount of recreational facilities and open space that is consistent with officially adopted county plans. The County recognizes, however, that due to the particular nature of a tract of land, or the nature of the facilities proposed for installation, or other factors, the underlying objectives of this article may be achieved even though the standards are not adhered to with mathematical precision. Therefore, the Planning Board is authorized to permit minor deviations from these standards whenever it determines that: (i) the objectives underlying these standards can be met without strict adherence to them; and (ii) because of peculiarities in the developer's tract of land or the facilities proposed it would be unreasonable to require strict adherence to these standards.
- 1) Whenever the County authorizes some deviation from the standards set forth in this Article, the official record of action taken on the development application shall contain a statement of the reasons for allowing the deviation.

#### *Right-of-Way Dedication*

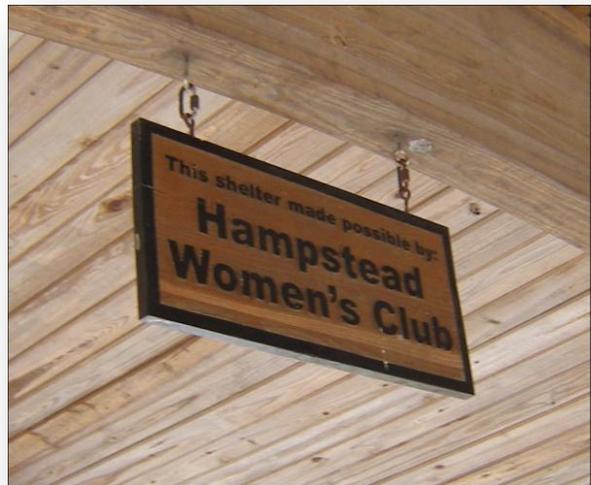
Another regulatory tool that may be considered in Pender County is mandatory right-of-way dedication for multi-use greenway and trail development. With a mandatory right-of-way dedication system in place, as new developments are planned, right-of-way dedications require developers to create greenway corridors by reserving the corridors and in some cases even the development of the proposed greenway or trail. This system may yield incentives for developers, such as density bonuses. While this plan identifies several recommended greenways and bicycle and pedestrian improvements, it is recommended that Pender County develop and adopt comprehensive bicycle/pedestrian plan to further detail the recommended projects that would be suitable for right-of-way dedication.

#### *Wetland Banking*

Due to the large amount of wetlands in Pender County, another regulatory tool that may be implemented is the system of wetland banking, which is a system where existing wetlands are purchased and placed under protective covenants and then sold as credits for mitigation of wetland impacts due to development of a different site. This system is advantageous to both developers and government agencies because purchasing credits is often quicker and less expensive than wetland creation, which may cost between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per acre. This system could result in significant potential income to the county as regulatory agencies continue to require increasing amounts of wetland creation for each acre that is impacted due to development.

#### *Naming Rights*

A method that is gaining particular popularity in the public sector is naming rights. Naming rights is a system that allows for private entities to have facilities or programs named after them in exchange for a significant donation, such as the WakeMed Soccer Complex in Cary. The cost of developing and operating new parks and recreation facilities in the county may be offset by allowing exclusive naming rights to willing members of the corporate community. For example, a significant donation from a corporate entity such as Sun Drop could offset the cost of a new indoor recreation center, and in exchange the facility would be called the "Sun Drop Recreation Center". The naming rights system could work on other facilities, including individual rooms in community centers, sections of trails and greenways, skate parks, sports complexes, and similar facilities. Alternatively, recreation and parks facilities could be named after a person in exchange for a major donation, such as the "John Doe Community Center." Naming rights have been a successful tool in many markets to offset the cost of parks and recreation facility development and operation. Some facilities in Hampstead Kiwanis Park feature placards identifying significant contributors to the park facilities.



***Image 8.1: Naming Rights are currently being used at Hampstead Kiwanis Park and should be expanded to other park facilities in the county.***

Development of future facilities and also renovations of existing facilities may benefit from naming rights.

### **Revenue Bonds**

Revenue bonds are a type of funding instrument that are sold on the market with intention to back a planned revenue or specific improvement. These types of bonds are most suitable for backing revenue-generating ventures, and would be most appropriate for funding parks and recreation facilities such as golf courses, aquatics centers, sports venues, and other facilities that will generate revenue for the department. Prior to implementing a bond program, a more thorough analysis of the project that the bond is proposed to fund should be undertaken to assess whether funding by the sale of bonds would be appropriate for the type of facility.

### **Partnerships**

Many parks and recreation departments are now shifting away from being the exclusive provider of facilities and services and moving towards forming partnerships with other organizations and entities to provide parks facilities and recreational programming. Partnerships are often successful when the county is approached by members of the community to develop parks facilities and recreational opportunities that are not specifically identified as priorities in this comprehensive master plan. When developing partnerships, it is imperative that benefits to all parties involved in the arrangement are reciprocal.

The Pender County Parks and Recreation Department currently utilizes many partnerships to provide park facilities and recreational programming, including but not limited to the following organizations:

- Burgaw Dixie Youth
- Topsail Ball Club
- Topsail Girls Softball Organization
- Pender Youth Basketball Association
- Topsail Basketball Association
- Eastern Pender Pop Warner Association
- Pender Youth Football and Cheerleading Association
- Pender Youth Soccer Association
- Port City Soccer Club
- Joint Community Development Center
- Maple Hill Resource Center
- Willard Outreach Organization
- Hampstead Kiwanis Park, Inc.
- Pender County Schools

The existing partnerships have been successful in the past and should continue to benefit the both the parks and recreation department and the partnered organizations. Additional partnerships should be explored, including partnering with local community centers for facility development and recreation programming partnerships.

A review of the partnership with the Pender County school system was being performed during the creation of this plan to allow for conditional public use of the existing and planned school recreational facilities, including ball fields, gymnasiums, tennis courts, etc. The parks and recreation department is currently working with school system staff to develop an agreement for shared use of facilities during non-school periods or when the schools are not using the facilities. This type of partnership should also include the potential use of school grounds for parks and other recreation facilities. Currently, several school sites are feasible for park and recreation development, including Malpass Corner Elementary School and Heide Trask High School.

### **Grant Opportunities**

A plethora of grant opportunities are available for funding assistance for parks and recreation. These grants are available from either federal or state opportunities, or from private foundations and establishments. It is strongly recommended that Pender County Parks and Recreation Staff concentrate more diligently on pursuing these grant opportunities.

Grant writing takes particular knowledge and skill. In the future, it may be beneficial for Pender County to create a position of Grant Writing Specialist to employ a person with a concrete understanding of the grant-writing process as well as the breadth of available grant funding sources. The grants that Pender County could receive as a result of establishing a grant writing specialist position could potentially offset the cost of funding the position in as short as two years. The County must commit to providing matching funds that many grant programs require, however.

The following are some of the possible grant opportunities that may be pursued for parks and recreation funding:

### ***State Opportunities***

#### ***Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund***

The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund provides grants to states for conservation and outdoor recreation purposes, and through the states local governments to address "close to home" outdoor recreation needs. Applications must be submitted to the National Parks Service at least 60 days in advance of the proposed acquisition or the beginning of construction except in accordance with retroactivity provisions to allow sufficient time for federal review to determine eligibility and federal compliance. Assistance shall not exceed 50% of the total eligible costs (except as provided for the Insular Areas) and is provided primarily on a reimbursement basis.

#### ***Public Beach and Waterfront Access: Grant Program for Local Governments***

The Public Beach and Waterfront Access Grant Program is in place to improve pedestrian access to the state's beaches and waterways. Local governments may use access grants to construct low-cost public access facilities, including parking areas, restrooms, dune crossovers and piers. Towns and counties may also use the grants to replace aging access facilities as well as help acquire land for access sites or to revitalize waterfronts. Pre-application must be submitted by January 30, and grantees are then invited by the end of February to submit full application package by mid-April. Matching contributions for acquisition must be at least 15% of the total project cost. For tier 1 & 2 counties and their municipalities, the match must be at least 10%. Grants for improvement must be at least 25%, however for Tier 1 & 2 counties, the match has been reduced to 10%.

#### ***North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund***

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund is to fund improvements in the state's park system, to fund grants for local governments and to increase the public's access to the states beaches. Awards are given with a \$500,000 maximum and require a 50% local match. Applications are due by 5:00pm to the applicant's regional consultant at Recreation Resources Service.

#### ***North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund***

Clean Water Management Trust Fund awards may be used for enhancement or restoration of degraded waters, protection of unpolluted waters, creating a network of riparian buffers and greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational benefits. Annual applications are reviewed by 21-member Board of Trustees. The application deadline is February 1. No match is required, but matching is preferred.

#### ***Clean Water State Revolving Fund***

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund is a revolving loan program designed to assist in the funding of wastewater treatment facilities and projects associated with estuary and nonpoint source programs. Projects are rated based upon the severity of the water quality problem in the project area. The annual application deadline is March 31, and awards require 20% matching funds.

#### ***North Carolina DOT Transportation Enhancement Program***

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is an example of a program that could provide grant funding for parks and recreation projects in Pender County. In August 2005, the SAFETEA-LU was signed into law, essentially as a reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). The SAFETEA-LU provides monies for various transportation projects, including transportation enhancements and greenways. The components of the SAFETEA-LU that may be most applicable to parks and recreation funding in Pender County include the Transportation Enhancements (TE) and the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).

Various transportation-related projects may be funded through the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program, providing they are related to surface transportation. Examples of projects that are eligible for TE funding include greenways and other recreational trails, as long as the funds utilized from the TE program are utilized for a transportation element of the project.

Of the twelve TE categories, three are most related to greenways and recreational trails. These include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, pedestrian and bicycle safety and educational activities, and conversion of abandoned railway corridors to trails. The agency responsible for administering TE funds in North Carolina is the NC Department of Transportation. Transportation Enhancement funds require a 20% match from local funding, and the application cycle is on an annual basis. The NCDOT reports that annual funding for the TE program has historically ranged from \$10 to \$22 million.

#### ***North Carolina Safe Routes to Schools Infrastructure Grant Reimbursement Program***

Infrastructure grants provide funds for planning, design, and construction. Funding requests may range from \$100,000 to \$300,000 per project. The infrastructure grant program is a cost reimbursement program. This competitive reimbursement program is 100% federally funded – no local match is required. Grant recipients must be able to cover the costs of the project and will be reimbursed during the course of project implementation. All costs submitted for reimbursement are subject to eligibility requirements and must comply with a reimbursement agreement executed between NCDOT and the recipient.

Although no local match is required, applicants are encouraged to leverage their request for SRTS funding with other funding sources that may be available to them, including grant awards, local, state, or other federal funding. However, additional funding is not required, and a lack of such will not penalize an applicant. The SRTS funds may not be used as a match for other federal funding. Also, per the federal guidance for SRTS, this infrastructure program funding cannot be used to replace existing funding sources for pedestrian or bicycle transportation projects.

#### ***Adopt-a-Trail Program***

The Adopt-a-Trail Program, administered through the North Carolina Trails Program, can be used for trail building, trail signage and facilities, trail maintenance, trail brochures and maps, and other related uses. The award cycle has an annual application deadline in January, and no local match is required.

#### ***Recreational Trails Program***

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a grant program administered by staff of the State Trails Program of the NC Division of Parks and Recreation. RTP grants may be used to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities, for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. Specifically, funds from the RTP may be used for renovation and maintenance of existing trails, development and renovation of trailhead and trailside facilities, the purchase and lease of trail construction and maintenance equipment, construction of new trails, and land acquisition for trail development, with an award preference for projects that connect existing trails, parks, schools, and other community features. The program requires a 25% match from local funding, and applications are accepted on a yearly basis. Maximum award amounts vary on the type of project; the maximum amount awarded for new trail development is \$1,000,000, while the maximum amount awarded for trail renovation is \$75,000. The minimum award granted for projects is \$25,000.

#### ***Water Resources Development Project Grant Program***

This program is designed to provide cost-share grants and technical assistance to local governments throughout the State. Applications for grants are accepted for seven purposes: General Navigation, Recreational Navigation, Water Management, Stream Restoration, Beach Protection, Land Acquisition and Facility Development for Water-Based Recreation, and aquatic weed control. There are two grant cycles per fiscal year; the application deadlines are July 1st and January 1st.

#### ***North Carolina Marine Resources Fund and Endowment Fund***

This program is funded from the revenues collected from the state-required coastal recreational fishing license (CRFL), and funds are awarded to projects that manage, protect, restore, develop, cultivate, conserve, and enhance the marine

resources. The annual funding cycle begins on July 1, and a request for proposals is made prior to the beginning of the funding cycle. Applications accepted through August 1, and the program has no cost-share requirement.

### ***Federal Opportunities***

#### ***Property Management and Disposal Services***

The General Services Administration is responsible for promoting effective use of federal real property assets, as well as the disposal of real property that is no longer mission-critical to federal agencies. Any agency or individual is eligible for property acquisition through this program.

#### ***North American Wetlands Conservation Grants Program***

The North American Wetlands Conservation Grants Program provides matching grants to organizations and individuals to carry out wetlands conservation projects. The program has bi-annual deadlines of March 4 and July 29, and requires a local match of 50% of total grant request.

#### ***Wetlands Reserve Program***

The Wetlands Reserve Program is designed to assist with the Initial development of a wetlands protection, restoration or management program or enhancement or refinement of an existing program. A 25% local-match is required.

#### ***Section 319 NPS Grant Program***

Section 319 of the Clean Water Act provides funding of innovative nonpoint source (NPS) management strategies. The NPS Workgroup serves as a selection committee to rank and choose projects for funding. The program has a bi-annual funding cycle, and a match of 40% of the total request is required.

#### ***North Carolina Federal Surplus Property Agency***

Federal Surplus Property is part of the Division of Surplus Property. The donation program enables certain nonfederal organization to obtain property that the federal government no longer needs. The Federal Property and Administration Services Act of 1949, as amended by Public Law 94-519, provides for the transfer of surplus property to eligible donees within the state of North Carolina.

#### ***Healthy People 2010 Community Implementation Grants Program***

Over the next ten years, the Federal Department of Health and Human Services plans to award hundreds of “micro-grants” worth up to \$2,010 each to community organizations for activities that support the far-reaching goals of Healthy People 2010, including promoting health education, quality care, access to care, and other projects. Healthy People 2010 is the Nation’s public health agenda for the next decade, and these micro-grants represent a new, low-cost approach to foster effective prevention efforts at the community level.

#### ***Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)***

Annual direct grants from CDBG are awarded to entitlement communities and may be used to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing and economic opportunities, and/or improve community facilities and services, primarily to benefit lower and moderate-income residents. Development or improvement of public facilities such as sidewalks, streets, water systems, senior citizen centers, sewers, and community centers are all activities that are eligible through Community Development Block Grants.

### ***Other Opportunities***

#### ***NRPA – CDC ACHIEVE Grant***

NRPA receives funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to enhance local communities’ abilities to develop and implement policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that will help prevent or manage health-risk factors for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer, obesity, and arthritis. ACHIEVE, now in its third year, is part of a broader Healthy Communities collaborative with the CDC, National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) and the YMCA of the USA. In 2010, NRPA will fund ten park and recreation agencies at \$35,000 each to develop coalitions of local stakeholders and community leaders to address chronic disease risk factors.

With an ACHIEVE grant, agencies will reduce the incidence of chronic disease through policy, systems and environmental change strategies at the local level; create partnerships with community stakeholders; attend meetings with national leaders to learn about tools, resources, and strategies to build healthier communities; create awareness of the vital services parks and recreation offers; and enhance the overall health and livability of their community.

The annual application deadline is December 11, and more information may be found on the National Recreation and Parks Association website: <http://www.nrpa.org/achieve/>

#### ***North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund***

The North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund has awarded nearly \$39 million in grants over the last eight years to a variety of farm organizations, local and state government agencies, commodity groups, non-profits, and others. The NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission was created by the North Carolina General Assembly to receive and disburse funds from the Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) between the state and various cigarette manufacturers. The Commission recognizes that North Carolina's prosperity has been historically supported by agriculture, specifically the tobacco-related segment of agriculture. Through its programs, the Commission seeks to mitigate the general decline in the tobacco-related segment of our economy. Funds are available for the public purpose of alleviating or avoiding unemployment and quantifiable adverse fiscal impacts, stabilizing local tobacco-dependent communities and tax bases and to provide for the optimal use of natural resources.

Eligible projects that Pender County may seek funding assistance for through this program include experimental agriculture programs, community gardens, and farmers markets. Applications are due annually in early December, and award recipients are announced in early May of the following year. More information is available on the program's website: [www.tobaccotrustfund.org](http://www.tobaccotrustfund.org)

#### ***US Soccer Foundation Annual Program and Field Grants***

The US Soccer Foundation's impact on soccer through its annual Program and Field Grant awards has been significant and continues to grow. Since 1995, nearly \$25 million dollars in cash, equipment, and services have been awarded through the annual grants program. The Foundation's support has benefited more than 500 grantees, covering all 50 states, and has served the entire spectrum of soccer communities from small local clubs to the U.S. Soccer Federation, the National Governing Body for the sport in the United States. Applications are available from August 1-October 15 each year.

#### ***US Soccer Foundation Annual Planning Grants***

Introduced in the spring of 2007, the US Soccer Foundation's Planning Grants provide funding assistance to develop an initial master plan for proposed soccer field projects. The Foundation offers grants of up to \$10,000 in the form of credit with Clough Harbour Sports, its Partner for Soccer Facility Design and Planning, who will provide successful applicants with a high quality master plan.

#### ***Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation Grants***

The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation provides funding, equipment and Quickball grants to youth organizations, schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, local governments, and community non-profit groups that meet our eligibility requirements, as well as promote safe, healthy out of school activities including youth baseball and softball. The Foundation works with invited strategic communities across the country to support their work with disadvantaged youth. All grants are contingent upon the Foundation's federal and state funding.

#### ***NIKE Bowerman Track Renovation Program***

The Bowerman Track Renovation Program provides matching cash grants to community-based, youth-oriented organizations that seek to refurbish or construct running tracks. The program distributes approximately \$200,000 in matching grants each year.

Recipients of a Bowerman Track Renovation grant are encouraged, but not required, to use Nike Grind technology to resurface their track. Nike Grind material is made of recycled athletic shoes sliced and ground into rubber granules, providing a superior, environmentally conscious all-weather track surface.

### ***USA Football Equipment Grants***

As the sport's National Governing Body, and Official Youth Football Development Partner of the NFL and NFL Players Association, USA Football is committed to enhancing the football experience for all at the youth and amateur levels through our Equipment Grants Program.

All NFL Youth Football Fund partner organizations and their local members, clubs, and chapters are now eligible (Amateur Athletic Union; American Youth Football; Boys & Girls Clubs of America; Jewish Community Centers Association; National Police Athletic League; National Recreation & Park Association; Pop Warner; YMCA of the USA). Two types of grants are available: a Youth Football Equipment Grant (retail value approx. \$1,000) and a High School Equipment Grant (retail value approx. \$1,500). The annual application deadline is October 15<sup>th</sup>.

### ***The Finish Line Youth Foundation***

The Finish Line Youth Foundation strives to make a difference in the lives of youth in the communities where employees and customers live, work and play. They accomplish this by being good stewards of the funds they receive and by supporting youth programs that are effective and inclusive. The Finish Line Youth Foundation financially supports opportunities for participation in youth programs that place an importance on youth development and an active lifestyle.

In 2006, the Finish Line Youth Foundation completed a year of mission and process review resulting in the new Mission Statement above and a new focus for giving back to the communities in which we operate our stores. In general, the Youth Foundation supports qualified, non-profit organizations that provide community based access to athletics for kids under the age of 18, as well as camps that give kids the chance to be active, especially camps that provide services to kids who are disadvantaged or disabled.

Applications are accepted on a quarterly basis. The board of directors will meet one month after each quarter to review the qualified grant applications received during that period. The Program Director will make recommendations to the board about which organizations he or she feels best meet the mission of the Foundation, are most qualified to execute the programs for which grants are intended, and have the most impact on the kids and/or the community.

### ***Tony Hawk Foundation Skatepark Grants***

Tony Hawk Foundation grants are awarded for the construction of free, public skateparks in disadvantaged communities around the country, and has awarded over \$2-million to 365 communities since 2002. The primary mission of the Tony Hawk Foundation is to promote high-quality, public skateparks in low-income areas throughout the United States. The foundation believes that local officials should treat public skateparks the same way they treat public basketball courts or tennis courts, meaning that anyone may show up and use them anytime, unsupervised. The Tony Hawk Foundation awarded over \$250,000 in grants to 29 communities in the fall of 2007. Grants range from \$1,000 - \$25,000. The deadline to apply for the spring round of funding is March 1, of each year, and the fall cycle deadline is October 1.

### ***Rob Dyrdek/DC Shoes Skate Plaza Foundation***

The Safe Spot Skate Spot Program was developed as a subset of the largely successful, Rob Dyrdek/DC Shoes Skate Plaza Foundation. Its main goal exists in the construction of legal, noninvasive places for kids to ride skateboards. Often times, many cities and townships have the desire to create a public skatepark for its community to frequent, but essentially lack funds needed to execute any such large endeavors. Public Skateparks and Skate Plazas are huge undertakings, which require enormous financing, as well as an abundance of land in order to produce the various obstacles to ride upon. While money may be absent, many communities have a wealth of land or free, existing neighborhood space that can easily be designated for the construction of individual street skating obstacles. The Safe Spot Skate Spot Program will take any donated land, regardless of how small or how big and work with the community to turn it into a fully legal, street skateable area for kids to come together and ride harmoniously. The needs of street skateboarders will be met, skateboarder interference with traffic will be eliminated and local residents and businesses will remain undisturbed.

### ***Baseball Tomorrow Fund***

The Baseball Tomorrow Fund (BTF) is a joint initiative between Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association that was established in 1999 through a \$10 million commitment by Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association. During the 1999 World Series, Baseball Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig, Players Association Executive Director Donald Fehr and the Baltimore Orioles' Cal Ripken Jr. were on hand to introduce this new grant program for youth baseball and softball.

The Baseball Tomorrow Fund is intended to provide funding for incremental programming and facilities for youth baseball and softball programs, not as a substitute for existing funding or fundraising activities. Baseball Tomorrow Fund generally considers projects that include capital expenditures for youth baseball and softball programs such as baseball/softball equipment and uniforms, basic baseball/softball field renovations and construction (e.g. infield mix, sod/seeding, bases, dugouts, fencing, field lighting, irrigation system, grading, etc.)

The mission of BTF is to promote and enhance the growth of youth participation in baseball and softball throughout the world by funding programs, fields, coaches' training, and the purchase of uniforms and equipment to encourage and maintain youth participation in the game. Grants are designed to be sufficiently flexible to enable applicants to address needs unique to their communities. The funds are intended to finance a new program, expand or improve an existing program, undertake a new collaborative effort, or obtain facilities or equipment. BTF provides grants to non-profit and tax-exempt organizations in both rural and urban communities. BTF awards an average of 40 grants per year totaling more than \$1.5 million annually. The average grant amount is approximately \$50,000. BTF is now funded annually by MLB and the Players Association.

#### ***Bikes Belong Grant Program***

Since 1999, Bikes Belong has awarded 191 grants to municipalities and grassroots groups in 46 states and the District of Columbia, investing nearly \$1.6 million in community bicycling projects and leveraging close to \$525 million in federal, state, and private funding. The Bikes Belong Grant Program strives to put more people on bicycles more often by funding important influential projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the United States. These projects include bike paths, lanes, and routes, as well as bike parks, mountain bike trails, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives.

#### ***The Conservation Fund***

The American Greenways Kodak Awards Program, administered by The Conservation Fund, provides grants of \$500 to \$2500 to local greenway projects to stimulate planning, design, and development. Applications are due annually in July, and award announcements are typically made in October of each year.

#### ***The Global ReLeaf Program***

The Global ReLeaf Forest Program is American Forests' education and action program that helps individuals, organizations, agencies, and corporations improve the local and global environment by planting and caring for trees. The program provides funding for planting tree seedlings on public lands, and the program is particularly interested in partnering with private and public sector organizations and agencies to plant trees and improve the environment in projects that would otherwise not be feasible. To date, the project has helped plant more than 23 million trees in more than 500 forest ecosystem restoration projects and urban and community forest projects. The Global ReLeaf projects cover 18,000 acres of land, most of which is considered difficult to plant.

Recently, the Global ReLeaf Program undertook a project close to Pender County. In the Stones Creek Game Land the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission is trying to reestablish the longleaf pine savannah. The project area was originally a longleaf pine ecosystem, but prior to NCWRC ownership it was replaced by slash and loblolly pine plantations and then was clearcut for residential development. Phase 3 of this multi-phase project will plant 63,500 containerized longleaf pine seedlings in the fall of 2009. This project will enhance water quality of the New River watershed, create wildlife habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker, game, and non-game wildlife and provide public recreation opportunities.

Applications for this program are accepted on a continual basis, and more information may be found at the program's website: [www.americanforests.org/global\\_releaf](http://www.americanforests.org/global_releaf)

### ***The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation***

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation seeks to improve the health and health care of all Americans, including one primary goal to “promote healthy communities and lifestyles.” Specifically, the Foundation has an “Active Living by Design” grant program that promotes the principles of active living, including non-motorized transportation. Many communities across the nation have received grants related to promotion of trails and other non-motorized facilities. More information may be found at the Foundation’s website: [www.rwjf.org](http://www.rwjf.org)

### ***National Tree Trust (NTT)***

The National Tree Trust has a grant program available that provides a way for communities to beautify themselves, replant a neglected area, or just get some fresh air by planting tree seedlings. The seedlings are available from January through April, and the proposed project must adhere to several requirements including: trees must be planted on public land, projects must use volunteers for planting and/or maintaining seedlings, and two years of annual reporting are required for each grant. Matching funds are required which can include volunteer hours, donated items, and non-federal funding. More information on the NTT program may be found at the website: [www.nationaltreetrust.org](http://www.nationaltreetrust.org)

### ***Fish America Foundation***

The Fish America Foundation provides funding to public and private organizations for projects that conserve or enhance water and fisheries resources. Over the past 18 years, the Foundation has provided over 620 grants for a total of nearly \$5 million to improve the fisheries resources in all 50 states as well as in Canada. Grant awards are typically around \$10,000, and may include projects such as greenways that enhance or conserve water resources. Grant applications must include a letter of support from a state resource agency, and evidence of the organization’s non-profit status. More information may be found on the Fish America Foundation’s website: [www.fishamerica.org](http://www.fishamerica.org)

### ***AmeriCorps’ National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)***

The AmeriCorps’ National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) members have created or improved more than 200 miles of hiking trails in 25 states across the nation, including clearing trees and brush, leveling trails to comply with federal guidelines on handicapped access, implementing erosion control techniques, and creating and updating signs. The project trails are typically located in rural, urban, and national parks, and are used by tens of thousands of Americans each year. More information may be found at the AmeriCorps website: [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov)

### ***Sticks for Kids Program***

Sticks for Kids is an annual program in which park and recreation agencies have the opportunity to apply to receive ten sets of junior golf clubs, access to instruction cards, programming manuals, and ongoing club maintenance. Sticks for Kids provides the tools necessary to give kids a hands-on golf learning experience during after-school activities, sports camps, programs, community events, and school physical education programs. The program not only teaches golf, it empowers youth to success through the life skills associated with golf; integrity, discipline, sportsmanship, etiquette, and respect for self, others and the environment. Best of all, direct access to a golf course is not required so agencies with or without a golf course can take advantage of the Sticks for Kids program. Annual application deadlines are October 30<sup>th</sup>, and more information may be found on the program website: [www.gcbaa.org/sticks\\_for\\_kids](http://www.gcbaa.org/sticks_for_kids)

## Sources for Funding Information

There are many funding sources available other than those listed above. The following resources are helpful to research potential sources of funding:

### **Grants.gov**

Grants.gov is a website for customers to electronically find, apply for, and manage grants. The website includes over 1,000 grant programs offered by the 26 Federal grant-making agencies. [www.grants.gov/search/advanced.do](http://www.grants.gov/search/advanced.do)

### **Grants.gov Grant Opportunity Email Subscription**

This service allows subscribers to receive notifications about Federal grants in several ways, including by funding number, category or funding activity, funding instrument, eligible applicant, agencies and sub-agencies, and by CFDA number. [http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/email\\_subscription.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp)

### **Foundations Center's Foundation Finder**

The Foundation Finder provides basic information on private and community foundations, and corporate grantmakers in the United States. <http://foundationcenter.org/findfunders/foundfinder/>

### **Foundation Center RFP Bulletin**

This weekly bulletin provides an electronic announcement of foundation and corporate funding announcements, including awards for community improvement and development.

### **N.C. Rural Economic Development Center's North Carolina Rural Funding Directory**

This publication compiles more than 100 sources of funding for programs and projects that rural communities may wish to undertake, including parks and recreation related projects. The NC Rural Economic Development Center hopes to update and expand the funding directory every year, which may be found at [www.ncruralcenter.org](http://www.ncruralcenter.org).

### **Local/State Funding Report, by Thompson Publishing Group**

This weekly newsletter provides an update on new grant announcements, legislative and regulatory news, sources of foundation and corporate funding, budget controversies, private sector funding opportunities, program updates, and online access. <http://www.thompson.com/public/sitedocs/order.jsp>

### **NC Open Notebook**

The website lists North Carolina state government grant and financial assistance programs and awards that have been made. Users may search for grants by agency, recipient, grant program, or location, as well as search for contracts by agency, vendor, contract, or location. <http://www.ncopenbook.gov/grants/default.aspx>

### **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)**

The CFDA is a government-wide compendium of federal assistance programs. [www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)

## Funding Recommendations Summary

As mentioned in the previous section, the funding allocated from the general fund to parks and recreation in Pender County is relatively low when compared on a total and per capita basis to similar departments in the region and the state. Again, it is imperative that the recommendations in the last section be implemented in order to bring the Pender County parks and recreation budget up to par so that the department may be poised to provide parks facilities and recreational opportunities as the county's population continues to grow.

- The department should also develop a fees and charges policy that can be applied to the existing programs, as well as new programs as they are created. The policy should clearly address the level of general funds that will be used to fund each program, and also set revenue generating goals for individual programs, as well as the department as a whole.
- The department should explore hosting more special events such as marathons, triathlons, and sports tournaments that require entry fees. Such special events may be significant revenue generators for the department, and potentially increase tourism and revenues from sales tax in the county. Special events that are not sponsored or joint-facilitated by the county should cover all costs associated with operating the facilities, and should generate revenue over that cost. The department should also look at the current rates for facility rental and the true cost of operations, including field maintenance, lighting, trash collection, and other expenses to determine if current rates are adequate.
- The department should examine existing partnerships and continue to explore new partnership. By strengthening relationships with local agencies, other departments, schools, non-profit groups, and other organizations, the parks and recreation department may be able to provide services through allied partners and reduce costs. Agreements between the parks and recreation department and these external organizations should be outlined in the form of intergovernmental agreements (IGAs), memorandums of understanding (MOU), memorandums of agreement (MOA), or other similar agreements so that each party involved clearly understands their roles and responsibilities.
- The department should significantly increase grant applications to use existing funds as potential matches. Grants have been and will continue to be a beneficial and credible funding source for parks and recreation projects. A tremendous amount of grant opportunities exist from the state and federal governments, as well as the private sector, as overviewed above, and the department should concentrate on seeking out and applying for these grants as a supplement to the capital funding for the department rather than a primary revenue source.
- The department should consider financing fee-based facilities with revenue bonds, a naming rights program, a wetland banking program, and funding through regulatory tools. All of these tools are an additional method to generate additional capital funding for the department, as well as increase the department's sustainability.

## Appendix

### Public Input Survey Results

1. Please indicate how often you or any member of your family participated in the following activities during the past year (from January 2009 to December 2009):

Item	Daily	Once a week	A few times per week	Once a month	A few times per month	A few times per year	Once a year	Total
Softball	7.0% 9	9.4% 12	23.4% 30	0.8% 1	10.2% 13	24.2% 31	25.0% 32	128
Baseball/Tee Ball	11.9% 20	8.3% 14	38.7% 65	3.0% 5	4.2% 7	14.9% 25	19.0% 32	168
Basketball	12.8% 24	13.3% 25	36.2% 68	2.7% 5	10.6% 20	11.2% 21	13.3% 25	188
Racquetball		4.4% 2	13.3% 6	4.4% 2		13.3% 6	64.4% 29	45
Day/Summer Camp	11.0% 11	5.0% 5	5.0% 5	2.0% 2	5.0% 5	37.0% 37	35.0% 35	100
Volleyball	3.6% 3	9.5% 8	13.1% 11	3.6% 3	8.3% 7	33.3% 28	28.6% 24	84
Fishing Tournaments	2.2% 2	5.4% 5	2.2% 2	6.5% 6	2.2% 2	47.3% 44	34.4% 32	93
Aerobics/Exercise	23.1% 37	11.3% 18	40.0% 64	5.0% 8	8.1% 13	6.9% 11	5.6% 9	160
Tennis	3.0% 3	8.1% 8	16.2% 16	9.1% 9	12.1% 12	32.3% 32	19.2% 19	99
Cooking Classes	1.6% 1	4.7% 3	4.7% 3	4.7% 3	3.1% 2	32.8% 21	48.4% 31	64
Tetherball		2.8% 1	8.3% 3	5.6% 2	2.8% 1	19.4% 7	61.1% 22	36
Photography	8.3% 10	15.8% 19	28.3% 34	9.2% 11	16.7% 20	10.0% 12	11.7% 14	120
Surfing	1.1% 1	8.8% 8	11.0% 10	8.8% 8	13.2% 12	34.1% 31	23.1% 21	91
Disc Golf	4.5%	2.3%	6.8%	4.5%	4.5%	20.5%	56.8%	44

	2	1	3	2	2	9	25	
Ballet		28.9% 11	7.9% 3		5.3% 2	7.9% 3	50.0% 19	38
Yoga	9.0% 6	17.9% 12	17.9% 12	6.0% 4	11.9% 8	13.4% 9	23.9% 16	67
Bike Races	5.3% 3	3.5% 2	8.8% 5	8.8% 5	10.5% 6	24.6% 14	38.6% 22	57
Water Skiing	1.7% 1	5.2% 3	5.2% 3	6.9% 4	20.7% 12	32.8% 19	27.6% 16	58
Canoeing/Kayaking	1.0% 1	5.8% 6	11.7% 12	5.8% 6	20.4% 21	40.8% 42	14.6% 15	103
Marathon	2.4% 1		2.4% 1			26.8% 11	68.3% 28	41
Art Classes	7.1% 5	18.6% 13	12.9% 9	2.9% 2	10.0% 7	18.6% 13	30.0% 21	70
Nature Hikes	3.0% 4	11.9% 16	6.7% 9	15.7% 21	12.7% 17	41.0% 55	9.0% 12	134
Kick Boxing	2.3% 1	9.1% 4	4.5% 2	4.5% 2	13.6% 6	20.5% 9	45.5% 20	44
Camping	1.5% 2		2.2% 3	10.4% 14	7.4% 10	58.5% 79	20.0% 27	135
Gymnastics	2.3% 1	25.6% 11	7.0% 3	2.3% 1	11.6% 5	18.6% 8	32.6% 14	43
Cheerleading	15.3% 9	10.2% 6	33.9% 20		5.1% 3	13.6% 8	22.0% 13	59
Shag Dancing		4.9% 2	4.9% 2	7.3% 3	12.2% 5	36.6% 15	34.1% 14	41
Skateboarding	20.0% 17	7.1% 6	21.2% 18	5.9% 5	12.9% 11	17.6% 15	15.3% 13	85
Bicycling	18.3% 31	10.7% 18	30.8% 52	3.6% 6	17.2% 29	14.2% 24	5.3% 9	169
Dog Obedience Classes	5.7% 3	7.5% 4	7.5% 4	5.7% 3		30.2% 16	43.4% 23	53
Special Olympics		3.0%				24.2%	72.7%	33

		1				8	24	
Swimming Lessons	4.1% 3	17.8% 13	11.0% 8	1.4% 1	8.2% 6	31.5% 23	26.0% 19	73
Flag Football	5.1% 4	12.8% 10	33.3% 26	3.8% 3	11.5% 9	15.4% 12	17.9% 14	78
Soccer	5.7% 6	6.6% 7	44.3% 47	3.8% 4	16.0% 17	12.3% 13	11.3% 12	106
Bocce Ball		2.1% 1	8.5% 4	4.3% 2	8.5% 4	42.6% 20	34.0% 16	47
Horseshoes	1.5% 1	4.6% 3	3.1% 2	6.2% 4	10.8% 7	50.8% 33	23.1% 15	65
After School Programs	24.7% 20	7.4% 6	18.5% 15	3.7% 3	11.1% 9	18.5% 15	16.0% 13	81
Rollerblading/Skating	5.8% 4	10.1% 7	14.5% 10	7.2% 5	14.5% 10	30.4% 21	17.4% 12	69
Golf	1.1% 1	9.7% 9	14.0% 13	12.9% 12	10.8% 10	35.5% 33	16.1% 15	93
Martial Arts Classes	7.1% 3	16.7% 7	26.2% 11	2.4% 1	4.8% 2	16.7% 7	26.2% 11	42
Art Show or Festival	0.8% 1	0.8% 1	0.8% 1	5.8% 7		76.0% 92	15.7% 19	121
Family Reunions	0.8% 1			2.3% 3	1.5% 2	36.2% 47	59.2% 77	130
Fishing	3.7% 6	8.5% 14	11.6% 19	13.4% 22	22.0% 36	34.1% 56	6.7% 11	164
Use Fitness Trails	5.7% 6	9.4% 10	14.2% 15	9.4% 10	17.9% 19	30.2% 32	13.2% 14	106
Kite Flying	1.4% 1	2.9% 2	2.9% 2	4.3% 3	7.1% 5	51.4% 36	30.0% 21	70
Water Aerobics	6.8% 3	6.8% 3	11.4% 5	6.8% 3	6.8% 3	22.7% 10	38.6% 17	44
Art/Crafts Classes	1.4% 1	8.1% 6	9.5% 7	5.4% 4	12.2% 9	36.5% 27	27.0% 20	74
Archery	2.2% 1	4.4% 3	11.1% 8	2.2% 1	15.6% 12	26.7% 21	37.8% 30	45

	1	2	5	1	7	12	17	
Lacrosse	3.3% 1	3.3% 1	10.0% 3	3.3% 1	10.0% 3	20.0% 6	50.0% 15	30
Boating/Sailing	2.3% 3	12.9% 17	18.2% 24	4.5% 6	23.5% 31	28.0% 37	10.6% 14	132
Senior Games			3.7% 1		7.4% 2	25.9% 7	63.0% 17	27
Senior Trips			3.4% 1		6.9% 2	34.5% 10	55.2% 16	29
Frisbee	3.6% 2	1.8% 1	12.7% 7	10.9% 6	9.1% 5	32.7% 18	29.1% 16	55
Attended a Concert		0.7% 1	0.7% 1	7.5% 10	3.7% 5	68.7% 92	18.7% 25	134
Horseback Riding	1.6% 1	6.5% 4	9.7% 6	4.8% 3	8.1% 5	37.1% 23	32.3% 20	62
Visited a Dog Park	3.6% 2	7.1% 4	7.1% 4	12.5% 7	8.9% 5	28.6% 16	32.1% 18	56
Shooting Sports	2.9% 2	5.9% 4	7.4% 5	13.2% 9	23.5% 16	27.9% 19	19.1% 13	68
Pottery Classes			9.5% 4	2.4% 1		26.2% 11	61.9% 26	42
Reading Outdoors	1.8% 2	9.0% 10	29.7% 33	7.2% 8	19.8% 22	23.4% 26	9.0% 10	111
Swimming in a Pool	8.3% 16	6.7% 13	26.9% 52	5.7% 11	17.1% 33	29.5% 57	5.7% 11	193
Walked in a Nature Area	4.4% 8	12.8% 23	11.7% 21	15.6% 28	11.7% 21	38.9% 70	5.0% 9	180
Visited a Greenway	3.7% 2	13.0% 7	3.7% 2	13.0% 7	14.8% 8	24.1% 13	27.8% 15	54
Jogging/Running	16.9% 22	6.9% 9	33.1% 43	7.7% 10	14.6% 19	12.3% 16	8.5% 11	130
Eating Lunch in a Park	0.6% 1	6.0% 10	9.6% 16	14.4% 24	13.2% 22	44.9% 75	11.4% 19	167
Picnicking with Family	0.6% 1	6.3% 10	3.8% 6	13.8% 23	8.8% 14	56.0% 92	10.7% 17	159

	1	10	6	22	14	89	17	
Picnicking with Groups		4.0% 4	3.0% 3	6.9% 7	8.9% 9	60.4% 61	16.8% 17	101
Shuffleboard					8.7% 2	17.4% 4	73.9% 17	23
Bingo	2.2% 1	4.4% 2	2.2% 1	4.4% 2	11.1% 5	33.3% 15	42.2% 19	45
Boy/Girl Scouts	3.7% 3	40.7% 33	14.8% 12	3.7% 3	8.6% 7	12.3% 10	16.0% 13	81
Badminton		4.5% 2	2.3% 1	4.5% 2	13.6% 6	34.1% 15	40.9% 18	44
Bowling	1.4% 2	4.9% 7	2.1% 3	9.1% 13	10.5% 15	60.8% 87	11.2% 16	143
Billiards	2.5% 2	1.3% 1	5.1% 4	8.9% 7	16.5% 13	48.1% 38	17.7% 14	79
Playing Cards/Games	2.7% 4	11.6% 17	16.4% 24	11.6% 17	26.7% 39	26.7% 39	4.1% 6	146
Playing at a Playground	8.1% 13	8.1% 13	17.5% 28	12.5% 20	30.0% 48	18.1% 29	5.6% 9	160
Bird/Nature Watching	13.1% 11	7.1% 6	10.7% 9	9.5% 8	21.4% 18	25.0% 21	13.1% 11	84
Dance Classes		16.7% 11	10.6% 7	9.1% 6	15.2% 10	16.7% 11	31.8% 21	66
Walking along a Trail	6.2% 10	11.1% 18	13.0% 21	9.9% 16	24.1% 39	29.6% 48	6.2% 10	162
Other	25.0% 9	11.1% 4	2.8% 1	5.6% 2	13.9% 5	8.3% 3	33.3% 12	36
Average %	5.7%	8.4%	14.7%	7.1%	12.3%	30.9%	20.9%	6,857.0

**2. Please indicate which of the following activities listed above you would like to see provided by Pender County (check all that apply):**

Item	Count	Percent %
Walking Trails	169	55.41%
Basketball	168	55.08%
Playgrounds	163	53.44%
Baseball/Tee Ball	150	49.18%
Nature Areas	147	48.20%
Swimming Pool	146	47.87%
Softball	131	42.95%
Bicycling	127	41.64%
Nature Hikes	126	41.31%
Swimming Lessons	126	41.31%
Day/Summer Camp	116	38.03%
Fitness Trails	115	37.70%
Picnicking Areas for Groups	114	37.38%
After School Programs	113	37.05%
Concerts	109	35.74%
Volleyball	109	35.74%
Tennis	105	34.43%
Camping	102	33.44%
Fishing	102	33.44%
Picnic Areas in a Park	100	32.79%
Picnic Areas for Families	100	32.79%
Aerobics/Exercise	97	31.80%

Jogging/Running	97	31.80%
Areas for Family Reunions	94	30.82%
Soccer	94	30.82%
Dog Parks	87	28.52%
Bowling	86	28.20%
Canoeing/Kayaking	86	28.20%
Flag Football	85	27.87%
Fishing Tournaments	84	27.54%
Art Classes	82	26.89%
Art/Crafts Classes	81	26.56%
Art Show or Festival	77	25.25%
Bird/Nature Watching	77	25.25%
Cooking Classes	77	25.25%
Photography	76	24.92%
Horseback Riding	73	23.93%
Yoga	71	23.28%
Boating/Sailing	70	22.95%
Skateboarding	68	22.30%
Boy/Girl Scouts	66	21.64%
Bike Races	63	20.66%
Dance Classes	63	20.66%
Gymnastics	63	20.66%
Rollerblading/Skating	63	20.66%
Pottery Classes	61	20.00%
Cheerleading	59	19.34%
Dog Obedience Classes	57	18.69%

Martial Arts Classes	56	18.36%
Golf	54	17.70%
Reading Outdoors	54	17.70%
Archery	53	17.38%
Shag Dancing	52	17.05%
Surfing	51	16.72%
Playing Cards/Games	50	16.39%
Greenways	49	16.07%
Shooting Sports	48	15.74%
Bingo	47	15.41%
Special Olympics	47	15.41%
Water Aerobics	46	15.08%
Racquetball	45	14.75%
Kite Flying	44	14.43%
Senior Games	42	13.77%
Disc Golf	40	13.11%
Frisbee	40	13.11%
Horseshoes	39	12.79%
Senior Trips	36	11.80%
Badminton	34	11.15%
Kick Boxing	31	10.16%
Water Skiing	31	10.16%
Marathon	30	9.84%
Ballet	26	8.52%
Billiards	24	7.87%
Bocce Ball	24	7.87%

Lacrosse	23	7.54%
Tetherball	16	5.25%
Shuffleboard	13	4.26%
Football	4	1.31%
Adult education classes	1	0.33%
bike trails	1	0.33%
Chess	1	0.33%
community swimming pool in Burgaw	1	0.33%
electric remote control planes	1	0.33%
Fitness area/ Cardio / Weights	1	0.33%
flying field for hobby planes	1	0.33%
Flying model airplanes	1	0.33%
football, soccer, baseball in Hampstead	1	0.33%
Horseback riding trails	1	0.33%
i would like to see them on the EAST side of the county	1	0.33%
indoor soccer, field hockey, dodgeball	1	0.33%
manmade lake with a walking trail around it	1	0.33%
model airplane flying	1	0.33%
More access for RC Airplanes.	1	0.33%
More public use Tennis Courts	1	0.33%
MOVIE THEATER	1	0.33%
movies in Soundside Park, Surf City	1	0.33%
nature trails for mountain bikes	1	0.33%
Off Road mountain bike trails	1	0.33%
Outdoor fitness class/group	1	0.33%
R/C Model Planes	1	0.33%

Radio Control Aircraft	1	0.33%
rail trails	1	0.33%
RC Plane Classes	1	0.33%
recreation center with pool and gym for community also afterschool boys and girls club	1	0.33%
Recreational center (like YMCA)	1	0.33%
Remote Control Electric Airplane Flying	1	0.33%
scrapbooking and stamping (papercrafts) classes and crops- also youth groups of all different kinds-more parks, including 1 that allows skateboarding and skating. - group trips for seniors and other adults and families, whether they be a bus trip, or carpooling	1	0.33%
Swim Team	1	0.33%
Tennis, Summer Day camp, girl scouts/boy scouts	1	0.33%
theatre	1	0.33%
these activities on east side!	1	0.33%
Topsail High School Fields	1	0.33%
Water access / boat ramps	1	0.33%
We need many improvements in Hampstead near Schools	1	0.33%
Womens Adult Softball League	1	0.33%

**3. Have you or members of your household participated in any recreation programs offered within Pender County in the last year (January 2009-December 2009)? If so, indicate by checking all that apply:**

Item	Count	Percent %
Topsail Basketball Association	83	39.34%
Topsail Ball Club	75	35.55%
Burgaw Dixie Youth	42	19.91%
East Pender Pop Warner Association	40	18.96%
Port City Soccer Club	40	18.96%
Pender Youth Basketball Association	39	18.48%
Pender Youth Football & Cheerleading Association	38	18.01%
Pender Youth Soccer Association	26	12.32%
Topsail Girls Softball Organization	18	8.53%
Willard Outreach Organization	15	7.11%
Maple Hill Resource Center	13	6.16%
South Pender Pop Warner Association	9	4.27%
Joint Community Development Center	4	1.90%

**4. How would you rate the programs that you or any member of your household participated in during the last year?**

Item	Count	Percent %
Good	122	54.22%
Excellent	53	23.56%
Fair	44	19.56%
Poor	6	2.67%

**5. How often do you or a member of your household visit any park in Pender County?**

Item	Count	Percent %
A few times per year	76	24.20%
A few times per week	75	23.89%
A few times per month	52	16.56%
Once a week	37	11.78%
Once a month	35	11.15%
Never	20	6.37%
Once a year	14	4.46%
Daily	5	1.59%

**6. How often do you or a member of your household participate in the programs and services provided by Pender County Parks and Recreation?**

Item	Count	Percent %
A few times per year	90	29.41%
Never	66	21.57%
A few times per week	56	18.30%
A few times per month	28	9.15%
Once a week	25	8.17%
Once a year	23	7.52%
Once a month	14	4.58%
Daily	4	1.31%

**7. In order to generate needed revenue to improve park maintenance and diversify/increase recreation program offerings by Pender County, please indicate ALL options that you would support for increasing funding for parks and recreation:**

Item	Count	Percent %
Build more facilities that generate revenue	188	62.46%
Sponsor more tournaments	155	51.50%
Charge non-residents higher fees	131	43.52%
Increase rental fees for park facilities	69	22.92%
Charge an annual park user fee	64	21.26%
Increase program user fees	46	15.28%
Taxes	4	1.33%
impact fees	1	0.33%
% of tax revenue	1	0.33%
advertise current programs more for more participation and usage of existing facilities.	1	0.33%
Annual Summer Fund Raiser and sell food at the park	1	0.33%
Ask for donations from the public	1	0.33%
bond referendum	1	0.33%
BUILD A MOVIE THEATER	1	0.33%
Build a recreational center (YMCA) & charge member fees	1	0.33%
Cash based services at parks to raise money	1	0.33%
Charge small fee per special events .Seniors& students less.	1	0.33%
community pool and indoor basketball charge admission	1	0.33%
community sponsors and grants	1	0.33%
concerts etc	1	0.33%
County employees waste time not working in parks	1	0.33%
Development impact fees	1	0.33%

economy is too bad to charge more for anything	1	0.33%
Encourage tourism via facilities	1	0.33%
Enhanced concessions; Raffles; increased drive for donations	1	0.33%
Fee in leu of open space to fund regional park efforts	1	0.33%
Grants	1	0.33%
Grants, County Budget	1	0.33%
Hampstead would provide funds for parks!	1	0.33%
Have annual/semi-annual fundraisers	1	0.33%
have fund raisers and ask for donations	1	0.33%
i think some program user fees can be raised like maybe the price of a spot or booth at a fair,but i do not think that any program for youth and seniors or using the park should be used.selling drinks and snacks alone can raise lots of revenue.why give that to an outside vendor.we could have a very large fair.pender county fair.bring in lots of rides and game booths from a group that travels. some food vendors could be allowed in with limitations on type of food and how many,but the local groups,schools,fire depts.,churches,would have their own yearly booths.when i lived in pa. in the poconos the county was just like pender,great scools,growing fast,and this fair,called the west end fair in brodheadsville,pa. was so successful. some days the rides were by the ticket,somedays it was ride all day. there were bleachers in a field for concerts,tractor pulls,demolition derbys etc.. this area was used for sports and festivals throughout the rest of the year. the fair also did agriculture,and lasted aprox. 2 weeks	1	0.33%
I'm not aware of any Pender County parks in the eastern part of the County.	1	0.33%
Increase taxes	1	0.33%
increase taxes/ impact fees!	1	0.33%
Let Topsail keep and use more of its Tax money!	1	0.33%
NEED BADLY - INDOOR BASKETBALL FACILITIES	1	0.33%
NO TAX INCREASES	1	0.33%
none get out of recreation business not a government function	1	0.33%
NOT SURE	1	0.33%
not sure how you charge groups like coastal soccer and Pop warner FB	1	0.33%
PARKING FEE	1	0.33%

Provide more facilites for Pop Warner Activities so you can get in on the annual user fee.	1	0.33%
R/C model Airplanes	1	0.33%
reallocate tax revenues	1	0.33%
reduce spenditures applies for below also	1	0.33%
see more fundraising events in community and businesses	1	0.33%
SEEK CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS	1	0.33%
Sponosr MORE concerts	1	0.33%
sponsor concert for local music groups and charge a fee	1	0.33%
Sponsor football programs on Topsail side and charge	1	0.33%
Such as concessions at the beach to generate revenue as in Onslow Co.	1	0.33%
Taxes Already TOO HIGH!!!! We need some who knows how to handle money properly and stop nickle and diming the people to death	1	0.33%
whatever other counties do; this is the only location that I have lived (4 states) that has such a non-existant park and rec; never had to pay to use any other parks and recs in other states....	1	0.33%

**8. Please indicate your top choice for funding needed park renovations, new park development, and other capital improvements:**

Item	Count	Percent %
Impose impact fees (paid by developers for impacts brought by new construction)	157	55.28%
Borrow money to make necessary improvements and pay back over a 20- or 25- year period	109	38.38%
Increase property tax to fund parks and recreation operations and maintenance	18	6.34%

**9. Please check all the ways that you learn about parks and recreation programs in Pender County.**

Item	Count	Percent %
Friends/Neighbors	211	68.06%
Newspaper	161	51.94%
Flyers/Brochures	119	38.39%
Website	89	28.71%
Banners	72	23.23%
Parks and Recreation Staff	46	14.84%
Radio	44	14.19%
Program Guide	34	10.97%
school	4	1.29%
Schools	4	1.29%
public school	2	0.65%
i try to involve my kids in all sports thats in season to keep them busy	1	0.32%
school	1	0.32%
about the only things i really hear about is fesivals on the news or papers and i get emails or snailmails on the sports my sons have been involved in over the years. a lot of things,i don't hear about until it's too late	1	0.32%
all above	1	0.32%
Coaches at Topsail High and Pop Warner Associates	1	0.32%
Don't usually find info on website	1	0.32%
family members living In Pender Cty.	1	0.32%
From friends	1	0.32%
I have not heard of anything they offer	1	0.32%
I have only heard about the Kiwanis Park	1	0.32%
I'm not certain we have programs in Hampstead	1	0.32%

Kiwanis	1	0.32%
Library	1	0.32%
my kids	1	0.32%
news media	1	0.32%
NONE - do we have any programs????	1	0.32%
none--we live on the East side of the county	1	0.32%
Not really applicable for Hampstead	1	0.32%
PC Parks is not visable at all.	1	0.32%
Pender County only focuses on Burgaw!	1	0.32%
recreation programs	1	0.32%
school newsletters	1	0.32%
sons been playing for 10 years	1	0.32%
they need more visibility, don't know how to find out about programs	1	0.32%
Topsail Electric Flyers Ass.	1	0.32%
Topsail Schools	1	0.32%
TV	1	0.32%
was not aware of any parks or rec in Pender	1	0.32%
word of mouth	1	0.32%
Word of mouth while at events	1	0.32%

**10. How would you prefer to register for parks and recreation programs?**

Item	Count	Percent %
Online registration	234	74.76%
Mail-in registration form	45	14.38%
In person at the Pender County Parks and Recreation office in Burgaw	34	10.86%

**11. How long have you lived in Pender County?**

Item	Count	Percent %
More than 15 years	120	37.62%
1-5 years	73	22.88%
6-10 years	68	21.32%
11-15 years	48	15.05%
Less than 1 year	10	3.13%

**12. What is your zip code?**

Item	Count	Percent %
28443	155	47.40%
28457	35	10.70%
28425	32	9.79%
28478	32	9.79%
28421	16	4.89%
28435	16	4.89%
28445	16	4.89%
28411	13	3.98%
28454	12	3.67%

**13. What is your gender?**

Item	Count	Percent %
Female	204	64.56%
Male	112	35.44%

**14. Please indicate the number of persons living in your household including yourself that are in the following age groups:**

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 +	Average	Total
Under Age 10	47.4% 63	39.1% 52	9.8% 13	3.8% 5					1.7	133
Age 10-19	41.3% 74	42.5% 76	11.7% 21	3.4% 6	1.1% 2				1.8	179
Age 20-24	71.8% 28	23.1% 9	2.6% 1	2.6% 1					1.4	39
Age 25-34	33.3% 18	63.0% 34	1.9% 1	1.9% 1					1.7	54
Age 35-44	42.9% 70	56.4% 92				0.6% 1			1.6	163
Age 45-54	58.3% 67	40.0% 46	1.7% 2						1.4	115
Age 55-64	55.8% 29	44.2% 23							1.4	52
Age 65+	51.4% 19	43.2% 16	2.7% 1	2.7% 1					1.6	37
Average %	47.7%	45.1%	5.1%	1.8%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6	772.0

**15. What was your annual household income for 2008?**

Item	Count	Percent %
\$50,000 - \$74,999	83	27.04%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	68	22.15%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	57	18.57%
Over \$100,000	54	17.59%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	30	9.77%
Under \$20,000	15	4.89%

**16. How would you describe your household?**

Item	Count	Percent %
Couple with children	210	65.42%
Couple	64	19.94%
Single Parent	24	7.48%
Individual	21	6.54%
Unrelated Adults	2	0.62%

**What types of special events would you like to see Pender County offer?**

Open Text Responses:
possibly have tournaments with neighboring counties--travel them would not be a big expense for players
offer grills in existing and future parks for people to cook on
Fishing and boating events
Triathlons and bike races, fishing tournaments, archery tournaments
Events that spotlight the great things our kids do, in schools and out.
Family oriented dances, non alcoholic events where there is an option for dance & kids' activities. this way the whole family can do what they like at the same location without danger associated with the usual dance atmosphere (drinking, etc).
More Tennis Sponsor Tournaments to raise money Topsail area needs more public use tennis courts.
music festivals in the summer theatre plays indoor or outdoor july the 4th street dancing
Concerts, fireworks, programs for school age children.
I have been involved with Pop Warner in the past with Football and Cheerleading. I would love to see a facility for football. It is very difficult to have practices on softball / baseball fields. My kids have been out now for 6 years. When they were in, there was government funding that the county had to upgrade the Burgaw location. As far as I know, nothing has ever been done. Another thing is that it would be great for our community (Rocky Point area) to have some sort of park / olympic pool & diving / practice grounds. I feel it is imperative that the county work to develop proper facilities for the kids / families of our communities to use. Families that participate together, stay together, and stay out of trouble. It is frustrating to see how long it is taking just to get some football / baseball fields done in Burgaw. I hope that the county persues and conquers building some proper facilities. I grew up in Florida. You should take a look at some of the park plans for ideas.

Any greenspace would be appreciated
None at this time
None at this time
<p>Please...Pender County DESPERATELY needs an aquatics center. We, along with other families, drive our children to Wilmington DAILY to participate on a swim team. We have no pool that will accomodate team competitions in Pender.</p> <p>Building a natatorium could generate income by opening it as a "club" with member annual dues. High Schools in Pender, Onslow and New Hanover could use the facility for competitions/practice. The Southeastern region of NC does not have a facility of this type. Teams from all over the state would be interested in hosting tournaments and competitions that could generate income.</p> <p>Please strongly consider partnering with the Pender County Schools and/or the YMCA of Wilmington on a project like this. I would be happy to serve on a committee, if needed.</p> <p>Thank you, Jayne Emma (<i>contact information removed for privacy purposes</i>) Please add me to your mailing list.</p>
I feel strongly that an aquatic center would not only benefit many, but would be a great source of revenue for the parks and recreation.
I really really want an off-road bike trail in Pender County.
Concerts - any catagory
Adult Softball league, geochaching club, and more oppportunities for the West Side of the County.
more concerts and theater events
<p>Guided bicycle tours of various areas of the county, 5-20 miles each.</p> <p>Guided hiking/nature/history tours...1-5 miles each.</p> <p>Family activity fairs to show what's available at county parks.</p>
Look at what Surf City has done with its park and recreational programs. Surf City is small compared to Pender County; however, it offers a lot more.
concerts
concerts
Organized programs and facilities for the youth in the County instead of our youth generating money to other counties for games and tournaments.
A Womens Adult Softball League
anything to keep our children out of the streets.
I would like to see baseball and softball facilties/complexs in Hampstead area that could host tournaments.
URGENLTLY NEED INDOOR BASKETBALL FACILITIES IN HAMPSTEAD AREA. ESPECIALLY IF THE CURRENT

AULIXIARLY GYM AT TOPSAIL IS ELIMINATED AND TURNED INTO CLASS ROOMS

Concerts, "Ball" Tournaments of all kinds, Football, Basketball, Softball and Baseball, Soccer, etc. Surfing and Fishing Tournaments as well. Anything to bring people from Wilmington and the surrounding areas to Hampstead and the Pender Co. area.

indoor site for sport use

Need more programs and recreation exposure in Eastern Pender County!!! Was very surprised not to find a youth basketball league near Hampstead sponsored by the county. Topsail B-ball Assoc practice facilities are substandard and unsafe for the kids! (Floors extremely slippery!)

BASKETBALL facility!!!!

Concerts. Carnivals, Food festival., family festival, concert for adults and children.

Anything! This is the FIRST town I have ever lived in where the Parks & Rec programs seem to be non-existent. Thank goodness for Kiwanis!

Military band concerts, fireworks

Park

Counseling for abusive behaviors.

Summer kid camps

Kiwanas park is the only park we have and I am not certain there are many events held at the park

sponsor championship games, all-star tournaments, etc.

boy, I wish we could just have SOMETHING !! Everywhere else I have lived (5 states) they have had everything from sports/exercise classes/pools/martial arts classes/playgrounds/concerts.....this is the only place I have lived where nothing is offered; other places charge a nominal fee for instruction/concerts/pool passes but not for use of the park for picnics or sports.....

football fields, raquetball courts, tennis courts, basketball courts, hiking and jogging trails

The Topsail/Hampstead area is grossly neglected. Even this survey illustrates the slant. The majority of the people and tax money is in Topsail. Who would want to go to Burgaw to register? Give Topsail it's fair percent of the money and the problems will take care of themselves.

a park in places other than Burgaw

More monetary support for school sports programs. We compete with counties that support their teams,

few special events needed with the many leagues that do/will use the grounds

it makes no difference to me, unless you are going to expand out of the Burgaw area and include the Eastern side of the County (you know, the part of the county that most of the money comes from, but doesn't come back to for our kids!)

A partnership with schools that would represent a true community approach to developing and maintaining resources to be shared by all and that would decrease segregation of services and promote community unity and meaningful collaboration.

Earth Day festival, fourth of July or Memorial Day celebration, summer camps for kids

Model aircraft Fly-in  
Activities fair  
local parks and recreation hearings/ meeting  
Introduction to R/C flying

I enjoy watching the model Airplanes fly and model boats in a pond.  
Soccer, basketball, softball and family picnics.

Softball Tourn., Soccer Tourn, Senior Games, Facilities on the West Side

fishing tournaments, sandcastle contests, summer concerts/family nights

The only County park in Hampstead is the run down baseball field on HW-17 which receive NO attention. Kiwanis is was made possible by the Kiwanis club and community. Pender County provides no visible support.

Keep Topsail Basketball & Softball programs available with practices and games still available @ the School locations. I.e. gyms, softball fields, etc.

need public tennis resources and boating access

Would love to a flying field for Remote control models have been flying model airplanes at Kiwanis park over 2 years we formed a club about 25 of us and the attention we get from other park users has been great also got a few members from spectators at park.

concert series in the park

Look to other successful planned communities all over the country to model our growth and planning

Hampstead/Topsail is deperate for parks/facilities. I am actually surprised there is a parks and rec department, since it seems nonexistent in Hampstead.

Walk/run events  
in Hampstead since that is where the majority of the population resides

n/a

Concerts  
Sports Tournaments & Meets

more options (especially for football and baseball) in scotts hill area.

We would like to see more things developed on the east side of the county, Hampstead.

i wrote about the fair above,which i think could be a huge success for the whole county. i would like to see more activities for our youth and seniors.an adult ed program,and definitely group trips. concerts or movies in the parks,but we need those parks before we don't have the land to do it.these kids need something to do.this is so

important.
Fastpitch tournaments Sand Volleyball tournaments (adult) Soccer tournaments  Better facilities=Better tournaments
Family oriented
Annual Redfish Tournament I think would generate a lot of revenue.
More projects to improve the environment...more beach clean-up and recycling events.
Marathon. Any activity that can get kids more outdoors and not in front of the tv.
more activities for kids/teenagers we are in need of walling trails in Eastern Pender
Beach music concerts
I think Pender County needs for for our youth and adults in this area, without having to drive into Wilmington.
Things checked above. more concerts, arts classes (ie martial, studio,dance, etc.),
The kind of activities on the survey in the Hampstead area. Would love to have a local "community center" such as Holly Ridge and Surf City have, with a variety of classes and programs.
Senior activities on the EAST side of HWY I-40
Pender needs a place where kids can play basketball. We are in need of courts for the kids because it gets really frustrating when we have to use schools that don't want us there and gyms that have no heating and air for the kids because the county don't want to pay the expenses.
Mentoring for sports. Sort of tutoring/big brother type programs. Bike paths. Community Pool. A community center in Hampstead like Surf City Community Center. All we have is a Hampstead Community Bldg. and it is small, only for meetings and small gatherings w/ no sports programs. A YMCA would be great.
Tom Chapin concert & other concerts Festivals Dance classes (ballroom, shag, latin) Bball hoops/nature trail at Kiwanis park Better facilities for youth basketball
help provide more fields to practice since schools do no have adauqate practice fields for sports and lights on baseball fields and maybe charge usuage fot clubs, schools and organizations that use existing fields to practice on

Concerts that are culturally based and more activities that get the entire county to come together.
Summer in the Park Concerts when kids are out of school for the summer.
I would like to see them offer more sporting events. Like baseball and basketball tournaments for companies and organizations.
More events and community support in the Burgaw area for our LOCAL schools. Just about all the events and festivals proceeds that take place at Poplar Grove, Hampstead and Topsail partly or fully go to there schools.
I just moved to Pender County from New Hanover. I would like to see classes (Dance, Art/Crafts, etc.) and dog parks! I visit the New Hanover dog parks weekly.
MORE FESTIVALS, AND PROVIDE MORE SOCCER FACILITIES
More summer programs offered in Burgaw for children of all ages. The hours are usually 2 hr programs.
Boat ramp in the Hampstead area.
expand SpringFest and change date so it's not so close to BB Fest; concerts, family activities on the courthouse square
More Summer Day Camps.
anything we can get
County Fair
Special olympics Concert in the park
i would like to see pender county get out of parks & rec, it is not something a government should provide
Concerts in the park
No need for special events. Need to improve on basic recreational facilities first.
anything fun for kids like a field day.
Parks
Basketball tournaments
Pop warners summer Basketball leagues.
Summer basketball & football camps
Kids mentor classes (careers) Senior classes (dance and educational)
Intramural sports

Intramural sports
Gymnastics
Swimming lessons Rubber Surface walking trail Support of Willard Outreach programs & facilities
classes, activities, & programs. (i.e. pottery, photography)
softball tournaments for all ages
I live in the west side of pender county. We have no kind of parks and the basketball goals in area have boards over them in which they dont give the key. My kids participate with pyba they give them a hard time with using the gym in Atkinson . If it wasnt for pyba their would really be no activities on the west side of pender county. I would love to see Pender County offer a gym pool and afterschool center in which the fees charged would allow the center to pay for itself . It would be nice to see something in the Atkinson and Currie communities
I would like to see an indoor basketball court so we do not have to use the schools , and also a football field for recreation
indoor gym
basketball, softball, baseball.
Concerts,outdoor summer activities/athletics for youth and adults....especially basketball facilities,a public pool...maybe more tennis courts,bocce ball areas etc.
na
need more options to bike safely in the county, more signs to make motorist aware of bikers have rights to the same roads every day
Bike races and concerts
Eco tourism. Boating events . Community involved cleanups of beaches and natural areas
Fishing tournaments have the potential to generate a lot of income. I would also love to receive a periodic electronic newsletter detailing what activities are occurring when. I didn't realize that the county sponsored sports other than soccer.
Plays theater Add grills to park for public use Concerts
Basketball, cycling
a place where seniors and handicapped people can go to fish and picnic...in lower part of county- south of rocky point where ther is access to river that is just south of pauls place.

Our household interests are horses, fishing, shooting sports, nature walks/trails, cooking, attending festivals. Anything involving these interests would be great!!

We would like to see a park in Rocky Point

more function supporting the basketballpayers

swimming lessons  
basketball  
pottery  
volleyball  
tennis

basketball

Senior Activities

any program to help our children

***Is there any area that we missed in the survey or any additional comments you would like to submit? Here is an opportunity to have your voice heard!***

Open Text Responses:

Movies in the park

We'd like more sidewalks and bike lanes. We don't find the area to be very pedestrian/ biker friendly.

Providing services for young families. Hosting birthing classes, hosting family days with activities for young children, etc.

Need activities for family to do together.

No

No

I think I said it all earlier. I keep telling my husband that if I were to ever win a lottery I would build a park for our community. He thinks I'm crazy, but having grown up in Florida and participated in Recreation programs and use the parks almost daily; it is very important to me. There are memories I have that would not be there without the parks I had grown up around.

I think the effort being put forth by the Parks and Recreation Dept. is appreciated and will be very well accepted by those who live here and those it attracts. A great thing in my opinion is if a track (track and field kind was built at Burgaw Middle School that was open to the public during non school hours (Very expensive but great for everyone including knees)

None at this time

Concentrate on making more areas, such as Burgaw, pedestrian friendly- adding more sidewalks should be a

priority.
"If you build it, they will come!"
A rail-trail would provide multi-use off-road recreation and promote local tourism and small businesses.
Do more to promote park resources and activities: brochures, media articles, tours. This is an extremely insular county; citizens don't know what's available.
make the park a place that kids can and want to go to instead of them getting into trouble.
We have participated in New Hanover P&R programs because they are not available in Pender.
Resolve tennis access issue at top sail high school
Increasing activities in Pender County (Burgaw ) area would be a wonderful enhancement for this city. We have watched Topsoil's development and we are all in the same county; however, we seem distant. Its time to support the youth development and not hinder an opportunity to give our children who will become the men/women of the future an outlet. The survey should include an outreach program for children. We have many people in the community who have inspired businesses that involve youth but have found that Pender County is no in support of functions to support positive activities that bring the community and people together.
Household description should include RELATED adults
na
what about a YMCA in Hampstead. It is a great family center and offers all of what you have been asking about.
I would like to see whatever facilities come about physically connected some how. Maybe a network of walking/bike paths that are safely removed from car traffic and are wide enough for multi-use.
littler in the parks
Hampstead is in desperate need for an indoor gymnasium facility. Recreational activities are the mercy of the area schools. With over 350 participants in Topsail Basketball Association, we do not have the appropriate facilities to practice and play games. As the league has grown approx. 50% in two years, we only expect growth to continue and the League can not physically accommodate upwards of 350 students ranging in age from 5 to 18 yrs. old.
There was no place for what kind of facilities were needed i.e. fields, pools, complexes, courts ,gyms.
Rumor has it in Topsail area that the School Board is wanting to change the Auxillary Gym into classrooms for the next school year. This would be terrible not only for Parks & Rec programs, but once they take that gym away we will never get it back. It can be used for Science Fair Programs, Art Exhibits, Plays and yes of course Physical Education in Middle School so that the girls and boys can have separate classes. This would be a travesty if this were to happen. Please Pender County Parks & Recreation help Hampstead fight for this gym to remain USEFUL. I am sure there are at least one mobile trailers on the school grounds and I have heard there are several other unused trailers at neighboring elementary schools that could be much better utilized and we already have them in our possession and it does not need to be "re-built".
We participate in more New Hanover P&R programs because Pender does not offer!

Eastern Pender County seems to be left out of recreation activities sponsored by the county. Surprised not to find a county sponsored youth Basketball league nor indoor recreation facilities, even YMCA's.

The Topsail basketball association needs more places to practice and the community needs something like surf city's community center. Kiwanas park is fantastic.

We played with Coastal Pop Warner Football Association- which was not listed on the choices.

We would love to see programs offered - especially in the Hampstead area where most of the tax income is generated. It has always been unbelievable to me that we hardly even have a parks & rec department or program when I have lived in several smaller towns in other states that offer MUCH,, MUCH more! Kiwanis has done an amazing job and from what the public sees --- they are Hampstead's only parks and rec provider.

Find some way to advertise what is available and where. How about a booklet show all locations of centers and programs available.

We need some facilities for the pop warner teams to be able to host home games with bleachers at Kiwanis Park

Public Awareness about Pender. More things like Spot Festival, but in different areas. Need a better hotel in Burgaw so people have a place to stay coming down I40.

Please consider providing parks to people in Hampstead.

football not just flag football

what about combining school budget and parks and rec like new hanover county ? when visiting other school complexes, ours pales in comparison...(Ashley high).....Ogden park is making a killing by getting pender residents to pay for it's upkeep.....

YES! The Topsail Pirate Pop Warner program and all the Topsail school sports programs that are lacking the necessary fields and courts for football, baseball and basketball.

Youth sports are huge to a child's mental and physical growth. We have struggled in Topsail school system area for ten years finding ball fields for baseball, softball, and football. We played football in WILmington and Jacksonville because there were no fields. When you look north and south at Brunswick, New Hanover and Onslow, there is one question that lingers...what happened to supporting the kids in Pender, and especially eastern Pender County. I intend to live here for a long time and I came from Beaufort and Carteret Counties previously, which there were no lack of county sponsored fields and leagues. I served on league commissions during my children's early years and it was the parents who performed and paid for a lot if not all of the field maintenance, equipment, officials, and improvements. We need to invest in children to be physically and mentally strong for life's challenges; team is key. Topsail High School is beautiful, but sports is left behind with no new fields or fieldhouse. There is great opportunity to support sports in football if we only had an efficient concession, sanitary restrooms and a field house. All around good fields and facilities would breed good opportunities to host tournaments, etc. Football with the right tools could raise tremendous funds. Thanks!

more fields that would allow for football as well as soccer, etc.

It is hard to feel represented by Burgaw, when Burgaw is environmentally different than down here at the coast. I do believe the county does the best they can do with the resources that are available, but I don't want my taxes going up.

Ummm...maybe more funding for our kids' sports in the Hampstead area. It's utterly ridiculous that so little is

done in this area. When I see the beautiful parks and ball fields that other areas have, and how little ours have, it really hurts my heart for the opportunities that my kids could have had. Additionally, where's the youth football in our area?? We have to go to Wilmington and pay additionaly fees b/c we don't pay NH County tax. We pay Pender County taxes, which are rarely returned in any form to our area.

Thanks to the Kiwanis Club we finally have a park in Hampstead. As far as I know we have no parks and recreation facilities here. I would love to see a communy pool in our area for all to enjoy. I grew up in a town in upstate New York that had a public park and community pool. It was a great gathering place for families, swim lessons, and swim teams. I think it would be a great addition to the eastern part of the county. Thanks.

I am a member of the Topsail Electric Flyers Association. We currently have approximately 27 members, most of which fly R/C aircraft every Sunday at Kiwanis Park in Hampstead. Many of us seniors fly quite often during the week as well. We consider ourselves good stewards of the park by policing the grounds and reporting malicious activities to the authorities when necessary. We have several young flyers and we are constantly working to introduce kids and adults to the hobby. Our club provides our own liability coverage through the Academy of Model Aeronautics and after following our strict safety rules, we have not had an incident in the 2 years that we have been flying at the park. As folks come to the park to fly for the first time, we take them in, offer them flying and safety instruction, and get them hooked up with proper liability insurance by having them join the AMA prior to joining our club.

We truly appreciate the support of the Pender County Parks Department in allowing our club to use these facilities. We can only hope that we have handled ourselves in a way that will encourage Pender County to incorporate our needs in the future development of the park facilities. We have not asked for any special facilities or services. We only ask that the future planning of the facility incorporates our groups minimal requirements as well. Most of our members use the park over 100 times per year and would like to see that every kid that is curious about flying, gets a chance to build and fly an airplane.

THANKS

Describing household should have a space for Grandparents staying with family. I am a grandparent staying with my children and grandchildren

Target Areas that need something now

Adult education classes would be great covering crafts to computers to semi professional classes to woodworking.

Yes. Simply by looking at your survey its clear the County is focused on Burgaw. Hampstead/Topsail pays the majority of the taxes and gets nothing in return. The Topsail Pop Warner organization was left off the survey. The RC club was left off. We are desparate for more football fields, baseball fields and basketball courts.

Kiwanas have done a incredible job with their park. Walking Bike Paths Connecting Neighborhoods would be a huge benifit to the community as a whole, Hwy 17 is not pedestrian friendly. Topsail High school needs to be more open to youth wrestling. We need more Public access to the intercoastal waterway. Promtion of County and State park/recreation areas would be nice - where are they and what do they offer the public? Impose a requirement on Builders to provide a certain amount of public Green Space based on the size of their development, it's cheaper to do while they have the equipment on site cutting in roads and utilities.

With multiple(5) children playing baseball/softball in the spring it is very hard to be at 4 different fields and watch all them play. Need Kiwanis park to be complete because it is a great and safe place to enjoy the day and watch my kids play in one place. Thanks

I would like area to be provided for ra dio control electric aircraft at the Kiwanis Park. Now the Topsail Electric

Flyers Association with 21 members using part of the park when there is no organized sports played. We have individuals age 12- 68 years participating, Members use the park 4 or 5 days a week weather permitting. We try to promote interests in aviation for youth,

Would love a park in the vicinity of Cape Fear Elementary/Middle School This would be a great partnership with Schools and has enough area for nice trails etc

need an area devoted to just R/C model Planes we've help in keeping vandals out of park teenagers driving vehilces on soccer fields and drinking beer on park property we need this in our community its a great past time for young and old our youngest pilot is 9 years old our oldest is 67 we enjoy meeting at the park a few of our members are soccer coaches at same facility. Thank you Randy Aponte safety Officer T.E.F.A.

I would like to say that port city soccer group is wonderful! I am very happy with all aspects of the organization. TBC has some organizational issues and doesn't seem to be/or want to be involved in the community.

This is a golden opportunity for Pender County. We do not need to reinvent the wheel there are many communities across the country for young families and older generations alike that have been successfully planned. The villages in Orlando comes to mind but there are others that we have researched over the years that work. We need a central location with plenty of room for outdoor exercise and activities and an indoor space for meetings, activities perhaps concerts. Nature trails for running, hiking, walks with dogs and mountain bikes is a great way to bring families of all ages outdoors playing and spending quality time together.

I feel that Hampstead has been overlooked and it is past time to have some parks and activities. If it weren't for Kiwanis, Hampstead would have nothing....the county has made no effort to provide the much needed parks/activities.

I would really just like to see more funding for the Topsail Ball Club. It really is an amazing program that lacks the full funding it needs to grow exponentially. I am a volunteer for a tball and coach pitch team and I know that it is very hard to schedule games due to lack of space and equipment.

n/a

n/a

YMCA!  
Swimming facilities, more parks

More things to do in Hampstead

i miss so much having nothing available to me where i live.i've always had the oppurtunity to take adult education at the county schools.it provides friendship,education,and amusement.i've been to the spot festival and i don't get it.sitting under a tent and eating fish and drinking beer is not my idea of excitement. there are a few blowup things for the kids with enormous lines,and that whole plan has caused major accidents on 17.i always buy the fish,but then i leave. the shrimp festival in sneads ferry doesn't have anything either.there needs to be activities,and parks for young and old. there needs to be activities,festivals,trips,classes,to go along with this.a local pool or ymca with water aerobics,swim lessons,and swim teams need to be put in the area.we have too much water around us.children need a place to learn how to swim.also a lot of people with back problems,joint problems,and other health problems can only exercise in water,because it has a lower impact on the joints.we really need some kind of quarterly or at least every 6 months,mailing as to what we do have going on in our county.we are so in need of more recreationon the beach side of the county.we have to drive for

everything,including courthouses,planning,health dept,and taxes.i know the park we use the most is kiwanis,and when i moved here that and the boat launch park and little playground and basketball park in surf city did not exist. i'm glad to see there is something now,but we need more.with the population growth that has happened since i moved here, we must have money for some of this. there certainly doesn't seem to be money going to roads or schools. i have never senn such poor schools in all the 4 states i've lived in.

The Kiwanis park in Hampstead seems to be built for ages 10 and under. The children over ten have to use school facilities only. These are the children that need to be busy to stay out of trouble!

The elementary schools (all 3) have playgrounds.

I do not support any more playgrounds. I would support anything that would keep teenagers and pre-teens busy such as roller skating, biking, outdoor movies, or even a water slide two (it doesn't have to be a whole water park)

We need more programs toward avation.

Offer more athletic programs for children and adults. We don't want to drive all the way into Wilmington to play!

Pender is growing. When someone relocates to Pender could you implement a one time fee for "Park Use" , or someting along those lines. I think it would be hard to have an annual fee and keep up with who can use a park and who can't. The parks should be for the public. I also wouldn't be afraid to ask advice from New Hanover county on how they get revenue for their parks. Thanks for listening.

Topsail area needs some great kids programs. Community seems to like getting involved, just too few times to do it.

We are a military family and new to the area. You may want to think of ways to reach military families that move to Pender County.

I would like to see more programs and facilities offerd on the eastern side of the county.

Kiwanis Park is a wonderful asset! Please consider a central venue in Hampstead area with classes and activities, charging a reasonable fee. A community swimming pool would be a huge hit! A YMCA-type facility would be a great thing as well. An annual park & rec useage fee is a good idea as long as it's reasonable, & higher for non-residents.

1/20/10 we witnessed County employees enjoy the picnic shelter while on his cell phone, go get lunch for workers and continue to talk on cell phone, while a sofa, carpet lay discarded near rear parking area.

Once again Pender County needs a place for the kids to go play basketball.

I would really like a Community Center like Surf City has or a YMCA or somewhere we can do sports, lift weights, gather as a community with friends and family. Somewhere closer than Wilmington, Jacksonville. Our own Community Center!!!

Please build more tennis courts.

Have not seen facilities for good swimming lesson programs in Hampstead area. Topsail gymnasiums will quickly be undersized for the demands of youth programs. Ball fields are widely dispersed. It will be nice when facilities like Kiwanis park are complete with multiple use fields in one area and greenways surrounding. Safe bike routes would also be nice.

Could we have a facility that had wellness/yoga/fitness classes/swim classes (like a YMCA) that was affordable

for families/children???
The prospect of offering more of these opportunities in Hampstead is exciting. Thanks for all the effort!
Citizens need parks in every area of the County. Build a park in Rocky Point. It's been talked about, but never done!
would like to see a recreation center that would generate revenue. Would like for it to include a fitness center, racket ball, swimming and basketball.
I often visit the County Website for info but it would be nice if there was an email list for updates on county activites/events, etc...
<b>MORE ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES WILL KEEP OUR YOUNG CHILDREN OUT OF THE STREETS AND FAR AWAY FROM BAD INFLUENCES</b>
My zip code is 28447.Had to make a choice.
I would like to see a public boat ramp in the Hampstead area. There is not a place to put a boat in the waterway unless you go to Wrightsville Beach or Surf City. If you live in the Hampstead / Scotts Hill area, that is a long way to go. I think Pender County should show more attention to the Coastal areas.
indoor recreation area and swimming facility would be awesome for the children. there are no activities for children other than organized sporting events (some of which are poorly managed) and the park.
would like to see a basketball gym
Clean all the ditch in Pender County trees or growing in ditches.
The westside of the county could use more things to do. Sidewalks for walking, park, etc.
We need better fields- practice and game. We need access to the gyms!
Youth & Senior Center/Programs
-more girl scout programs available -be able to arrange summer/fall sports so kids can participate in more than one (i.e. soccer, cheerleading) -have swimming lessons available -more programs for 3 yr olds to participate in
please allow not just topsail area and burgaw to have parks. In Atkinson, Currie and watha we have lots of kids who would love to go to the park in their community to play basketball baseball something lets be fair about situation we all pay taxes
the lack of public amenities for RURAL youth. There has to be places for them to HANG OUT and play pickup ball games (baseball/basketball etc)...or go swimming or something.
I would like to see some sort of nature park that has hiking, running and mountain bike trails. I am president of Cape Fear SORBA. We have built trails in a New Hanover park and are starting to build trails in Brunswick.
I support the West Pender Rail Trail Alliance's effort to construct the trail and have it incorporated in the

EastCoast Greenway.
We need public water access. More public coastal boat ramps. Natural preserves (Lea Island). More parks.
It would be great if there was an e-mail list available so that recreational program opportunities could be mailed out to interested individuals. I had no idea that Pender county sponsored Basketball and baseball programs.
It would be good to use the land where railroads were moved as area for picnic tables and grills with sitting covered sitting areas.
Horses and equestrian sports are a big part of Pender County for people at all income levels. Please seriously consider including a park that has horse trails. Thanks!!
It seems like all the parks go to the other side of the county, we would like to see some parks in the Rocky Point and Burgaw area.
It would be great to have nice basketball courts built in all of these Pender County parks. We have a lot of fields for baseball, softball etc. There aren't many for basketball, it would give the kids that don't play those particular sports the opportunity to play something in their spare time.
more support for the basketball players more funds available for them to use and to spend
the burgaw area of the county needs facilities!
I would fully support any effort by Pender County to be a part of the East Coast Greenway project
In Hampstead we need to add more afterschool and summer programs in our diversity area.

***Please use the following space for any additional comments you would like to share about your experiences at Pender County parks, regarding this survey, or for additional room to answer questions on this survey. Thank you for your participation.***

Open Text Responses:
I have lived in Pender County all my life. My children have grown up here (and are still here) and they played sports with the County P&R. I have grandchildren that are or hopefully will be involved in sports or other activities that the County can sponsor thru their P&R Dept.
More for Summer, when kids are out of school.
I am very upset that parks and rec is now under the planning dept it is a step back and we need steps forward not back
As far as the parks in Pender County, there isn't much to them. I think the new one being developed near Topsail is coming along nicely. I know that there has been a lot of donations to get that facility started. I don't go over that way much, so I don't know if the park is completed and what all is offered.
The Dixie Youth fields in Burgaw are a pitiful site. Parking is a problem. The grounds and poorly planned. Restrooms are an issue. The sharing of the facilities for Football were always an issue. It's not much of a park if you ask me.

We need to take a stand for the kids of our communities and get these parks built with proper facilities.

None at this time

Pender does a good job with kids sports-swimming lessons would be a great addition.

I really think that we need to act on the West Pender Rail-Trail effort while the area is still relatively undeveloped. Other Counties and municipalities across the country are paying a premium to develop such facilities post-development. Trail facilities are fast becoming a priority in developing a "green," healthful, economic boost to rural and urban areas.

the land in southern pender county on hwy 117 ??? (pond) why is that not being used?? an more rec facilities for the youh ie baseball , soccer> football etc

I've lived here for 4 years and have not heard of or seen any Pender County parks and recreation activities. I feel that it would be best if there was more information available at local areas (i.e. coffee shops, schools, doctors, etc.) to spread the word about activities offered.

The parks opportunities in Pender County are very limited to say the least. The only park in my area (Kiwanis Park) is a clear cut mass of parking with no trees or sense of place established for any sort of enjoyment. The only time I went there, a gust of wind came and I got sand in my eye! Boo!

No new taxes.

They have done a BEAUTIFUL job with the Kiwanis Park. Keep up the great work that you are doing for our community and families! It is helping us in the area to do things as a family in these desperate economic times in our world today.

The county needs to take a proactive approach. It has been reactive in building parks, quickly patching holes presented by the community.

The county needs to act faster, for we are growing and the situation is only going to get uglier.

need public pool in Hampstead

I have found that there is NO SUPPORT from Pender County parks directors or facilitators. It is sad to see that certain programs such as Dixie Youth receive major support from the County and that that same support is not offered to all programs in the County. I am a member of this County that has participated in the majority of the programs for the children in this community.

We really need recreational areas in the Rocky Point area. Perhaps physical activity options could be available - and promoted - on the school campuses during non-school hours. School students could promote activities for the adults in the area to foster a greater sense of community.

na

1. Look into linear parks like converting the old rail path to a walking/jogging/bike riding trail

2. Connect fitness fusion by a sidewalk/trail to the new Burgaw walking/bike trail.

I feel that the existing parks that I frequent have been maintained very well. The partnership with private

groups seems to be working.

Fire ants, poor water drainage in the parking lots and drive ways and play area. Burgaw area seems to get less attention than the Hampstead area.

I currently serve on two local rec boards, including EPCWA Treasurer and Topsail Basketball Association President. Pender County Parks & Rec has graciously providing funding to support these programs and we are very appreciative. Thank you!

Being new to the area I was shocked by the lack of parks and rec in the Pender/Hampstead to be specific. with no commuinity center, no sports fields, no lighted sports fields, 2nd rate youth sports leagues. i have been here over a year and don't know off the top of my head where any parks are. I know the schools have fields and Kwanis park. With 3 elem. schoools and no parks seems odd.

I think with the addition of a sports complex (4 fields softball with conseesion stand in middle)the abilty to to host tournaments and bring in tourist and money..

Southeaster Pender County does not have enough basketball gyms or baseball fields. There are no pool facilities. There are no public boat ramps for access to the waterways.

Dee Turner has always been very helpful and kind to speak with. Thank you for her. The Kawanis Park in Hampstead has been a gift from God. It is so important to our little town.

We need a public swimming pool in the Hampstead area which could generate income as well. Summer programs designed to attract working parents to have their children enrolled in a summer program involving swimming, outdoor games and other activities. There are so many children who do not get to go the beach and they would be able to go to a summer program held in the Topsail area that would incorporate a swimming area as well as games and arts & crafts offered.

Thank you so much.

We need a community center with gym facilities in the Hampstead area!!!!

indoor gym area

Topsail Basketball Association has inadequate and unsafe practice facilities for kids. The multipurpose rooms used are extremely slippery during practice and kids are literally sliding around the court. A child had a metal chair fall on his head last week that were stacked in a chair rack courtside.

An indoor recreation facility and YMCA type facility in Eastern Pender would be nice to see. I assure you, it would be constantly utilized.

We need some kind of recreational area , or an area for family to go and do activities with their children, so we don't have to go to Wilmington and spent money in NH county. The recreational area here at Kwianas is great but there is not much to do there.

I would also like to see a banquet facility of some sort for professional as well as recreational events such as award ceremonies or business meetings/retreats.

I am pleased to say that many of the activities are already being offered by local community centers such as Surf City Community Center and senior citizens in Hampstead. In recent years there has certainly been more done as we recognize that more and more senior citizens have discovered this wonderful area. Thanks for what you do. I have been coming to the area since 1952 and have seen much positive growth!

Thank you for visiting our community. We hope our plans will be successful!!!
The county population shift is in the east so continued development in the Hampstead area is needed.
We use small park at Poplar Grove and Grist Mill. WE need something like Halyburton in Wilmington here in Pender, but spread them out. Have summer programs there like Halyburton. We need better summer programs for our kids. Not this stuff at the schools for summer. WE need a YWCA type presence in the Hampstead area. But I want Pender County to employ and reap the benefits from employment to revenue from this endeavor. We have great schools up our way and people are moving here. Use that to the County's advantage. If not we are losing out.
Please enlist the help of some "coupon clipping" moms with your budget talks....it appears we do not spend our county money wisely.....
The people in Topsail/Hampstead are not aware there is a Pender County Parks. Through my extensive volunteer work with Pop Warner, TBC and TBA, there has been zero involvement or support by Pender County parks. All emphasis by Pender County parks appears to focus on Burgaw. I would very much like to see a separate Topsail Parks organization, staffing and funding established.
is there any way to create a summer program for youth that would include working at/maintaining the parks. this would give them some ownership as well as experience.
I am glad to see the Pender County Parks and Recreation make improvements to Pender Memorial Park. This is needed upgrades. The partnership with Burgaw Dixie Youth, Burgaw Rotary, and Pender County to build the new concession stand has been an outstanding step forward with progress. Hopefully in the future a parks system could be started in the Rocky Point area. These resident surveys are a step forward to the future of our parks system in Pender County.
The Topsail Basketball Program facilities desperately need to be improved. The school gyms are now used, and they are in dire need of repair. I am pleased with the Kiwanis Park growth,--however, would like to see basketball courts and more covered areas.
Can there be some contact information at the park in case there is a need for clean-up, something broken or dangerous that is not a 911 emergency?
TENNIS COURTS!!!
Please incorporate R/C model flying in future park planning and surveys. A lot of American heroes like Neil Armstrong started out flying models.  Thanks
I love the Park Area. My grandchildren are in many sports and love the area. Wish the park was big like the Ogden Park area so we could have big tournaments at home
As a member of the Topsail Electric Flyers Association (TEFA), I extremely appreciate the availability of the Hampstead Kuwatis Park The availability of alternate areas that will suffice flying of RC aircraft within the Hampstead and surrounding communities is nearly if not non-existent. Since our organizing last spring with approximately 10 members we have since over doubled our membership. Our members are of all ages ranging from youth to senior citizens. In that this exciting recreational activity requires very little physical strength and/or abilities age and gender(with in reason) plays little role in who can participate. As such I would

encourage that a special area be assigned and funded for the flying of RC aircraft.....specifically those that are electric.

Pender County parks is completely invisiable to the eastern part of the County. Only through extensive volunteer work do we have what little we have. I urge the County to provide the Hampstead and Topsail area its fair share of its tax contribution for this portion of the county.

I really like the county, but more public green spaces like parks and ball fields would be a great benifit. Conencting these green spaces via hiking / biking trails would be huge. There are not even sidewalks forcing everyone including kids out into the streets which is unsafe and difficult to navigate.

For years, the Eastern 1/3 of Pender County has been completely neglected by Pender County. The resident's in this section pay a high portion of the County taxes but get a disproportinate amount of services. The Kiwanis Park is a good start but it took a private organization to get it started and progress is very slow. New Parks in New Hanover County get completed very quickly. The layout of the items that are already at Kiwanis Park is very bad. The designer of the baseball/ soccer obviously has never participated in youth sports. For example, the current concession stand /bathroom is so far away from 2 of the baseball fields that it would surprise me if many people walk that far to use it.

please include electric radio control plane flying in the Park and Recreation Master Plan.

Topsail Electric Flyers Association meets on sundays at rear soccer field and we get plenty of spectators using other Facilities at park some watch and some join club and learn to fly a great group of guys and gals getting together to show their building skills of these models.  
some of the members are retired and some still employed and in school some extra flying time other than just sunday would be great.

I would be interested in a long term plan that would include additional field space for football, basketball, and other sports that would have programs avaiable to various age groups. Individual organizations are doing this currently, but I feel the county needs to take responsibility for this.

In Hampstead there is only the Kiwanis Park that I know of and that is mostly for sporting activities. I'd like to see lots of greenspace, a pavillion, a gymnasium, rooms for classes, a pool (indoor and outdoor) hiking/walking trails, and just a pleasant place to go for picnics or just to read a book. A dog park would be nice too but must be monitored. I'd like to see this in Hampstead where the majority of the populatioin lives.

The co. should suspend all of the recent BS regarding the tennis play at Topsail High School. These courts were provided by public money and should be made available to the public, especially the the local seniors who play there several times a week.

Less Soccer fields and more diversity in open space use (Football, baseball, lacrosse, dog space, concert areas, lights on all fields etc...)

We need a better way to hear about programs that are offered.

The programs that are offered have been well-run. We look forward to more.

We also need more adult programs.

thanks. i think this county could have so much more. we have 1 of the nicest beaches on the WHOLE east coast.this is a beautiful place to live. there's just nothing to do.(other than the beach)

nothing for kids,nothing for adults,nothing for seniors.we need to do something about it.

As a military family that moves often, we chose Pender County for the schools. You should try to reach out and inform new people to the area about what is offered. i have not heard of another park other than Kiwanis Park. I amnot sure what is offered anywhere else. We moved here from Albuquerque where they have parks, bike paths, and dog parks all ove the city.

I feel that there is a need for something like the Wilmington Parent magazine that comes out monthly in Pender County. I am not aware of there being one and don't know how to go about finding activities that are in this county for my family and children. There is only one park in Hampstead and no community pool or anything more for us to do. I feel the people of this community would appreciate more activities right here in Hampstead without putting our money into other surrounding counties.

This survey is a commendable effort by the county to get input from residents. Please consider more family-friendly festivals, programs, classes and green space for us on the east side!

I wish more was offered in the Eastern side of Pender County.

Hampstead Kiwanis park should not pave the walking path, there is too much hard surface in the park as it is. How are other developers limited with the amount of impervious surfaces and run-off water storage but the park can just continue to put in more paved parking?  
A park should have trees!

We need our own Community Center or YMCA in Hampstead that all can afford to join  
The community bldg in Hampstead has dances, bingo (once in a blue moon), Art classes, community H.O.A. meetings and such but it is just a small building not a community center to gather for sports and classes. It's just too small.

by no having adquate parks people tend to go to wilmingtin therefore the money they spend to eat for gas etc goes to New Hanover County

The high school practice fields are non existant. Have more football -soccer fields and charge the school system a fee to use the fields for practice

Have a county wide concert to generate funds maybe in the summer

have more summer classes for the children so parents that work send send children to a day of fun Have it on Hampstead side of county

surf camps marine exploring campsand charge a weekly rate for the summer fun

Kids should have a park to play in during the summer when school is not in session. Only a few communities in Pender County have a park. If there were more engaging positive activities in the county, there would be less juvenile delinquency, fewer crimes commited by adults such as "Child Abuse". Kids need an outlet for their boundless energy, and adults need to have some freedom from worry that the child is in a safe 'play' environment. Give some 'Rock Concerts' and charge a nominal fee--you would be surprised at how much money you could raise towards park development. Let the kids pantomine super stars. I know a kid that does a magnificent "Elvis" imper-sonation!

I think that the Pender County Parks and Recreation does not have enough events to occupy the time of its

residents, especially the children. The events that they do offer does not appeal to everyone and is paid for by the tax payers and does not generate any revenue to help pay for the few things that they offer. The county needs to offer a recreation center where it could have a little something for everyone of all ages.

THE ONLY PARK THAT IS CLOSE TO ME IS VERY VERY VERY SMALL, I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A BIGGER AREA WERE CHILDREN CAN PLAY AND NOT HAVE TO BE IN A LINE TO GO DOWN ONE (1) SLIDE, IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE MORE PLAYGROUNDS, BIKE ROUTES AND MAYBE EVEN A POND WERE SOME CAN RIDE BIKES, PLAY OR FISH.

We have not participated in Burgaw Dixie Youth activities for the past several years because the atmosphere at the ball park became far too competitve and unruly. This was behavior exhibited by adults who were placed in positions of authority (coaches, team parent representatives, etc.) Is there a screening process for these positions or is it strictly whoever volunteers? Sprotsmanship is far more important in training a child to be an athlete then there record in t-ball and beyond. I have seen it carry over to the high school level and feel it's a disservice to so many children in Pender County who have only these few to look to for role models.

Question 1 does not offer a "None" answer option. I left the questions blank for those activities we had not participated in. But you can't make the assumption that everyone who leaves a blank meant they didn't participate - perhaps they simply skipped questions. Also, if you select a radio button for a Question 1 answer option then realized you hadn't participated in that activity after all, there is no way to clear the radio button without selecting a different answer option. This problem would be corrected if there was a "None" answer option.

Questions 1 and 2 offer entirely too many options to make data analysis very meaningful. I imagine you will have many, many responses for each answer option making it difficult to determine what the true top answers are. Combining similar activities into one option and asking respondents to choose their top 4 in Question 2 would have been a better approach.

Although my family lives in Pender County, we have elected to let our children play sports in Duplin County due to the extreme competitive nature of many of the coaches in Pender. This occurs at such a young age, when they are suppose to learn the fundamentals and have fun interacting with other children with similar interests.

We really need more facilities on the eastern side of the county (Hampstead) Would love to see a community pool. Charge annual fees for membership. Would also love to see an Y facility like the YMCA in Wilmington. Offers many classes and sporting activities along with an indoor pool, wet area etc.

I would like to say that coaches and assistants should have background checks completed before tryouts begin. There have been several instances with several programs that I belive could have been avoided if this were taken care of before the season began. The children should not have to be exposed to arguing and switching coaches back and forth. There is not need for the discussions of what did coach do on or off the fields. Overall this is handled well but it does have room for improvement.

Thank you!

i do not think it is a government responsibility to provide the citizens with recreational facilities. no wonder government is broke! no its not up to government to get one a car,house etc loan either. it can be done by the optimist and other clubs NOT THE GOVERNMENT

i would like the government to stay out of the parks & rec business it is not something the government should do. it goes along with bailout/entitlement programs. every body wants the government to provide instead of doing it yourself. by the way i want a public free shooting range,skeet,trap, target etc

Our basketball numbers increased from 230 kids to 348 this year alone. We need space for them in a gym to play.

Our football practice field for the high school is over used by the middle school kids. Holes and rocks caused injuries to our players. Our High school football field deserves a dild house for the players instead of having to pee in the woods and stand in muddle puddles during half time. We also deserve a concession stand brought up to code and one we could be proud of. We have a beautiful new high school but our field does not reflect the same.

There is a definite need for multiple indoor basketball courts in teh hampstead area.

Topsail Basketball currently plays all day on both Saturday and Sunday at the TMS main gym and auxiliary gym.

The auxiliary gym is actually inadequate for the recreational league play due to the floor surface. The walls are immediately adjacent to the out of bound lines.

Should the auxilary gym be made unavailable in the future due to needs to convert the space to something other than a gym, the Topsail Basketball League would parbably be forced to drop their 5-6 and 7-8 leagues. This could probably result in around 150 kids not being able to play basketball in the Topsail area.

Indoor basketball facility would provide the kids in Topsail something to do in teh winter when it is too dark and cold to do much else.

Swimming pools for the summer.

I would like so much for our children to have some place they could enjoy and have fun during the summer.

Please don't charges/fees to high

(free)

-My daughter has participated in teeball/softball for 5 years.

-She has also participated in cheerleading for 3 years.

-She has participated in soccer 1 year

-She has been unable to participate in more than one frpgram due to scheduling, so she has been forced to choose.

-She is unable to participate in girl scouts because there is only 1 program available.

-My son is 3 and there is nothing for him to participate in

-More programs available for adults and families

Like i spoke on earlier Pyba is given a hard time and they have no place to really practice or have games without being given a hard time please help our area we need to get more involved in the kids activities on the west side of the county because we to pay taxes in our county and as a whole we should offer more even during summer months there is nothing to do.

Unfortunately...in this day and age.....our public parks MUST BE SUPERVISED to limit gang/drug/destructive

activity and create a safe environment for youth and adults and elderly.....
Pender county needs more activities for young adults...concerts, boxing, things they are interested in.....
Burgaw needs a nice park for kids to play. Basketball courts soccer fields, softball fields.
When phone messages are left for the staff/director of the Park & Rec Dept by residents of the county they should be returned.  When baseball events charge for parking at Pender Memorial Park are the organizers using that to offset there usage fee or does that money go directly to P&R?
The Easter Egg hunt last year was a blast at Kiwanis Park. Two thumbs up.  It makes me sad to see the empty sand volleyball court at Kiwanis Park since my husband and I are avid volleyball players, but we don't know any others in the area.  Maybe if there was a Pender County electronic bulletin board for folks with similar interests to meet up on?
i have tried several times to find a place in lower pender just to fish and to take my grandchildren but unable to find a suitable park unless we go into new hanover,,,,,why can;t prnder have a place like that.....
Kiwanis park is a wonderful addition to Hampstead. I'd like to see more opportunities/facilities available for kids to skate, skateboard, and bicycle there. A good model for this is Halyburton park in Wilmington. Halyburton has a one mile loop/nature trail for walking, jogging, skating, and bicycling.  Also, Kiwanis park could use a basketball hoop or two.  It would also be nice to have bike lanes or trails for kids to ride their bikes to Kiwanis Park from the local neighborhoods. Right now kids depend on their parents to drive them to the park for exercise. The act of getting in a car to drive to the park cuts down on exercise level and the frequency of visits. This type of access works in other communities. We just don't have a good example of this locally.
We need a community center in the Hampstead area with an olympic size pool designed for competition. We need more walking/jogging trails. It would be nice to have sidewalks around Kiwanis Park so people could walk to the park without the fear of being runover on Sloop Pt. Lp. Rd. Biking trails would also be nice.
more support for the basketball players more money to spend for them
we only have one park in burgaw and it is not age appropriate for all age groups. It is too big for toddlers and we don't offer a place for teens. I think it is very important that Burgaw offer a place for our teenagers to hang out and have fun while also being active.
our park
we are in need of more parks in pender county especially the rural areas



1. Which of the following recreational activities have you or any member of any member of your family participated in during the past year? Check all that apply and indicate the number of times you or your family member participated in the activity during the past year (January 2009 - December 2009).

ACTIVITY	✓	# of Times	ACTIVITY	✓	# of Times
Sofball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Marital Arts Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Baseball/Tree Ball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Art Show or Festival	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Basketball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Family Reunions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Recquetball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Day/Summer Camp	<input type="checkbox"/>		Use Fitness Trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Volleyball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Kite Flying	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fishing/Tournaments	<input type="checkbox"/>		Water Aerobics	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Aerobics/Exercise	<input type="checkbox"/>		Arts/Crafts Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tennis	<input type="checkbox"/>		Archery	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Cooking Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Lacrosse	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Tetherball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Boating/Sailing	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Photography	<input type="checkbox"/>		Senior Games	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Surfing	<input type="checkbox"/>		Senior Trips	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Disc Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>		Frisbee	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ballet	<input type="checkbox"/>		Attended a Concert	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Yoga	<input type="checkbox"/>		Horseback Riding	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bike Races	<input type="checkbox"/>		Visited a Dog Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Water Skiing	<input type="checkbox"/>		Shooting Sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Canoeing/Kayaking	<input type="checkbox"/>		Pottery Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marathon	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reading Outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Art Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Swimming in a Pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Nature Hikes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Walked in a natural area	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Kick Bowling	<input type="checkbox"/>		Visited a Greenway	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Camping	<input type="checkbox"/>		Jogging/Running	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Gymnastics	<input type="checkbox"/>		Eating lunch in a park	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Cheerleading	<input type="checkbox"/>		Picnicking with Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Shag Dancing	<input type="checkbox"/>		Picnicking with Groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Skateboarding	<input type="checkbox"/>		Shuffleboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bingo	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dog Obedience Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Boy/Girl Scouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Special Olympics	<input type="checkbox"/>		Badminton	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Swimming Lessons	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bowling	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Flag Football	<input type="checkbox"/>		Billiards	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Soccer	<input type="checkbox"/>		Playing Cards/Games	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Booze Ball	<input type="checkbox"/>		Playing at a Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Horseshoes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Bird/Nature Watching	<input type="checkbox"/>	
After School Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>		Dance Classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Rollerblading/Skating	<input type="checkbox"/>		Walking along a Trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Golf	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>				

2. Indicate which of the following activities listed above you would like to see provided by Pender County by circling the activity above.

3. Have you or members of your household participated in any recreation programs offered within Pender County in the last year (January 2009-December 2009)? If so, indicate by checking all that apply.

- Burgaw Dixie Youth
- Port City Soccer Club
- South Pender Pop Warner Association
- East Pender Pop Warner Association
- South Pender Pop Warner Association
- Joint Community Development Center
- Topsail Ball Club
- Maple Hill Resource Center
- Topsail Basketball Association
- Pender Youth Basketball Association
- Topsail Girls Softball Association
- Pender Youth Soccer Association
- Willard Outreach Organization
- Pender Youth Football and Cheerleading Association

4. How would you rate the programs that you or any member of your household participated in during the past year?

- Excellent
- Fair
- Good
- Poor

5. How often do you or a member of your household visit any park in Pender County? (Check ONE)

- Daily
- Once a week
- A few times per week
- Once a month
- A few times per month
- A few times per year
- Once a year
- Never

6. How often do you or a member of your household participate in the programs and services offered by Pender County? (Check ONE)

- Daily
- Once a week
- A few times per week
- Once a month
- A few times per month
- A few times per year
- Once a year
- Never

7. In order to generate needed revenue to improve park, maintenance and diversify/increase recreation program offerings by Pender County, please indicate with a check mark ALL options that you would support for increasing funding for parks and recreation.

- Charge an annual park user fee
- Increase rental fees for park facilities
- Increase program user fees
- Charge non-residents higher fees
- Build more facilities that generate revenue, such as a tournament facility
- Sponsor more tournaments
- Other (please indicate)

8. Please indicate your top choice for funding needed park renovations, new park development, and other capital improvements (Check ONE)

- Borrow money to make necessary improvements and pay back over a 20- or 25- year period
- Increase property tax to fund parks and recreation operations and maintenance
- Impose impact fees (paid by developers for impacts brought by new construction)

9. How would you prefer to register for parks and recreation programs? (Check ONE)

- Mail-in registration form
- Online registration
- In person at the Pender County Parks and Recreation Office in Burgaw

10. Please check all the ways you learn about parks and recreation programs and activities in Pender County.

- Program Guide
- Website
- Flyers/Brochures
- Parks and Recreation Staff
- Newspaper
- Friends/Neighbors
- Barriers
- Radio
- Other (please indicate)

11. What types of special events would you like to see Pender County offer?

---



---



---

**Information about you and your household**

Please remember this information is kept confidential.

12. How long have you lived in Pender County?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- More than 15 years

13. What is your zip code?

14. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

15. Please indicate the number of persons living in your household including yourself that are:

- Under age 10 \_\_\_\_\_ Age 34-44 \_\_\_\_\_
- Age 10-19 \_\_\_\_\_ Age 45-54 \_\_\_\_\_
- Age 20-24 \_\_\_\_\_ Age 55-64 \_\_\_\_\_
- Age 25-34 \_\_\_\_\_ Age 65+ \_\_\_\_\_

16. What was your annual household income for 2008?

- Under \$20,000
- \$20,000-\$34,999
- \$35,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000+

17. How would you describe your household?

- Individual
- Unrelated Adults
- Couple
- Couple with children
- Single parent

18. Is there any area that we have missed in the survey or any additional comments you would like to submit? Here is an opportunity to have your voice heard!

---



---



---

Public Meeting Sign-in Sheets

2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - January 7, 2010 - Maple Hill

	Name	Email	Zip Code
1	Doris L. Jordan		28454
2	Jones A. Pickett		28454
3	Felicia Watkins		28454
4	Gabbie NUK@yahoo.co.uk		28454
5	Judy Funnis		28454
6	Bryan F. Shephard		28454
7	Addie L. Shephard		" "
8	Malissa Jordan		28454
9	James Allen		28454
10	Dennis Tinsley		28454
11	Pamela J. Propp		28454
12	Sharon J. Lee		28454
13	Joseph Lee		28454
14	Wendee Holmes		28454
15	Wanda Brown		28454
16	Alicia Hooks		28454
17	Sherry Lee		28454
18	ROZAKA LANINGHAM		28454
19	Azalea Lee		28454
20	Uera Halmer		28454
21	Nathaniel Malloy		28454
22	Margaret W. James		28454
23	Janet R. Taylor		2594062
24	Abelia L. Brown		28454
25	Patricia McShepard		28454
26	Shirley J. Lee		28454
27	Randy James		28454
28	Margie Lee		28454
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			

## 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - January 14, 2010 - Penderlea

	Name	Email	Zip Code
1	Ruth Murray		28478
2	Neillie B. Fields		28478
3	DAVID PIERMAYER		28443
4	Daloma Toward		28478
5	LAVERNE JOHNSON		28478
6	Douglas E. Johnson		28478
7	Sam [unclear]		28478
8	Michael + Amanda Gillespie		28466
9	Samuel DEXOT		
10	Robert + Tanja Carney		28464
11	Cathy Williams		28478
12	Anthony Prews		
13	Jerry Kanning		28478
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			

## 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - January 14, 2010 - Penderlea

	Name	Email	Zip Code
46	Pony Stone Pollock		28466
47	Dashone Pearshall		"
48	DOUGAN WILLIAMS		"
49	Shadix Carney		28460
50	<del>XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX</del>		"
51	Charlana Carney		28466
52	Jarious Williams		"
53	Shantell Williams		28466
54	Uasmine Williams		28466
55	Tracy Jerry		28478
56	Shantel Johnson		28435
57	Jimmy Horrell		28478
58	Harry Teachey		28478
59	Donna Mintz		28478
60	Tammie Scobee		
61	Shelia Newkin		28478
62	Sonja Keith		28478
63	Cindy Ezzeil		28478
64	Cindy Rohlbraak		28478
65	Melissa Jones		28478
66			

## 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - January 21, 2010 - Hampstead

	Name	Email	Zip Code
1	Bryan Davis		28411
2	Jill Sullivan		28443
3	Johnny Strickland		28425
4	Tara Pyrtle		28443
5	Paul Donovan - Potts		28443
6	Chad Pelkey		28443
7	Tom Potts		28443
8	Rob Kelly		28443
9	Tommy Surratt		28443
10	Jayne Emma		28443
11	Bob Willard		28443
12	Brace George		28443
13	Joe Camperlense		28443
14	Kristen Manicelli		28443
15	Jimmy Pyrtle		28443
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			
41			
42			
43			
44			
45			

## 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - February 11, 2010 - Malpass Corner

	Name	Email	Zip Code
1	Joyce Keith		28435
2	Terry Lanning		28478
3	Susan Bullers		28435
4	JIMMY ROUGHTON		28457
5	BOBBIE SMITH		28478
6	TERRY BENJY		28411
7	Heidi Waller		28425
8	TRINA N. SIMPSON		28435
9	Mamie Hansley		28425
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			
41			
42			
43			
44			
45			

## 2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - February 18, 2010 - Rocky Point

	Name	Email	Zip Code
1	GREGORY BINSON PRES CF SORBA	[REDACTED]	28457
2	STEVE MARIACOPPE PRES Cape Fear Cyclists	[REDACTED]	28409
3	NADINE JORDAN	[REDACTED]	28457
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			
41			
42			
43			
44			
45			

2010 Pender County Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting - February 25, 2010 - Burgaw

	Name	Email	Zip Code
1	Susan Bullers		28435
2	Bruce Rouse		28457
3	Johnny Stringfield		
4	Samuel Stringfield		
5	STAN ROGERS		28457
6	David Joyce		28457
7	Matt Wilson		28425
8	Kenny Burchill		28425
9	Don Rawls		28478
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			
41			
42			
43			
44			
45			

# Facility Matrices

## Facility Matrix 1: Existing Public Facilities in Pender County

Existing Public Facilities	Classification	GIS Acreage	Amphitheater/Outdoor Classroom	Baseball/Softball Field - Youth	Baseball/Softball Field - Adult	Basketball Court	Batting Cages/Practice Area	Boat Dock/Water Access	Camping	Community Building	Concession Stand	Fitness Center	Fishing	Hiking/Walking Trails (miles)	Multi-Use (Football/Soccer Field)	Paved Trail (miles)	Picnic Area	Playground	Restrooms	Shelter/Pavilion	Soccer Fields - Youth	Soccer Fields - Adult	Tennis Court	Volleyball
<i>Pender County Parks and Recreation Facilities</i>																								
Pender Memorial Park	Community Park	25.75		6	1		3				2				2			1	Y	1	1			
Hampstead Kiwanis Park	Community Park	83.72		3							1				3	0.5		1	Y	1				1
Millers Pond Park	Natural Resource Area	31.38											1	1										
<i>Municipal Parks and Recreation Facilities</i>																								
Atkinson																								
Hoggard Park	Mini Park	1.4															1	1		1				
Burgaw																								
Hankins Memorial Park	Mini Park	1.49															1		Y	1				
Harrell Memorial Park	Mini Park	0.75															1	1					2	
Oswood Canal Greenway and Urban Trail	Greenway	0.90														0.75								
Surf City																								
Soundside Park	Neighborhood Park	11.35	1					1					1				1	1	Y	1				
Family Park	Neighborhood Park	0.77				1												1	Y					
Albury Recreation Area	Mini Park	0.70																1	Y	1				
Surf City Community Center	Community Park	22.7			2	1				1		1			1			1	Y				2	
Topsail Beach																								
Bush Marina	Special Use Park							1																
<i>State Parks and Recreation Facilities</i>																								
Holly Shelter Game Land	Natural Resource Area	64,743							1				1											
Angola Bay Game Land	Natural Resource Area	29,375.38											1											
Cape Fear River Wetlands Game Land	Natural Resource Area	5,281											1											
Sandy Run Savannas State Natural Area	Natural Resource Area	1,609.27																						
Shelter Creek WRC Boat Access	Special Use Park	2.37						1																
Holly Shelter WRC Boat Access	Special Use Park	1.80						1																
Sawpit Landing WRC Boat Access	Special Use Park	5.00						1																
<i>Federal Parks and Recreation Facilities</i>																								
Moore's Creek National Battlefield	Special Use Park	75.83	1							1			1			1	1	1	Y					

## Facility Matrix 2: Existing Private Facilities in Pender County

Existing Private Facilities	Basketball Court	Boat Dock/Water Access	Camping	Community Building	Dance	Equestrian Facilities	Fitness Center	Fishing	Golf	Horseshoe Pits	Martial Arts	Museum	Paintball Facilities	Picnic Area	Playground	Pool	Skating Rink	Skateboard Park	Softball Field	Walking Trails
<b>Community Centers</b>																				
Canetuck Community Center	X			X																
Edgcomb Community Center	X			X										X	X				X	
Joint Community Development Center	X			X															X	
Maple Hill Resource Center	X			X											X				X	
Willard Outreach Center	X			X			X				X			X	X					X
<b>Other Private Facilities</b>																				
Ashton Farms								X						X						
Belvedere Golf & Country Club									X											
Blackbeard's Campground			X																	
Buccaneer Golf Club									X											
Cape Fear Coastal Charters								X												
Cripple Creek Corner Dance Studio				X																
Curves of Burgaw							X													
Curves of Hampstead							X													
Curves of Surf City							X													
The Crest Fitness							X													
Dave Richie Landing at Cross Creek		X																		
Desperado Trail Rides						X														
Dolphin Aquatics & Fitness (planned)							X									X				
The Dragon Martial Arts Center											X									
Finest Kind Saltwater Charters								X												
Fitness Fusion of Burgaw							X													
Gil's Boat Rental		X																		
Grand Oak Golf Enterprise									X											
Grand Slam Fishing								X												
Hana Taekwon-Do											X									
Holland Shelter Creek Outdoor Adventures			X					X												
Just for Kicks				X																
Kirkwood Camp & Retreat Center			X																	
Lanier's Campground		X	X				X			X							X			
Nature of the Game Paintball Complex													X							
Olde Point Golf Club									X								X			
Penderlea Homestead Museum												X								
Poplar Grove Plantation												X		X						
Richard Dambakly Martial Arts Academy											X									
Rocky Point Campground			X					X									X			
Scotts Hill Marina		X																		
Second Wind Fitness Center							X									X				
Shipwreck Point Golf									X											
The Skate Barn																			X	
Surf City Family Campground			X																	
Topsail Greens Golf Club									X											
Topsail Skating Rink																	X			
Topsail Sound RV Park			X					X								X				
Virginia Creek Campground			X																	
Vonda Kay Headboat								X												

### Facility Matrix 3: Existing School Facilities in Pender County

Existing School Facilities	Amphitheatre	Auditorium/Stage	Baseball/Softball Field (Adult)	Baseball/Softball Field (Youth)	Batting Cage	Basketball Court - Indoor	Basketball Court - Outdoor	Concession Stand	Fitness Center	Football Field	Gymnasium	Multipurpose Rooms/Auxiliary Gym	Multi-Use Field (Football/Soccer Field)	Picnic Area	Playground	Shelter/Pavilion	Soccer Fields	Tennis Court	Walking Trail
<b><i>Pender County Schools Parks and Recreation Facilities</i></b>																			
Burgaw Elementary		X									X				X				X
Burgaw Middle						X	X						X				X		
Cape Fear Elementary		X		X								X	X		X				
Cape Fear Middle		X		X		X		X					X				X		
Heide Trask High		X	X		X	X			X	X	X		X				X		
Malpass Corner Elementary		X										X	X		X				
North Topsail Elementary		X		X								X	X		X	X			
Pender Early College		X																	
Pender High	X	X	X		X				X	X	X		X				X	X	
Penderlea Elementary		X		X				X				X			X		X		
Rocky Point Primary		X										X	X	X					
South Topsail Elementary		X		X									X	X	X				
Topsail Middle		X				X		X			X	X							
Topsail High			X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	
West Pender Middle		X		X		X					X		X				X		

## Sample Consent Form/Release

### PENDER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION Consent/Release for Skate Park Participants

- Adult** – Check here if the participant is an adult. By checking this box, I am representing that I am 18 years of age or older and that I am fully competent and legally able to execute this document with the intent to be bound by the terms hereof.
- Minor** – Check here if the participant is a minor (under 18) (hereinafter the “minor”) or has a legal guardian

The undersigned, parent(s), or legal guardian(s) consent to the minor’s full and unlimited use of, or presence at, any and all Pender County Skate Park Facilities (County Skate Park), on an unsupervised basis.

I consent to the minor’s use of the County Skate Park for any purpose, including but not limited to, skateboarding, inline skating, and freestyle bicycling. This consent shall be continuing unless revoked by a written document addressed to the Director, PO Box 1519, Burgaw, NC, 28425. In order to be effective, the revocation documents must be sent by certified U.S. mail, return receipt requested, and must include any sticker, badge, permit, or other item indicating to the County the minor’s authorization to enter the County Skate Park. No oral or other form of revocation shall be sufficient to withdraw this consent.

#### GENERAL

1. All participants will be required to comply with all rules and regulations regarding the County Skate Park and I accept on my behalf, or that of the minor participant, full responsibility for informing myself, or the minor participant, of any changes to those rules and regulations.
2. The consideration for this agreement is the recreational benefit to be received from the use of the County Skate Park, and the County’s waiver of any requirement that I or the minor participant carry liability insurance prior to being allowed to use, or enter, the County Skate Park. I acknowledge that, absent the execution of this agreement, the County would not have offered me or the minor participant access to its Skate Park because of unacceptable exposure to liability claims. I acknowledge personally, or on behalf of the minor participant, that Section 99E-25(b) of the North Carolina General Statutes protects the County from liability claims arising from the use of the County Skate Park, except in very limited circumstances.
3. I hereby agree personally, and on behalf of the minor participant, that use of the County Skate Park is only granted by the County because of its understanding that in the event of injury to myself, or the minor participant, or damage or loss of property that any private insurance policy which covers such injury or loss shall be the sole source of any recovery.
4. I hereby personally, and on behalf of the minor participant, **release, waive, discharge, and covenant not to sue** Pender County, North Carolina, its Board of County Commissioners, County Manager, any County department or subdivision, or its employees, servants, representatives, officers, agents, and successors and assigns (collectively, the “releasees”), **from and for all liability** whatsoever to me, the minor participant, my (or the minor participant’s) personal representative, assigns, heirs, and next of kin. I also expressly waive any claims or demands therefor on account of injury to person or property, including injury resulting in my (or the minor participant’s) death, whether caused by the **negligence, including gross negligence, of releasees, or otherwise**, or whether arising out of or caused by any defect, or presence or absence of any condition of, in or on any real property, premises, County property, thoroughfare, or vehicle occurring when I, or the minor participant use, or are present upon, any County Skate Park.
5. I hereby personally, and on behalf of the minor participant, voluntarily and expressly assume full responsibility for any risk of bodily injury, death, and property damage **due to the negligence of any or all releasees or otherwise** while in or upon any County Skate Park and/or while using the County Skate Park.
6. I fully realize and appreciate the dangers, including severe injury or death, inherent in engaging in, observing, or being present where others engage in extreme sports such as skateboarding, inline skating, and freestyle bicycling. I further acknowledge that use of, or presence in, the County Skate Park carries with it the possibility that I, or the minor participant, may be exposed to physical danger, harm, and injury, including severe injury or death. I acknowledge that use of, or presence in, a County Skate Park may involve physical contact with others and that this physical contact may occur while myself, the minor participant, and/or others are traveling at a high rate of speed. I personally, and on behalf of the minor participant, nevertheless freely and voluntarily accept these risks.

7. I hereby personally, and on behalf of the minor participant, agree to defend at my expense, pay on behalf of, indemnify and save and hold harmless releasees, from and against any and all claims, demands, liens, liabilities, judgements, losses and damages (whether or not a lawsuit is filed) including, but not limited to, costs, expenses and attorneys' fees at trial and on appeal (collectively, "Claims") for damage to property or bodily or personal injuries, including death at any time resulting therefrom, sustained by any person or persons, which damage or injuries are alleged or claimed to have arisen out of or in connection with, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, from the use of the County Skate Park.
8. I also agree that I am responsible for any and all damages that I (or the minor participant) willfully, accidentally, or negligently inflict upon releasees or third parties as a result of use of the County Skate Park.
9. The undersigned expressly agrees personally, and on behalf of the minor participant, that this agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the law of the State of North Carolina, and if any portion thereof is held to be invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.
10. The undersigned as read and voluntarily signs this agreement, and further agrees that no oral representations, statements or inducements apart from the foregoing written agreement have been made.
11. The undersigned agrees that he/she has been hereby encouraged to seek the advice of his/her own attorney prior to signing this agreement and has been given the opportunity to seek such counsel.
12. I acknowledge the fact that this release, including my address and phone number, will become public record pursuant to North Carolina Public Records Law and will be available to members of the public upon their request.
13. I hereby give Pender County permission to take and use photo(s) of myself and/or participant for publicity. This may include newspaper, brochures, website, displays or any other forms of publicity for the Pender County Parks and Recreation Division. I understand there is no monetary compensation for use of these photos.

PLEASE NOTE THAT A RELEASE FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY EACH PARTICIPANT BEFORE HE/SHE WILL BE PERMITTED TO PARTICPATE.

**BY SIGNING THIS AGREEMENT YOU ARE WAIVING OR RELEASING VALUABLE LEGAL RIGHTS.  
YOU MUST READ THIS AGREEMENT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING IT.**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the participant has caused this agreement to be executed this \_\_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

**FOR PARTICIPANT 18 OR OLDER:**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FOR PARTICPANT UNDER 18** *Waiver must be signed in front of a Pender County Employee:*

Print Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Parent/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR ALL PARTICPANTS:**

Who to notify in case of emergency: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

## Related Media Coverage



# Pender residents want more county parks

By K.J. Williams  
[Citydesk@StarNewsOnline.Com](mailto:Citydesk@StarNewsOnline.Com)

Published: Tuesday, October 6, 2009 at 11:46 a.m.

There's a rumbling among some Pender County residents looking for recreation.

They say they want parks and recreational facilities to give their youth a place to play. Right now, all they've got in some parts of the county are fields of dreams located at schools without any improvements to make them suitable for use when the schools are closed.

Charles Davis, 22, is one of the county residents who says there's a need for more parks and recreational facilities. He says there aren't any after-school outlets for youth in Burgaw. "We need something for all these kids to do."

The facilities shortage is a problem that Patrick Davenport, the county's director of planning and community development, acknowledges wasn't a priority with the county in the past.

That's changing.

County employees are working on a comprehensive plan to address the issue and identify grants and other financing options. They expect to seek public input on what residents want at several forums across the county in January and February, and also collect surveys during that time.

Ben Andrea, a county planner, said the information gathered will be incorporated into the plan. A final draft is expected to be completed in April, and the public can review it at the planning and community development office or online on the county's Web site.

Some Burgaw residents have recently made requests for basketball courts, which aren't provided at either of the two county parks: Pender Memorial Park in Burgaw and the Hampstead Kiwanis Park.

"This is something we will work to address with future facilities," Andrea said.

The county also lacks playing fields and has no swimming pools or tennis courts, according to a state assessment of counties in last year's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Pender ranks near the bottom in several categories.

County employees met last week with the county school board about joining forces to provide facilities at school sites.

"The specifics of it have not been ironed out in any detail yet, but this is what we're working towards and going to begin discussing," Andrea said.

Trask High School in Rocky Point is a likely site for a partnership, and the county owns 120 acres adjacent to the school.

Davenport noted that residents in the western part of the county have been requesting playing fields, as evidenced by two Currie residents who spoke at a county commissioners meeting held in Atkinson last month.

George Murphy, a longtime coach of youth co-ed softball teams, said he had to rent a portable toilet one Sunday because the teams playing on fields at West Pender Middle School had no facilities to use.

Roshawn McIntyre asked commissioners what they could do to help bring facilities to their area. She said the western part of the county needs a playground and a community center, and she's working on fundraisers to help provide future facilities.

Davenport suggested she contact the parks and recreation advisory board, which meets at 5:30 p.m. Oct. 15 at 805 S. Walker St. in Burgaw. Andrea said the board will discuss the proposed survey and other aspects of the plan then.

Once the plan is completed, it will go before the parks and recreation advisory board, the planning board and the board of commissioners for resolutions of support. It's projected to become effective in July, in conjunction with the county's comprehensive land use plan and unified development ordinance, Andrea said.

County staffers have said demand for parks and facilities will increase as the population grows, with facilities becoming more crowded and development making land for parks more scarce. Pender ranked 66 or lower in 13 out of 14 categories for recreational fields and facilities in last year's analysis by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

Pender did shine in one area. It ranked 15th for its 98,389 acres of state or federal park land.

There have been recent improvements and ongoing projects at the county's two parks, aided by funding from the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. At Pender Memorial Park, playground equipment has been installed, and at Hampstead Kiwanis Park, which was built on donated land, there's now a walking trail.

At both parks, improvements include fencing around playing fields. At Pender Memorial Park, two youth baseball/softball playing fields are expected to open in early 2010. A new restroom and a concession stand is under construction, said Dee Turner, a parks and recreation division planner.

At Hampstead Kiwanis Park, three new fields should be ready for use by spring: two youth baseball/soccer fields and a field for football and soccer. A new restroom facility should be completed this year, Turner said.

Andrea said the county's next project will be Miller's Pond Park in the Rocky Point area, near the Northeast Cape Fear River at the county line. The current budget includes \$25,000 for the project, which is planned as a passive nature recreation area. The 24-acre county-owned site was once N.C. Department of Transportation property used for fill dirt, which has been converted into a freshwater pond.

Region desk: 343-2389

On Twitter.com: @StarNewsOnline

Copyright © 2010 StarNewsOnline.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.

## Pender County residents want recreation options

By K.J. Williams

[Citydesk@StarNewsOnline.com](mailto:Citydesk@StarNewsOnline.com)

Published: Monday, October 19, 2009 at 9:22 p.m.

Burgaw residents who say the town needs basketball courts and a recreation center were able to persuade Pender County Commissioners to consider various options at Monday's meeting.

"Do we have to wait until 2010 to put up a ball court," asked Pastor Ben Artis of Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Willard.

The county is working on a master plan for parks and recreation that it expects to be finished by July 1, 2010, detailing its plans for future facilities. Public input meetings will be held in January and February.

Artis asked if some of the open space at Pender Memorial Park in Burgaw might be available for a basketball court, but Dee Turner, the county's planner for its parks and recreation division, said what appears to be open space is actually wetlands, where nothing can be built.

Commissioner David Williams suggested that organizers also approach the Burgaw Board of Commissioners on the issue, adding he wouldn't support anything without Burgaw's cooperation.

Artis, a resident of Watha, also offered the county use of 3.5 acres he owns for a basketball court. The land about seven miles west of Burgaw on Piney Woods Road, off U.S. 421.

Johnny Stringfield of Burgaw, one of the leaders of a prison outreach ministry, and the community coordinator for the Pender County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, asked for basketball courts and a recreation center before a standing-room-only crowd.

"It's all about us coming together and bringing up the confidence level about what we can do here in Pender County," Stringfield said, adding that a committee with resident members should be formed to look at the issue.

Stringfield said the Community Boys & Girls Club in Wilmington was interested in opening a club in Burgaw.

Commissioners' Chairman Jimmy Tate directed County Manager Rick Benton to look into the possible formation of a committee and he asked staff to look into the suitability of Artis' land.

The board also heard a request from the county's board of health made by Jack Griffith, director of the county's health department, asking it to approve a proposed ordinance banning tobacco use from county property effective Jan. 3, 2010. Commissioners tabled the resolution, directing staff to work with county employees who smoke on a compromise like a smoking area.

In other action, the board voted unanimously to approve contracts for its planned Topsail Regional Library in Hampstead. Cherry Huffman Architects was chosen for the design and architectural services, and a contract for engineering services was awarded to McKim & Creed.

Regional desk: 343-2389

On Twitter.com: @starnewsonline

Copyright © 2010 StarNewsOnline.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.

## Sports fields, lights and pool on 'wish list' for Hampstead

By K.J. Williams  
[Citydesk@starnewsonline.com](mailto:Citydesk@starnewsonline.com)

Published: Thursday, January 21, 2010 at 10:20 p.m.

Asking residents of eastern Pender County what they wanted in recreational facilities resulted in a "wish list" the county plans to use when applying for future grants.

Dee Turner, the county's planner for its parks and recreation division, wrote down the desires of residents at the county's third public forum on the issue held Thursday night at Topsail High School in Hampstead.

"Basically, this is a wish list," she said, "But when we go for grants, we have to justify this is truly a need."

Her comments were a response to a question raised by Ronald Crowell of Hampstead, who wondered if the economic downturn meant their input was only a "wish list."

Turner said public input and a countywide survey would help the county's grant requests to build park facilities.

The county is developing its comprehensive parks and recreation master plan, and is hosting meetings countywide to receive input. Upcoming meetings are scheduled at 6 p.m. Feb. 11 at Malpass Corner Elementary School, Feb. 18 at Trask High School in Rocky Point, and Feb. 25 at the county offices in Burgaw.

Thursday's public forum followed a meeting of the parks and recreation advisory board. Board member David Piepmeyer said members planned to listen to everyone. "People like to at least know that their comments were heard and considered," Piepmeyer said.

Several of the residents who spoke said there was a need for more and better facilities for organized youth teams, ranging from more playing fields, and lighting for existing ones, to basketball courts. They also requested a community center.

"All these sports are just growing every year," said Pat Donovan-Potts of Hampstead. "So I think we need to add to them (facilities) and not turn children away."

Jayne Emma of Hampstead said the county's lack of a swimming pool means a youth swim team has to go outside the county to practice.

And Johnny Stringfield of Burgaw asked the county to look into mitigating wetlands at Pender Memorial Park in Burgaw so courts for basketball and tennis could be built there.

After a draft of the recreation plan is completed, it will be available for public comment. The target date for its adoption is July 1.

Regional desk: 343-2389

On Twitter.com: @StarNewsOnline

Copyright © 2010 StarNewsOnline.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.

## Rocky Point delivers recreation wish list

By K.J. Williams

[Citydesk@StarNewsOnline.com](mailto:Citydesk@StarNewsOnline.com)

Published: Friday, February 19, 2010 at 3:58 p.m.

Nadine Jordan said she's heard talk before about recreational facilities for Rocky Point before.

"Every 15 or 10 years, it comes back up again," Jordan said. "What's going to happen this time that's going to make any difference?"

She spoke Thursday during a public forum at Trask High School.

The meeting was one of six public forums to identify residents' wishes for future facilities and formulate a parks and recreation master plan.

"We want to make sure that Rocky Point is included," Jordan said.

Earlier, the Rocky Point resident said the area doesn't have any parks. "If you're not affiliated with the schools, there's nothing for the kids to do."

She added that adults also need recreation, suggesting basketball courts and a swimming pool.

Pender County Commissioner George Brown, who represents the Rocky Point area, pledged that some type of facilities would be realized this go-round. "Something's going to happen over here."

Facilities could start out small, he said, naming a nature area and trails that have been proposed at the county-owned Miller's Pond property off U.S. 117.

The county also has developed a concept plan for a recreational complex on land adjacent to Trask High School, with playing fields that could be shared with Pender County Schools.

"I think everyone is aware of the limited opportunity for recreation in the county right now," said Ben Andrea, a county planner. "What's really important in this process is gathering that public input."

Surveys can be picked up at county offices or accessed online through the Feb. 28 deadline. The final public forum is 6 p.m. Thursday at the county complex at Burgaw.

Kaylyn Brinson, 8, may be too young to fill out a survey, but she didn't hesitate to speak up for herself and her third-grade classmates at Cape Fear Elementary School. She asked for a playground and said the boys in her class like to skateboard. "And I thought maybe put out some concrete so they can go skateboarding."

The other two people at the forum suggested a partnership with a local cyclists' group to build bicycling trails.

Region desk: 343-2389

On Twitter.com: @StarNewsOnline

Copyright © 2010 StarNewsOnline.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.



# PENDER COUNTY GOVERNMENT NEWS

1/13/10

### Applications for Animal Control Ordinance Review and Recommendation Committee

Pender County Board of Commissioners is accepting applications for appointment of a committee to review county's Animal Control Ordinance and procedures. Applications may be obtained from and returned to the Pender County Health Department-(910)259-1328-PO Box 1209, Burgaw, NC 28425. Applications may also be filed on-line at <http://www.pendercountync.gov>. Any questions may be addressed to the same phone number.

### Pender County Citizen Volunteer of the Year Applications Due by February 15, 2010

Pender County is accepting nominations for Citizen Volunteer of the Year for 2010 through February 15, 2010. The purpose of the Pender County Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year Award is to recognize and honor a Pender County citizen volunteer who has demonstrated outstanding service to the community. Nominations run through February 15, 2010. The chosen winner will be recognized and honored by the County Commissioners during National County Government Month, April 2010.

Criteria for nomination consideration includes participation in community projects, presenting a positive image of the county, demonstrating a commitment to improving the quality of life, and contributions of time, energy and resources to enhance the Pender County community. Names of nominees will not be disclosed to the selection committee, only qualifications, thus the selection process will be anonymous.

Nomination forms and instructions may be picked up at any of the Pender County office buildings, or the public offices in Burgaw and Hampstead. Forms and instructions may also be downloaded, or completed on-line, at [pendercountync.gov](http://pendercountync.gov) after January 1, 2010.

### 2010 Pender County Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Public Input Meeting Schedule/All meetings will begin at 6:00 PM.

Meeting Date	Meeting Area	Meeting Location
January 7, 2010	Maple Hill	Maple Hill Community Center
January 14, 2010	Penderlea	Penderlea Elementary School
January 21, 2010*	Hampstead	Topsail High School Cafeteria
February 11, 2010	Malpass Corner	Malpass Corner Elementary School Cafeteria
February 18, 2010	Rocky Point	Heidi Trask High School Cafeteria
February 25, 2010*	Burgaw	Public Meeting Room, 805 S. Walker St

\*Dates regularly scheduled Advisory Board meeting will be held during the same night. Agenda items not being to the Comprehensive Master Plan will be covered prior to receiving Public input.

### 2010 CALENDAR OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETINGS

DAY	DATE	TIME
Monday	January 4	10:00 a.m.
Tuesday	January 19	4:00 p.m.
Thursday	January 28 (Planning Summit)	9:00 a.m.
Friday	January 29 (Planning Summit)	8:30 a.m.
Monday	February 1	10:00 a.m.
Monday	February 15	4:00 p.m.
Monday	March 1	7:00 p.m.
Monday	March 15	10:00 a.m.
Monday	April 5	4:00 p.m.
Monday	April 19	7:00 p.m.
Monday	May 3	10:00 a.m.
Monday	May 3 (Budget Work Session)	12:00 noon
Monday	May 17 (Budget Work Session)	12:00 noon
Monday	May 17	4:00 p.m.
Monday	June 7	7:00 p.m.
Monday	June 7 (Budget Work Session)	10:00 a.m.
Monday	June 21	12:00 noon
Monday	July 12	4:00 p.m.
Monday	August 2	7:00 p.m.
Monday	August 16	10:00 a.m.
Monday	August 16	4:00 p.m.
Tuesday	September 7	7:00 p.m.
Monday	September 20	10:00 a.m.
Monday	September 20	4:00 p.m.
Monday	October 4	7:00 p.m.
Monday	October 18	10:00 a.m.
Monday	October 18	4:00 p.m.
Monday	November 1	7:00 p.m.
Monday	November 15	10:00 a.m.
Monday	November 15	4:00 p.m.
Monday	December 6	7:00 p.m.
Monday	December 6	4:00 p.m.

Note: All meetings held at Pender County Public Assembly Room, 805 South Walker Street, Burgaw, unless otherwise advertised. Any questions may be addressed to 910-259-1200.

---

## News briefs

### Parks and recreation public meeting

The Pender County Department of Planning and Community Development will hold a public meeting Jan. 14 at 6 p.m. at Penderlea School. The meeting will offer residents the opportunity to give input to planners concerning the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Online surveys are also available at [www.pendercountyne.gov](http://www.pendercountyne.gov)

*The Pender Post, January 13, 2010*

---

## News briefs

### Parks and recreation public meeting

The Pender County Department of Planning and Community Development will hold a public meeting Jan. 21 at 6 p.m. at the Topsail High School cafeteria. The meeting will offer residents the opportunity to give input to planners concerning the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Online surveys are also available at [www.pendercountyne.gov](http://www.pendercountyne.gov)

*The Pender Post, January 20, 2010*

# Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan meeting comes to Hampstead

By Ken Clarke

**HAMPSTEAD** – In an attempt to get a better understanding as to what Pender residents expect from parks and recreation in future years the Pender Planning staff has begun holding community meetings around the county.

The Pender Planning Department is in the process of trying to create a comprehensive

plan that will help guide the development of future parks and recreation facilities within the county.

To get a better understanding what to plan for, the planning department, which presides over the parks and recreation department, is attempting to try and understand how residents currently use the existing facilities and discover what they want in the future.

In an attempt to get this

information the planning department is holding a series of meetings across the county and encouraging residents to take an online survey at the county website.

The meetings began on Jan. 7 at Maple Hill and Jan. 14 at Penderlea.

On Thursday, a meeting will be held in Hampstead in the Topsail High School Cafeteria beginning at 6 p.m.

Subsequent meetings will be held on Feb. 11 in Rocky Point at the Trask High School cafeteria and Feb. 25 in Burgaw in the commissioners meeting room.

The survey can be found on the county website at [www.pendercountync.gov](http://www.pendercountync.gov).

*The Topsail Voice, January 20, 2010*

## **News briefs**

### **Parks public input meeting at Malpass Corner**

The Pender County Department of Planning and Community Development will hold a public input meeting Thursday Feb. 11 in the cafeteria at Malpass Corner Elementary School at 6 p.m.

*The Pender Post, February 10, 2010*

### **Parks and Rec public meeting in Rocky Point**

County planners will hold a public input meeting in the cafeteria at Trask High School Thursday Feb. 18. The meeting will allow residents to fill out the parks and recreation survey and offer input on future plans for Pender County. The meeting begins at 6 p.m.

*The Pender Post, February 17, 2010*

## Works Cited

Adaptive Environments Center, Inc. *Checklist for Existing Facilities*, v2.1. 1995. Web. <<http://www.adaptenv.org/publications/checklist-pdf.pdf>>.

"All Pender County City and Rural Bicycle Crashes." *Bicycle Crash Data for North Carolina*. NC DOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. Web.

<[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pbcat/county\\_cities.cfm?CNTY=Pender&LVL=BIKE\\_A&V\\_FIELD=MNCPLTY\\_NM&PERSON=&Y1997=YES&Y1998=YES&Y1999=YES&Y2000=YES&Y2001=YES&Y2002=YES&Y2003=YES&Y2004=YES&Y2005=YES&Y2006=YES&Y2007=YES&type=1](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pbcat/county_cities.cfm?CNTY=Pender&LVL=BIKE_A&V_FIELD=MNCPLTY_NM&PERSON=&Y1997=YES&Y1998=YES&Y1999=YES&Y2000=YES&Y2001=YES&Y2002=YES&Y2003=YES&Y2004=YES&Y2005=YES&Y2006=YES&Y2007=YES&type=1)>.

"All Pender County City and Rural Pedestrian Crashes." *Bicycle Crash Data for North Carolina*. NC DOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. Web.

<[http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pbcat/county\\_cities.cfm?CNTY=Pender&LVL=PED\\_A&V\\_FIELD=MNCPLTY\\_NM&Y1997=YES&Y1998=YES&Y1999=YES&Y2000=YES&Y2001=YES&Y2002=YES&Y2003=YES&Y2004=YES&Y2005=YES&Y2006=YES&Y2007=YES&type=3](http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pbcat/county_cities.cfm?CNTY=Pender&LVL=PED_A&V_FIELD=MNCPLTY_NM&Y1997=YES&Y1998=YES&Y1999=YES&Y2000=YES&Y2001=YES&Y2002=YES&Y2003=YES&Y2004=YES&Y2005=YES&Y2006=YES&Y2007=YES&type=3)>.

"Bicycle Maps and Routes." *NCDOT: Bike Maps and Routes*. North Carolina Department of Transportation. Web. <<http://www.ncdot.org/travel/mappubs/bikemaps/>>.

Brunswick County, North Carolina. Parks & Recreation Department. *2009 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. Nashville, TN: Lose & Associates, 2009.

Clark, R. & Stanley, G. *The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum: A Framework for Planning, Management and Research*. 1979. <<http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/gtr098.pdf>>.

Costin, Rebekah. "Parks and Rec Survey Information." Message to Benjamin D. Andrea. 26 Jan. 2010. E-mail.

"Crash Data Tool and Reports." *NCDOT: Research and Reports*. North Carolina Department of Transportation. Web. <<http://www.ncdot.gov/bikeped/researchreports/default.html>>.

McEwen, Chad. "Planned Burgaw Parks." Message to Benjamin D. Andrea. 1 Dec. 2009. E-mail.

National Recreation and Park Association. *Grant Opportunities*.

<[http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/Explore\\_Parks\\_and\\_Recreation/Project\\_Initiatives/Grant%20Opportunities.pdf](http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/Explore_Parks_and_Recreation/Project_Initiatives/Grant%20Opportunities.pdf)>. Web.

National Recreation and Park Association. *Open Space Guidelines and Standards: A Guide to Understanding the New Versus Old*. Comp. C. Castleman.

National Recreation and Park Association. *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*. By J. D. Mertes and J. R. Hall. 1996. Print.

National Recreation and Park Association. *Recreation, Park, and Openspace Standards and Guidelines*. By Roger A. Lancaster. 4th ed. 1990.

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Division of Parks and Recreation. *North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) 2009-2010 Grant Application*. 2009.

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Division of Parks and Recreation. *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2003-2008*. 2002.

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Division of Parks and Recreation. *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2009-2013*. 2008.

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. *Natural Area Inventory of Pender County, North Carolina*. 2000.

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. *2009 North Carolina Child Health Care Report Card*. By Action for Children North Carolina and North Carolina Institute of Medicine. Web. <<http://www.nciom.org/docs/card2009.pdf>>.

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. *North Carolina Statewide and County Trends in Key Health Indicators: Pender County*. Web. <<http://www.schs.state.nc.us/SCHS/data/trends/pdf/Pender.pdf>>.

North Carolina Rail-Trails. "Wilmington's Many Historic Corridors Hold Great Potential." *Little Toot* 3 (Winter 1992): 4. Web. <<http://www.ncrailtrails.org/littletoot/WINT92.PDF>>.

North Carolina State University. Recreation Resource Service. *North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study Fiscal Year 2006-07 Executive Report*. 2007.

North Carolina State University. Recreation Resource Service. *North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study Fiscal Year 2007-08 Executive Report*. 2008.

North Carolina State University. Recreation Resource Service. *North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study Fiscal Year 2008-09 Executive Report*. 2009. .

North Carolina State University. Recreation Resource Service. *North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Services Study Fiscal Year 2009-10 Executive Report*. 2010.

North Carolina's Eastern Region. Military Growth Task Force. *Regional Growth Management Plan*. By Marstel-Day, LLC, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., Impact Communications, Inc., Health Planning Solutions, Inc., Operations Research / Education Lab, NCSU, and Management Information Services, Inc. Oct. 2009. Web. <<http://www.nceastmgtf.org/documents/FINALRGMP2009-10-11.pdf>>.

Onslow County, North Carolina. Parks and Recreation Department. *2007/2008 Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. 2008.

Pender County, North Carolina Finance Department. FY 08-09 and FY 07-08 Pender County Parks and Recreation Budget Data. 23 Sept. 2008. Raw data. Burgaw, North Carolina.

Pender County, North Carolina. *1993 Pender County Waterfront Access Plan*. By Howard T. Capps & Associates. 1993. Print.

Pender County, North Carolina. *1998 Pender County Recreation and Open Space Plan*. By Howard T. Capps & Associates, Inc. 1998. Print.

"PENDERLEA HOMESTEAD MUSEUM FACTS." *Facts about the PENDERLEA HOMESTEAD MUSEUM*. Penderlea Homestead Museum. Web. <<http://www.penderleahomesteadmuseum.org/facts.html>>.

*Scl\_wilm\_newbern\_nc*. Abandoned Railroads of the US. Web. <[http://abandonedrailroads.homestead.com/scl\\_wilm\\_newbern\\_nc.html](http://abandonedrailroads.homestead.com/scl_wilm_newbern_nc.html)>.

Town of Burgaw, North Carolina. *Burgaw Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. By Town of Burgaw Planning Department. 2008.

Town of Surf City, North Carolina. *Town of Surf City Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan*. By William G. Simmons, Jr., PE, Lisa A. Manning, EI, LEED AP, and Everett C. Gupton, EI. Wilmington, NC: Cavanaugh & Associates, P.A., 2007.

United States Department of the Interior. National Parks Service. *Ice Age National Scenic Trail Handbook*. Web. <<http://www.nps.gov/iatr/parkmgmt/upload/hb-chpt2.pdf>>.

United States Department of the Interior. National Parks Service. Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program. *Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails, and Greenway Corridors; A Resource Book*. 1995. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Web. <[http://www.nps.gov/pwro/rtca/econ\\_all.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/pwro/rtca/econ_all.pdf)>

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *Finding Funding for Your Water Project*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009. [http://research.unc.edu/grantsource/samples/NCNERRhandout\\_Oct09.pdf](http://research.unc.edu/grantsource/samples/NCNERRhandout_Oct09.pdf). Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, Oct. 2009. Web.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. *Identifying Sources for Funding Environmental Improvements in Your Community*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2009. <http://www.nccoastaltraining.net/uploads/Documents/Susan%20Gramling%20GW%20PPT.pdf>. Office of Information and Communications, Oct. 2009. Web.

Wilder, Bill. "Progress Energy (Transmission Line ROW's)." Message to Benjamin D. Andrea. 8 Mar. 2010. E-mail.

Williams, K. J. "Burgaw Greenway Opens Path to Recreation." *Wilmington Star-News* [Wilmington, North Carolina] 1 Nov. 2009.

Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization. Bikeped Committee. *Bicycle Facilities Study for the Blue Clay Corridor*. By Greenways Inc., PB Americas, and CLH Design. Web. <[http://www.wmpo.org/PDF/2008-03\\_BlueClay\\_Cover.pdf](http://www.wmpo.org/PDF/2008-03_BlueClay_Cover.pdf)>.