



FEBRUARY 2023

COMPREHENSIVE PARKS
AND RECREATION
MASTER PLAN

Marvin, North Carolina

“WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON OUR OPEN SPACE--WE’VE GOT MORE TREES THAN HOUSES. WE’RE NOT A COLLECTION OF HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATIONS, WE’RE A COMMUNITY.”

- Parks, Recreation+ Greenway (PRG) Board Member

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THE PLAN + THE COMMUNITY

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WESTVIEW
GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB



The Village of Marvin Parks and Recreation is pursuing their first comprehensive parks and recreation master plan to respond to the community’s growing population. Through this plan, the Village is working towards understanding the community’s current and future recreational needs. Based on needs and future goals, the plan will assist the Village with prioritizing investments in parks, recreation, and open space. The plan will also position the Village as a strong contender for grant funding sources to expand the parks system over a 10-year planning horizon.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

First accounts of those who lived in the Marvin area were the Waxhaw Indians, known by their name of the reed-like waxy haws that were abundant in the Waxhaw creeks. The tribe was all but wiped out from a smallpox outbreak in 1741, and those who survived the outbreak left and joined other tribes like that of the Catawba Indians across the river. The first settler families where the Stitt, Dunn, Story, and Ezzell who received state grants after the American Revolution when in 1777 North Carolina begun issuing State Land Grants. These granted lands were previously held by the English Crown and the Earl of Granville. The settlers, for example, became blacksmiths and tailors, trading their goods across the Carolinas. As time went on,

the area developed, grist and corn mills along the McAlpine Creek flowing to Sugar Creek and Twelve Mile Creek.

The local economy thrived pre-Civil War, when the settlers began producing cotton, causing drainage patterns to shift around cotton cultivation requirements. The current Village of Marvin boundary sat within Mecklenburg County in 1842. In 1874 completion of the Seaboard Railroad running through the area, as well as the pioneer bank of Monroe, and the First National Bank, helped to re-establish economic prosperity to the area.

LOCAL + REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Village of Marvin is one of 16 incorporated municipalities located in Union County. The

population of Union County, North Carolina in 2021 was 243,648, 20.6% up from the 202,110 who lived there in 2010. For comparison, the United States population grew 7.3% and North Carolina’s population grew 10.2% during that period¹. In terms of age, the data show the population of Union County, as well as the Town of Marvin is aging – with the 50 to 64 age group growing the most quickly (27.8% increase) and the 0 to 4 age group declining most starkly (10.3%) between 2010 and 2021.

Incorporated communities within Union County are fairly concentrated along its western border with Mecklenburg as urban sprawl has pushed south and eastward. The Village of

¹ Our Changing Population: Union County North Carolina. USA Facts. Updated July 2022. Accessed February 2023.



Marvin’s boundary covers approximately six of Union County’s 632 square miles, and is home to a population of 6,444 per 2020 census data. The Village was incorporated July 1, 1994 as a Council-Mayor form of government with a Mayor and 4-councilmembers forming this governing body, later it transitioned to it’s current form of a Manager-Council form of government with a Mayor and 5-councilmembers (will be 6-councilmembers as of November 2023.)

Existing recreation resources in Marvin include 27-acre park featuring a playground, a barn shelter, picnic shelter, one mile of trails and a community garden. The Village also hosts community events such as: Marvin Day, Movie Nights, Annual National Night Out and an annual Holiday Tree Lighting. A 4-mile paved trail is planned along Marvin School, New Town, Marvin and Joe Kerr roads.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PURPOSE + PROCESS

Comprehensive planning provides the information the Village requires to make informed, equitable, and responsible decisions for meeting diverse community needs. Some of the reasons for pursuing a comprehensive planning process include the following:

This process also provides a structure for evaluating needs and setting priorities. The

planning process captures the status of the Department at a moment in time, creates a vision for the future, and identifies steps to achieve that vision. The plan will guide the Department’s decisions and priorities for the next 10 years.

PLAN OUTLINE

This plan is based on robust community and staff engagement and data-driven recommendations determined through an analytical approach. From the initial inventory and analysis through the recommendations and action and implementation plan, the team engaged stakeholders and acknowledged local, regional and national recreation needs and trends, demographic shifts and agency performance. The project team studied current facilities and programs to evaluate the overall operational successes and challenges of the Department and its mission. Finally, the project team alongside Department staff developed a plan that prioritizes recommendations to improve recreational offerings and meet growing expectations from an increasing population.

This 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes the following components:

› Introduction

The project team reviewed the planning context of the Village’s Parks and

Recreation Department to understand past planning efforts and the Department’s evolution. Comprehensive plans, specific park master plans and long-range recreation planning were reviewed to gain a comprehensive understanding of the plans that guide the growth and development of the Village. It is the goal of this plan that the recommendations presented herein will be seamlessly integrated with Village plans.

› Demographics + Trends

The project team completed a demographic and trends analysis to consider national and local recreation trends and cross-referenced Census data with the Village’s demographic data and national publications to draw conclusions about current and future recreation trends and participation levels.

› Inventory + Analysis

The inventory and analysis takes a full account of the existing parks and recreation system. The inventory and analysis chapter covers parkland, facilities, and trails.

› Vision

Visioning allows Department staff to develop a future direction for the department and each of its component parts. The visioning session results in vision statements for each of the plan elements that informs the creation of goals and objectives. Each of this plan’s goals, objectives and action items are in service to



achieving this vision.

› **Community Engagement**

The project team performed a robust public input process which gathered input through staff input, stakeholder groups, focus groups, community input meetings, and pop-up stations. The process was designed to be transparent, equitable, and engage the widest range of residents possible. The engagement plan consisted of the following elements:

- One pop-up community meeting
- One stakeholder group meeting
- Staff meetings
- Statistically valid survey

› **Benchmarking and Level of Service**

Benchmarking and level of service evaluate current and future needs for park acreage, trail mileage, and operational standards compared to national standards, best practices, and peer agencies. These metrics are population based to allow the department to expand to meet future demand for parks and recreation services. The level of service standard includes current and future standards for parkland, facilities, and trails.

Benchmarking peer communities provides a comparison for the existing state of the Department’s amenities and informs level of service standards for the ten-year planning horizon. Metrics for parks, trails, acreage, staffing, and budget, are

evaluated for each peer community which informs the development of an appropriate level of service standard specific to the Village. Such standards are normalized by population so target metrics can evolve to meet demands of the population growth Marvin is experiencing.

› **Recommendations and Action + Implementation Plan**

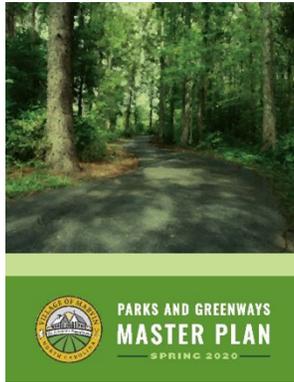
The recommendations and prioritized implementation plan provide a framework to guide park, facility, open space, programming and operational improvements for the future. It is structured to guide decision making for Department policy. Each recommendation is further prioritized as short term (1-3 years), mid-term (3-7 years) or long-term (7-10+). Criteria for these recommendations and their prioritization varies based on the context and criteria ranging from land availability to financial implications but are firmly rooted in community preferences.

RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Over the past decade, several local agencies and organizations have undertaken planning studies in Marvin to consider the expansion of parks and trails. Integral to this master plan is the coordination and integration of all planning efforts and goals related to recreation. The following sections summarize overarching goals and objectives of these plans and recognize



common planning themes while minimizing redundancies in recommendations.



PARKS + GREENWAYS MASTER PLAN

The Parks + Greenways Master Plan is intended to serve as an update to the Village’s 2008 Parks and Greenways Master Plan. The plan is centered around six overarching goals (Connectivity, Natural Resource Conservation, Quality of Life, Partnerships, and Grant Funding). Provided within the plan are maps identifying existing conditions used to determine areas of opportunity and constraint within the Village’s existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. A community survey was conducted as a component of the plan’s public outreach, revealing several findings that may inform the current parks and recreation master plan recommendations for the Village of Marvin. Key findings included (1) more survey participants

support sidewalk, greenway and trails project than do parks and public greenspace, (2) the most important greenway connection is to neighborhoods, (3) respondents overwhelmingly prefer investment in public spaces within the Village Center District. The plan concludes with recommendations for both greenways and parks. In terms of greenways/ trails, the plan lays out several potential spine and connector trail projects throughout the Village determined via existing conditions and future projections, and then prioritized those scenarios as short, mid and long-term implementation. Trail segments identified as short term and have been implemented include:

- › **Saddle Avenue – New Town (DOT Sidepath/Typical Greenway)**
- › **Wheat Field Drive - Saddle Avenue and New Town -Yellow Jasmine Lane (DOT Sidepath/Typical Greenway)**
- › **Stacey Howie Road - Crane Road (DOT Sidepath/Typical Greenway)**
- › **Tom Short Road – Existing Gravel (Crushed Stone Path)**
- › **Proposed/Marvin School Road - Joe Kerr Road (DOT Sidepath)**
- › **Painted Turtle Court - Intersection of New Town and Marvin School Roads (Crushed Stone Path)**
- › **Intersection Joe Kerr and Marvin Road - Six Mile Creek (DOT Sidepath)**
- › **Golden Bell Drive - White Dogwood Lane (Crushed Stone Path)**

- › **Duke Energy ROW (C18) - Waxhaw Marvin Road (DOT Sidepath)**
- › **Crane Road – Waxhaw Marvin Road (Crushed Stone Path)**
- › **Tar Kiln Branch – Waxhaw Marvin Road (Natural Surface Trail)**
- › **Waxhaw Marvin Road – NC/SC State Line (Natural Surface Trail)**



VILLAGE OF MARVIN 2020 LAND USE PLAN

The Village completed its first a comprehensive land use plan ten years after it incorporated in 1994. From 2004 leading up to the time Village leadership determined the plan needed an update, community surveys demonstrated that residents were not interested in developing the Village in ways differing from its original purpose. Yet, because the 2004 Village of Marvin Land Use Plan lacked policy guidelines, the Village opted to develop a revised plan dedicated to more specific policies and methods of implementing recommendations.



Expanding and maintaining the Village’s network of pedestrian travel ways, parks, recreation & greenspace was a core land use policy, gleaned via data harvesting exercises. Results from public input identified that over three-quarters of residents support parks and public greenspace, sidewalks, greenways and trails; residents are most supportive of greenways as a conservation areas, followed by nature preserves and parks; Thus, the promotion of green, outdoor recreational opportunities and development was noted as a top public priority.

Recreation, open space and trails goals of the 2020 Land Use Plan included:

Planning + Implementation

- › Identify and encourage the reservation of strategically located, undeveloped land for publicly usable greenspaces and parks.
- › Create pedestrian connections from neighborhoods to recreation, parks and other destinations in the Village.
- › Periodically update the Park and Greenways Master Plan to accommodate changing conditions.
- › Require development plans to show the presence of an internal pedestrian network and pedestrian areas where appropriate.
- › Review new development and



▲ 2020 Land Use Plan: Policies & Goals, graphic / Village of Marvin

redevelopment for compliance with an adopted Parks and Greenway Master Plan.

- › Expand existing multi-use trails and continue to support Marvin’s equestrian heritage and preserve open spaces.
- › Consider partnering with neighboring towns to develop a shared park space.

Acquisition + Provision

- › Establish capital project funding to implement a prioritized list of greenways with the Greenway Master Plan.
- › Continue to research opportunities to acquire lands for potential future public parks.
- › Actively pursue and secure easements along the Marvin Loop and other areas key to the Marvin Greenway Map.
- › Require accessible pocket parks, pedestrian travel ways and recreation equipment in new neighborhoods where appropriate.
- › Create regulations for development and redevelopment, to ensure the provision

of green space for recreation.

- › Establish a minimum standard of accessible, public green space, and travel ways to be provided by non-residential development.
- › Require non-residential uses to provide landscaped and furnished public gathering spaces as appropriate.

Maintenance

- › Institute regular maintenance programs for parks and recreation areas, public lands and greenways.
- › Service & Needs
- › Develop a public park system with adequate space and facilities to meet varied demographic needs.
- › Develop public spaces and parks with recreation equipment to serve a wide range of residents.
- › Support educational and recreational programs to optimize use of the Village’s recreation system (e.g. native plant / bird watch lists, walking



programs, educational walks for school-aged children, etc.).

- › Develop educational programs that promote environmental care and greenway safety.
- › Consider the installation of signs, maps and trail programs along Village greenways and park trails.
- › Consider providing safe and secure parking areas that serve greenway trails and parks.

Effective Uses

- › Protect environmentally sensitive lands by requiring greenway or open space to buffer development.
- › Incorporate existing natural areas and historic areas into the greenway system as feasible.

Streetscapes and Crosswalks

- › Require streetscapes to create more pleasant walking environments and separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic.
- › Create appropriately diverse streetscape standards for different uses or character areas in the Village.
- › Require (as feasible) streetscape trees between sidewalks and curbs to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic.
- › Consider lighting standards, pedestrian

furnishings and landscape standards for streetscaping in appropriate areas.

- › Provide pedestrian crosswalks that may incorporate pavers and other building materials and textures.

Pedestrian Networks and the Village Center

- › Create pedestrian-friendly parks and facilities that are furnished and well-lit in the Village Center area.
- › Provide linear parks connecting uses and recreation areas within the Village Center area.
- › Provide usable spaces for recreation and entertainment connected by pedestrian travel ways within the Village Center

The previously outlined principle policies and land use objectives stated within the plan have the strongest implications for parks, recreation and greenways planning. But, because the impact of parks and shared civic spaces are so broad-reaching, it makes sense to point to several other of the 2020 Village of Marvin Land Use Plan principles and goals which have the potential to impact parks, recreation and greenway service delivery within the Village. Among these are:

Cultivating a Sense of Community

- › Promote and highlight community characteristics and landmarks to which residents feel a connection

- › Build special places around civic and historic buildings that residents identify with the Village of Marvin.
- › Create inviting, walkable spaces between land uses that foster residents' meaningful connections to Village spaces.
- › Provide public places that encourage citizen engagement and shared community experiences
- › Support development plans that provide community gathering areas and pedestrian activity





B. IDENTITY & SENSE OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY: POLICIES & GOALS

PROMOTE MARVIN'S IDENTITY AND CULTIVATE A SENSE OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY

Principle Goal Promote the Village's vision, rural heritage, historic roots and foster an appreciation for the Village's history and its unique identity to cultivate a greater sense of place and community.

G. SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT: POLICIES AND GOALS

MAINTAIN OUR COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AND PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Principle Policy Maintain our commitment to sustainable practices, sensitivity to susceptible lands, strategies to protect the natural environment, and respect for biodiversity, and environmental health & well-being.

▲ Policies & Goals: Sense of Place and Sustainability and Environment, graphics / Village of Marvin

- › Support events that promote community connections.

Branding and Identity

- › Utilize the Village seal on signs, furnishings, along greenways and in parks
- › Develop identifiable Village edges, pathways, entry points, and landmarks
- › Consider funding a uniform branding program to install branding at gateways, in the Village Center and at public spaces to include landmark signs that draw attention to historic sites, public spaces and Village gathering areas

Value Natural Landscapes

- › Commit to preserve landscapes and implement viewshed buffers that characterize Marvin
- › Protect natural landform features that differentiate Marvin from other communities (e.g. wide viewshed buffers, heritage tree preservation, natural open space preservation)

Protecting the Village's air, land and water resources through sustainable practices

- › Commit to preserve landscapes and implement viewshed buffers that characterize Marvin
- › Inform developers with Village

regulations regarding open space, natural vegetation, trees and landscaping

- › Preserve open space, viewsheds and trees and sensitive lands

VILLAGE OF MARVIN



Marvin Heritage District Small Area Plan

Note (to remain after adoption): This adopted Small Area Plan (including appendices), is part of the adopted Village of Marvin 2020 Land Use Plan. The adopted map included in this Small Area Plan entitled, "Marvin Heritage District Small Area Plan - Future Land Use Map," replaced the "Village of Marvin Future Land Use Map" inset, currently labeled "Possible Village Center Subzones"

Adopted: 12-14-2021

THE VILLAGE OF MARVIN HERITAGE DISTRICT

Small Area Plan was created to kick off the achievement one of eight goals adopted in the Village of Marvin 2020 Land Use Plan. This goal is to "Facilitate a Uniquely Identifiable Village Center that Promotes Marvin's Heritage." (Reference Goal D). Since the November 10, 2020 adoption of the 2020 Land Use Plan, Planning Staff through proactive citizen engagement began to create the official Marvin Heritage District through adopting language into the Village of Marvin Zoning Ordinance. During that process the Marvin Village Council directed



Planning Staff to create the Marvin Heritage District small plan area which was adopted in December 2021 and the Marvin Heritage District Form-Based Code was adopted by the Village Council in January of 2022.

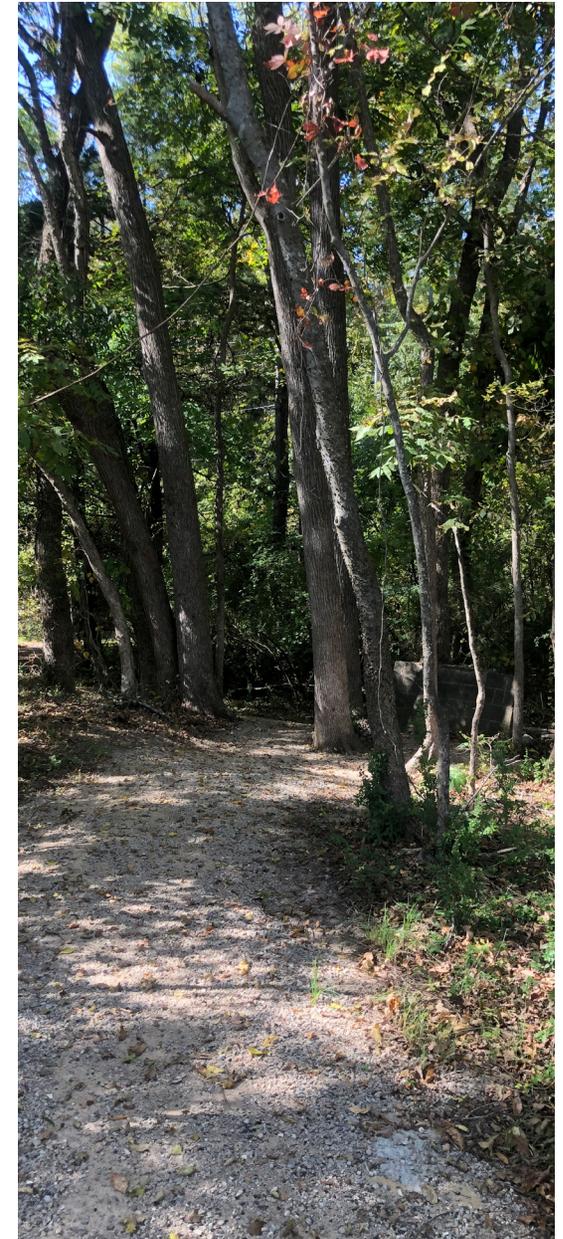
The Marvin Heritage District (MHD) is a planned mixed-use district that aims to create a community center that preserves and celebrates the culture and history of Marvin. The MHD Small Area Plan (advisory document, no regulatory authority) incorporates years of iterative input from the Resident Survey, Planning Board, Village Council, and a few consultants. This Plan creates a solid mechanism to enable and encourage the Village Council and appointed boards assure what is proposed in the Heritage District is uniform and what residents want to see in their community. This foundational document was approved by the Village Council on December 14, 2021, as an amendment to the Village of Marvin Land Use Plan 2020.

The MHD Form Based Code (regulatory authority) builds off the foundation, goals, policies, and implementation strategies set forth in the MHD Small Area Plan. This document regulates the district through appearance and feel rather than traditional factors. This code regulates:

- › **require commercial and residential buildings to look like and be sited like**

existing single-family houses in the Marvin area,

- › **preserve around 30% of land as public open space,**
- › **prioritize walkability and prohibit parking in front,**
- › **strictly regulate allowable commercial uses,**
- › **and much more to capture the rural feeling through design**





RELATED CODES + ORDINANCES

Analysis in this section is based upon the Village of Marvin Code of Ordinances adopted September 2, 2011. The three main Village of Marvin Code of Ordinances chapters reviewed during this process where Chapter 97: Parks and Recreation, Chapter 150: Subdivisions, and Chapter 151: Zoning. These chapters covered relevant information to the parks and recreation department. Items such as common open space (COS), parks and recreation dedication, greenway and sidewalks.

In the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 97: Parks and Recreation, defines in the Village of Marvin what parkland regulations the parks and greenways are held to. Items such as hours of operation, use, and prohibited activities and uses. Rules, regulations and their penalty enforcement for how Village parks and greenways are done.

Chapter 150: Subdivisions states the purpose of this chapter “is to establish procedures and standards for the development and subdivision of land within the corporate limits of the village.” This chapter helps to determine for Parks and Recreation, based on new development, what requirements are necessary for common open space (COS) and how that could impact the Department’s ability to serve the community. Stated within this Code of Ordinances chapter “the acquisition or development of recreation

facilities, parks, greenways, or open space sites that would serve the needs of the residents of the subdivision and residents within close proximity of the subdivision.”

Subsection (D) and (I) in section 150.068 for the category of sidewalks, pedestrian crosswalks and greenstrips must be a “...minimum of eight feet in width and shall be constructed of asphalt according to specifications on file with the Village.” Trails shall be constructed to the trail standards approved and amended within the Parks and Greenway Master Plan, determined by the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Boards, the Planning Board and approved by Village Council.

Conservation lands in the Village of Marvin is dictated based on: the minimum land size requirements, the interconnected and continuous system joining conservation land to other COS areas, accessibility for the Public, and standards to which the land shall match the Village’s land use plan.

Key Code of Ordinances items related to these conservation lands requirements are:

- › **“Required conservation lands (other than viewsheds) shall be at least 75 feet in width...” 150.070 (B)**
- › **“All common or publicly owned conservation lands shall be interconnected wherever possible**

to provide a continuous network of conservation lands within and adjoining the subdivision.” 150.070 (D)

- › **“All common of publicly owned conservation lands, to the greatest degree feasible, shall be contiguous adjoining parks, preserves or other protected lands.” 150.070 (E)**
- › **“All common or publicly owned conservation lands may be provided with pedestrian pathways for use by the residents of the subdivision. Public access shall be provided on the trails if they are linked to other publicly accessible pathway systems within the village. Provisions shall be made for access to the conservation lands, as required for land management and emergency purposes.” 150.070 (F)**
- › **“Conservation lands shall be located in a manner that is consistent with the village’s land use plan.” 150.070 (H)**





In the Village of Marvin, the Code of Ordinances states how the dedication of land for and/or fees in lieu of park, recreation and open space purposes (150.075, A) is determined. 150.075, A, 1 General Provision states that “All major subdivisions shall dedicate a portion of land to the village of pay a fee in lieu thereof...” This portion of land can go towards public parks, greenway, recreation facilities and open space are intended to serve the recreational needs of the residents in subdivision or development. If land is dedicated as or adjacent to an existing or proposed greenway of parkland, the site must provide public access to the site. The second half of section A, “the amount of land to be dedicated. At least on thirty-fifth (or 1,245 square feet) of an acre shall be dedicated for each dwelling unit proposed in the subdivision plat or development that contains five lots or more.” In both situations, general provisions and the amount of land to be dedicated, the Village Council can accept the land for recreational purposes, approve and open space site or accept a fee in lieu.

Nature of land to be dedicated shall meet the criteria of:

- Unity, form a single parcel of land.
- Usability. 2/3 of dedicated land shall be suitable for active recreation.
- Shape. A portion of dedicated land that is for active recreation shall be usable for active recreation activities planned

for the site.

- Location. Located to serve the recreation and open space needs of residents of the subdivisions and residents within close proximity of the subdivision.
- Access. Land shall have a provided adjoining public street frontage or by a dedicated public easement (at least 10 feet wide) connecting to the dedicated land
- Topography needs an average slope of dedicated land must be usable for active recreation, slope cannot exceed 15%.
- Screening, to be counted must have sufficient natural or human-made buffer or screening to minimize any negative impacts on adjacent properties.
- Ownership and maintenance. An absolute and legal possession of parcel to local government or non-profit organization for ownership and maintenance.

The Chapter 151: Zoning, for Parks and Recreation helps to determine, due to zoning requirements, what properties or new developments have the potential to create additional parkland for the Village due to zoning requirements. The chapter establishes ways to calculate required accessible open space, what open space requirements are needed, and how

to define common open space types and ways in which the design process will be reviewed. Required by zoning, landscaping, screening and buffers, according to 151.046 (C.4) “Landscape areas and open space. Parking lot landscaping areas and foundation landscaping shall not be counted toward open space requirements.” Calculation of required open space and landscape areas have the development standards of:

“Accessible green space. A Minimum 15% of gross area shall be provided as accessible useable green space. Only village green and public gathering areas may be counted as open green space. Village greens and public gathering spaces must be prominently located and pedestrian-accessible with the intent to encourage walking and pedestrian activity within the development and shall count toward the minimum 15% open space.” 151.085(D.2.e.2)

Defined by the code of ordinances, open space is the “Land area open to the sky and unoccupied by a principal or accessory building. Open space may be used for vegetation, landscaping, roads, sidewalks, recreation, including roofed, open-air facilities, or the preservation of historic, cultural or natural features or amenities.” Pocket parks are defined as: “A small (usually less than one acre in area) neighborhood-oriented park or open space area that can contain benches, fountains, gazebos and open space areas, that is designed as an



integral part of a subdivision. These parks are usually accessed by foot or bicycle, thus, off-street parking facilities are not required nor encouraged.”

In order to receive design review from the Village of Marvin:

“Open space or land conservation: The exact location and design of conservation areas, recreation areas, active and passive open space, public and private open space, public or private amenities or improvements, calculated areas of required and dedicated open space. Publicly accessible open space must show access points, trail locations, with labels indicating relevant elements and dimensions on the site plan.” 151.215(E.2.f.4)

DEMOGRAPHICS + TRENDS

A detailed and accurate understanding of a community’s demographics is a critical component of a successful long-range plan. Growth and change within the population drive many of this plan’s goals and objectives, providing a roadmap to keep the Village of Marvin’s parks and recreation offerings at pace with the evolving demand. A continual increase in number of residents and changes within the community’s demographics impact demand for parks and recreation.

Within a growing population, demographic

traits within, are also likely to shift over time. Allocations of different age groups, races, and income levels are all likely to change in various degrees as a population grows. These changes can impact the need for types of recreational facilities and programs needed to best serve the community.

Alongside demographics, recreational trends are important as they can help predict what recreation activities may be expected or desired by park users and program participants in Marvin. Trends in recreational preferences change continuously which sparks continuous change in demand for new activities and programming. Even when demographic factors are unchanging, changing preferences and trends influence the demand for parks and recreation programs and facilities from a population.

What follows is a summary of the Village of Marvin’s current demographic characteristics and an analysis of the Village’s future population projections through 2033. Included in this analysis are population growth projections, an overview of current demographics and projects for the 10-year planning horizon. A summary of national and local trends is also provided. The combination of these two sets of data provides a framework for recommendations that target the current and future population and align with trends in

recreation.

DATA SOURCES

This analysis draws data from the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI).

Data obtained from the USCB is the foundation of this Demographic Analysis. Census data includes data gathered from the Decennial Census of Population and Housing, conducted every 10 years, and the American Community Survey, conducted on an ongoing basis and reported every five years. Data is collected and synthesized using a variety of demographic analysis methods to inform current and future characteristics. Data obtained from the BLS is used to assess employment levels in the community, including data on employment and unemployment rate.

Components of this analysis including population projections are sourced from ESRI. ESRI uses proprietary methodology for creating a current population estimate and a five-year population projection estimate. ESRI uses data from the USCB, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and high-quality local sources. ESRI has developed methods specially tailored to estimating demographic characteristics of small areas such as Census Blocks.



ESRI encourages use of their data in conjunction with other sources of data, saying “ESRI revises its forecasts annually to draw from the latest data. However, this data can be enhanced with personal knowledge of an area to provide the qualitative, anecdotal detail that is not captured in a national database. It is incumbent on the data users and producers to incorporate as much information as possible when assessing local trends.”

ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS

Estimates provide a summary of an area’s current population or demographics characteristics, while projections are a proposed scenario for a future population based on certain assumptions such as a consistent growth rate or expected increase in migration. Projections are based on an estimate of the population at a given point in time and project a potential future scenario based on certain assumptions.

AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH

Average annual growth is a measure for determining the rate of growth per year over a given period. The average annual growth rate is useful for showing the rate at which population growth is occurring per year, even when population estimate data available spans a multiple year period. An indication of past growth can be used to form the basis for projection population for a future year. Data obtained from the Village Planning Department

as well as the NC State Demographer’s Office, Marvin’s annual growth rate is 1.49%. This is significantly higher than that of North Carolina and over two times that of the United States.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

This report uses 100 percent stacked bar charts to display changes in demographic characteristics over time. The information embedded in the charts is drawn from ESRI’s analysis of demographic characteristics for Marvin. Such context provides an understanding of overall population growth and expected changes in subsections of age, race, and household income. ESRI’s analysis estimates 2022 data and makes a projection for 2027. To create the population proportions of demographic trends through 2033, this analysis calculates the average annual growth rate for each demographic segment between 2022 and 2027 and uses that to make projections for each population segment through 2033.

AGE SEGMENT

The following chart presents the changing proportions of the age cohorts based on population estimates and projections from 2022 through 2033. The proportional charts show a downward trend in all individuals except those between the age of 25 to 34 and individuals over the age of 75. The median age in 2022 in the Village of Marvin was 35.7 years, compared to 38.3 years for North Carolina and 38.1 years





for the United States.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

Estimates show that currently, residents identifying as White Alone make up over 68 percent of the population. In the coming years this will shift slightly as the population of non-white individuals increases. As seen in the chart below, the largest growth will be experienced in the portion of the population that identifies Two or More Races at 0.6% growth annually. The population of individuals identifying as Black Alone is also experiencing a positive growth rate at 0.2% growth annually. While these segments are experiencing positive growth, the rate is fairly low thus leading to a fairly stable composition over the next 10 years. The percent of the population of Hispanic Origin is experiencing a positive annual growth rate of 0.04 percent per year and will make up 5.64 percent of the population by 2033.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

The table below shows the proportional distribution of income for households in Marvin. Pew Research defines Low Income Households as “households earning less than two-thirds of the US Median Income, Middle Income households as households earning between two-thirds of the US Median Income and double the US Median Income and Upper Income households as those making more than double the US Median Income.” The current US Median

Income, as documented by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, is \$79,900. Current income ranges for household classification are listed below.

Currently, between 4.3 and 9.7 percent of households in Marvin would be classified as low-income based on the Pew Research metric. Between 18.4 percent and 35.5 percent would be considered middle-income and between 54.8 percent and 71.9 percent would be considered upper income. Households earning less than \$150,000 are experiencing a strong negative growth trend meaning that, as a portion of all households in Marvin, households earning less than \$150,000 will make up less of the overall households than they do now. These households currently make up 28.1 percent of all households, by 2033 that number is expected to fall to 14.9 percent. Households earning between \$150,000 and \$200,000 are experiencing strong positive growth (increase of 13 percent of households by 2033) with households earning between \$150,000 and \$200,000 growing the fastest with an average annual growth rate of 0.62 percent. Households earning between \$15,000 and \$35,000 are experiencing such a strong negative growth rate that there is a possibility, assuming current trends continue, that virtually no households will fall into this range by 2033.

The median household income in 2022

according to the ESRI Community Profile was \$245,520, a figure that is projected to increase to \$293,735 by 2033.

EDUCATION

The Village of Marvin’s population, according to estimates for 2022, has higher attainment of degrees and diplomas than the United States. Over 90 percent of the population has education beyond a High School Diploma compared to 45.2 percent for the United States as a whole. 1.1 percent of the population does not have a High School Diploma or equivalent compared to 10.2 percent for the United States.

TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION

Tapestry Segmentation is a demographic analysis methodology developed by ESRI to provide a fuller more detailed description of America’s neighborhoods, combining multiple demographic factors to identify numerous unique consumer markets throughout the United States. Each of these tapestry segments, 67 in total, are meant to reflect shifts to established consumer markets and the emergence of new ones due to population growth, demographic and socioeconomic change and evolving consumer behavior.

The Tapestry Segmentation Analysis divides areas into distinct segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. Neighborhoods with similar characteristics are



grouped and neighborhoods with divergent characteristics are separated into different segments.

The Tapestry Segmentation Analysis for the Village of Marvin revealed two Tapestry Segments in the community. Official profiles generated by ESRI are included in the Appendix.

- Boomburbs (76 percent): ESRI describes Boomburbs as a new growth market comprising “young professionals with families that have opted to trade up to the newest housing in the suburbs. This market is an affluent one but has a higher overall proportion of mortgages. This group is experiencing rapid growth and tends to be comprised of well-educated professionals with a running start on prosperity.” These individuals and neighborhoods are often suburban peripheries of larger metro areas and are overwhelmingly homeowners (84 percent). This group is majority white and has a median household income twice that of the United States. According to ERSI’s Market Profile, Boomburbs are technologically savvy, being well educated and affluent lifemode groups. They enjoy gardening, and physical fitness is a priority for them, with gym memberships or home equipment ownership. Leisure includes a range of activities from sports such

as hiking, bicycling, swimming, and golf, to visits to theme parks or water parks.

- Professional Pride (24 percent): ESRI describes the Professional Pride lifemode as well-educated career professionals that have prospered through the Great Recession and maintain upscale suburban lifestyles. This market is characterized by individuals who work long hours and often commute far to get to work. This group is financially savvy, and individuals have accumulated an average of 1.6 million dollars in net worth. Individuals are almost entirely homeowners (91.6 percent) with few renters (8.4 percent). This group is majority white (78.7 percent) with a sizeable Asian and Pacific Islander population (12.6 percent), but it is significantly less diverse than the US.¹

TRENDS IN PARKS + RECREATION

The field of parks and recreation continually updates best practices and integrates new policies and technologies as they become available. A forward-looking parks and recreation department will be aware of new and emerging recreation trends and can understand and anticipate the impacts broader

² http://downloads.esri.com/esri_content_doc/dbl/us/tapestry/segment2.pdf

trends will have. This plan looks at local and national recreation and activity trends, high-level emerging trends in the field of parks and recreation, sustainability trends, and impacts of COVID-19 – all of which are expected to have significant impact on Marvin’s parks and recreation department during the next 10 years.

METHODOLOGY

Local recreation trends are sourced from Esri, an international supplier of geographic information system software, web GIS and geodatabase management. Esri uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Internal Revenue Service and other high-quality local sources. This analysis is drawn from ESRI’s market potential index (MPI). The MPI is a measure that compares demand for a product or service within a pre-determined geographic area to the national demand for that product or service. Demand for a recreational activity is measured based on whether an individual has participated in a certain activity within the past 12 months. An MPI of more than 100 indicates that the local demand for a product is higher than the national average, while an MPI of less than 100 indicates that the local demand is lower than the national average. The products or services included within this comparison are specific to parks and recreation activities, though the products or services are not necessarily indicative of the Village’s facility or program offerings. Demand for a recreational activity is



Marvin trailway / McAdams

measured based on whether an individual has participated in a certain activity within the past 12 months.

National recreation trends and high-level emerging trends are sourced from a variety of industry standard publications including The Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report. The report was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

- › **National Sport and Fitness Participatory Trends**
- › **Core versus Casual Participation Trends**
- › **Participation by Generation**
- › **Non-Participant Interest by Age Segment**

The study is based on findings from surveys carried out in 2020 by the Physical Activity Council (PAC), resulting in a total of N= 18,000 online interviews. A statistically representative sample size of N= 18,000 completed interviews is considered to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.32 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. Using a weighting technique, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 303,971,652 people (ages six and older). The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation

across the U.S.

Core versus Casual Participation

In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual versus core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness and recreational activities more than 50 times per year, while for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13 times per year.

In each activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than casual participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants.

LOCAL RECREATION TRENDS

Local recreation trends were pulled from ESRI’s Market Potential Index profile for the Village. The table below lists the parks and recreation activities most popular with Marvin residents as indicated by having the highest percentage of participants and their Market Potential Index (MPI). This data is derived from spending



associated with sports and sports equipment and captures participation in public leagues, private leagues and individual participation. Some activities can be done individually and with little specialized equipment. Walking and biking are activities that residents can participate in anywhere, though they may choose to pursue these activities in public parks. Fishing, hiking, bowling, swimming and weight lifting are activities that can be pursued at a specific location and may require additional equipment and resources. The popularity of these activities suggests that continuing to offer opportunities to partake in these activities while investing in new resources to enhance those offerings would be responsive to the community.

The MPI analysis for all of the top 7 recreation activities in the Village indicates that not only are these activities the most popular in Marvin, they are more popular in Marvin than they are nationwide. In fact, 30 of the 38 recreation activities analyzed in ESRI's MPI have MPI values over 100, and only 2 have a score under 80. This indicates that general recreational activities are very popular in the Village.

NATIONAL RECREATION TRENDS

National changes in the popularity of recreation activities provide additional context for activities experiencing increasing or decreasing popularity and give an overview of activity

levels for individuals. These national trends supplement local trends and can serve to anticipate forthcoming trends at the local level. Popularity of activities have implications for future planning for the Marvin Parks and Recreation Department's programs and facilities. National trends also provide insight as to whether changes within a given year at the local level are local trends or part of a larger shift in preference.

The five activities experiencing the largest growth by participants in the last year according to the Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report are hiking, camping, birdwatching, RV camping and tennis.²

Of note, all the top 25 activities facing decline except for baseball are all activities that are indoor activities requiring a specialized facility and/or equipment likely due to closure of facilities due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. All these activities, when looking at a 3-year average, are facing a decline much less significant and the sharp decrease in the past year alone could likely be the source of a multi-year average decline. Similarly, the large increases in 1-year changes in hiking, camping and tennis are better viewed within the context of their 3-year average change which is still high but not as high as the 1-year change.

² Sports and Fitness Industry Associations. State of the Industry. Silver Spring, MD: SFIA, 2021.





This can likely be attributed to the fact that these are all outdoor activities with minimal interaction with large groups of individuals.

The top 5 fastest growing sports/activities according to the same report were skateboarding, surfing, camping, tennis, and pickleball.

While playgrounds, park shelters, and restrooms remain the most common facilities located across parks and recreation systems nationwide, trending facilities, according to Recreation Management are: outdoor fitness areas and fitness trails, splash play areas, and walking and hiking trails.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) also issues an annual trends report. Several of the noted trends are rooted in sustainability and are covered later in this report. Aside from those two trends of note are increased integration of technology and a decline in youth sports participation.³ On technology, NRPA notes the increased use of drones for horticultural maintenance, a transition to electric maintenance vehicles and mowers, and a long term future use of pedestrian robots using public paths in parks for deliveries and other services.

³ Doles, Richard J. “Top Trends in Parks and Recreation for 2022.” National Recreation and Parks Association, 2021. December 16. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2022/january/top-trends-in-parks-and-recreation-for-2022/>.

NRPA also provides commentary on a steady decline in youth participation in recreation that has been happening since the late 2000s and has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Citing multiple academic studies, NRPA reports that youth participation in sports decreased 7 percent between 2008 and 2018 and that most kids between the age of 6 and 12 playing a team sport had quit by age 11. Since the onset of the pandemic, 30 percent of kids have reported that they are no longer interested in picking their pre-pandemic team sports back up. NRPA promotes parks and recreation organizations using sports sampling programs which allow kids to try a variety of sports in an effort to find something that aligns with their interest and skills with low commitment and investment required on the kid and family’s part. In addition, NRPA sees a return to community-based sports in the future and that parks and recreation agencies are the most ideally positioned to be multi-sports providers.

INTERGENERATIONAL RECREATION TRENDS

CHILDREN AND NATURE PROGRAMMING

The Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN) initiative offers local officials guidance for establishing new connections between children and nature.⁴ Children and Nature

⁴ “Cities Connecting Children to Nature, A municipal Action Guide”, CCCN-Municipal-Action-Guide.pdf (cityparksalliance.org)

Network and other organizations have been pushing the efforts to provide the benefits of nature for all children. Parks and open spaces provide opportunity to highlight natural resources and enhance access to these areas. Nature based programming, after school, and summer camp programming in natural areas, as well as educational programming to raise environmental awareness are some of the strategies that are on rise across the country.

ADULT AND SENIOR PROGRAMMING

Many parks and recreation departments have expanded to provide adult and senior fitness, athletic, and enrichment programming. Healthy aging in parks⁵ is NRPA’S campaign to improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of older adults through parks and recreation. It is about preserving the health, independence and social connections of older adults. NRPA’S healthy aging in parks initiative aims to improve the health and wellbeing of older adults through parks and recreation by the following strategies:

- › **Chronic Disease Prevention and Management: Dissemination and increased sustainable supports for evidence-based chronic disease prevention and management programs.**
- › **Food Security: Improved access to healthy foods.**
- › **Social Isolation: Increased opportunities to establish strong and healthy social**

⁵ “Healthy Aging in Parks”; <https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/healthy-aging-in-parks/healthy-aging-in-parks-about/>



connections.

TRENDS IN ENSURING AFFORDABLE ACCESS

Parks are free and open to the public and serve as important locations for people to play, socialize and gather as a community. Community members are only able to access free or low-cost parks and programs if they can afford the trip to get there. Ensuring an equitable distribution of parks and amenities throughout a geographic area means residents truly have affordable access to parks and programs.

The 10 Minute Walk campaign⁶ is working to “ensure there’s a great park within a 10-minute walk of every person, in every neighborhood, in every city across America.” Seven North Carolina Mayors have signed the pledge according to Trust for Public Land website.

Parks and recreation departments frequently provide day programs and camps for children at below-market or discounted rates. This service provides an affordable alternative for families who must find childcare when school is out of session.

A recent study from the National Recreation and Parks Association found “93 percent of Americans believe providing affordable out-of-school time programs at local parks,

⁶ <https://www.10minutewalk.org/#Home>

recreation centers and libraries to families of all income levels should be a goal of their local government. Currently, 93 percent of park and recreation agencies nationwide administer or manage out-of-school time programs.”

Day programs and camps can benefit all children but are especially important for low-income families with few other options for daytime childcare options.

Parks and Recreation in *Underserved Areas: A Public Health Perspective*⁷ states “Several studies have documented that while parks and recreational facilities are available throughout the United States, there are several additional factors that affect park use and physical activity levels.” Factors include:

- › **Park access - Easy park access is associated with increased park use. Park visits are more frequent and physical activity levels are higher.**
- › **Park distribution - Disparities in park distribution are particularly evident in areas with low income and racial/ethnic populations.**
- › **Park facilities - Within parks, there are certain types of facilities that encourage higher levels of physical activity than others, such as trails and playgrounds.**
- › **Park conditions - Park facilities that are consistently well maintained,**

⁷ <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/park-pulse/park-pulse-survey-affordable-out-of-school-time-programming/>

aesthetically appealing and safe have increased public use and physical activity.

COMMITTING TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) recognizes that equal access to parks for all is a right, not a privilege.⁸⁹ According to their position statement on social equity. “Our nation’s public parks and recreation services should be equally accessible and available to all people regardless of income level, ethnicity, gender, ability, or age. Social equity is a critical responsibility borne by every public park and recreation agency and the professionals that operate them.” According to NRPA, “designing programming to meet the needs of multicultural, racial, or ethnic communities supports the well-being of historically marginalized and vulnerable groups.” Other programs around the nation have offered community gardens, health and wellness programs and budget and personal finance training for multicultural, racial and ethnic communities, in addition to a high-quality park system equitably distributed across a community.

⁸ Kellogg, Michelle, and Julie Nelson. “Racial Equity in Parks and Recreation.” National Recreation and Parks Association, 2015. November 30. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2015/december/racial-equity-in-parks-and-recreation/>.

⁹ Rouse, David. “Social Equity, Parks and Gentrification.” National Recreation and Parks Association, 2018. July 26. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2018/july/social-equity-parks-and-gentrification/>.



The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) acknowledges that parks and recreation providers can be at the forefront of addressing racial equity due to their unique role as a public service provider of many quality-of-life programs and amenities. The NRPA

INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS:

- › Health and wellness programs such as cooking and nutrition programs
- › Field trips
- › Special Olympics or Paralympics
- › Therapy and mentoring services such as therapy swimming, art/music therapy
- › Technology training
- › Volunteer or employment activities including work opportunities at local parks and special events

recommends the following considerations for addressing racial equity in parks and recreation:

- › **Normalizing conversations about race is the only way to develop effective strategies for racial equity. One of the biggest challenges is the general discomfort many people experience in talking about race. This is a critical hurdle to overcome. Avoiding conversations about race means there**

is a greater likelihood that organizations will not develop appropriate strategies to address institutional and structural racism.

- › **Behavior drives attitude. It is a common misconception that attitude drives behavior and expecting people to “understand” racism can lead to desired behavioral changes. However, changing behavior changes understanding. Providing common understanding of racial equity terminology and tools to use helps employees develop an increased understanding of institutional and structural racism.**
- › **Equity is a process. Embedding racial equity in the core operations of an organization takes continual learning and practice. It should be considered as an ongoing process of delivering business and not relegated to a checkbox or an additional step to an existing process**

NRPA first published its Inclusion Report in 2018, addressing the challenges for people with different backgrounds, races, ethnicity, income levels, physical ability, sexual orientation, gender, and cultural backgrounds to access high quality parks and recreation programming. NRPA defines Inclusion as removing barriers, both physical and theoretical, so that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy the

benefits of parks and recreation¹⁰. 40 percent of US agencies have adopted formal inclusion policies to maintain consistent guidelines and implementation standard across the Agency. Examples of programming for individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities include physical activity programming, volunteer and employment activities, and health and wellness programs.

Acknowledgement of demographic diversity through celebratory programs such as heritage and holiday celebrations, culturally sensitive program hours, and health and wellness programs that reflect cultural and ethnic practices help brings the community together. Programs and activities geared towards diversity and inclusion include community gardens, women-only programs such as swimming and dedicated gym hours, language training, technology training, financial training, and health and wellness programs such as culinary skills classes, nutrition classes etc.

SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS

Parklands in Villages like Marvin where development is in proximity to large expanses of streams and floodplains are credited to reducing flooding by allowing for intensive green infrastructure and opportunities

¹⁰ National Recreation and Parks Association. “Parks and Recreation Inclusion Report,” 2018. <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/e386270247644310b06960be9e9986a9/park-recreation-inclusion-report.pdf>



for restoration and stabilization of riverine ecologies. Increasingly, parklands have also been recognized as a vital component of infrastructural development strategies to help mitigate the impacts of climate change. According to a survey of parks and recreation agencies conducted by The National Recreation and Parks Association, nearly 50 percent of Parks and Recreation agencies had adopted or would go through the process of developing and adopting a Sustainability Plan in the near future¹¹. The trends seen in this report relating to sustainability showed that most agencies contributed to city, county and/or state sustainability goals by providing healthy outdoor activity for residents, protection and management of wildlife and wildlife habitat, responsible management of natural land, reduction of landfill waste, environmentally friendly design practices including green infrastructure and fostering sustainability through public education and engagement.

The National Recreation and Parks Association's top trends of 2022 predicted that most new parks will be designed with resiliency in mind. Parks are and will continue to be seen increasingly as landscapes providing a multitude of benefits including protection against flooding, stormwater management, mitigation of rising temperatures and promotion

11 National Recreation and Parks Association. "Park and Recreation Sustainability Practices," 2017. <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/f768428a39aa4035ae55b2aaff372617/sustainability-survey-report.pdf>

of environmental and social resiliency. NRPA also predicted that in an effort to address extreme heat and the emptying out of strip malls and big-box stores, park and recreation projects will increasingly be transformation of these vacant parcels into recreation amenities. Assessment of fallow land and highest and best use of existing developed land will be priorities for agencies looking to expand their impact and geographic presence and distribution. An additional trend noted, is an increasing view of parks as critical infrastructure for the environment, the economy and social and physical wellbeing.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND PARKS

The COVID-19 Pandemic has simultaneously put strain on Parks and Recreation organizations and highlighted their importance to both the physical and mental health of their users. For the better part of the pandemic thus far, the outdoors has been the safest place to have social gatherings and for individual recreation as well. At times, it has been the only option with the shuttering of indoor gyms and recreation facilities.

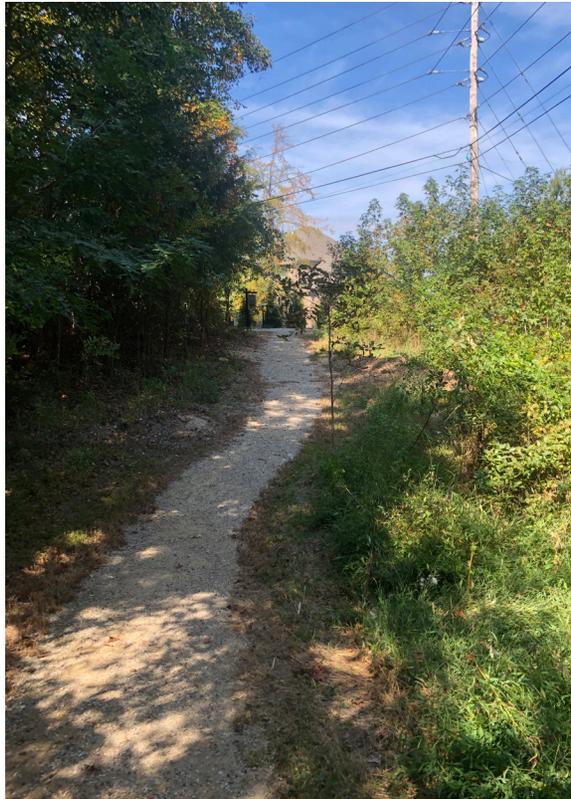
According to the Outdoor Foundation, 53 percent of Americans participated in an outdoor recreation activity at least once which is the highest participation rate on record.¹² The

12 Outdoor Industry Association. "The New Outdoor Participant (COVID and Beyond)." Outdoor Industry Association, March, 2021.

report cautions however that this growth isn't guaranteed to be sustained in a post-pandemic world with one quarter of new participants saying they did not want to return to their outdoor recreation activities and the overall number of times that participants engaged in outdoor recreation continued to decline as it has in years past. Engagement with those participating in these activities for the first time, especially those open to sustaining outdoor recreation post-pandemic could reveal programmatic and facility desires from that population that would keep them as users of the system.

North Carolina State University led two studies studying the decrease in formal outdoor activities in parks by teens and young adults led to decline in mental health and wellbeing.¹³ These studies found that 54 percent of college students reduced their park uses during the pandemic. They also found that increased worry about contracting COVID-19 was marked by a further deprecation in use of parks particularly among students identifying as Asian or Black. 52 percent of students self-reported a decline in mental health, nearly matching the percentage of students who had reduced their

13 Larson, Lincoln, and et al. "Greenspace and Park Use Associated with Less Emotional Distress among College Students in the United States during the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Environmental Research* 204 (Part D), 2022. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0013935121016686?casa_token=EZ-XY-76jqRwAAAAA:ZtuQLp6m5UEl6wlb5Pv7JmhN4utLcJKsIxed_pN4OF8j-1gpM6e-WFb2ycgdgpGN85dF_0S61g.



outdoor activities due to the pandemic. Among students who increased their park and outdoor use during the pandemic, however, the studies found less overall distress attributed to the pandemic.

These studies emphasize the important role of parks and recreation agencies in improving mental health and wellbeing for younger individuals.

- › **SIDEBAR** *The following factors are derived from the 2020 Trust for Public Land special report -Parks and Pandemic. The report highlights following challenges and changes as they are affecting the parks systems.*
- › **Health:** *Parks and open spaces have become critical resources for all the physical and mental health benefits they provide. The pandemic has resulted in closings of restaurants, bars, malls, etc. where people socialize, and parks and open spaces are helping fill that gap while also helping communities deal with the trauma and stress that comes with a global health crisis. The report also notes that the pandemic has revealed a significant gap in the nation's poor neighborhoods which lack access to the quality green spaces, thus depriving them of the health benefits.*
- › **Usage:** *As the businesses and non-essential services have closed across the nation, people have found respite in close to home neighborhood parks, open*

- spaces, and greenway trails to stay physically active and meet other people while maintaining the 'social distance'. Parks and greenway trails are seeing unprecedented high levels of usage proving their importance in this health crisis. This has also led to the overwhelmed parks and recreation systems and many communities had to come up with innovative ways to encourage people to maintain distance and use open spaces in accordance with CDC guidelines.*
- › **Policy:** *Across the country, the pandemic has led parks departments to consider a range of policy changes by closing off amenities, athletic programs, and facilities that result in large gatherings. While the communities have kept access to open spaces, portable toilets, restrooms, drinking fountains are shut down. In major cities, the problem of equitable access became apparent when parking lots were closed to manage heavy traffic in parks which in turn created a barrier for people not within the walking distance of the parks.*
- › **Investment:** *Exacerbated usage of parks and open spaces has underscored the need for increase in parks and recreation as essential infrastructure investment and*



leverage the momentum of communities' interest to be outdoors and focused on health benefits. Cities and Villages across the nation are facing the financial challenges with decreased revenue, employment loss, and budget cuts. Elected officials and decision makers need to realize the importance of parks and recreation as an essential service in this pandemic and ensure a steady investment to continue offering the quality service to their communities.

- ***Future: The Trust for Public Land report also highlights that the pandemic has called attention to the fact that access to the outdoors is considered a privilege when it should be a right. With the data to pinpoint where parks are most needed, we can address the equality challenge across the communities. Experts in the field are suggesting that this is the crucial time to continue supporting the operational needs of parks to maintain their high quality, especially in the underserved areas.***





▲ View from a Marvin trailway / McAdams

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As Marvin's population grows and changes in the coming decade, the community's recreation needs will grow and change.

- › **The overall population growth indicates a need for expanding parks and recreation services and suggests a quickly growing tax base to support that work.**
- › **A population with positive population growth trends in adults and youth suggest that a balance of programming that targets both populations as well as families would best serve the Village. Development of standards for design amenities and features that are universally inclusive while incorporating**

targeted programming for these demographic groups is crucial.

- › **High participation rates indicate that work needs to be done to continue to engage and assess needs and desires to make sure investments in parks and recreation facilities are making the best use of committed funding and staffing.**
- › **Quickly increasing incomes means that programs that require financial contributions from users will become increasingly possible for the Village.**
- › **The area's racial demographics will change slightly during the next ten years, but with an already relatively diverse population there is a need for equity, diversity and inclusion efforts**

to ensure equitable provision of parks, facilities, amenities and programs.

- › **In addition to Marvin's specific community context, emerging trends in parks and recreation include understanding the many far-reaching benefits of parks and incorporating parks and greenway planning into larger connected networks of infrastructure.**
- › **Both in Marvin and nationwide, in the aftermath of COVID-19 there is an immense opportunity to turn casual users of parks and recreation facilities who increased their use of such facilities during the pandemic into core users who use facilities long term.**



INVENTORY + ANALYSIS

IN THIS CHAPTER

PARKS + FACILITIES

PARKS ASSESSMENT

PARKS + FACILITIES MAINTENANCE





To establish a clear vision for the future of a parks and recreation system, the existing state of that system should be inventoried and analyzed to identify those elements that are working well, and those where there may be gaps.

This component of the current Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan examines the Village’s parkland, operations and maintenance. Many of the findings detailed in the following assessment will inform this plan’s recommendations. Each recommendation will be rooted in the discoveries and realities of the existing parks and recreation system and will help inform action items and strategies for achieving them.

PARKS + FACILITIES

OVERVIEW

To establish a clear vision for the future of a parks and recreation system, the existing state of that system should be inventoried and analyzed to identify those elements that are working well and those where there may be gaps. Over the course of the day-long parks assessment, the Planning Team (McAdams Team and Village of Marvin staff) observed strengths and opportunities throughout each park, facility and open space and developed a set of five themes based on the number of times a particular observation occurred. Each theme summarizes the realities, opportunities,

and challenges of the current conditions observed throughout the parks system. The five themes are: (1) Accessibility + Safety (2) Branding, Wayfinding + Sense of Place, (3) General Conditions + Maintenance, and (4) Diversity of Park Offerings. Parks and facilities examined include: Marvin Efrd Park, Village Hall, and Marvin Gardens Pocket Park

INVENTORY

The Village of Marvin maintains approximately 29.25 acres of parkland and open space. The Village’s parks system includes one developed park, one undeveloped property, 4.13 miles of trail, and 3,610 square feet of informal indoor

recreation space. Of the current trail offerings, the Marvin Loop Trail consists of an existing 1.5 miles of asphalt greenway with 1.15 miles to be completed. There’s an additional effort in progress for the Marvin Loop of 1.25 miles and is estimated to be completed within the next 3 years. [Figure1].

PARKS ASSESSMENT

The themes included here are intended to be a summary of the realities, opportunities and challenges observed throughout the park system. They are a synthesis of reflections and are not intended to be discrete categories nor a comprehensive list of considerations. [Figure 2].

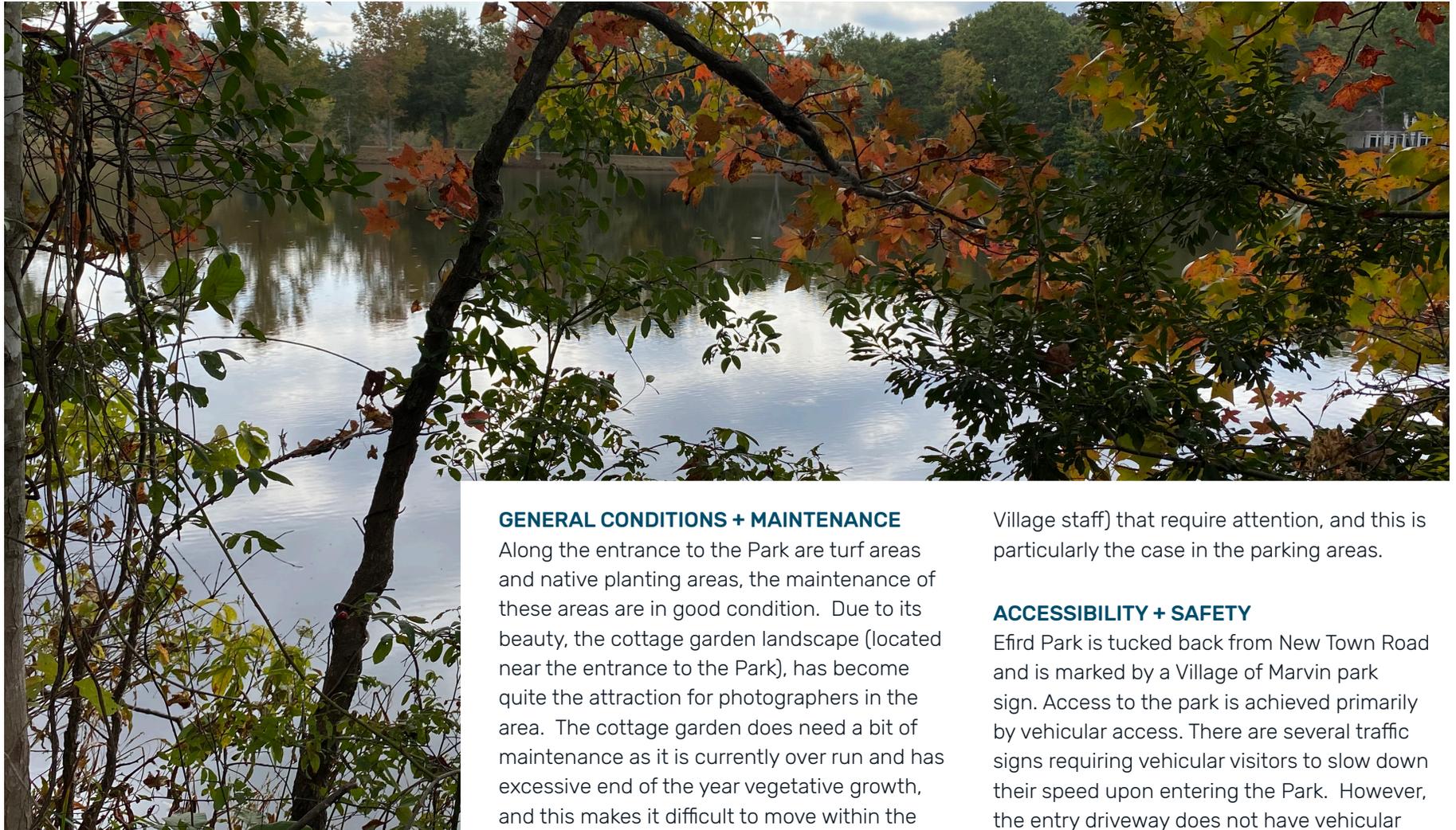


PARKLAND + TRAILS	INDOOR FACILITY SPACE	PARK FACILITIES + AMENITIES
<p>29.25 acres of developed parkland</p> <p>1+ acre of future parkland</p> <p>1 parks</p> <p>1 future parkland property</p> <p>4+ miles of trails and greenways</p>	<p>3610 square feet of indoor recreation space</p> <p>1 enclosed events barn</p> <p>2 rentable multipurpose rooms</p> <p>1 conference room</p>	<p>1 playground</p> <p>2 shelters</p> <p>1 disc golf course (9-hole)</p> <p>1 boardwalk</p> <p>1 community garden</p> <p>1 certified wildlife habitat</p>

			
ACCESSIBILITY + SAFETY	BRANDING, WAYFINDING + SENSE OF PLACE	GENERAL CONDITIONS + MAINTENANCE	DIVERSITY OF OFFERINGS
<p>Is the park designed so people of all abilities can access the park and all its amenities?</p> <p>Does the park meet most or all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?</p> <p>Does the park feel safe and encourage user safety?</p>	<p>Does the park design support the intended use of the park and create an enjoyable place to pursue those activities?</p> <p>Does the park appear to reflect the history or identity of the community?</p> <p>Are people able to identify this park as owned and maintained by the Village of Marlin?</p> <p>Can park visitors easily navigate to and within the space?</p>	<p>Is the park maintained to Village standards?</p> <p>Do the park amenities and facilities need to be updated?</p> <p>Are the park amenities and facilities showing signs of wear and tear?</p> <p>Does the park feel safe and encourage user safety?</p>	<p>Does the park provide a collection of park amenities and facilities to serve various ages, demographics and ability levels?</p> <p>Does the Village provide park amenities equally throughout the park system?</p>

Figure 1. Parkland Village of Marlin Parkland Inventory.

Figure 2. Park Assessment Chart.



MARVIN EFIRD PARK

Acres: 27.67 AC

GENERAL CONDITIONS + MAINTENANCE

Along the entrance to the Park are turf areas and native planting areas, the maintenance of these areas are in good condition. Due to its beauty, the cottage garden landscape (located near the entrance to the Park), has become quite the attraction for photographers in the area. The cottage garden does need a bit of maintenance as it is currently over run and has excessive end of the year vegetative growth, and this makes it difficult to move within the space or on the pathways. Near the playground and bathroom facility, the lawn area needs sod replacement. The restroom facility near the playground is in good condition. The Park has notable drainage issues (as mentioned by the

Village staff) that require attention, and this is particularly the case in the parking areas.

ACCESSIBILITY + SAFETY

Efir Park is tucked back from New Town Road and is marked by a Village of Marvin park sign. Access to the park is achieved primarily by vehicular access. There are several traffic signs requiring vehicular visitors to slow down their speed upon entering the Park. However, the entry driveway does not have vehicular determinants such as a speed hump to stop or slow down the speed of entering vehicles. There are currently no sidewalks along New Town Road, which inherently prevents pedestrian access. This may be particularly concerning to



📍 The Barn at Marvin Efrid Park/ *McAdams*

adjacent neighborhood residents desiring to walk or bike to Marvin Efrid Park.

The majority of paths within the Park are a crush and run surface rather than a paved surface, a potential mobility-use concern. Paved pathways throughout Marvin Efrid Park include the area around the Barn, outside the playground and near the bathroom facilities. There is turf access to the picnic shelters; however, the surfaces to the structures are currently not paved and, thus, the picnic shelters are not fully accessible. All the of the park's trails have a natural surface and, thus, are not accessible to all park users.

The playground area is surfaced engineered wood fiber surface, which is the minimum acceptable ADA surface standard. With regard to the playground area, and in order to create additional ease for all users, a playground surface that is a poured in place material would allow easier access for users with mobility issues, yet accessible play features for users of all abilities and play needs are currently absent.

BRANDING, WAYFINDING + SENSE OF PLACE

The entrance of Efrid Park utilizes the Village's branding with the architectural style seen in the fence and Park sign. From the street, visitors see the Marvin style of signage for the

property as well as a rail fence with stone caps which helps to establish the Park's property boundaries. Marvin Efrid could benefit from an overall map of the Park for wayfinding purposes. This overall map would help identify the Park's natural trail pathways. Discreet signage is provided throughout the Park which denotes the locations for parking areas and disc golf course holes. A sense of place is established with the Barn, a well-known facility within the community.

CONNECTIVITY

Efrid Park is located outside the Village of Marvin property line and the property lies



📍 Cottage Garden at Marvin Efrid Park / McAdams



📍 Playground at Marvin Efrid Park / McAdams

between various residential neighborhoods. Additionally, the Park is located off New Town Road, which cuts through Marvin. Connectivity can be challenging to non-vehicular visitors because there are no sidewalks or bike lanes to the Park and this eliminates those connecting opportunities for the community. Marvin Efrid Park has natural trails running throughout the Park; however, these trails do not connect to the larger established trail system of Marvin. Additionally, there are no internal sidewalks for pedestrian use within Efrid Park.

DIVERSITY OF OFFERINGS

Marvin Efrid Park’s amenities include the most diverse set of amenities within the Marvin parkland properties. The Park offers both active and passive offerings. The active offerings of Efrid Park includes a wooden playground, the Barn (which has 2,100 square feet of indoor recreation space)of and the restroom building.

Marvin Efrid Park’s passive offering include: several nature trail pathways, which overlap and allow visitors to choose their trail length and offer the ability to loop the trail; a 9-hole disc golf course; a recently added community garden; bench seating; views of the lake; the cottage garden; wooded areas; and lawn space. With a primary focus on passive park offerings, Village staff would like to see additional programmatic and amenity additions to better utilize the space. The Park has plenty of space for park elements but lacks a dedicated program to dictate what the space is for. With respect to more diverse park offerings, Village staff members comments include: the Park lacks enough space for large community events, there is a need for more programmatic elements for the Park, and the Park has plenty of vehicular parking for visitors but staff and visitors alike would like those areas to be paved surfaces.



MARVIN VILLAGE HALL

Acres: 3.48 AC

GENERAL CONDITIONS + MAINTENANCE

Marvin Village Hall was completed in April 2022 and includes dedicated building space for Marvin's Council, Village staff and rental space for the community. The facility's architectural style suggests an appearance as though it has existed for some period of time. The current building space exists as an area to host current and future programming for the community. The property site of Village Hall remains largely undeveloped, not including the Village Hall building and adjoining parking lot. There is potential area within the site's property that the Village has a desire to expand during future development with the purpose to create spaces where future offerings could be hosted.

The property location of Village Hall is important within the Village area due to its proximity to a large portion of the residential neighborhoods, the new rezoned Heritage District, as well as two churches in Marvin: Banks Presbyterian and Weddington United Methodist Church. The large residential communities have a connection point along the edge of the Village Hall property via a natural trail connecting Village Hall to the neighborhood adjacent. This natural trail connection ties into the neighborhood's interior pathway system which connects further with other Marvin neighborhood greenways. This trail connection to Village Hall is primed to establish other trail connections from different parts of the site's



📍 Roundabout near Village Hall / McAdams

property to other close by neighborhoods. Further developing the overall Marvin Greenway trail system goal that the Village aspires to provide to its entire community. The recent accomplishment of creating the Heritage District, located in close proximity to the site, will establish planned mixed-use district for new growth that Marvin previously did not have as a development opportunity. Both church properties, Banks Presbyterian and Weddington United Methodist Church, have civic space as a part of their property. The Village Hall property and adjacent properties (such as the Heritage District) have been developed and rezoned for potential areas that are suitable for the

development of recreational amenities in the future.

During peak rainstorms, the Village Hall property experiences drainage issues due to the influx of water, and a water management system is needed to help control or alleviate the problem in the form of a best management practices (“BMP”) facility. Future development plans at the Village Hall site include the use of green stormwater infrastructure measures to divert surging water away from Village Hall and produce flood reduction during large storm events.

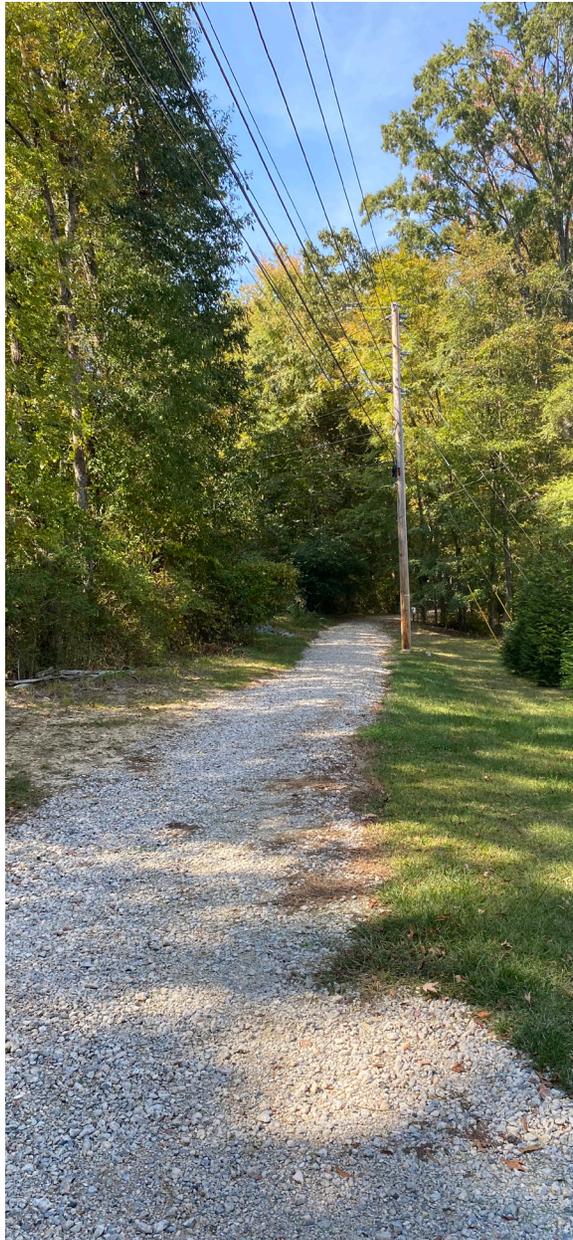
ACCESSIBILITY + SAFETY

The Marvin Village Hall is adjacent the Marvin entry roundabouts on New Town Road, the Village Hall entrance and access to the site via vehicular access. There are no sidewalks surrounding the site. Visitors can access from the Preserve at Marvin via the natural surface trail. For ADA accessibility, the Hall has a ramp entrance into the building, this is in addition to the main stair entrance. The site does provide high visibility from the street due to the setback nature of the building and the slope provides lines of sight for the cars entering and exiting the roundabout entrance.

BRANDING, WAYFINDING + SENSE OF PLACE

With its recent completion, the building personifies the Village of Marvin’s architecture style and aesthetic, establishing both branding and a sense of place. An informational kiosk, utilizes the Village’s branding style, is located near the entrance of the Hall providing a space for flyers on upcoming events and community related information for the Marvin community. Other amenities that utilize the Village’s branding style include rocking chairs for seating and the Hall’s light fixtures, and the natural walking trail even personifies the branding style through its utilization of the recently completed logo.

Additionally, the natural surface trail has several wayfinding trail signs with the recently updated



Trail connection to the Preserve at Marvin neighborhood/ *McAdams*



Rockers at Village Hall/ *McAdams*

Village of Marvin logo using branding methods for the signs. These trail signs located at the entrance points to the trail as well as indicating the trail's mileage for visitors.

CONNECTIVITY

The Marvin Village Hall is located off Marvin School Road and New Town Road and is nestled within the Village of Marvin's boundary and in the historic Heritage District. The proposed future development plan for the Village Hall property has an additional proposed connection as well as the trailhead locations for that can be made to the surrounding Village area.

DIVERSITY OF OFFERINGS

Due to the current nature of the site, the diverse offerings include what programs the Marvin Village Hall building can offer.

Programmatic elements are possible within the building's space, this is in addition to providing space for the Village staff and Village council meetings. Additional space is available to rent for the community, thus providing more potential programs to offer to the community than those which the Village residents currently enjoy.

Village Hall is an 'anchor' within the Village's recently envisioned Heritage District. As presented in the review of previous planning efforts included in Chapter 1 of the current comprehensive parks and recreation master plan, the Marvin Heritage District (MHD) is a planned mixed-use district that aims to create a community center that preserves and celebrates the culture and history of Marvin. The purpose of the Marvin Heritage District is to promote the educational, cultural, and general



welfare of the public through the creation of a civic/urban corridor that preserves, protects, and enhances the significant and architecturally worthy structures of the historical center of the Village of Marvin; to maintain such structures as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the Village. Another purpose is to maximize pedestrian connectivity and preservation of open space in this area.

Based on community and stakeholder feedback, Recreational amenity development plans at the Village Hall property include an amphitheater, large lawn space, trailhead and additional trail length with connections to existing and new trails. Retaining walls are planned due to the site's topography as well as to help create a space that is accessible to all. Tree preservation, at the Village's request, will be provided to protect large maturing trees

along the property edge of New Town Road.

The lawn area would be turf, flexible use space to provide multi-use programmatic elements for future Village of Marvin events and offerings to the Marvin community. Additional wayfinding would be provided through proposed trailhead and signage that the site's design will include. This proposed development space would utilize existing property to create additional offerings opportunities for the community and enhance the heart of the Village.

Furthermore, future efforts to mitigate stormwater concerns include a green stormwater measure creating an opportunity for water infiltration and improved water quality for the site. During the development of the existing Village Hall building those plans did not require further stormwater measures,

however, with recent storm events and the additional proposed amphitheater and lawn area, stormwater upgrades will be designed to support future development and existing needs on site.





Image pictured above is a generic image / photo credit

MARVIN GARDENS POCKET PARK

Acres: 1.053 AC

The Marvin Gardens Pocket Park is currently a vacant lot within the Marvin Gardens shopping center.

GENERAL CONDITIONS + MAINTENANCE

The property was recently acquired by the Village of Marvin during the development of the Shopping Center, and with the exception of some installed sod (to help retain the soil on the parcel) and the leftover trees from the development, the site remains empty. The

parking lot and sidewalks are completed.

ACCESSIBILITY + SAFETY

The Pocket Park is located within the Marvin Gardens shopping center off of Providence Road. The space includes a parking lot with 11 parking stalls and the sidewalks surrounding the site are fully accessible. Current topographical grades indicates that the site is fairly flat and, thus, maintaining accessible pathways is achievable. From the street, the site currently has full visibility across the entire site with an evergreen hedge creating the edge of the property.

BRANDING, WAYFINDING, + SENSE OF PLACE

N/A

CONNECTIVITY

The Pocket Park is located off Providence Road in the Marvin Gardens Shopping Center. Since the site is within the Shopping Center, it is buffered with existing vegetation from the Center's main store fronts. The Park is connected to one of the only commercial areas in the Village of Marvin. Pedestrians can gain access to the Park from the site's surrounding sidewalks or an access point from the Weddington Chase neighborhood.

DIVERSITY OF PARK OFFERINGS

N/A





PARKS + FACILITIES MAINTENANCE OVERVIEW

Parks, facilities and amenities that are clean and functioning efficiently are a critical element to delivering high quality programs and services. Thus, maintenance is an essential part of running a safe and quality parks and recreation system. Maintenance tasks ensure that parks, fields, facilities, and equipment are in safe working order to ensure that park visitors are able to enjoy their park experience. The objective of the current maintenance management assessment is to provide an overall evaluation of how the Village of Marvin provides maintenance services for its parks, amenities and facilities. As the community grows and recreational preferences evolve, Village leadership will need to have a vigorous maintenance practices in place to ensure sustained service for existing amenities, while enhancing parks and facilities to meet growing demand. [Figure 3].

The Village of Marvin currently offers parks and recreation services, but these services are not part of a formal Village department. The Village has expressed interest in establishing a fully functional recreation and parks department to manage services and help the system evolve with public input.

OPERATIONS ASSESSMENT

Operations refers to the standard procedures that guide daily, seasonal, annual, and ongoing functions of a parks and recreation department. Operations includes maintenance, administration, and strategies for addressing the staff needed to adequately maintain the existing park systems and expand programming. The Village of Marvin offers parks and recreation services, but these services are not part of a formal department. Village leadership has expressed interest in establishing a recreation and parks department to advance leisure services and continue to enhance community quality of life in Marvin. It is the goal of this staffing and operations assessment to understand where the Village can establish a foundation upon which to develop a relevant and recognizable parks and recreation department to provide essential leisure services for the community.

Park systems require a wide range of facility, amenity, and grounds maintenance responsibilities. There are many different kinds of parks; some have playgrounds and benches, while others have natural scenery and protected wildlife areas. Regardless of the type, park maintenance is crucial for user experience. Daily tasks frequently include landscaping which encompasses pruning flowers and shrubs, applying pesticides and fertilizers, cleaning amenities, minor repairs and ensuring

park equipment remains in good working condition. In Marvin, the positive response to the Village's recreation and parks investments have stretched current staffing levels.

The Village of Marvin provides services at one park and maintains Village Hall. The well-visited Marvin Efir Park opened in 2012 and offers amenities for outdoor activities, community gardening, one-of-a-kind redwood playground, a 9-hole disc golf short course, restroom facilities, picnic areas, meadow and natural groomed walking trails. The park holds several annual events: Marvin Day, Marvin Movie Night under the stars, National Night Out and a Holiday Tree Lighting.

The Village employs one full-time public facilities manager and two full-time to maintain and operate its publicly available leisure resources such as Marvin Efir Park and Village owned trails and greenways. These positions are also responsible for maintaining other public facilities and amenities like Village Hall grounds and public rights of way. Park maintenance is a foundational element of providing a safe and high-quality park system for a community. Parks and recreation staff work every day to achieve that goal. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, operations and maintenance are the primary work responsibility for park and recreation professionals.



As this report was being developed, the planning team was made aware of the many hats the public facilities manager wears under the position’s current job functions and responsibilities. In addition to maintenance and operations, the role of the public facilities manager includes event planning as well as overseeing facility rentals and scheduling. It also includes oversight of capital improvement projects including RFPs, negotiating contracts with vendors, project management, and budgeting. Part-time employee scheduling is done through Park Maintenance Associates; however, this can be challenging due to limited funds provided to pay for these positions. It is important to recognize that these operational conditions exist in tandem with the community’s expectation of a high degree of aesthetic maintenance not only just in parks but across the Village as a whole. At the time this assessment was published, the Village’s public facilities manager had resigned. Village leadership is now considering the responsibilities of the position and how to best approach and support the community’s leisure service needs.

Case studies have shown that the provision of public parks and leisure services are diminished when parks and recreation operations and planning responsibilities are assigned alongside responsibilities of maintaining all public facilities and amenities within a jurisdiction. These

obligations will inevitably pull the person in this position away from preparing parks recreation services by way of strategic planning and developing policies and procedures. Such concerns must be held in high regard if the stated goal of a local government is to provide recreation as an essential public service.

A lack of staff and resources creates a situation where staff are striving to provide the expected facilities and services with little additional capacity available for growing and improving to meet the community’s growing recreation needs. These spaces, programs, and events bring the community together to share experiences. Parks and recreation services are important to the Marvin community. How the Village plans, prepares, implements, and develops parks and recreation services should reflect the upscale nature of the community and its high quality of life.

Marvin’s continued investments in recreation and parks services have resulted in benefits the whole community enjoys. This investment has enhanced the visibility of the Village’s public recreational facilities, amenities, and community events – thereby increasing maintenance and management responsibilities for parks, programs, events, facilities, and amenities. Exposure to the Village’s recreation amenities and parks also grew by expanding marketing efforts and partnering with sponsors



^ Park maintenance metrics/ NRPA



to increase attendance at parks, programs, events, facilities, and amenities. Such growth requires additional internal capacity for stakeholder and customer service, finances, equipment maintenance and acquisition, and human resources.

Marvin has a reputation of safety and cleanliness in recreation and parks management. Recreation programs are provided on a limited basis and staff assist with special events. The Village makes intentional improvements with the resources it has available. This includes recent efforts to diversify amenities at Efir Park and look at other locations across the Village such as the Village Hall property to provide a greater level of access to parks for the population. Such an approach to quality has increased use and demand for services. Leaders and staff see the need to explore opportunities for Village leisure service operations to evolve.

Maintenance responsibilities are tasks that must be done to ensure a clean and safe park experience for users. Tasks can be completed within the department or can be contracted out. The decision of which party will complete which task balances considerations of cost, experience, timeliness, and quality. Being that is the wealthiest municipality in North Carolina, the Village of Marvin populace expects a very high level of service provided at peak standards.

Marvin leadership created park maintenance level of service standards based on the Village's vision statement. The standard for public spaces and parks appearance is not based on a set visual standard and, instead, is based on the goal of a "high quality of living." This overarching Village goal has been added as a goal for maintaining parks and recreational amenities, and how those areas and facilities are maintained. A potential future step for the Village of Marvin would be to create a maintenance management plan addressing an array of project types.

The Village's three FTE park maintenance staff members are responsible for maintaining close to 28 acres at Marvin Efir Park, 3.25 miles of natural surface trails and 1.3 miles of asphalt greenway trails. All maintenance functions are currently performed in-house. There are currently no contracted services or on call vendors for services such as emergency repairs, electrical and plumbing issues that require licensed contractors, animal control, etc.

Greenways are a key component of the quality of life in Marvin. The 2020 Parks and Greenway Master Plan defines a typical Marvin greenway as a "trail type [that] is a 8-12 foot paved asphalt path with a 2-23 foot wide shoulder on each side. This trail type is located in overland and riparian corridors that will

sustain moderate to heavy use." The natural surface trail type is defined as a "trail type [that] is a 4-8 foot wide soil path with a 2-3 foot wide shoulder on each side. This trail type is located in overland and riparian corridors that will sustain light to moderate use." The Village of Marvin's goal is to maintain its trails and greenways to an optimally high standard and ensure quality user experiences that are safe, aesthetically pleasing, and attractive to families. Nevertheless, their various surface types, lengths, and locations create a unique operations and maintenance situation for the Village.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

IN THIS CHAPTER

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE: TRICK OR TREAT IN THE PARK

ASSET MAPPING

2022 MARVIN PARKS + RECREATION MASTER PLAN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE



COMMUNITY VALUES

PROGRAM NEEDS

AMENITY NEEDS

SECURITY/TREND NEEDS



Community engagement is an essential part of any planning process. The most effective plans are firmly rooted in the realities and vision of the community that created them. Such visionary documents influence recommendations for development of future parks and enhancement of recreation programs and services. The community engagement approach for the current plan included a combination of input from community members, Village of Marvin staff, Parks, Recreation, and Greenway (PRG) Board, and the Village of Marvin Council.

The Village and project team designed the public engagement process to maximize the amount of input and feedback from community members, the Village’s Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and the Village of Marvin Comprehensive Systemwide Parks and Recreation Plan Advisory Committee. The process was intended to be equitable and inclusive, offering a variety of input opportunities and methods for all community members to have a comfortable platform for expressing their input. The graphic to the right describes each technique.



➤ Public Engagement Process/ *McAdams*

➤ Trick or Treat in the Park / *McAdams*



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE: TRICK OR TREAT IN THE PARK - OCTOBER 28, 2022

Public input provides a foundation for understanding and responding to the parks and recreation needs of a community. An effective master plan is the result of a collaborative effort that solicits and incorporates input from citizens. This exercise was conducted as a means of understanding public sentiment towards parks and recreation and community-wide need for parks, facilities, special events, recreational programs and leisure services in the Village of Marvin.

Community members were given the opportunity to provide input into the 10-year comprehensive plan using public input boards set up at the Village’s Trick or Treat in the Park event. Participants provided input with regard to community values, park amenity needs and recreational program needs. Village staff and project team members were available to assist with the process.

Approximately a total of 92 people participated in the input exercise. Of that total projected participant number: 45 residents and 47 non-residents; 26 people formally signed in for the event, but did not specify if they were residents or non-residents. and Participants were provided the opportunity to reflect and comment on the Village of Marvin’s existing provision of parks and leisure services, to

Community Values

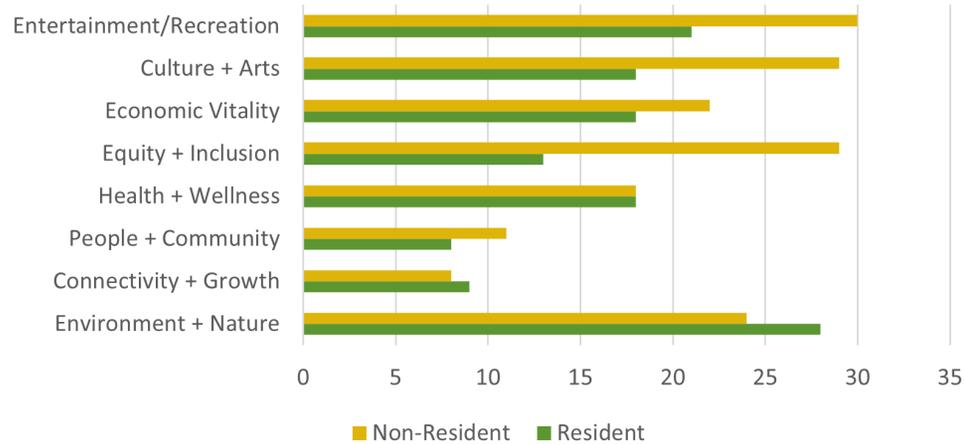


Figure 1: Community Values Results / McAdams

develop an understanding of what the Village’s first comprehensive systemwide parks and recreation master plan should include, to establish goals for the next 10 years, and to contemplate where funds should be allocated.

COMMUNITY VALUES

Community values help inform the project team during the planning process and provide valuable information with respect to what participants regard what issues to prioritize so as to accomplish the community’s needs. Based on responses from the residents of Marvin Community values reflect the things that are important and resonate with community members. They inform the character of parks,

programs, and amenities that will advance the quality of life in Marvin. The top three community values for residents were: (1) environment and nature, (2) entertainment/recreation, and (3) a three-way tie for residents third top choice of health and wellness, economic vitality, and culture and arts. Non-residents chose: (1) entertainment/recreation, (2) culture and arts, and (3) equity and inclusion for their top three community values. [Figure 1].

AMENITY WANTS

Participants ranked the top three amenities they would like to see the Village of Marvin expand, improve, or offer in the future. The



project team compiled the list of possible amenities from department recommendations, references to previous community input, and items in line with current national trends. The top amenity needs selected by village of Marvin residents were paved walking trails and greenways. Non-residents chose greenways and dog parks. Both groups had a high interest in greenways. This confirms the current goal of Marvin to continue developing the village-wide greenway system. Amenity needs also suggest in this case what non-residents would be will to visit the Village of Marvin to enjoy, suggesting that the neighboring areas are not providing for their residents these suggested amenity choices. [Figure 2].

AMENITY TRENDS

The trends boards presented various recreational amenities popular within the area or are becoming popular in the industry. Amenity needs can change during the allotted period of time that the comprehensive master plan covers, and understanding parks and recreation amenity trends helps the project team forecast demand for recreational amenities, as well as provides a reflection of amenities that experienced in other locations that residents would like within their own community. For the residents of Marvin, the top three amenity trends needs were: (1) zipline, (2) ninja warrior facilities, and (3) active adult playground and exercise equipment. For



non-residents, the results were similar: (1) zipline, (2) ninja warrior facilities, and (3) pump track. For both types of attendee (resident and non-resident) the top two choices were zipline and ninja warrior facilities. This suggests that the community and its surrounding areas either do not have these amenity choices as options. [Figure 3].

PROGRAM NEEDS

Recreation programs and services reflect a community’s character in terms of demographics, resources and culture. They serve as the foundation upon which the notion of parks and recreation being an “essential public service” is built. Practitioners have conveyed the effectiveness of recreation programs across a broad swath of interdisciplinary research. Outcomes point to benefits including improving or maintaining health and well-being, positive socialization with peers, development of friendships, enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence, and development of inclusive communities accepting to all. Recreation, leisure and sports activities may involve individuals, small groups, teams or whole communities and are relevant to people of all different ages, abilities and levels of skill. The types of recreation, leisure and sports activities people participate in vary greatly depending on local context, trends, social systems and values. The top three choices

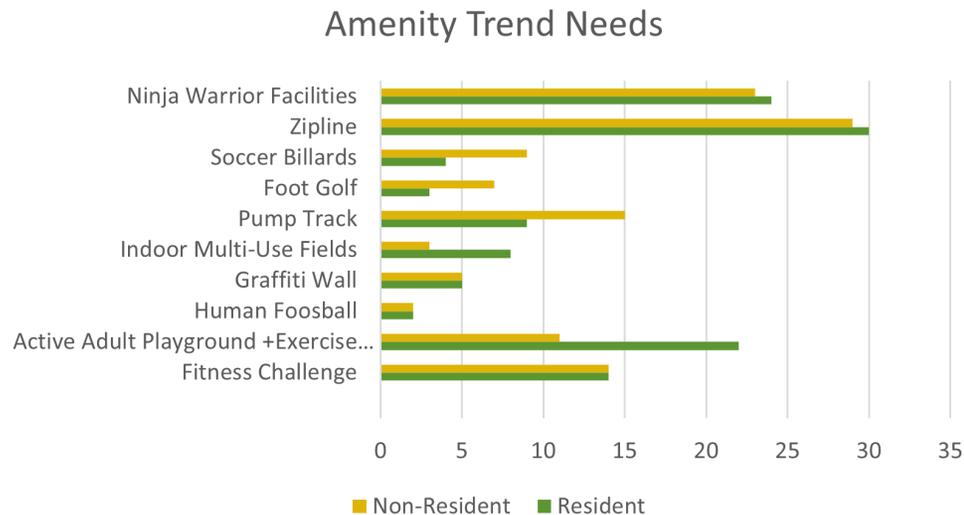
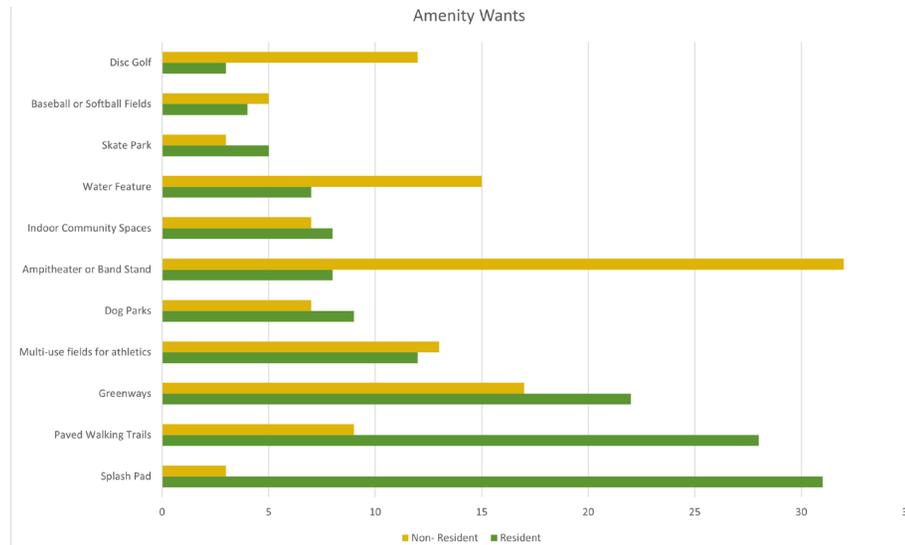


Figure 2: Amenity Wants Results / McAdams

Figure 3: Amenity Trends Results / McAdams

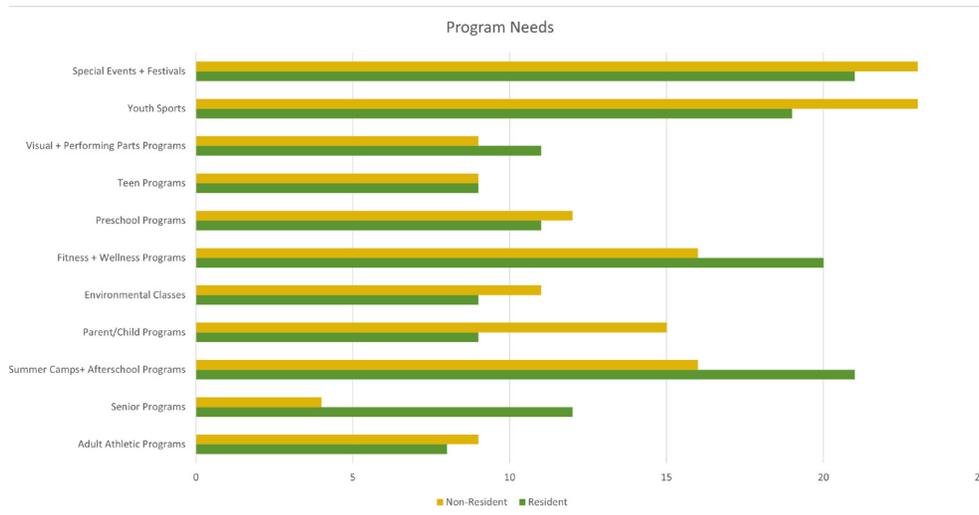


Figure 4: Program Needs Results / McAdams

selected by Village of Marvin residents included a tie for first between (1) summer camps and (1) afterschool programs. Special events and festivals and fitness and wellness programs ranked second and third, respectively. Non-residents' top choice was also marked by a tie – this time between (1) youth sports and (1) special events and festivals. This input suggests that special events and festivals are priority for program needs. This was further highlighted by the fact that the input activity was taking place during a special event where participants reported that they were not Marvin residents but they “enjoyed coming to Marvin

due to the fun events hosted by the Village.” [Figure 4].

ASSET MAPPING

The engagement effort included meeting with the City’s Parks and Recreation Staff and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in the form of asset mapping sessions. Asset mapping is an information gathering technique concentrating on community strengths, opportunities and challenges from an asset-based perspective. Such an approach cultivates promise by shifting the focus from the identification of needs

and deficits, to recognizing a community’s resources and capacities/assets¹. Assets are defined as anything that provides tangible or intangible value to the community. Examples include tangible concepts such as parks, recreational amenities, vehicles and buildings, as well as non-tangible concepts such as relationships, community support, quality staff members and more.

THE ASSET MAPPING QUESTIONS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. What about parks and recreation makes your community better?
2. What is your parks and recreation in the Village known for?
3. What would strengthen positive impact of parks and recreation on the community?
4. What are the most significant challenges to the Village’s current and future parks and recreation assets?

COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The project team led the Steering Committee through the asset mapping exercise to glean

information and opinions regarding the benefits
¹ U of M’s Urban Serving Research Mission, “Module 4 – Asset Based Community Engagement,” University of Memphis, Last Modified: August 5, 2019. <https://www.memphis.edu/ess/module4/page3.php>



parcs and recreation provide to the Marvin community, how to strengthen recreational services and identify improvement challenges.

HOW PARKS + RECREATION MAKES MARVIN BETTER –

Steering Committee members felt that parks and recreation in the Village of Marvin contributes to the quality of life in the community by bringing people together at events and gatherings, establishing connectivity both interpersonally and physically between neighborhoods, and providing amenities to stay active.

WHAT PARKS + RECREATION IN MARVIN IS KNOWN FOR –

Based on comments made during the discussion, Steering Committee members felt the community recognizes parks and recreation in the Village of Marvin for special events. These events are extremely popular with the community – especially with recent park improvements and expanded advertising. The Committee also believe the Village is known for efficiently and effectively utilizing the limited recreation and park space, and maintaining the parks’ aesthetics, particularly the gardens, to a very high level of quality. Other key points made about the system related to the Village’s active effort to extend the community’s access to greenways and

trails.

WHERE THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF PARKS + RECREATION’S CAN BE STRENGTHENED IN MARVIN –

The Committee’s ideas with regard to strengthening the impact of parks and recreation in the short-term included enhancing recreational amenities, replacing existing playground equipment and adding toddler play components. Some of the more mid to long-term goals included ensuring new amenities and facilities are equitably distributed throughout the Village. Another proposed idea was determining the prevalence of recreational amenities within the Village’s residential neighborhoods such as golf courses, pickleball, tennis courts, etc. To that, the committee acknowledged the importance of understanding what these amenities are and where they are located as a foundation upon which to initiate conversations with HOAs and developers about allowing public access to such recreational amenities and facilities. Lastly, the Committee acknowledged that there are recommendations and goals from the 2020 Parks and Greenways Master Plan that have not yet been realized; these recommendations should be readdressed, inventoried and prioritized and plans established to accomplish them.

CONCERNS ABOUT AND CHALLENGES TO IMPROVING AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO PARKS AND RECREATION -

As has been discussed throughout the current Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan, acquiring land in the Village of Marvin to dedicate as parks or urban public space is challenging if not altogether unattainable due to availability and cost. The Steering Committee again recognized this as a barrier to expanding and enhancing the Village’s parks system – once again tying this acknowledgement back to the idea of working with developers and HOAs to extend public access to neighborhood recreational resources. Pedestrian mobility and trail/ greenway connectivity was another concern for the Steering Committee. With population growth comes an influx of traffic and strain on the existing transportation system. The Steering Committee acknowledged that expanding the greenway system would require carefully identifying high-speed and busy intersection crossings to ensure safety and user confidence. Connectivity was also discussed in that the lack of pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods limits Village of Marvin residents’ ability to walk or bicycle from their homes to Marvin Efrid Park and other desired destinations.



VILLAGE OF MARVIN PARKS, RECREATION AND GREENWAYS BOARD

HOW PARKS + RECREATION MAKES MARVIN BETTER –

PRG Board members found the value of nature is reflected through access to parks and open space, thereby making the Village of Marvin better. According to Board members, Marvin's natural areas play a substantial role in the Village's appeal. The PRG Board believes the environmental approach taken by Village of Marvin leadership makes Marvin different than neighboring communities. They expressed their appreciation for the Village's sense of being an authentic community with "open space between houses" and "more trees and green spaces than houses;" versus being a "collection of HOAS" with a "cookie cutter suburban feel." Several members of the board felt that greenways made Marvin unique, as greenways by their nature create buffers between development thereby reducing the feeling of suburban overdevelopment.

WHAT PARKS + RECREATION IN MARVIN IS KNOWN FOR –

When the PRG Board was asked what is your parks and recreation system known for,





members immediately turned to the sense of community. One member reflected on Marvin being a small place with a strong history of building community. To that, Board members agreed that parks and recreation in Marvin was known for its newly-established, enjoyable events. Special events have become so successful that the spaces where these events are held cannot adequately host the number of participants, nor provide adequate infrastructure like parking. The quality of the Village's parks and recreation offerings makes Marvin stand out among its peers, according to Board members. They felt that Marvin has established excellence in the provision of amenities and services offered to the community, and expressed the desire to continue to ensure that when the Village makes an investment, it invests in quality over quantity.

WHERE THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF PARKS + RECREATION'S CAN BE STRENGTHENED IN MARVIN –

A key comment made throughout the discussion was that the PRG Board wants to continue invest in gathering space for the community. Members were of the opinion that Marvin Village Hall was a great addition to the community's recreational resources, however its offerings are limited due to available square footage. Depending on the offering that is





being hosted by the building, parking can be challenging due to the minimal amount of spaces. Notably, no additional parking within close proximity to the Hall can be utilized for parking overflow for events.

PRG Board members suggested that due to the limiting factor of space for the Village Hall, consideration should be given to a potential community center (separate from the Village Hall). In this proposed new building, residents would have another area to gather and build community. Hosted events or programs for this new space could expand recreational programs offered to community members, such as was mentioned, yoga classes, arts displays, and events that can be weather dependent. Board members also agreed that an indoor recreational facility could encourage additional partnerships.

Relationships and partnerships with providers of recreation related services were seen as valuable by the PRG Board. Members cited relationships with schools and non-profits, acknowledging their success and suggesting that the Village continue to develop relationships to advance access to parks and recreation. Many of the non-profits in the area need a place, and parks and recreation can help to provide such a space to those entities." The PRG Board felt that Village leadership should examine the efficacy of current partnerships

and explore new ones.

CONCERNS ABOUT AND CHALLENGES TO IMPROVING AND EXPANDING ACCESS TO PARKS AND RECREATION –

The PRG Board most notably cited a lack of available space for recreation and events as the greatest challenge. Although parks and recreation creates a place for Marvin residents to gather, the lack of space is becoming all the more obvious. The Village and the PRG Board have a great desire to provide additional services and offerings to the community, however, and due to space limitations, that desire can be challenging to implement.

After commenting about their incredibly successful events, various members mentioned the most recent event, Trick or Treat in the Park. The park, Marvin Efrid Park, could not handle the influx of attendees who wanted to attend the event due to lack of parking and there was no additional parking to utilize. Additionally, the lack of parking caused significant traffic for attendees trying to get to the event. Overflowing events is seen as threatening Village residents' participation and attendance at them. It was voiced that "marketing is almost too good where outside will come." Stakeholders also voiced the idea that it's difficult to measure "how successful we want these event to be" and bought up the

question as to whether these events are for Village of Marvin residents or for Marvin residents and for the surrounding area.

Based on this available space challenge, Board members wanted to identify space and what the feasibility for using these potential parkland opportunities were, i.e., use "open space mapping to see where those space is available; seeing where those gaps are." Based on recent property price increases, Board members questioned if there were "vacant lots – finding 'general' areas" and what those prices could or would be and whether such prices might deter the Village from making those expansion investments were viewed as very being important.

With limited available Village of Marvin property, members brought up the practice of annexation. They felt that the interconnectedness of the Village was a major strengthen and something that would attract others to want to be a part of that interconnectedness. Another key strength Stakeholders mentioned was wanting Marvin to continue to be a place where Marvin is "very inclusive," and Stakeholders think that view would help others who "would like to eventually annex." Many members felt that Marvin was



currently in a phase of change and that the community was evolving due to the change in demographics where families with younger kids are moving to Marvin, while older community members were leaving Marvin. Thus, the PRG board felt that “growth is coming for schools” and that Marvin needed to meet those changes and community needs.

2023 MARVIN PARKS + RECREATION MASTER PLAN ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE

Village of Marvin leadership facilitated this component of public outreach. Village staff created an online recreational needs survey, distributed online via the Village of Marvin, and was made available to the public. The online questionnaire asked respondents their opinions, wants, and needs regarding connectivity, amenities, programs, and community connections for the next 10 years. A total of 152 responses were collected.

- › **General Questions asked respondents basic questions to see how parks and recreation are perceived throughout Marvin by its residents.**
- › **Connectivity questions asked respondents about their access to parks and recreation spaces.**
- › **Amenities Offered questions sought information from respondents about**

amenities they would like to see added or expanded within Marvin parks and recreation system.

- › **Programming Offered questions sought information from respondents about programs they would like to see added or expanded within the Marvin parks and recreation system.**

GENERAL QUESTIONS

The questionnaire began with seeking information regarding current parks and recreation offerings in the Village of Marvin and how those offerings are perceived.

Respondents were asked “Do you feel parks and rec facilities are important to the quality of life in Marvin?”

- › **95.4% Yes**

This response helps confirm the importance of parks and recreation to the residents of Marvin. Quality of life also suggests that if residents feel there is a high quality of life, they will want to continue to spend time and resources within the area of and surrounding Marvin. Parks and recreation facilities are items that the municipality can offer to their residents and visitors and when such facilities are different than other communities, this makes the location unique from its surrounding area.

When asked: “How do you rate the conditions

of the parks facilities that you have visited in Marvin?” participants rated facilities on a scale of excellent to poor.

- › **30.3% Good**
- › **29.6% Excellent**
- › **20.4% Fair**

Overall, the responses are favorable for the park facilities and the conditions seem to be acceptable when visited by participants. [Figure 5].

In response to the question “Do our existing parks and recreation facilities meet your needs?”

- › This response suggests the parks and

Conditions of Park Facilities in Marvin

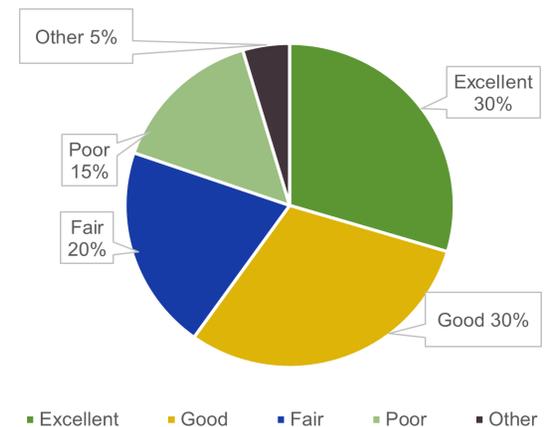


Figure 5

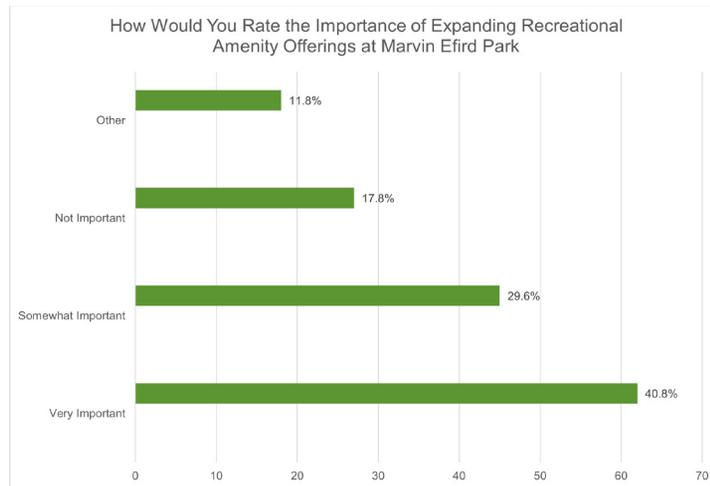


Figure 6

recreation facilities have room for improvement in order to meet participants needs. Needs can be anything from the quantity of offerings to the amenities and programs provided by the department, etc.

With respect to Marvin Efir Park, participants were asked, “How would you rate the importance of expanding recreational amenity offerings at Marvin Efir Park?” Participants ranked their opinion on a scale of very important to not important.

- › **40.8% Very Important**
- › **29.6% Important**
- › **17.8% Somewhat Important**
- › **11.8% Not Important**

The majority (40.8%) of participants said

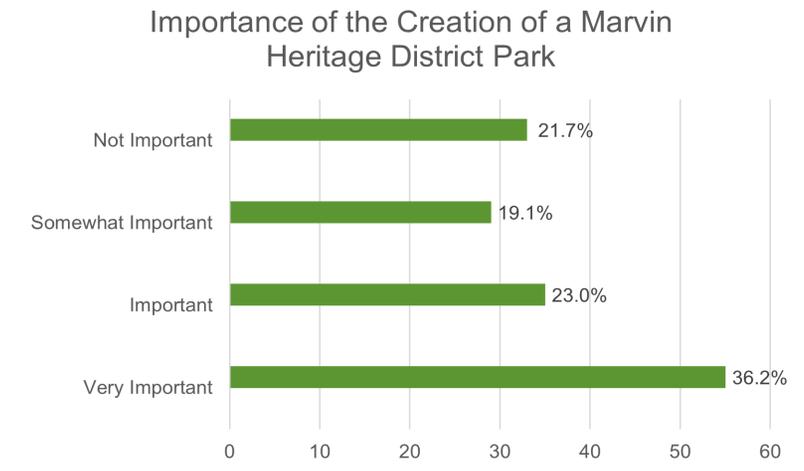


Figure 7

this was very important to them, indicated that they’d like to see offerings expanded at Marvin Efir Park. Thus, the majority of participants indicated a level of support for providing additional recreational amenities at Marvin Efir Park. [Figure 6].

A key topic the Village wanted to ask about was about the Heritage District. In this regard the questionnaire asked: “How would you rate the importance of the creation of a Marvin Heritage District Park?”

- › **36.2% Very Important**
- › **23.0% Important**
- › **19.1% Somewhat Important**
- › **21.7% Not Important**

Responses were mixed, with 36.2 percent

of respondents indicating very important and 23.0 percent important, while a total of 40.8 percent responded either somewhat or not important. [Figure 7]

A second component of this question asked if the Village added a Heritage District Park, “What type of recreation amenities would you like to see at a Heritage District Park,” and allowed participants to choose between either active or passive recreation amenity types. Active recreation amenity types would be amenities that require intensive development and often involves cooperative or team activity, and such items would include ball fields or a skatepark or playground. Passive amenity types would include recreation that has an emphasis on



open-space for a park and would involve low impact development, and such items would include something like a picnic area or bench. Based on those amenity descriptions, participants stated a slight preference for Heritage District Park to focus on active (53.3%) versus passive (46.7%) recreational amenities.

Participants were also asked “*Why do you visit parks?*” The Questionnaire provided 11 choices as well as other, for a write in response option. The top three selected reasons for visiting parks were: (1) walking trails (72.4%); (2) to get to nature (54.6%); and (3) exercise (53.3%). The question did not specify whether it was talking about parks in general or Village of Marvin parks. The Village of Marvin currently provides access to top three selected choices. [Figure 8].

The last general question asked survey participants: “*Do you feel well informed about existing facilities offered by the Village of Marvin, information outlets including social media and the Village of Marvin website?*”

- › **67.8% Yes**
- › **32.2% No**

The question was a yes or no question and survey results indicate 67.8 percent of participants said yes indicating they felt well informed, and 32.2 percent said

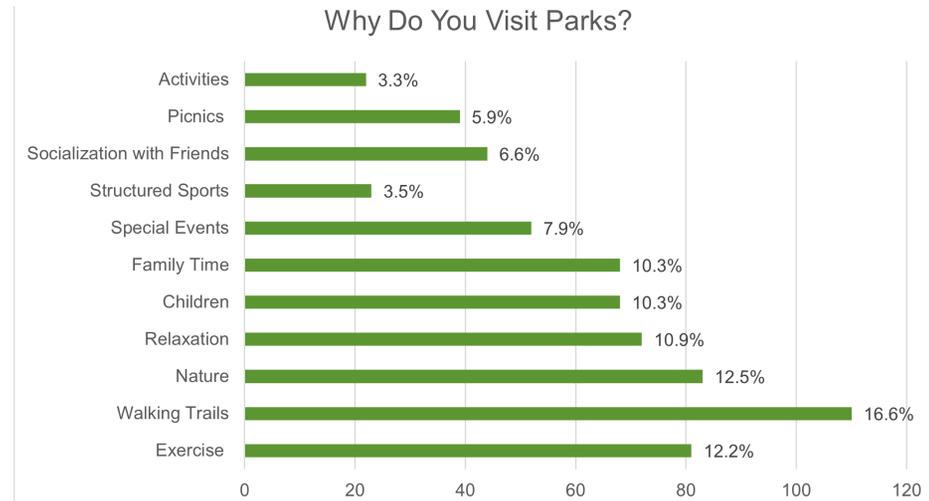


Figure 8

no and indicating they did not feel well informed. This information indicates that the majority of the participants within the community felt like they received a good amount of information from the Village about the various parks and recreational offerings provided by Marvin.

CONNECTIVITY

The online questionnaire also sought information regarding connectivity, i.e., questions that elicited information from respondents about their access to parks and recreation spaces.

In this regard, participants were asked: “*Can you reasonably walk to a park or recreational*

facility from your home?” 87.5 percent of the respondents said no and 12.5 percent said yes they could reasonably walk to a park or recreational facility from their home. This survey result suggests that the majority of residents have difficulty accessing parks and recreational amenities in Marvin by foot or bike. This is an issue area where leadership could identify areas of connectivity throughout the Village of Marvin. [Figure 9].



Can You Reasonably Walk to a Park or Recreational Facility from Your Home?

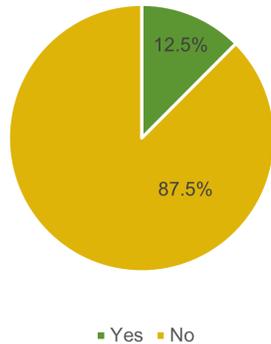


Figure 9

An additional connectivity question asked: *“Which of the following items would you like to see improved or expanded to help you access a park by walking or biking?”* Choices given to participants included: more paths and trails connected to parks, improved sidewalks, connectivity from existing trails to parks, safer street crossings, and more bike lanes. The top three choices selected were: more paths and trails connected to parks (67.8%); improved sidewalks (50%); and connectivity from existing trails to parks (47.7%). These results suggest residents have a preference for pedestrian pathways such as trails or sidewalks to emphasize connectivity. [Figure 10].

Which Would You Like to See Improved or Expanded to Help You Access a Park by Walking or Biking

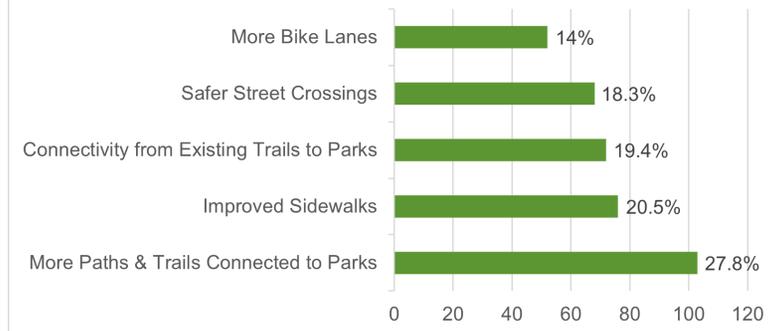


Figure 9

Both connectivity questions focus on the pedestrian experience as it relates to park and recreational facilities and how residents currently can and would prefer to access those locations in the future. The results suggest that residents would like an offering that will allow them to visit via alternative methods and rather than via vehicular access to park and recreational offerings. After the recent 2020 Parks and Greenways Master Plan, the Village of Marvin is in the process of enhancing connectivity with a focus on connecting the Village’s residents to desired destinations.

AMENITIES OFFERED

The online questionnaire also sought information about recreational amenities

and facilities they would like to see added or expanded within the Village of Marvin’s parks and recreation system.

- › **57.9% Farmers Market**
- › **46.1% More Trails**
- › **28.9% Pickleball Court**

The three top choices selected by participants were: farmers market (57.9%); more trails (46.1%); and pickleball court (28.9%). With regard to existing park offerings, and because Marvin Efrd is the largest of the Village owned properties, these suggested or selected amenities would be added to the various offerings the visitors can already experience at Marvin Efrd. With regard to the participants who



selected more trails as their top choices, this selection relates back to comments made by participants with respect to their desire for more connectivity for the parks and recreational offerings. [Figure 11].

When participants were asked, “*What additional or new recreational amenities would you like to have in Marvin,*” the answers varied between the 25 choice options that were provided along with one write in choice. The top choices selected were two tied pairs: greenways (57.2%) and natural hiking/fitness trails (57.2%), and dog parks (30.9%) and paved walking trails within a park (30.9%). This response suggests that the top choices have an aspect of connectivity via a trail pathway system.

PROGRAMMING OFFERED

Lastly, the online questionnaire sought information regarding recreational programming needs. The first question focusing on programming asked: “Do you believe the Village of Marvin should provide recreational programming?” Examples would be adult athletic programs, senior programs, summer camps, youth sports, fitness and wellness classes, special events and festivals, etc. Over half of all respondents (59.2%) said yes, one-quarter (25%) were neutral, and just over 15 percent said no, they did not think the village of Marvin should provide recreational

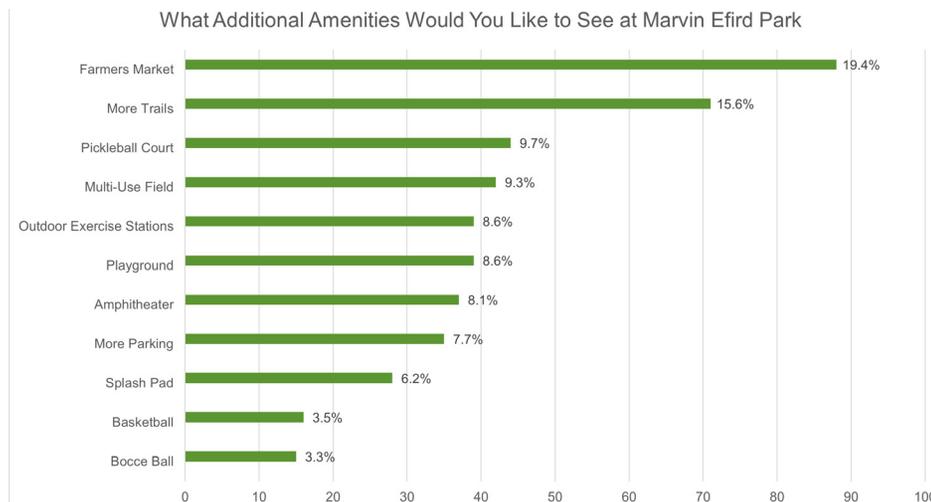


Figure 11

programming.

The second programming question asked: “*If the Village of Marvin did provide recreational programming, would you participate?*”

- › 73% Yes
- › 27% No

The responses indicate that 73 percent said yes, they would participate, and 27 percent said no, they would not participate. A positive response of 73 percent coincides with the 59.2 percent, suggesting that residents would like more recreational programming from the Village of Marvin. Recently, the Village of Marvin has increased their number of special events and festivals, resulting in increased in

attendance for those Village offered events and programs. [Figure 12].

ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SUMMARY

The majority of survey takers mainly reside in the neighborhoods of the Preserve at Marvin, Marvin Creek, and Innisbrook. Nearly all respondents agreed that parks and recreation contribute to community quality of life. The survey results also demonstrate that participants believe the Village of Marvin should provide recreational programming to the community and that they would participate in those provided programming offerings.



There was a direct relationship between connectivity and accessibility to parks and recreation facilities. One of the key survey findings was that the majority of participants (87.5%) found that they could not reasonably walk to a Village facility. However, and based on their responses, participants provided a solution to this connectivity and accessibility issue – more trails and pathways. Other findings continue in that vein. The top three most desired amenity choices for residents were greenways, hiking trails and trail loops. These responses all indicate that community members have a keen interest in connectivity to these parks and recreation offerings. The recent greenway master plan would be a crucial way to act upon this data with regard to the suggested implementation of various trails and pathways within the Village.



If the Village of Marvin Did Provide Recreational Programming, Would You Participate?

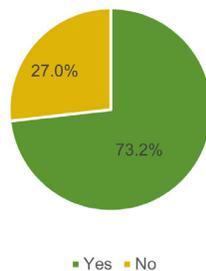


Figure 12

Figure 13: What we heard



LEVELS OF SERVICE

IN THIS CHAPTER

OVERVIEW

PARK DISTRIBUTION + MAPPING

BENCHMARKING

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS





Level of service (LOS) is a quantitative measure used to determine how much access to parks, trails, recreational amenities and indoor facility space residents have based on the park system’s current inventory and the jurisdiction’s total population. The purpose of the level of service analysis is to establish a baseline benchmark for the Department’s current offerings. The final output of the analysis is a determination of surpluses and deficits in parkland and facilities based on 10-year population projections – important metrics for guiding future growth.

The analysis is a four-step process that begins with an inventory of existing facilities. The second step is to compare Marvin’s parks and facility inventory to national baseline benchmarks. Baseline benchmarks are gleaned from the National Recreation and Parks Association’s (NRPA) Park Metrics database for departments serving similar sized populations (under 20,000) and associated 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review. The 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review contains self-reported data from 1,000 unique park and recreation agencies across the United States, as reported between 2019 and 2021. Third, the findings are locally contextualized by understanding current offerings, recreation trends and demand, annual budgets, land use, land availability, and other factors to propose

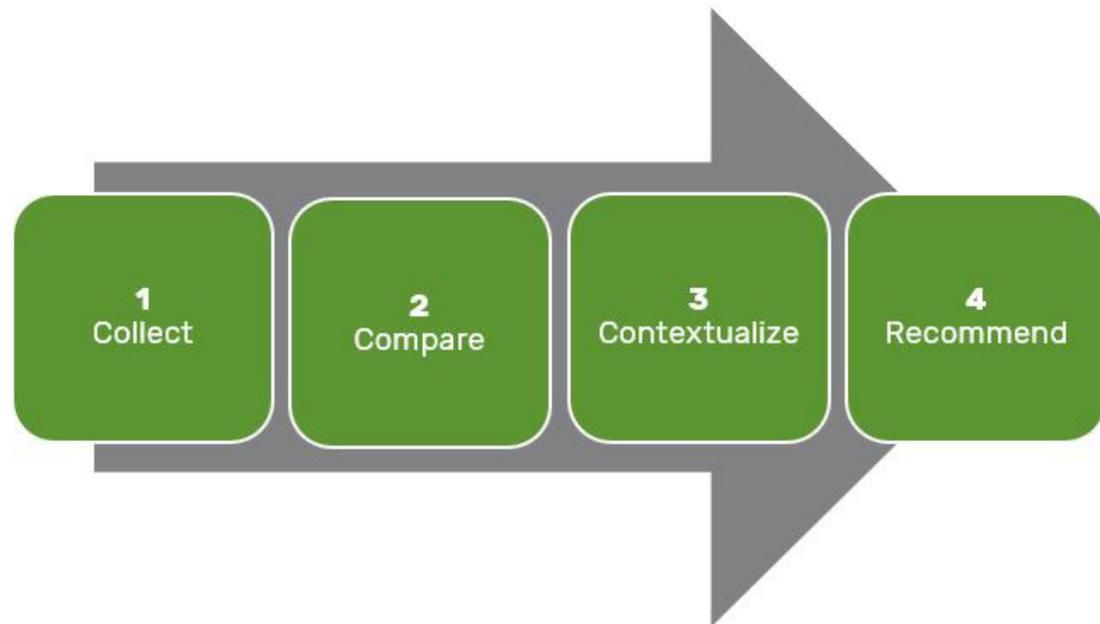


Figure 1

Pond view at Marvin Efrid Park / McAdams



CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE	NATIONAL BEST PRACTICES	PEER COMMUNITY BENCHMARKING	PROPOSED LEVEL OF SERVICE
<p>Measures the municipality’s current offerings. Analysis is local.</p> <p>This analysis asks: <i>What do we offer?</i></p>	<p>Compares metrics across nationwide best practices and standards. Analysis is national.</p> <p>This analysis asks: <i>What do parks and recreation professionals say is best to offer?</i></p>	<p>Compares measures among similar jurisdictions. Analysis is similar communities regionally.</p> <p>This analysis asks: <i>What do others offer?</i></p>	<p>Measures the municipality’s future offerings based on projected population and growth. Analysis is local.</p> <p>This analysis asks: <i>What should we offer or anticipate to offer in the next ten years?</i></p>
<p>The Level of Service (LOS) analysis identifies existing offerings, based on the current population at the time of the review. This metric forms a baseline standard that is population based moving into the future. The analysis answers the question - what does the Village of Marvin offer to the current population?</p>	<p>The NRPA benchmarking analysis relies on the annual Parks Metrics Report to compare communities across the country that share similar characteristics. Such information can be used to illustrate where the department excels, alongside where opportunities for enhancement exist. Opportunities represent deficiencies or areas that have been set aside in favor of other priorities.</p>	<p>The benchmarking analysis identifies communities that share similar characteristics with the Village of Marvin and then compares data points across all communities. This generates an understanding of the department’s strengths and chosen areas of expertise. Shortcomings in the benchmarking may represent deficiencies or areas that have been deprioritized in favor of other priorities.</p>	<p>National standards serve as an “ideal state” for parks and recreation in a community. When compared with the national standards, agencies set the achievable goals for the next ten years. This analysis answers the question – what and how much should the Village of Marvin provide over the course of the next ten years to satisfy the needs of the projected population?</p>



a recommended level of service. Lastly, the recommended LOS is then compared to current and projected population to quantify surplus and deficits of parkland and facilities. [Figure 1].

The level of service is a ratio which includes the current offering of parkland, trails, and facility space – divided by a portion of the current population. Parkland and trails are calculated based on a rate per 1,000 residents. The population figure used for this analysis is 6,444. This number is used throughout the plan as the Village of Marvin’s 2022 population estimate. [Figure 3].

Existing level of service is determined using the current population, and the future level of service is determined based on future population projections. This plan determines 2032 level of service recommendations using the population projections determined in the Demographics and Trends chapter as 7,471 residents. The current inventory serves as a baseline and the NRPA Park Metrics serve as a benchmark from which the Village can goal-set. Benchmark data was derived from the following information:

- › **Marvin’s 2022 Population – 6,444**
- › **Marvin’s Projected 2032 Population– 7,471**
- › **29.25 total acres of public space maintained (27 developed acres, 2**

$$\frac{\text{parks and recreation offering}}{\text{portion of population}^*} = \text{Level of Service}$$

Figure 3

acres of future parkland, .25 acres of roundabouts)

- › **4.13 miles of trails**
- › **Total indoor recreation space – 3,610 square feet**
- › **\$236,085 total operating expenditures in parks and recreation budget**
- › **3 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff members**

CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE

It is a common tendency to believe that numbers above the median indicate positive performance and numbers below the median, deficiencies. Another common tendency is to believe that numbers below the median must be increased to the standard, while numbers above the median indicate deficiencies. A better interpretation is to consider metrics as

a representation of services the jurisdiction has chosen to invest in. A high metric may indicate a service particularly important to the Village. A low metric may indicate an area in need of additional investment, or an area that is not considered a priority. It is essential to understand the context and connections between all metrics rather than focus on one isolated fact. [Figure 4].

This plan does not adopt any standard wholesale, but considers the full analysis, staff input, and community input to help identify standards and metrics that will be meaningful points of guidance as the Village grows its parks and recreation services to meet an increasing population.



Metric	Village of Marvin	NRPA (Median)
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 residents (includes <u>20 acres</u> of undeveloped land)	4.54 acres	12.9 acres
Trail Miles	4.13 miles	3 miles
Annual Operating Expenditures	\$236,085	\$1,200,000
Operating Expenditure per Park Acres	\$8,071	\$8,188
Operating Expenditures Per Capita	\$36.64	\$104
Parks And Recreation Agency Staffing (FTES)	3	11.8
Total Indoor Recreation Space Per Capita (Best Practice)	.56 square feet	2 square feet



CURRENT OFFERING	CURRENT LOS	NATIONAL MEDIAN LOS	NEEDED TO MEET NATIONAL MEDIAN LOS (CURRENT)	NEEDED TO MEET NATIONAL MEDIAN LOS (FUTURE)
Total Acres	Acres/per 1,000 Population		Additional Acres	
29.25	4.54	12.9	45	

Figure 5
Marvin vs NRPA / McAdams

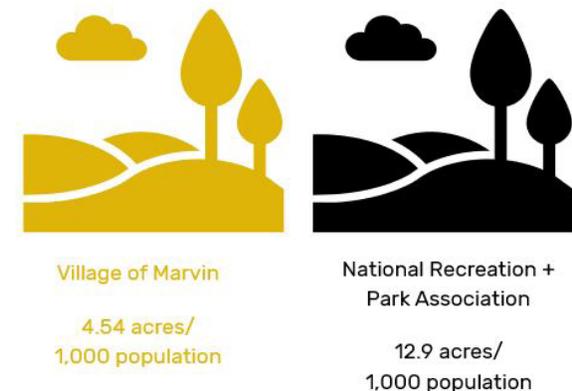
PARKLAND + FACILITIES

Comparing acres of parkland per 1,000 residents is done with information that relates total park acreage within a system to a ratio of residents, not the entire population of the municipality. Marvin has 4.45 acres per 1,000 residents – approximately than half the NRPA median per 1,000 residents.

Demonstrated in the table above [Figure 5], the Village of Marvin currently provides acres of parkland at less than half the national median level of service. At the present time, the Village would need to own and maintain an additional **45** acres to stand at the national median – totaling 74.25 acres. As the Village’s population grows over the 10-year planning horizon, an additional acres **9.7** acres of parkland would

need to be acquired to maintain the national median level of service for park acreage per 1,000 population. Maintaining the current level of service of 4.45/ 1000 population would require an additional **3.32** acres.

It is necessary to emphasize contextualization of existing conditions and resources that are readily available in the local environment to make an informed decision regarding the level of service standards. Every agency has its own unique set of realities that may present barriers to achieving baseline level of service. This is particularly true of parkland acquisition. Many local governments have a limited ability to acquire land for various reasons.





CURRENT LOS	NATIONAL MEDIAN LOS	NEEDED TO MEET RECOMMENDED LOS (CURRENT.)	NEEDED TO MEET RECOMMENDED LOS (FUTURE)
Total Miles			Additional Miles
4.13	3	1.13 mile surplus	0

Figure 6

GREENWAY TRAIL MILES

With nearly one and one quarter trail miles above the national median, the Village of Marvin is currently out performing the national median. The Village of Marvin has 4.13 miles of trails in the park system compared to the national median of three miles for communities of less than 20,000 population. This analysis indicates that similar to many communities across the United States, Marvin is undertaking the challenging task of constructing greenway trails.

Engagement with residents, stakeholders and Village leadership conducted as part of the current parks and recreation master plan, as well as Village’s 2020 greenways plan, indicated

a desire to expand access to greenways in Marvin. Results from the survey conducted for the greenway plan revealed that more community members support the Village of Marvin’s trails planning than do planning for parks and open space.

Further, the survey pointed out that over 20 percent more community members support walking paths over parks. The current plan’s survey determined that community members overwhelmingly do not believe they can reasonably walk to a park or recreational facility from their home and there is demand for more paths and trails connected to parks. The survey went on to ask the community what additional or new recreational amenities they would like

to have in Marvin – to which they responded with three trails/greenway amenities including greenways, natural hiking/fitness trails, and paved walking trails within parks. Consequently, although the Village is providing more than adequate access to trails, feedback from the community points to a need for prioritizing the development of new trails and greenway amenities.



INDOOR FACILITY SPACE

While NRPA does not provide benchmarking data for indoor facility space per 1,000 population, the project team has developed an industry standard based on the experience gained through working with communities across the U.S. That standard is two feet of indoor recreation space per capita. The Village of Marvin currently provides 3,610 square feet of indoor recreation space comprised of Village Hall and The Barn. At Village Hall, a community room, conference room, and Council chambers are available to the public to rent. Marvin Efirid Park is home to The Barn, an 2,100 square foot enclosed, open-air structure with a covered patio. The Barn can be rented for private events of no more than 100 persons. It is not air conditioned or heated, but is connected to power. [Figure 6].

Indoor recreation space is a valuable asset to any community. NRPA Parks Metrics provides recommended LOS for indoor parks and recreation facilities based on prevalence and population served per facility. As demonstrated in the table below, community centers are prevalent among over half (51%) of parks and recreation departments serving a population of less than 20,000. Recreation centers are prevalent among slightly under half of all parks and recreation departments serving the same size population.

Total Indoor Recreation Space	Village of Marvin	Best Practice
	.56 sq. ft. per person	2.0 sq. ft. per person

Indoor Park and Recreation Facilities — Population per Facility

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000
Community center	29,036	8,504
Recreation center (including gyms)	31,239	9,126
Indoor ice rink	50,863	8,002
Aquatics center	53,025	11,375
Teen center	57,109	14,426
Senior center	59,603	12,935
Arena	65,466	6,137
Performance amphitheater	68,181	9,291
Stadium	75,026	9,126
Nature center	114,696	11,821

Indoor Park and Recreation Facilities — Facility Prevalence

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000
Recreation centers (including gyms)	64%	49%
Community centers	59%	51%
Senior centers	41%	25%
Performance amphitheaters	36%	16%
Nature centers	31%	10%
Aquatics centers	25%	15%
Stadiums	17%	11%
Teen centers	14%	8%
Indoor ice rink	12%	6%
Arenas	7%	4%

Figure 6

Figure 7

Figure 8

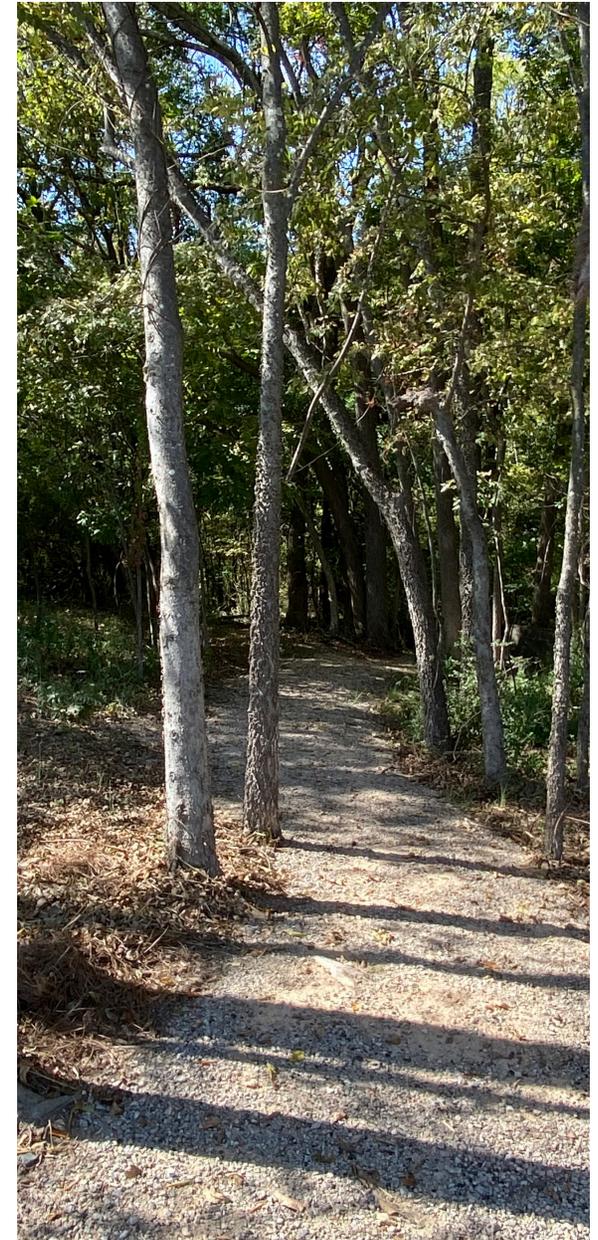


Many times, the terms “recreation center” and “community center” are used interchangeably. While the services offered at these facilities can overlap, the primary purpose of a community center is more social gathering space compared to recreational services at a recreation center. For example, community centers offer amenities like meeting rooms, classrooms, conference rooms, and spaces for large group gatherings for larger community. And often times they do include gymnasiums and other active indoor-recreation amenities typical of recreation centers. [Figure 7].

The 2022 NRPA Performance Review also describes the prevalence of indoor recreation facilities in terms of population served. Agencies serving a population of less than 20,000 provide one community center for every 8,504 residents and one recreation center for every 9,126 residents. [Figure 8].

Marvin’s population, as discussed in the introduction to the current report, will grow to 7,471 by over the 10-year planning horizon. This is an increase of over 1,000 residents. With that in mind, the Village may wish to consider providing additional indoor recreation amenities or partner with other agencies to fill this gap in Marvin’s level of service. Additional findings from this plan’s community engagement and public input report point further to a need to expand access to indoor

recreational amenities in the Village of Marvin. For example, the majority of respondents (58%) feel their needs for parks and recreation facilities are not being met. Exercise was one of the top three reasons Marvin residents visit parks. Indoor space can be designed to support exercise pursuits like court games, fitness classes, weight and cardio training, etc. – especially in the winter and during periods of inclement weather. Lastly, members of the Parks, Recreation and Greenways Advisory Board agreed that indoor space is limited in Marvin – with Village Hall being the only climate-controlled public facility and demand for its use quickly outpacing its capacity and availability. To that end, several members suggested consideration be given to a potential community center providing the population with expanded recreational resources.





BUDGET

Operating Expenditures

Level of Service metrics can help assess if the parks and recreation departments are adequately funded to manage, operate, and maintain their parks and recreation facilities. Operating expenditures include direct and indirect costs incurred by the municipality to provide parks and recreation services to the community. This includes the staff salaries, benefits, tools and equipment, repairs and replacements of materials, and the actual expenses of managing a facility. National Recreation and Parks Association median reports **\$1,200,000**. Marvin has **\$236,085** in operating expenditures, which is **over 100 percent** (134%) less than the national median. [Figure 9].



Figure 9

Operating Expenditures per Full Time Equivalent

Another metric to demonstrate adequacy of expenditures for a park system is a ratio of expenditures per full time equivalent employee. This ratio shows the comparison for benchmarking other agencies, not only by the size of their park or population, but the cost per employee for maintaining the system. [Figure 10].

As the graphic above shows, Marvin's operating expenditures are **\$78,667** per FTE. This amount is **\$23,105** less than the

NRPA median spending per FTE. Operating expenditures per FTE is a metric that inversely relates total operating expenditures to the total FTE. Because the Department is considered understaffed, the operating expenditures are naturally higher than the NRPA metrics. A parallel increase in number of staff hired and the higher operating budget will help ensure that the Department continues the positive trend of operating expenditure per FTE ratio.

Operating Expenditures Per Capita

Using the same ratio calculation and the population of Marvin, the per capita spending

(\$37) is which is approximately five (5%) percent spent for operations expenditure per capita (median) as compared to National Recreation and Parks Association (**\$104**). According to the NRPA Parks Metrics data, per capita operations spending is inversely related to the population of the served which means as the population of a municipality increases, the operating expenditure per capita ratio reduces if the operating budget number is constant. An increased budget for a growing population will help the Village catch up to the NRPA parks metrics standard. [Figure 11].



Marvin
\$78,667 per FTE



NRPA National Median
\$101,772 per FTE



Operating Expenditure per Acre of Parkland

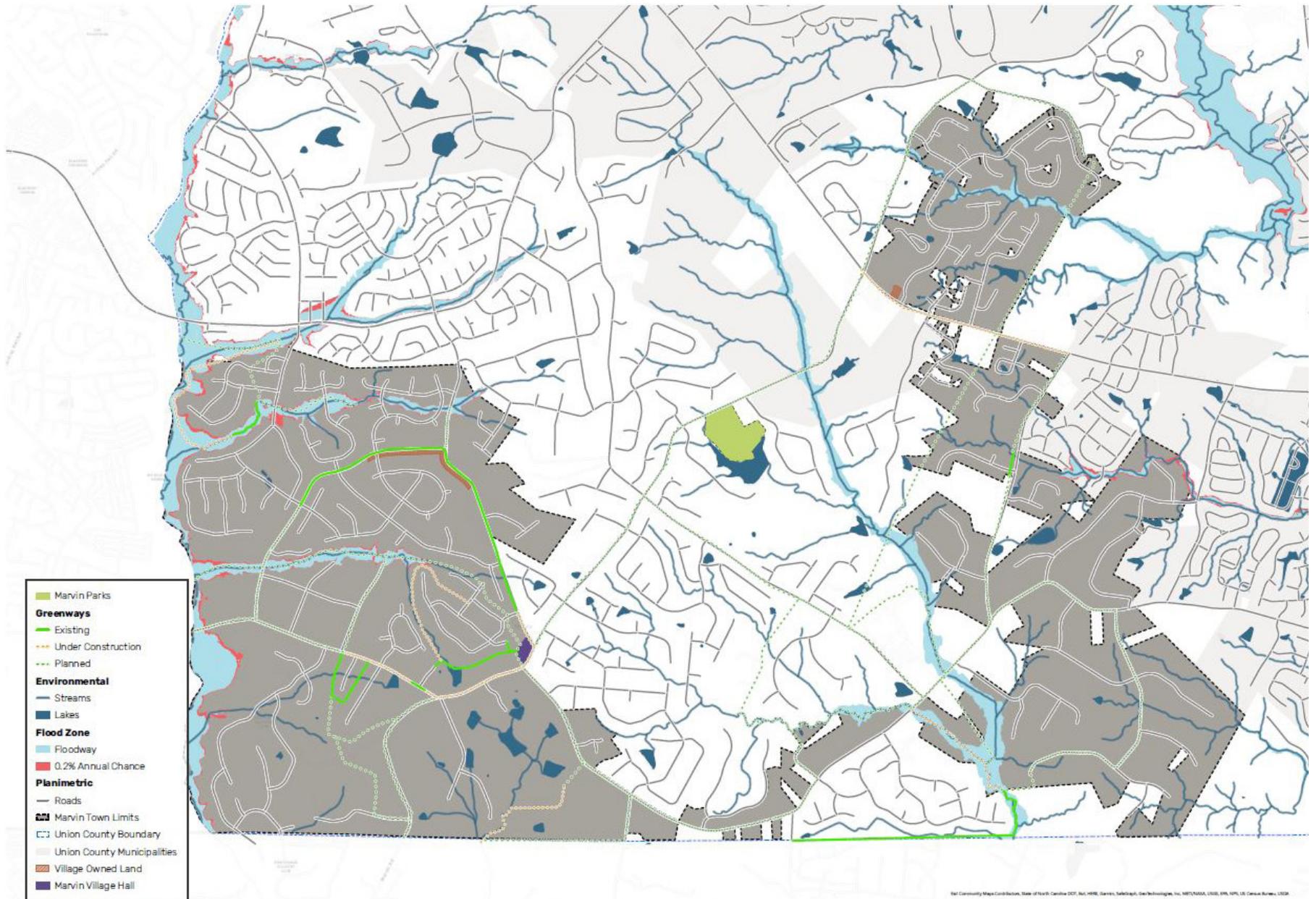
Marvin spends **\$8,071** per acre of parkland on operating expenditures, and agencies within NRPA’s median segment spend \$8,188 per acre. Marvin spends roughly the same per acre of parkland as agencies within NRPA’s median. As the parks use continues to increase and new parks added to the system, the Village should expect to see rise in expenditures related to parks maintenance, additional staff and resources, and program offerings.

- ▲ Figure 9
- ▲ Figure 10
- ▲ Figure 11



PARK DISTRIBUTION + MAPPING

This component of the Level of Service analysis looks at where parks, recreational amenities, and indoor facilities are located across the Village of Marvin, identifies gaps, and speculates on why gaps occur to inform recommendations for enhancing the equitable distribution of recreation opportunities



Map Courtesy: Map Contributors, State of North Carolina DOT, Inc., NCEM, Garris, Subright, Geo/Technology, Inc., MPT/MASA, USGS, EPA, NPL, US Census Bureau, USGS



LEGEND

SEARCH AREAS

- PARK SEARCH AREA

WALKSHED + DRIVESHED

- 5 MINUTE WALKSHED
- 10 MINUTE WALKSHED
- 15 MINUTE WALKSHED
- 10 MINUTE DRIVESHED

PARKS + GREENWAYS

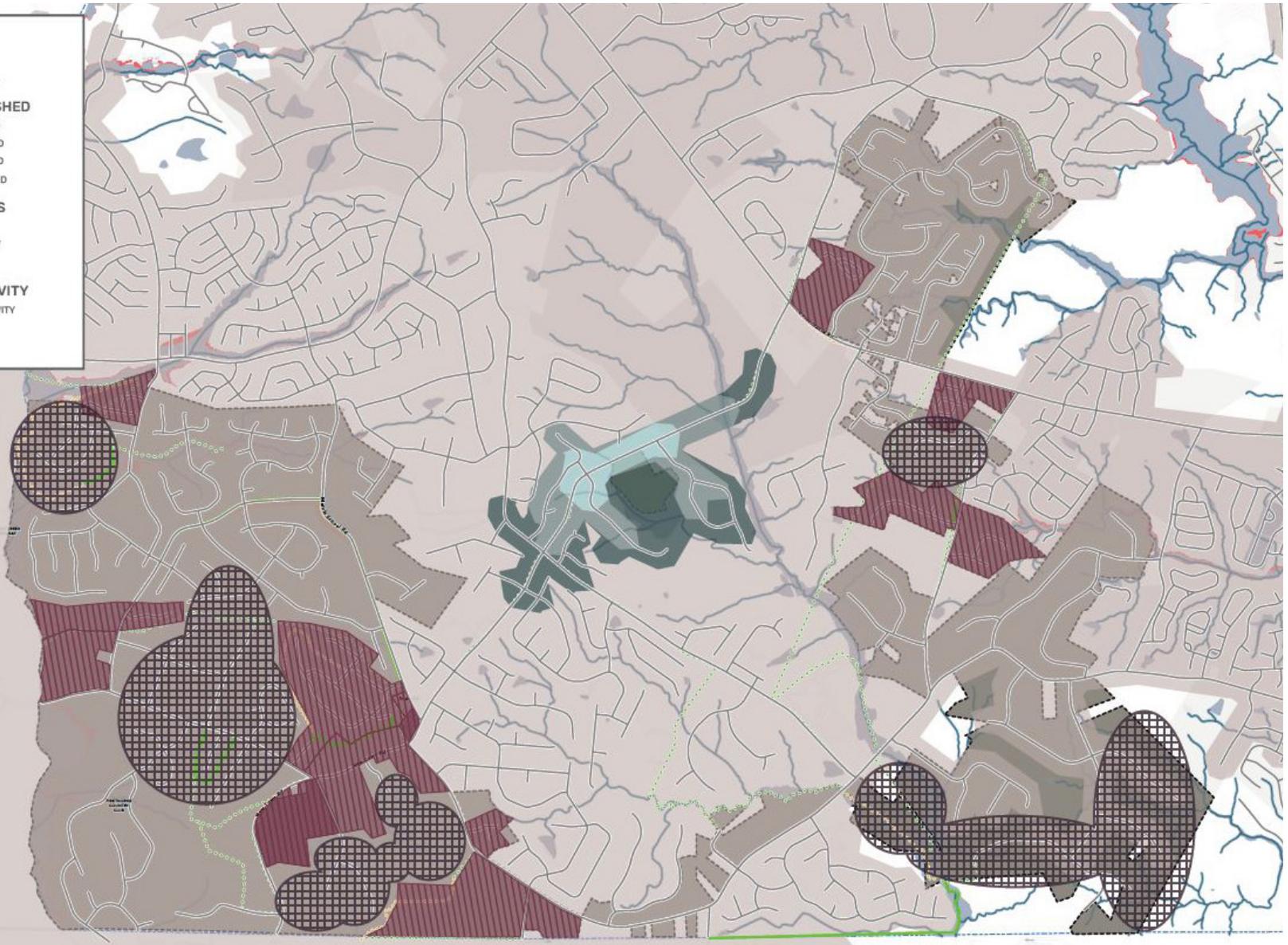
- GREENWAY
- PLANNED GREENWAY
- PARK

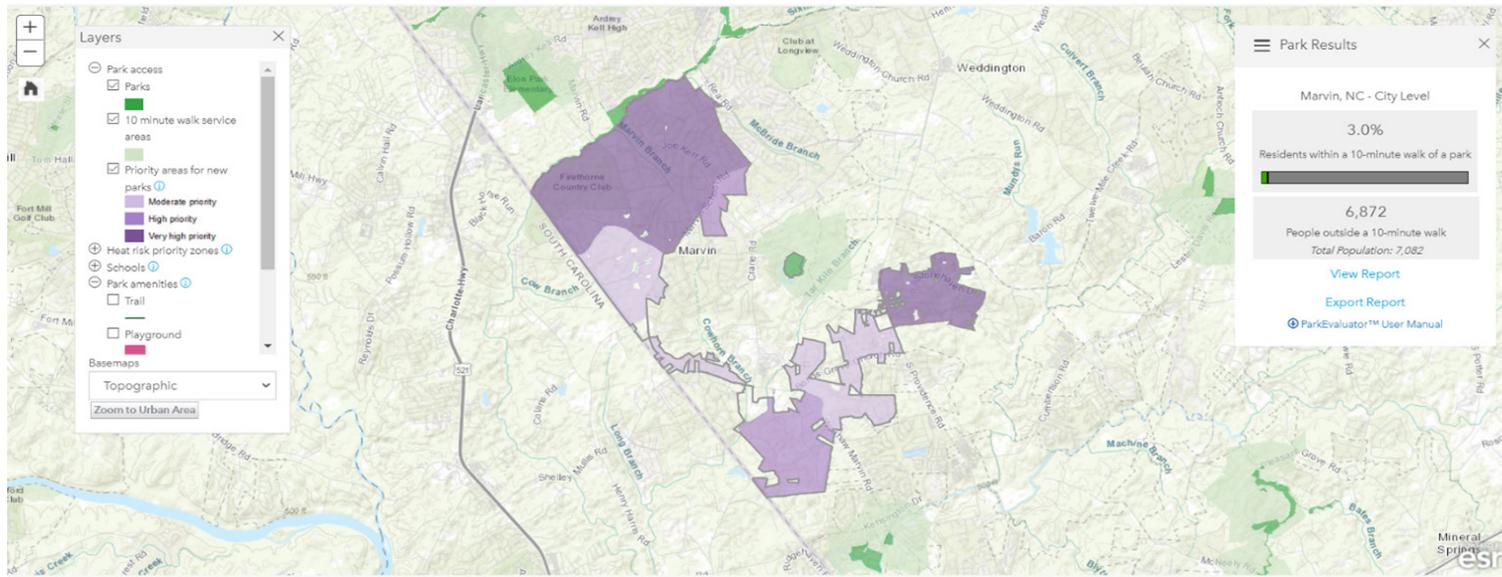
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

- DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

VILLAGE LIMITS

- CORPORATE LIMITS





Access for Parks

ACCESS TO PARKS

The Trust for Public Land (TPL), Urban Land Institute, and NRPA joined hands in creating a 10-minute walk to a park campaign with a goal that everyone should be able to reach the nearest park or open space within ten minutes or half a mile distance from their home. This initiative is being embraced by parks and recreation agencies across the US to achieve equitable access to parks, recreation facilities, and programs to help residents achieve positive health outcomes related to walkability and access to spaces that encourage physical activity.

The Trust for Public Land shares a database that tracks park-related data for communities around the country. The analysis is based on census data and it provides metrics for community-wide walkability including demographic characteristics of those living within a 10-minute walk of a park. For each park, TPL created a 10-minute walkable service area using a nationwide walkable road network dataset provided by ESRI. The analysis identifies physical barriers such as highways, train tracks, and rivers without bridges, and chooses routes without barriers.

According to the 2022 TPL report, three percent (3%) of Marvin residents are within a 10-minute walk of a park, which is significantly below the national average of 55 percent.



	Population	Land Size in Square Miles	Tax Rate Expressed X/\$100 Real Estate Value	Total Park Acres Owned	Total Trail Mileage	Total Indoor Facility Space
Village of Marvin	6,444	6.03	\$0.06	29.25	4.13	3,610
Village of Pinehurst	17,689	17.36	\$0.32	335.98	11	31,700
Town of Black Mountain	8,452	6.73	\$0.79	55.2	3.2	16,064
Town of Jamestown	3,721	3	\$0.48	185.9	0	3,910
Town of Hope Mills	18,000	7	\$0.46	99	1.64	35,237

Access for Parks

BENCHMARKING

OVERVIEW

The project team identified departmental operating metrics to benchmark the project team identified peer communities based on similar populations, similar facilities, or similar budgets. The benchmarking analysis draws on data self-reported by the selected peer communities, and information from the National Recreation and Parks Association’s Park Metrics database, a national resource for parks and recreation operational information. This analysis

also includes recommend best practices for parks and recreation operations.

FRAMEWORK

Peer communities self-reported information used for this benchmarking analysis. Due to differences in data collection and reporting within each department, data may have slight variances that impact the final calculations of included in this report. Data includes metrics for budgets, staffing levels, and inventories, and reflects data collected and reported in

2022. Discrepancies in data collection and reporting from peer communities create some gaps. Data is reported using level of service metrics. Each data point is reported as a ratio to provide a better comparison among peer communities. For example, park acreage is compared as total number of acres per 1,000 residents. This provides context on the level of service park acreages are providing based on the population they are required to serve. Peer Community Overview the table above [Figure 12] lists peer communities arranged by population density and listing key characteristics of each



jurisdiction.

Benchmarking provides a direct comparison among peer communities sharing similar characteristics with the Village of Marvin. Looking to peer communities is a valuable tool for decision-making, evaluation and goal setting. It is a common tendency to believe that numbers above the median are good and numbers below the median are bad. Another common tendency is to believe that numbers below the median must be brought up to the standard, while numbers above the median indicate a jurisdiction is over-providing a service.

In turn, a better interpretation is to consider metrics as a representation of services the jurisdiction has chosen to invest in. A high metric may indicate a service particularly important to the Village. A low metric may indicate an area in need of additional investment, or an area that is not considered a

Village of Marvin parkland acreage per resident is less than the median individual peer communities.

	Parkland Acres	Population	Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents
Marvin	29.25	6,444	4.45
Pinehurst	335.98	17,689	8.10
Black Mountain	55.2	8,452	6.52
Jamestown	185.9	3,721	49.95
Hope Mills	99	18,000	5.5
Median			6.52

Figure 12. Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents among Peer Communities

priority. A benchmarking analysis may identify areas where the department is excelling or falling behind, but it is essential to understand the connections between all metrics rather than focus on one isolated fact.

PARKLAND + TRAILS

PARKLAND

The rate of acres of parkland per 1,000 residents indicates how much access to parkland residents have. A higher number indicates more acres per resident, and therefore, more access to parks. This number can be used as one indicator of whether a

department's provision of parkland is keeping pace with population growth and helps forecast land acquisition needs over time based on population projections.

The Village of Marvin provides 4.45 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents which is below the median value of more than two acres/ population less than the median, and lowest among peer communities, with the closest being one acre less than Hope Mills.



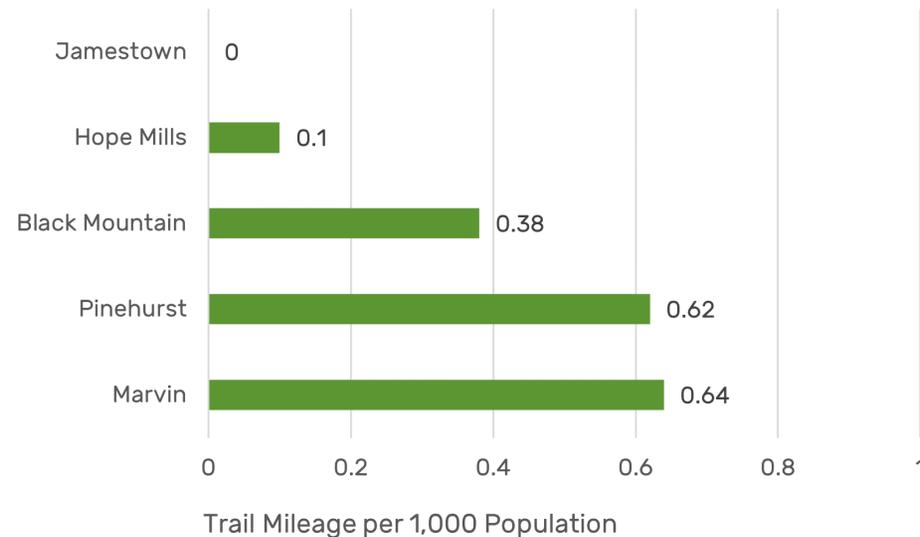
	MILES OF TRAIL	POPULATION	MILES OF TRAIL PER 1,000 POPULATION
Marvin	4.13	6,444	.64
Pinehurst	11	17,689	.62
Black Mountain	3.2	8,452	.38
Jamestown	0	3,721	0
Hope Mills	1.64	18,000	.10
Median			0.38

Figure 13

Figure 14

GREENWAY TRAILS

Trail mileage accounts for paved trail greenways, walking loops, multiuse paths and unpaved or natural surface trail mileage. The rate of trail mileage per 1,000 residents shows generally how much access to trails residents have. A higher number indicates more trail miles per resident, and therefore more access to trails. This number indicates whether a department's provision of trail mileage is keeping pace with population growth. As is indicated in the table below, the Village of Marvin leads its peers and far exceeds the median with .64 miles per 1,000 population.





	SQUARE FEET OF INDOOR RECREATION SPACE	POPULATION	SQUARE FEET OF INDOOR RECREATION SPACE PER RESIDENT
Marvin	3,610	6,444	.56
Pinehurst	31,700	17,689	1.8
Black Mountain	16,064	8,452	1.9
Jamestown	0	3,721	0
Hope Mills	35,237	18,000	1.95
Median			1.8

Figure 15

INDOOR FACILITY SPACE

Other than the Town of Jamestown, who’s imperative calls for the town to provide outdoor recreation amenities, programs and services, the Village of Marvin is providing the least amount of indoor recreation space per resident as compared to peer communities. That having been said however, none of the Village’s peer communities are achieving the national best practice as they are providing less than the national best practice standard of two square feet per resident.

Albeit less than the national best practice, the peer communities provide several unique

indoor recreation facilities. The Village of Pinehurst provides its residents with a 19,700 square foot traditional community center and 12,000 square feet of a historic exhibition hall now used for weddings and special events. Unlike the majority of parks departments serving populations of 20,000 or less, the Town of Black Mountain provides the community with a senior center. The Town also uniquely provides an indoor soccer turf field. Of the peer communities, the Town of Hope Mills provides the greatest amount of square footage. Its facilities include a 22,400 square foot recreation center and 11,000 square foot community center across the street. [Figure 15].



	OPERATING EXPENSE	POPULATION	OPERATING EXPENSE PER CAPITA
Marvin	\$236,085	6,444	\$36.64
Pinehurst	\$3,210,596	17,689	\$181.50
Black Mountain	\$895,000	8,452	\$105.89
Jamestown	\$467,570	3,721	\$125.66
Hope Mills	\$1,971,500	18,000	\$109.53
Median			\$109.53

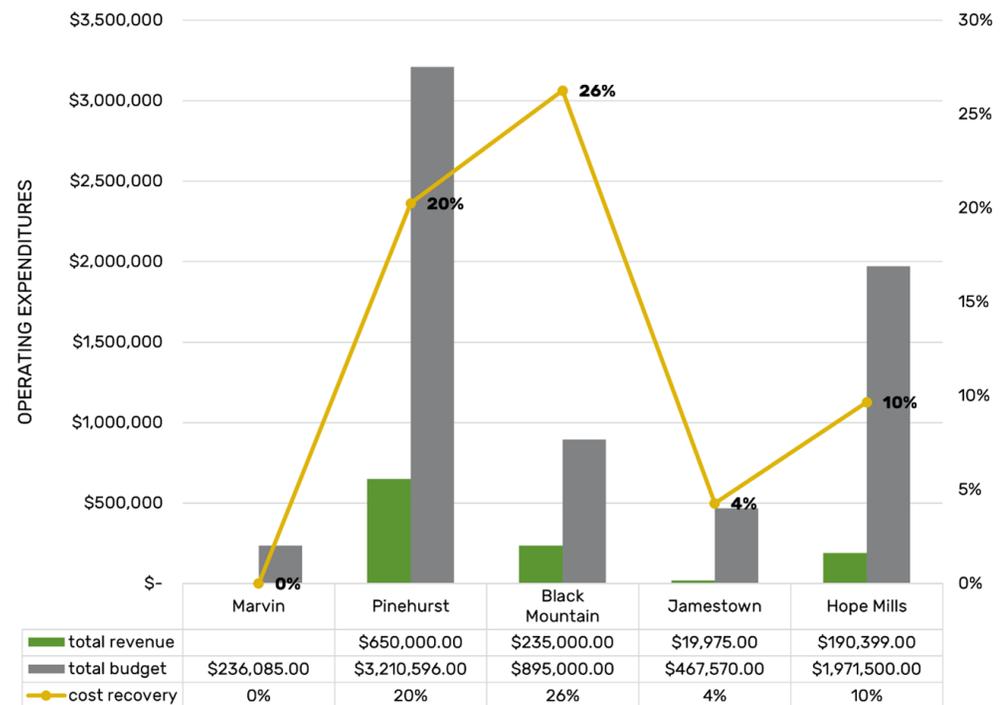
Figure 16

Figure 17

FINANCES

Cost recovery refers to the amount of cost of services the Department recovers from revenue from program fees, facility charges, grants, donations, and other sources. Common sources of revenue generated from programming include enrollment fees and sponsorships, but partnerships, grants and other sources may also generate funds to cover programming costs. Parks departments may adopt an overall price recovery strategy to determine whether they will generally subsidize or generally generate revenue from programming. Even with an overarching departmental approach to cost recovery, the cost recovery goals for individual services may still vary.

The Village of Marvin does not currently recoup the funding it provides for parks and recreation services. Peer communities of Hope Mills and Jamestown recover very little. Pinehurst and Black Mountain recover 20% and 26% respectively. NRPA Park Metrics 2022 report states the national median cost recovery as 22.5%.





	FTES	POPULATION	FTES PER 1,000 POPULATION
Marvin	3	6,444	.47
Pinehurst	18.5	17,689	1.05
Black Mountain	6	8,452	.71
Jamestown	3	3,721	.81
Hope Mills	34	18,000	1.89
Median			.81

Figure 18

STAFFING

The following table compares the staffing for peer communities included in the benchmarking analysis by converting the hours worked by staff to a measure called FTE, or full-time equivalent, to provide a uniform metric for the analysis. FTE is calculated by adding the number of total hours worked by all department employees and then dividing that total by the number of hours typically worked by one full-time employee in a calendar year (2,080 is the number generally used for this calculation).

The number of FTEs per 1,000 residents is a performance metric that can be used as an indicator to determine how well an agency is

staffed, and thus how well it is equipped to meet the jurisdiction’s needs. The following table illustrates how the Village of Marvin’s staffing levels compare to its peer agencies. The Village provides three FTEs to support parks and recreational services. This translates into less than one FTE per 1,000 population in Marvin – the lowest among peer communities. The information presented in the maintenance and operations assessment of this plan explains where additional staff may be needed. Other potential staffing matters are further addressed in this plan’s recommendations.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Marvin Efir Park supports a high level of visitation from both Marvin residents and Union County residents. The Village of Marvin falls behind its peers, and deviates significantly its level of service provision of park acreage per 1,000 population. Parks attract residents and businesses, increase revenue for cities, spur private investment, and increase job opportunities. As urban sprawl extends outward, families, retirees and young professionals look to suburban and exurban areas to live, work and play. The availability of and access to quality parks and open space plays an outsize role in attracting and retaining new residents, as well as satisfying current residents.

Level of service and benchmarking results demonstrate that the Village of Marvin is outperforming the trail mileage national median for communities of less than 20,000 population – and leads its peers in trail mileage per 1,000 population. Public or private investments in greenways and trails offer an opportunity to transform community health, quality of life and prosperity. As the Village plans to extend its park system, collaboration with private developers will be essential to providing options for greenway network expansion and connectivity.

Other than Jamestown, whose parks and

recreation department is solely tasked with providing public access to outdoor recreation, Marvin ranks lowest among its peers in providing the public with indoor recreation opportunities. The Village of Marvin currently oversees two indoor recreation spaces, though neither are designated exclusively for recreational uses. Well-run community or recreation centers serve as a thriving hub of activity for youth, families, senior citizens, civic organizations, parks and recreation departments, and more.¹

Because park and recreation agencies differ by size, jurisdiction served, as well as the agency’s overall mission, so too do staffing levels. Park and recreation agencies serving jurisdictions of less than 20,000 residents have a median of 11.8 FTEs on staff. The ratio of full time equivalent (FTEs) parks and recreation staff per 10,000 population is an indicator of how well the community is being served in terms of quality parkland, recreational programs, special events, etc. With three (3) FTEs, and a population of 6,444, The Village of Marvin’s level of service for parks staff per 10,000 is below the median and lowest among its peers. This is consistent with low park acreage per population and limited programming. This number should be considered with the recognition that the Village’s one true public park is intensively

¹ Jumpsix2, The Positive Impact of Community Recreation Centers; The Sports Facilities Companies, 3-9-2016



maintained to a very high level of quality, and its trails also very well cared for. In response to demand, Village leadership should anticipate the need for more FTEs as they look to extend recreational services to include special events, an expanded park and trail system, and potentially recreation programming.



RECOMMENDATIONS + IMPLEMENTATION

IN THIS CHAPTER

PARKS + FACILITIES

TRAILS + GREENWAYS

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE



VILLAGE MARVIN



This plan’s vision and recommendations result directly from an extensive information gathering process involving community input, staff input, analysis of existing parkland, recreation programs, and maintenance standards.

A concluding analysis prefacing the current comprehensive systemwide parks and recreation master plan recommendations suggests that the department runs efficiently on limited funding and limited staff. Expanding the department’s offerings to meet the needs of a growing population will require increasing staff and expanding and enhancing the park and facility offerings.

The following data sources informed the Department’s vision, goals and objectives:

- › **Community Input**
- › **Staff + Stakeholder Input**
- › **Recreational Needs Survey**
- › **Review of Existing Planning Documents**
- › **Parks + Facilities Assessment**
- › **Benchmarking + Level of Service**
- › **Village of Marvin Demographics**
- › **Parks + Recreation Trends**

An implementation plan with prioritized action items is the final step in bringing the parks and recreation master plan vision to reality. Implementation is not a linear process but an ongoing iterative process that will rely on funding investments. Feasibility studies, master plans, phasing plans, and business plans are some of the intermediate steps the Village will have to assume to understand the full order of magnitude costs. In addition, effective implementation strategies are based on highly collaborative processes that span across the various Village Departments, community leaders, strategic partners, and elected officials.

Action items are prioritized as short-term, mid-term, long-term or ongoing. Action items receiving higher priority are those supported by

significant community input or are items that have been delayed or postponed in the past but have significant bearing on accomplishing the recommendations of this plan. Each action item indicates a responsible party to foster accountability within the Department as well as component of the parks and recreation system as it relates to parks and facilities, programs, operations and maintenance.

Furthermore, priority projects may change or evolve into new possibilities over the ten year planning horizon based on community needs or other related opportunities. For this reason, additional prioritization criteria has been established and is described in the appendix, which the staff can use to evaluate for implementation.



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▲ Pond at Marvin Efir Park

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GOAL	TIMELINE	ABBREVIATION
Short-term	1-5 Years	ST
Mid-term	5-10 Years	MT
Long-term	10+ Years	LT
Ongoing	Continual	OG

▲ Action Item Implementation Time Frame Key



There is no doubting the deep history that runs through the Village of Marvin. As discussed in the introduction to this plan, the community is located within a region of North Carolina whose population successfully grew from societal events of historical significance and adapted within the constraints of uncertain evolution. Yet, the Village is itself a young municipality in terms of how long it has been an established local government. Incorporated in 1994, the Village of Marvin is currently recognized as a Newly Incorporated Municipality (NIP). A municipality is considered an NIP if it was incorporated in or after 1990. Union County is home to the largest number of NIPs in North Carolina, which stands to reason as sprawl from Mecklenburg and Cabarrus counties pushes south.

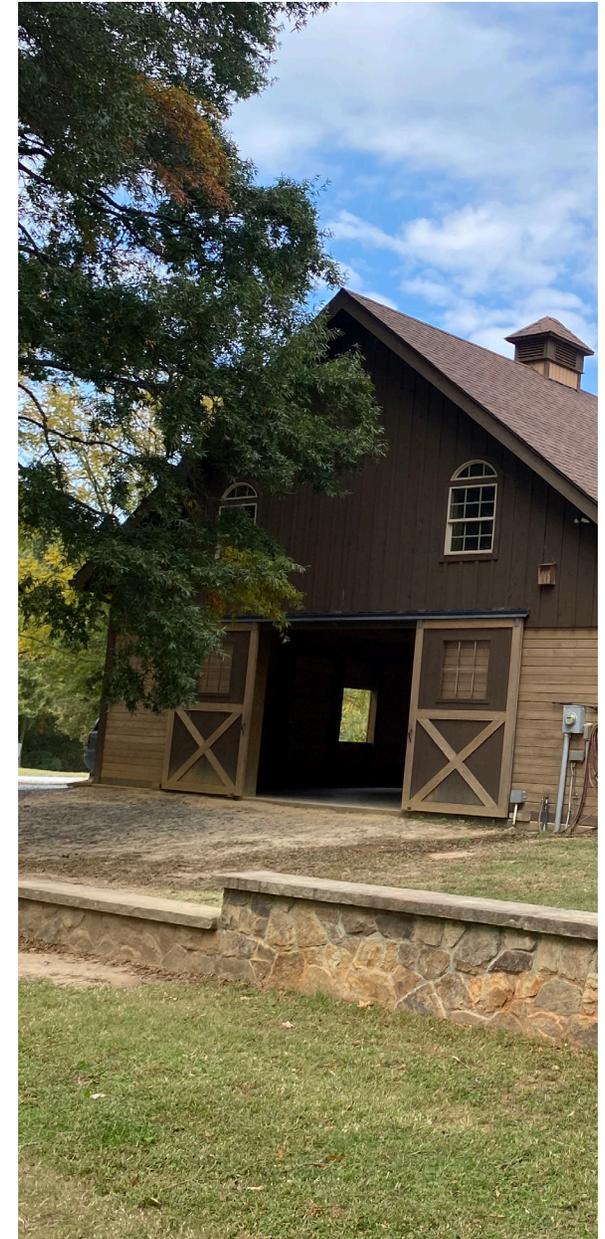
There are a number of incentives for communities to seek incorporation: infrastructure development and maintenance, control of land use decisions, concern for annexation, control of growth, delivery of public services, and perhaps most importantly, the preservation of rural character. A study found that the desire to incorporate in order to preserve local identity was shared across each of the seven NIPs examined as part of that research. The Village of Marvin shares this in common with those communities. Once a community's spirit of independence and preservation of a dearly-held way of

life translates into incorporation, the new municipality should be prepared to provide essential public services.

The amplification of parks and recreation as an essential public service must be accomplished within the framework of competing demands for infrastructure improvements. As the Village grows, there will be more competition for funding, necessitating validation of investment decisions and tracking of outcomes. The recreational needs survey revealed that nearly all (95%) respondents believe parks and recreation is essential to a high standard of living. This data point suggests there is community support to justify prioritizing investment in the park system.

Village of Marvin leadership should understand and communicate to the many widespread community benefits that access to parks and recreation services provides. Communities across the nation and within the greater Charlotte metro area are recognizing that a dollar spent on parks and recreation is an investment in their community that will be returned many times over.

Results from the recreational needs survey identified a high demand for a farmers market pavilion and more trails – ranking first and second respectively as facilities Village of Marvin leadership should consider high priority investments. The Village of Marvin should





continue to review industry trends and utilize resident surveys to understand evolving recreation interests, needs and wants to provide relevant and diverse parks.

The level of service and benchmarking exercise conducted as part of this plan revealed areas where the Village is meeting or exceeding best practices for parks and recreation provision, and also where there are gaps. Two key findings from the analysis determined that the Village of Marvin provides an abundance of trails and greenways, and a dearth of park acreage and indoor recreation space per 1,000 population. Having an understanding of where the level of service can be improved provides a foundation upon which the Village can establish goals for parks and recreation enhancements. This understanding, coupled with results from the recreational needs survey, will equip Village of Marvin leadership with the information needed to make informed decisions about where to invest resources.

Village of Marvin residents support the growth their community is experiencing, but want to retain the area's small-Village character amid this expansion. Parks and recreation services are a valuable tool for enhancing and elevating that character and often create the iconic spaces and events that make a place feel like home. There are strong connections between the built environment and perceived feelings of pride in a community. The built environment

vibrant shared public spaces.

These goals are achieved through placemaking. Placemaking balances consistency of signage, furnishings and materiality. Marvin must incorporate community involvement into park design projects to achieve unique sense of place at each park and allow expression of historical, cultural and social narratives. This will result in a defined park character that reinforces the overall Village brand while allowing each park to have a unique vision. Offering visitors unique experiences allows parks to stand out. Highlighting and area's unique features indicates that users are having an experience that no other place could offer by connecting them to the area's history, culture, or natural environment. Placemaking taps into why a place is special and creates a defining visual feature or character around that idea.

Marvin Efir Park embodies the objective of creating comfortable community gathering spaces with a variety of amenities that attract a variety of park users. The park provides a space for the community events that bring residents together. Existing parks and trails have served the community's expectation for a charming parks system the Village can continue to expand while maintaining this character.

Parks should include diverse amenities with wide community appeal. A diversity of amenities leads park users to extend their

length of stay and attracts broader park visitors. A combination of amenities with low barriers to entry and more "niche" amenities provide all visitors with recreation opportunities while offering a unique amenity that gives a park its own identity. Examples of amenities with low barriers to entry include paved, looped walking trails and open multipurpose lawns for unprogrammed play. Niche amenities may include splash pads, adventure courses, archery ranges, and skate parks.

The Village of Marvin's system is characterized by a central park featuring a mix of recreational amenities and flexible space that serves as venues for Village-sponsored special events, unprogrammed play for families, community gardens and opportunities to experience nature and the outdoors. Village leadership has achieved this outcome through focused development of Marvin Efir Park, as well as greenways and trails to meet the community's basic recreational needs. Public and stakeholder input gleaned during the creation of this plan suggests the Village's successful events such as Marvin Day and Trick or Treat in the Park are beginning to outgrow Efir park's capacity to support them.

The majority of respondents to the recreational needs survey believe expanding recreational amenities at Marvin Efir Park is very important – citing a need for various amenities which are highlighted in the table below. These items as



well as implementation measures for providing them are described in the following pages. Throughout the 10-year planning horizon the Village will need to balance providing quality parkland and personalized customer service with expanding the park system to meet new and growing community needs.

PARKS AND AMENITIES	STRATEGY / ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY
Expand and enhance the park system to reflect the Village of Marvin’s unique heritage and charm.	Center parks and recreation as an essential public service for a growing community.	ST, OG
	Update and enhance existing parks and recreational amenities.	ST, OG
	Develop a master plan document for Marvin Efir Park.	ST
	Develop a conceptual plan for Pocket Park at Marvin Gardens.	ST
	Create sense of place	ST, OG
Create a park system that meets community needs and wants.	Develop both active and passive recreational amenities at a future Marvin Heritage District Park	ST, MT
	Secure additional parkland to meet future demand.	MT, LT



Create a park system that meets community needs and wants.(continued from previous page).	Develop parks and recreation amenities to support identified as high-priority needs: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trails2. Dog Park3. Playground4. Picnic Shelters5. Pickleball Courts	ST, MT + LT
	Develop a combination of passive and active options at Marvin Efirid Park including adding or enhancing: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trails2. Farmers Market3. Pickleball Court4. Multiuse Fields5. Outdoor Exercise Stations6. Playground	ST, MT + LT
	Develop parks and recreation amenities to support programs identified as high-priority needs: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Multifunctional Pavilion2. Indoor Recreation Space3. Fitness and Wellness Amenities4. Multiuse Fields5. Trails	MT + LT



RECREATION AMENITY OR FACILITY NEED	COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SOURCE	ACTION
	<p>Amphitheater</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational Needs Survey
	<p>Dog Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Input Recreational Needs Survey
	<p>Greenway System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Input Recreational Needs Survey Stakeholder Meetings VOM 2020 Greenways Plan
	<p>Indoor Recreation Space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Input Recreational Needs Survey Stakeholder Meetings



	Loop Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Recreational Needs Survey› VOM 2020 Greenways Plan	Establish partnerships with HOAs and to permit public use of neighborhood paved trails.
	Multiuse Fields + Areas for General Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Public Input› Recreational Needs Survey	Establish partnerships with schools and other agencies to create joint-use agreements.
	Natural Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Public Input› Recreational Needs Survey	Establish partnerships with schools and other agencies to create joint-use agreements.
	Pickleball Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">› Recreational Needs Survey	Establish partnerships with HOAs and to permit public use of neighborhood courts.



	<p>Picnic Shelters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Recreational Needs Survey 	<p>Enhance and expand existing amenities at Marvin Efrid Park.</p>
	<p>Playground</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Recreational Needs Survey 	<p>Establish partnerships with schools and other agencies to create joint-use agreements.</p>
	<p>Splashpad</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Public Input › Recreational Needs Survey 	<p>Identify site location at existing park properties or partnerships with planned developments.</p>



TRAILS + GREENWAYS

Trails are gaining popularity as national trend as they contribute to the physical and emotional health of a community, and they are source of regional connectivity and economic development. Results from the current recreational needs survey revealed that trails of all kinds are the most in-demand recreational amenities among Village of Marvin community members. Feedback gleaned during the community input event echoed that sentiment,

with trails and greenways ranking second among the most desired amenities in Marvin. Community engagement conducted as part of the 2020 Village of Marvin Trails Plan determined that the most important greenway connection is to neighborhoods.

There is also a desire for increasing connectivity from existing trails to parks and more paths and trails from existing parks would facilitate pedestrian access. The Village of Marvin’s over

four miles of trails accomplishes some of this, however, responses captured from the current plan’s recreational need survey determined that the majority of respondents do not believe they can reasonably walk or bike to a park from their home.

The 2020 Trails Plan recommendations are based on greenway component designations consisting of spines, or connector trails. Spine trail serve as the backbone of the larger

TRAILS + GREENWAYS	STRATEGY / ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY
<p>Expand and maintain an extensive greenways system.</p>	Connect people to the places they want to go via an expansive trail system.	OG
	Review funding resources provided in the appendix and coordinate with Village Staff, Union County, and NCDOT to determine funding strategies for plan recommendations.	ST, OG
	Implement and refine subdivision ordinances to ensure that future growth supports park and greenway development and open space dedication.	ST, OG
	Coordinate with developers during the review process on inclusion of planned greenways in new developments where required.	ST, OG
	Conduct feasibility studies for priority greenway projects to determine corridor alignments with 30% design and detailed cost estimates.	ST, MT
	Increase the visibility of the Village’s greenway system by establishing a signage and wayfinding system to improve visitors’ experiences and assist them in reaching their desired destinations.	ST, MT



greenway network, while connector trails are routes that connect the spine trail to other key assets . The plan recommended a total greenway system length of just under 35 miles comprised of slightly over seven miles of spine and close to 28 miles of connectors. As of that plan’s adoption, just over four miles of trails were on the ground in Marvin. This means the Village would need to plan and construct 31 miles of trail over the 10-year planning horizon.

OPERATIONS + MAINTENANCE

The Village of Marvin’s park system is evolving alongside recent investments and creative efforts to increase visibility of parks, services, and special events. One such endeavor includes the creation of a “professional pass” allowing vendors and other local businesses paid access to Efir Park to advance their goods and services. For example, for a small fee, a local photographer purchased a “professional pass” to use the Cottage Garden as the backdrop for various client photoshoots. The Village of Marvin has also enhanced visibility of parks and facilities expanding special events. Growing events like Marvin Day, Trick or Treat in the Park, and the Annual Tree Lighting and Santa Parade was made possible by extending outreach and partnering with sponsors to increase attendance at Village events.

Relationships like these one not only generate revenue to expand leisure services in Marvin, but also create awareness of the Village’s parks

and recreation amenities. With this visibility comes increased visitation and patronage of paid services provided by the Village such as Barn, shelter and rentable space within Village Hall. As has been discussed throughout this plan, Village leadership has creatively brought attention to its leisure amenities, which has led to an influx in visitation that on many accounts is stressing capacity. The initial steps the Village takes in response to growing demand for parks and recreational services will set the tone for efforts taking place over the long term.

Undertaking the current comprehensive planning effort for parks and recreation in Marvin is one step in a positive direction as recreation has always been held as a priority. The Village established the Parks, Recreation and Greenways (PRG) Board in 2009 and hired a full-time Park Manager in 2017 to oversee parks, greenways and leisure services. Despite the growth in demand for parks and leisure services and expanded menu of services as a result, the Park Manager was reclassified as Public Facilities Manager. As a result of the reclassification the position which initially managed the Village’s one park and four miles of greenway, is now responsible for maintaining Village Hall building and grounds, roundabouts, and scheduling of part time employees. This position further includes event planning as well as overseeing facility rentals and scheduling – in addition to oversight of capital improvement projects including RFPs, negotiating contracts

with vendors, project management and budgeting. In summary, growing public demand and extended Village responsibilities are putting pressure on an already lean organizational structure. Transitioning into a formal parks and recreation department will reinforce the relevance of recreation and parks services, thereby driving demand, and enhancing an already existing high standard of living

The best practice for operational efficiency is for all parks and recreation functions to be within the structure of one department overseen by a director. This plan recommends transitioning to a conventional recreation and parks department as a means of effectively and efficiently meeting the leisure needs of the community.

The expectation that such a transition will ensure parks and recreation provisions are provided at scale cannot be met within the constraints of a local government with limited resources. Consequently, an action item considered throughout discussions with steering and stakeholder committees was the idea of strengthening and adding to their current list of partnerships.

The Village of Marvin currently has both local and regional partnerships. Though each partnership is different, the goal remains constant; to combine assets of the public and private sectors to create first-in-class



PARK OPERATIONS	STRATEGY / ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY
<p>Create a formal recreation and parks department structure to meet existing and future demand.</p>	<p>Use community and stakeholder feedback, NRPA best practices (referenced in the Appendix) and the Village’s existing plans to define the department’s core functions.</p>	<p>ST</p>
	<p>Establish the department’s mission and vision.</p>	<p>ST</p>
	<p>Develop operational functions, roles and responsibilities to ensure appropriate responsibility, and management levels.</p>	<p>ST</p>
	<p>Hire new staff based on defined selection criteria and skillset to achieve departmental functions.</p>	<p>ST, MT</p>
	<p>Build staff capacity by training and developing existing staff.</p>	<p>ST, MT, OG</p>
	<p>Establish volunteer program to achieve department functions.</p>	<p>ST, OG</p>
<p>Enhance partnerships to expand leisure service provisions.</p>	<p>Create system for identifying, pursuing and evaluating new partnerships.</p>	<p>ST</p>
	<p>Pursue effective partnerships that use best practices for policies and procedures.</p>	<p>ST</p>
	<p>Conduct a capacity demand study of private and/or quasi-private recreational amenities and facilities to determine prospects of additional services.</p>	<p>ST</p>



PARK OPERATIONS	STRATEGY / ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY
Incorporate park maintenance best practices to create quality parks, facilities, and amenities.	Develop a maintenance management plan linked to maintenance standards (referenced in the Appendix).	ST
	Develop a maintenance management training program for Village of Marvin staff assigned to maintaining parks.	ST
	Invest in technology and software applications to increase service delivery capacity in operations and maintenance.	ST

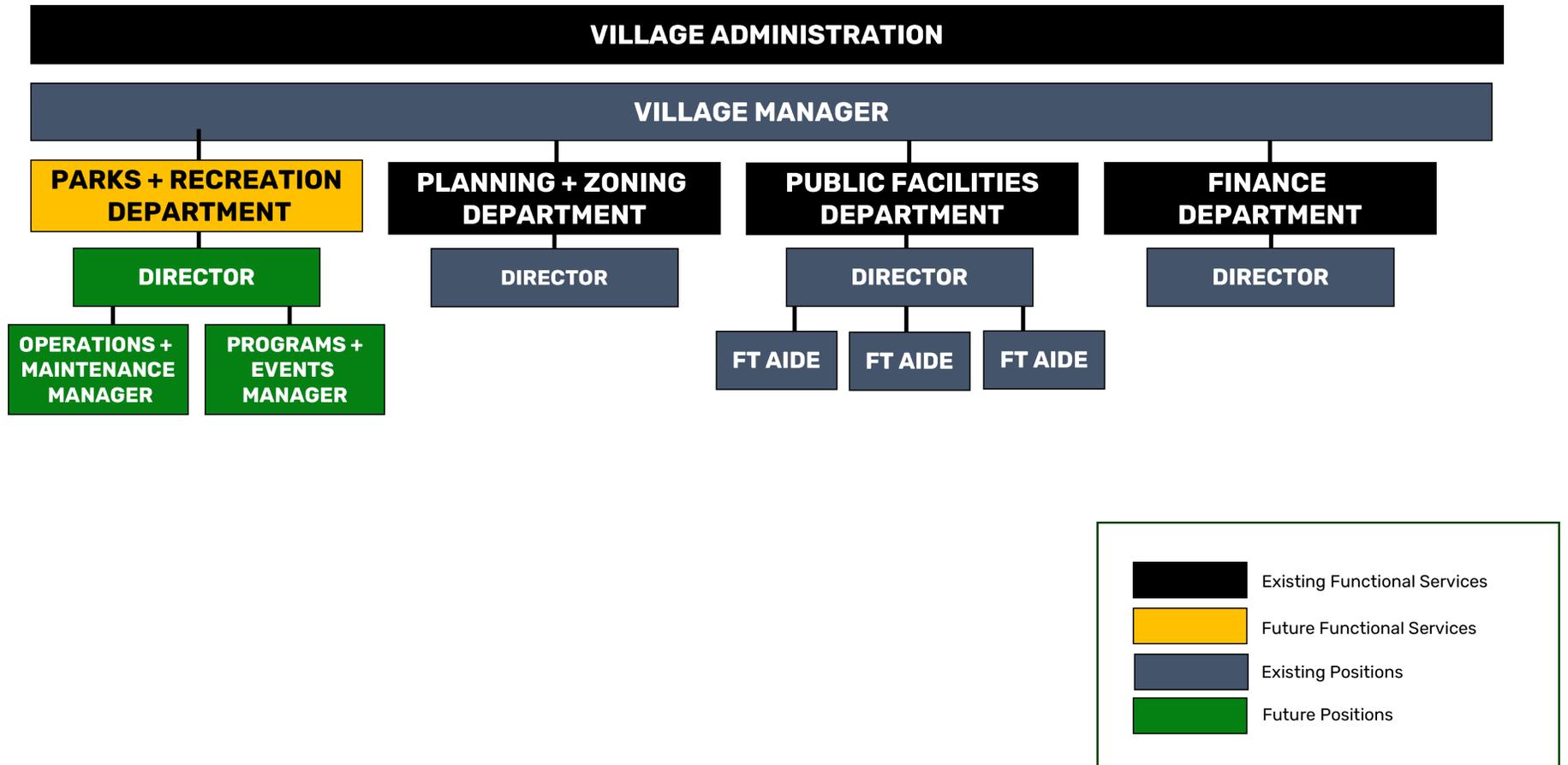
recreation opportunities in the face of municipal budget constraints and a dearth of available property to develop into parkland. Partnerships include local civic groups; churches, scouts, schools, 501(c)3 organizations, and other neighboring local governments. A list of partners and agreement scopes can be found in the Appendix.

Evidenced through the community engagement process, residents, stakeholders, and elected officials truly recognize the value of parks and recreation. However, there is less recognition and understanding regarding the amount of staff hours that go into maintaining the parks in a way that meets or exceeds the public’s expectations. Park maintenance is

a foundational element of providing a safe and high-quality park system and parks and recreation staff work every day to achieve that status. Park maintenance also includes many hidden costs and unseen time expenditures. For example, mowing requires transportation of equipment to and from sites, any time needed to repair or replace equipment and refueling, in addition to time spent on the mower itself.

Daily maintenance tasks among parks and recreation departments include landscaping and trash removal. Long-term maintenance include items such as structural repairs and unplanned maintenance needs. While many staff members have a complete understanding of a park systems maintenance needs, it is

important to have records of the time and funding expenditures needed to achieve all maintenance needs so the department can be properly staffed and funded. A well-planned maintenance strategy will include full accounting of the time and budget required to meet short term, long term, and unplanned maintenance needs.





Existing conditions at Marvin Village Hall/ McAdams



APPENDIX
