



# ELIZABETHTON PARKS AND RECREATION



## 2020-2030 MASTER PLAN

**Prepared by: Elizabethton Parks and Recreation Department**



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## Introduction

Understanding the importance of community recreation and the vital part of life it provides the citizens of Elizabethton, the 2020-2030 Master Plan is a specific guide of goals and objectives that will lead to the future success of recreational programming and facility needs for years to come. This plan gives an extensive look at the current needs of this Department while aggressively planning for future improvements that will expand the recreational services for our citizens.

Since the previous 2010-2020 plan was adopted, this Department has achieved great success as many facility improvements and programming needs have been accomplished. Improvements to many recreational facilities have occurred while programming and special events, especially as it pertains to outdoor recreation, has given our citizens a new recreational experience and improved the quality of life for all.

It is with great determination that while seeking public input for this Master Plan that it was made clear the importance of hearing from all; especially as it pertained to individuals' interests and their future vision of recreation for Elizabethton. This desire led to public meetings, surveys and routine conversations with community volunteers, businesses, non-profit agencies and again, our citizens. This important process did not only establish the goals and objectives found within this Master Plan, but it provided specific direction and will most notably help us remain on task for now and most importantly in the future.

The 2020-2030 Master Plan will guide a specific path for the future success of recreation in Elizabethton. It will help determine priorities of importance, give insight into current recreational facilities and establish programming goals and objectives that will certainly offer new exciting recreational opportunities for all. This Master Plan will help create an identity for Elizabethton, one that will focus on taking advantage of our beautiful natural resources and will establish a vision that supports improving the quality of life for our citizens.



Future Covered Bridge Park improvements is a top priority in this Master Plan



## A Closer Look

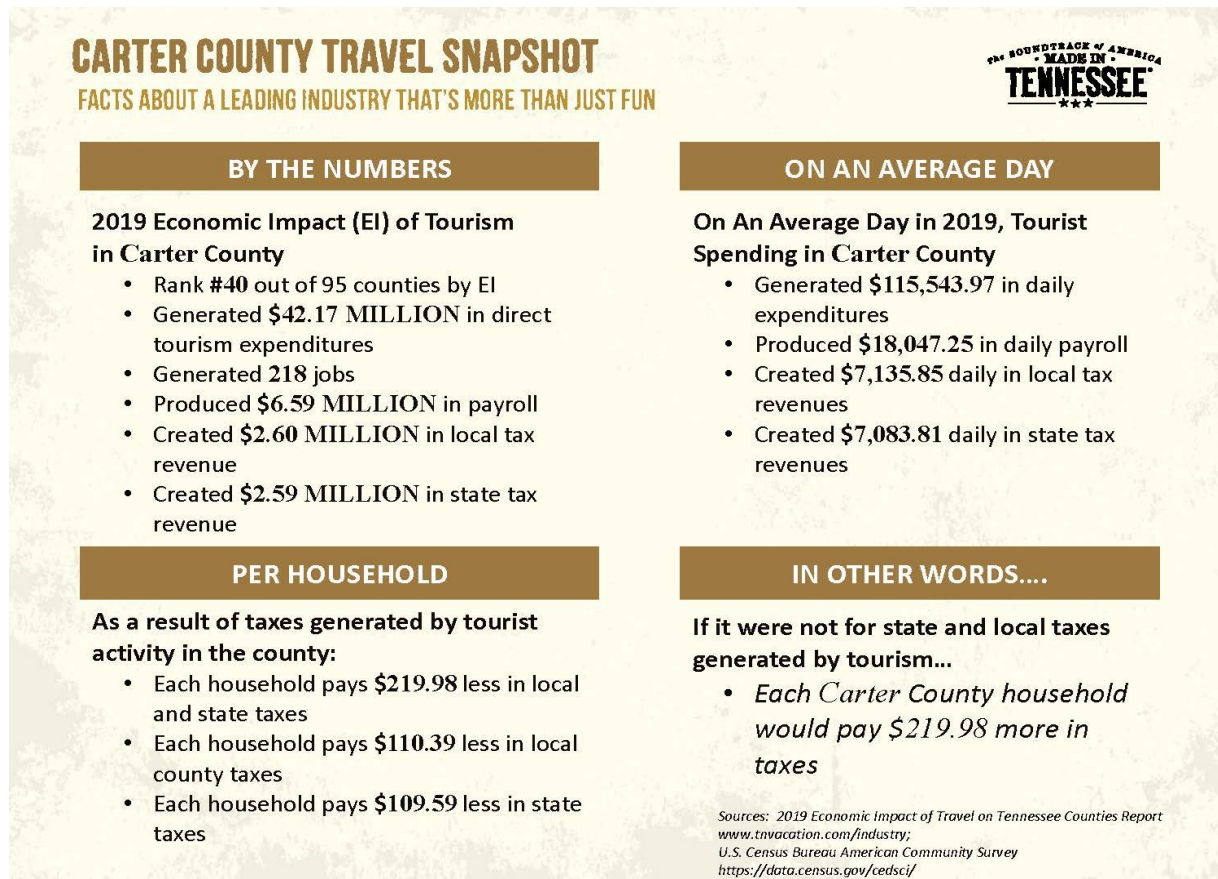
Today, the Parks and Recreation Department has witnessed a considerable amount of growth and has seen a significant change in operations. Now maintaining over 100 acres of park land that incorporates historic landmarks, athletic facilities and fields, walking trails, picnic pavilions, playground equipment, the Franklin Pool, tennis and outdoor basketball courts, park restrooms facilities and the Elizabethton Recreation Center, the Elizabethton Parks and Recreation Department has vast options for recreational enjoyment. In addition to valuable recreational facilities, the Department has substantially increased programming opportunities for our citizens. This includes an increase in the scheduling of outdoor concerts, movies nights, organized holiday events, educational programming, athletic leagues and partnerships with numerous non-profit agencies determined to offer citizens of Elizabethton more recreational opportunities for all.

Parks and recreation options are a very important way of life in urban areas. These resources provide relaxation and allow individuals to expend energy in a natural, healthy way. As Elizabethton continues to grow, the Parks and Recreation Department must seek to provide the growing demand we envision for future recreational facilities and activities. This would include conducting significant research into the utilization of our natural resources by way of developing new recreational uses directly associated with our beautiful rivers and mountain landscapes that could then, in turn, lead to substantial recreational and economic benefits for our citizens.

The development of such outdoor recreational resources, including those associated with the Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail, the completion of the Riverfront Linear Trail, improvements to the Covered Bridge and Edwards Island Parks and the possible building of a White Water Park, could all lead to a significant impact on tourism dollars for Elizabethton.

As we continue to move forward strengthening our recreational facilities, developing new programming opportunities and special events for our community, our Master Plan will serve as a guide for this development and as a document that could once again bring about positive change for our citizens.

Figure 1:







## Recreation Expenditures

Carter County, TN  
Carter County, TN (47019)  
Geography: County

Prepared by Esri

Figure 2:

Demographic Summary		2017	2022
Population		56,855	56,678
Households		24,377	24,378
Families		16,020	15,925
Median Age		44.6	46.3
Median Household Income		\$34,243	\$37,731
	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Tv/Video/Audio</b>	66	\$849.00	\$20,696,126
Cable & Satellite Television Services	70	\$661.37	\$16,122,261
Televisions & Video	57	\$135.63	\$3,306,371
Audio	56	\$49.61	\$1,209,371
Rental of TV/VCR/Radio/Sound Equipment	73	\$1.00	\$24,407
Repair of TV/Radio/Sound Equipment	52	\$1.38	\$33,716
<b>Entertainment/Recreation Fees and Admissions</b>	44	\$280.40	\$6,835,314
Tickets to Theatre/Operas/Concerts	43	\$25.90	\$631,339
Tickets to Movies/Museums/Parks	45	\$35.00	\$853,075
Admission to Sporting Events, excl.Trips	46	\$25.67	\$625,835
Fees for Participant Sports, excl.Trips	46	\$45.75	\$1,115,153
Fees for Recreational Lessons	40	\$52.95	\$1,290,687
Membership Fees for Social/Recreation/Civic Clubs	45	\$94.83	\$2,311,789
Dating Services	38	\$0.31	\$7,437
<b>Toys/Games/Crafts/Hobbies</b>	59	\$71.18	\$1,735,259
Toys/Games/Arts/Crafts/Tricycles	57	\$60.25	\$1,468,688
Playground Equipment	82	\$3.76	\$91,693
Play Arcade Pinball/Video Games	42	\$1.04	\$25,371
Online Entertainment and Games	48	\$2.13	\$52,036
Stamp & Coin Collecting	99	\$4.00	\$97,471
<b>Recreational Vehicles and Fees</b>	68	\$69.21	\$1,687,152
Docking and Landing Fees for Boats and Planes	45	\$4.75	\$115,756
Camp Fees	60	\$19.33	\$471,113
Payments on Boats/Trailers/Campers/RVs	90	\$37.35	\$910,424
Rental of RVs or Boats	44	\$7.79	\$189,859
<b>Sports, Recreation and Exercise Equipment</b>	59	\$100.83	\$2,457,900
Exercise Equipment and Gear, Game Tables	69	\$41.09	\$1,001,704
Bicycles	44	\$12.38	\$301,899
Camping Equipment	47	\$7.74	\$188,569
Hunting and Fishing Equipment	60	\$25.47	\$620,942
Winter Sports Equipment	35	\$2.09	\$51,035
Water Sports Equipment	47	\$2.67	\$65,069
Other Sports Equipment	78	\$8.26	\$201,271
Rental/Repair of Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment	52	\$1.12	\$27,410
<b>Photographic Equipment and Supplies</b>	54	\$29.70	\$723,979
Film	69	\$0.67	\$16,220
Film Processing	54	\$4.15	\$101,205
Photographic Equipment	49	\$11.47	\$279,494
Photographer Fees/Other Supplies & Equip Rental/Repair	57	\$13.42	\$327,060
<b>Reading</b>	60	\$75.63	\$1,843,682
Magazine/Newspaper Subscriptions	64	\$26.87	\$654,987
Magazine/Newspaper Single Copies	66	\$6.16	\$150,105
Books	58	\$23.17	\$564,843
Digital Book Readers	58	\$19.43	\$473,747

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2017 and 2022; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2014 and 2015 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

May 14, 2018



## Cultural Information - Population, Health and Wellness

During the 1990s, Elizabethton hit a large growth spurt. From 1990 to 2000, the city grew 17.8% with a total population in 2000 of 13,372. This increase in growth is due to various annexations of the western part of Elizabethton during the 1990s. Estimates based on state population projections indicate that Elizabethton will continue to grow and have a population of 16,037 in 2030. Carter County is projected to have a population of 53,880 in 2030 and the estimated population of Johnson City MSA, of which Elizabethton is a part, is 211,402 in 2030. Figure 1 below illustrates the population projection estimates for these three cities.

**Figure 1 - Region Populations and Projections Table**

	2010	2020	2030	2040
Elizabethton	14,176	15,809	16,037	Unavailable
Carter County	57,424	56,091	53,880	50,911
Johnson City MSA	199,005	204,683	211,402	215,574

The population of Carter County is estimated at 56,351 with 18% of that population falling under the age of 18. Only 15% of residents have a Bachelor's Degree or higher with 21% living at or below the poverty level. According to the 2018 County Health Rankings, Carter County is ranked 47th in Tennessee for health outcomes and 65th for health factors out of 95 counties. Carter County also ranked 73rd in health behaviors. When compared to other Tennessee counties, Carter County has high rates of physical inactivity, limited access to healthy foods and high overweight/obesity rates. As for social and economic factors, Carter County ranks 57<sup>th</sup>.

In Carter County, the percentage of adults age 20 and over reporting no leisure-time physical activity is 33%. Anecdotal evidence leads us to believe that this is largely due to a great number of social determinants of health, including lack of safe spaces for healthy activities, as well as lack of childcare, transportation and a great deal of untreated mental health issues (4,441:1 county rate of mental health providers: residents).

Nutritionally, 15% of the Carter County population are low-income and do not live close to a grocery store in comparison to 1% in nationwide top scores. According to 2014 County Health Rankings, the percentage of adults reporting fair or poor health is 23%. The percentage of the adult population that reports a body mass index greater than or equal to 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> is 30% adult obesity and 42% elementary age child obesity. Comparatively, Tennessee's percentage is 23% with top scorers nationwide boasting 14%.



## Review of Mission Statement

"To provide safe and cost effective programs, facilities and parks that promote the health and welfare of all citizens participating in recreation programs."

The Park and Recreation Department believes that this mission statement communicates the idea of safe settings, affordable programs and access to all citizens, regardless of age or disabilities, which are goals that the staff strives to achieve.

## Recreation Inventory and Assessment

### Mini-Parks

#### Covered Bridge Park

Covered Bridge Park is located on both sides of the Doe River bordered by Elk Avenue to the north and Riverside Drive to the west. This 2.25 acre park includes a small fountain, various pavilions and picnic tables, and the historic Doe River Covered Bridge. A few years ago, a stage was built in order to host concerts and other events. It is also connected to other city parks via the Elizabethton Linear Path. This park could use significant renovations which in turn would bring great benefits for our citizens. Located in downtown Elizabethton, this park provides a lunch-break getaway for citizens during the hot summer days.

#### Dixon Street Park

Dixon Street Park is a 1.4 acre park bordered by Dixon Street and the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad. There are no facilities located at this open grass park. Facilities could be added at minimal cost to convert this open grass park into an active mini-park.

#### Edward's Island Park

This 3.2 acre mini-park is also located along the Doe River, just north of Covered Bridge Park, and has a pavilion with picnic tables. Located in downtown, the small island that makes up this mini-park is one of the ten parks along the Elizabethton Linear Path. This passive park could benefit from several renovations including landscaping, park lighting and equipment and upgrades to the Rotary pavilion.

#### Mill Race Park

Mill Race Park is located along the Doe River with Riverside Drive to the east and the Broad Street Bridge to the north. Just over .5 acres, this mini-park is another stop along the Elizabethton Linear Path. While this park is in good condition, a few amenities could be added to make it a passive park.

#### Race Street Park

Race Street Park is located near the intersection of Race Street and Pine Street. This 1.3 acre park is along the Elizabethton Linear Path. This relaxing mini-park is in good condition. Benches and picnic tables are proposed to be constructed in 2010.

#### Riverside Park

This scenic park is nestled between the beautiful Watauga River and the Carmon Dugger Sports Complex. This 6.8 acre park is home to recently installed playground equipment and a pavilion with picnic tables. In 2020, a new restroom facility was constructed by our maintenance staff. Riverside Park is also located along the Elizabethton Linear Path. This park is in good condition. Upgrades to the horseshoe courts, however, would advance its status to excellent.

### School-Parks

#### Eastside Elementary School

Eastside Elementary School is located along Siam Road in the eastern quarter of the city. The elementary school has playground equipment and a multi-use field. The facility also serves as the beginning point of the Elizabethton Linear Path. The playground at this school is in good condition.

#### Elizabethton High School

The High School is located at the corner of Elk Avenue and Bemberg Street in the west- central quarter of the city. This facility has five tennis courts, two ball fields, a track, and a multi-use field. The 1.2 acre fields are used by to Senior Little League Baseball with 360 participants and the Boys and Girls Club Pee-wee Baseball and Softball with 540 participants and other community events. The facilities are in excellent condition and are accessible to the city for other park and recreation program.





### Harold McCormick Elementary School

This elementary school is located at the intersection of Cedar Street and Beasley Street. This school has playground equipment, swings, and a multi-use field in excellent condition.

### T.A. Dugger Junior High School

T.A. Dugger Junior High School is located at the intersection of E Street and Holly Street. This school has a soccer/football field, a track, and two ball fields.

### Westside Elementary School

Westside Elementary School is located at the corner of Dakota Street and Burgie Street. This school has playground equipment, a tennis court, a walking track, a multi-use field and a small ball field. All of the facilities at this school are in good condition.

## **Neighborhood Parks**

### Douglas Park

Douglas Park is located at the intersection of Watauga Street and Church Street. Once a school-park, this 3.7 acre neighborhood park has playground equipment, a basketball court and a multi-use field. The equipment and the field are in fair condition and need upgrades.

### Harmon Park

Harmon Park is 1.9 acres and located on US Highway 19E just north of the Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce. This neighborhood park now hosts our largest pavilion with built in restrooms, a recently installed all inclusive playground equipment, a track and a multi-use field. The park is in good condition.

### Walter Curtis Memorial Park

Walter Curtis Memorial Park is located along H Street and Holston Avenue adjacent to the Senior Citizens Center. The 1.6 acre park contains two shuffleboard courts, a basketball court, 2 half basketball courts, walking paths, a pavilion and various benches. This park is in fair condition and is in need of repairs to the walking path and shuffleboard courts.

## **Community Parks**

### Cat Island Park

Cat Island Park is located along US Highway 19E in the eastern half of Elizabethton and is along the Elizabethton Linear Path. This 12.5 acre park has playground equipment, two tennis courts, and pavilions with picnic tables. It also has two ball fields, Billy Bob Garrison Field and Jim Ensor Field, which hosts the Elizabethton/Carter County Youth League with 400 participants. Although park is in good condition the restroom and concessions facility will need improvements in coming years.

### Joe LaPorte Recreation Area

This 3.9 acre park is located immediately east of Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park. Franklin Pool, with 14,000 participants annually, a recently constructed Splash Pad that replaced an out of date baby pool, two recently renovated tennis courts, and pavilions with picnic tables are located here.

### Kiwanis Park

Kiwanis Park is located at the intersection of G Street and Carter Boulevard. This 3.1 acre park has swings, playground equipment, a multi-use field, a basketball court and pavilions with picnic tables. A new, larger pavilion with a built in kitchen was recently built, along with a new restroom facility. The park hosts the Adult Spring and Fall Flag Football each with 360 participants are popular activities. This park is in good condition.



**New Splash Pad at Franklin Pool**



## **Sports Complexes**

### Carmon Dugger Sports Complex

This 9.8 acre sports complex contains a Minor League Baseball Facility that is in 2021 the home of a new summer collegiate wooden bat league supported by Major League and USA Baseball. This facility also serves as the home of Elizabethton High School Baseball team which draws 6,500 fans annually. The softball field is also located in the complex and host practices for multiple youth league teams and travel ball teams. There have been multiple improvements made to Joe O'Brien Field, including a new front entrance, new ticket booths, restroom facilities, souvenir stand, concession stand, an upgraded visitors and umpires' locker rooms and a \$2.1 million home clubhouse.

### Lions Field

Lions Field is located next to Elk Avenue in the western quarter of Elizabethton. The 12 acres host the Elizabethton National Little League Baseball and Softball Fields. The boys program attracts 360 participants annually and the girls program attracts 300 participants annually. These facilities are in excellent condition.

## **Special Use Parks**

### Carter Mansion State Historic Park

This state historic park is located on Broad Street and is 4.5 acres. Built around 1780 by John Carter, the house is the oldest house remaining in Tennessee. Various activities are conducted in the house during the summer and fall months.

### Elizabethton Linear Path

The Elizabethton Linear Path is approximately six miles long and stretches from Eastside Elementary School to Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area. The linear path follows the scenic Doe River through the heart of Elizabethton and then follows the Watauga River westward downstream to the Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area. The linear path will have designated areas for fishing. The linear path is in good condition and needs little maintenance. A section of the path is designated as the Over Mountain Men Victory Trail by the National Registry.

### Elizabethton Municipal Golf Course

The Municipal Golf Course is the largest public owned facility in the city, on 115 acres. Located on Elk Avenue in the western half of the city, this special use facility is the only golf course in Elizabethton and is a complete 18-hole, 6,339 yards, 72 par public golf course. The condition of this facility is fair.

### Elizabethton Recreation Center

The Elizabethton Recreation Center provides a great location for the Men's and Women's Open League Basketball with 450 participants in each league. The Adult Coed Spring, Fall and Winter Volleyball Leagues with 60 participants in each league and Boys and Girls Club Tee-ball with 840 participants are held at the Recreation Center. The Recreation Center serves as a meeting place for many non-city sponsored events such as Weight Watchers, Studio Dance, Home School 4-H, fitness classes and many others. The 3.2 acre, 14,608 square foot facility is located along Mill Street. The facility is in need of multiple repairs.



**Recreation Center Special Events**

### Tweetsie Trail Park

This new park facility is located in a beautiful section of the Tweetsie Trail. This facility, which will be developed, will consist of picnic tables, a bike repair station, water fountain and other future park amenities.

### Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area

Sycamore Shoals State Park is the largest park in Elizabethton with 36 acres of land and the historic Fort Watauga. It has a two mile walking trail, various picnic tables, an amphitheater, and a visitor's center/museum. Several programs and festivals are held here during the summer to commemorate the historic fort and early American life. It is located in the western half of the city between Elk Avenue and the Watauga River and is the termination point of the Elizabethton Linear Path. The Over Mountain Men mustered here prior to their march to Kings Mountain.



## **Special Use Facilities**

### Boys and Girls Club

This 26,000 square foot facility provides many recreation activities for the children of the community including kickball, basketball, cheerleading, swimming, baseball, hiking, football, triple play gym games, T-ball, air hockey and much more. The facility has two large gyms, one large multi-purpose room, two meeting rooms, a computer room and a media room. The Boys and Girls Club is located on Hudson Drive next to the Elizabethton High School.

### Senior Citizens Center

The Senior Citizens Center is located at the intersection of G Street and Holston Avenue. This 7,000 square foot facility provides an assortment of recreation and leisure time activities such as bingo, bowling, aerobics, billiards and line dancing to many senior citizens in the community.

## **Commercial Recreation**

### Annual Carnival

The Elizabethton Carnival comes to town during the month of June and provides rides and arcade games for the citizens of Elizabethton and Carter County.

### Bonnie Kate Theater

Located on Sycamore Street, in the heart of downtown, the Bonnie Kate Theater was built in 1926. In the 1960's, the room was divided to show two movies concurrently. As the industry changed to digital format, the division was removed and a stage was built for live performances. The Bonnie Kate is committed to enriching the lives of people in the community through performing arts in a restored venue that reflects the history of Elizabethton.

### Franklin Health and Fitness Center

Franklin Fitness Center is a private fitness facility that provides equipment for full body workouts, equipment for cardiovascular workouts, aerobic classes, Pilates, racquetball courts, kickboxing, taekwondo, yoga, and line dancing. The future of this 14,601 square foot facility is uncertain at this time as ownership is considering selling this facility.

### Stateline Drive-In Theater

The Stateline Drive-In Theater is a seasonal drive-in movie theater operating from April through September. It is located on US Highway 19E on the southeast side of Elizabethton.

## **Regional Recreation**

### Cherokee National Forest

The Cherokee National Forest is located in Eastern Tennessee and stretches from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Bristol, Tennessee along the North Carolina-Tennessee border. The 640,000-acre forest is the largest tract of public land in Tennessee and contains opportunities for sightseeing, swimming, boating, hiking, camping, fishing and wildlife viewing.

### Roan Mountain State Park

Roan Mountain State Park encompasses 2,006 acres of southern Appalachian forest at the base of the 6,285 foot high Roan Mountain, 20 miles south of Elizabethton. Roan Mountain is the highest point in Carter County and the Unaka Mountain range. Rich hardwood forests allow for a great diversity of life and a wide range of outdoor activities including camping, fishing, hiking, and swimming.

### Tennessee Valley Authority Lakes

Wilbur Lake and Watauga Lake are located almost three miles from each other on the Watauga River in some of the most beautiful country in the Tennessee River watershed. Located 10 miles southeast of Elizabethton, both lakes provide some of the best fishing, boating, swimming, picnicking and camping sites available in Tennessee.



The Watauga River continues to be a very popular regional destination for those that enjoy fishing and white water canoeing, kayaking and rafting.



## A Look At Athletics, Programing and Special Events



Figure 4 :

LEAGUE	PARTICIPANTS
Elizabethton/CC Youth Baseball and Softball– Spring	800
Elizabethton/CC Youth Baseball and Softball– Fall	350
Adult Coed Spring Volleyball	65
Adult Coed Fall Volleyball	65
Adult Coed Winter Volleyball	65
Adult Spring Flag Football	100
Adult Fall Flag Football	100
Adult Men’s Basketball	100
Adult Women’s Basketball	80
Kickball	60

Approximately 1,785 individuals participate in the athletic leagues administered by this Department or participate in local league play that will use our athletic facilities that are maintained by our Maintenance Division. In addition to athletic league play, the Parks and Recreation Department provides a number of other health and recreational opportunities for our citizens. These programs include a Weight Watchers class, Studio Dance program, Pillboxing fitness program, Fitness Boot Camps, basketball practices, homeschool 4-H and a morning walking program at the Recreation Center.

In addition to athletic leagues and programming classes, the Department has dramatically expanded what we offer in the form of special events for this community. This includes numerous holiday associated events, outdoor concerts, special events along the Tweetsie Trail, outdoor movie nights and several party in the park events held throughout the year.

As we look to the future, we do see several opportunities for additional success. Improvements to the Covered Bridge Park, with the addition of new, unique special events, could be a tremendous opportunity for our citizens to enjoy and for new economic benefits for our downtown. A new focus on athletics is also recommended as we have an opportunity to create new leagues and also provide facilities needed for weekend travel ball tournament play. Last, but certainly not least, a new emphasis on outdoor recreation facilities, such as the Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail and the possible building of a white water park, could once again greatly impact the recreational services we provide and our local economy.

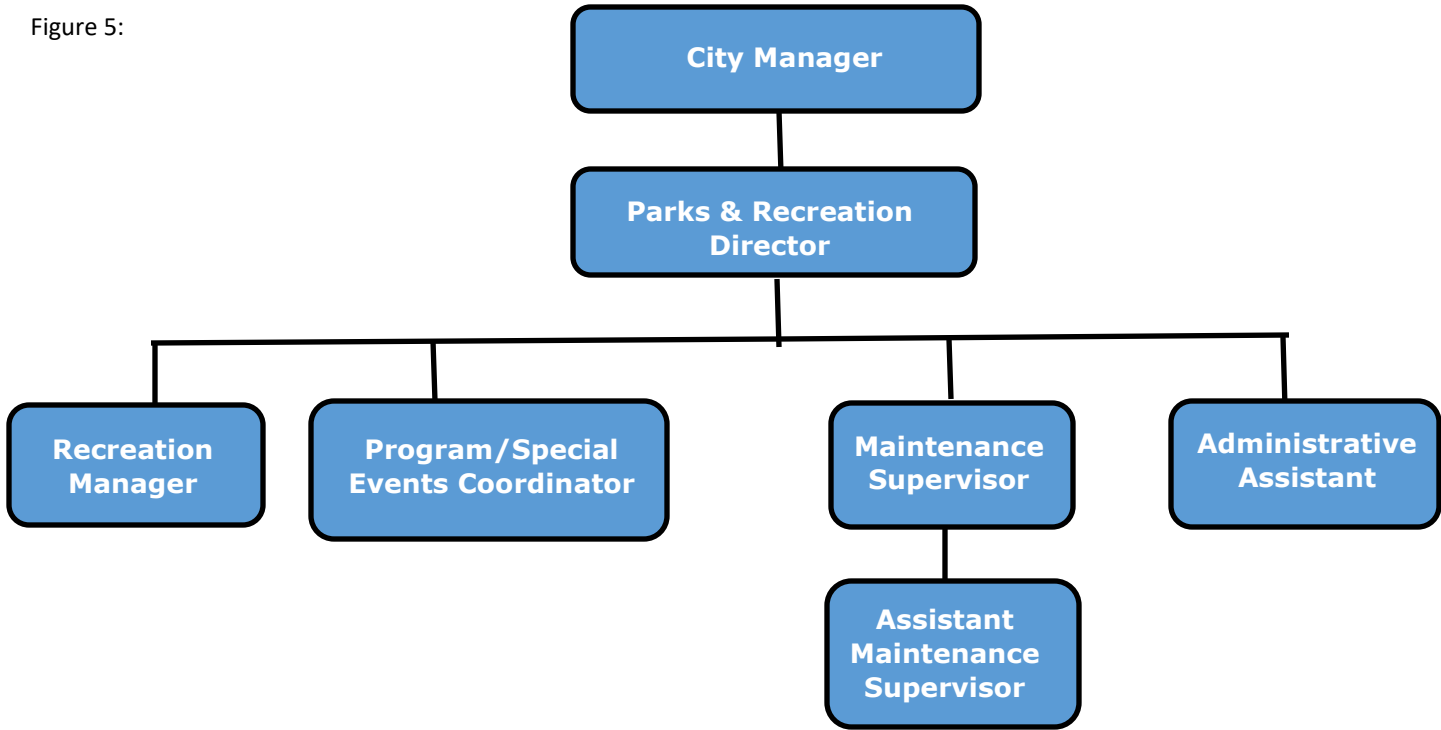




## Staffing Review

The Park and Recreation Department employs ten full-time regular employees throughout the year and 3 part-time employees. Of the ten full-time employees, five are administrative positions. The department's 18 seasonal employees fill positions in both the public pool (as life guards and supervisors) and maintenance from mid May to September.

Figure 5:



This organization chart is the current chain-of-responsibility for the Park and Recreation Department. As we continue to grow and meet the demands for our recreational services, we must consider the additional need for both maintenance and administrative needs.

This may include conducting research into the reclassification from part time maintenance employees to full time employee status. Research could also identify specific job duties for future full time maintenance positions that are associated with their daily tasks. For example, an employee that has electrical, construction / carpentry, athletic turf or heavy equipment certifications may be sought after. If that is the case, it could be very beneficial for the Parks and Recreation Department and for the employee who would be fairly compensated.

With regards to future administrative needs, the hiring of an Athletic Director will be researched and may be recommended. With an increase interest in hosting and operating youth baseball and softball weekend tournaments and as we expect a growing demand in coming years to offer new athletic league play, the hiring of a fulltime Athletic Director may be necessary.

## Budget Review

The Park and Recreation Department is currently funded annually out of the general fund of the city's budget. The city's fiscal year begins in July and ends in June of each year, splicing the most popular time for the Park and Recreation Department. Because of this, the department relies heavily on tax revenue generated by the city.

### Parks & Recreation 2020 Fiscal Year Expenses

Figure 6:

Item	Budgeted	Actual
Administration	201,924.00	161,657.80
Swimming Pool	81,401.00	79,843.11
Athletic Fields/Parks	714,337.00	513,546.93
Recreation Center	146,284.00	118,001.66
Sports Leagues	21,024.00	20,898.13
Boys & Girls Club	48,805.00	41,816.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,213,775.00</b>	<b>935,764.02</b>

Figure 7:

### Parks & Recreation 2020 Fiscal Year Revenue

Item	Budgeted	Actual
Franklin Pool	22,000	13,220
Sports Leagues	9,500	6,740
Rentals	12,400	8,465
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,900</b>	<b>28,425</b>



Rotary Pavilion is just one of five park pavilions that can be rented by the public.



## Maintenance Equipment Inventory and Review

The Elizabethton Park and Recreation uses 52 different pieces of equipment to maintain and update the Park System. 60% of the items are in excellent, good, or fair condition. However, the remaining 40% are in the Poor or Needs Replaced category. The Following figure lists the items in the Poor or Needs Replaced category.

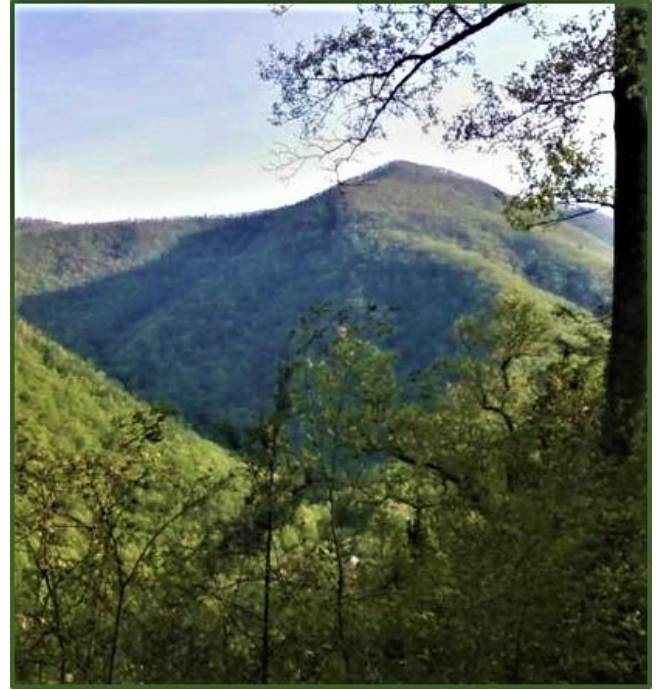
Figure 8:

Item	Condition
Toro 6400D Reel Mower	Needs Replaced
Sthil MS180C Chainsaw	Needs Replaced
Skil 10" Table Saw	Needs Replaced
Poulan Pro Hedge Trimmer	Needs Replaced
Husqvarna Backpack Leaf Blower	Needs Replaced
Husqvarna Backpack Leaf Blower	Needs Replaced
1997 BobCat 751-Skid Loader	Poor
1980 John Deere Tractor PR 704	Needs Replaced
John Deere 1200a Field Rake	Poor
Toro 2600 Reel Mower	Needs Replaced
Shurflo Sprayer	Needs Replaced
Shurflo Sprayer	Needs Replaced
Shurflo Sprayer	Poor
Craftsman 3.5 HP Edger	Needs Replaced
Milwaukee Band Saw	Needs Replaced
Milwaukee Sawzall	Needs Replaced
2009 Trac-Vac Vacuum	Needs Replaced
Echo CS-3450 Chainsaw	Needs Replaced
Echo CS-3450 Chainsaw	Needs Replaced
Reddy Heater Pro 110	Needs Replaced

## Environmental Review

Elizabethton's location places it at the center of natural beauty. The Park System attempts preserve this natural beauty and bring it to the citizens to enjoy. Elizabethton has two rivers that flow through the city, both having multiple parks located along their banks. Covered Bridge Park, Edward Island Park, Mill Race Park, and the Linear Path are located along the Doe River. The Doe River is a clean river that teams with wildlife during the spring, summer, and fall. Some of the species that can often be seen on the Doe River include Canadian Geese, a variety of ducks, trout, and other aquatic river wildlife. The Watauga River flows along the edge of Riverside Park, Sycamore Shoals Park and the Linear Path. This river is also in pristine condition and has frequent visits from Canadian Geese, trout, and a variety of ducks.

Carter County's many ecosystems provide for a large diversity of plant and animal life. Many of these plants and animals are native to this specific area of the country and the world. Most are classified as rare and endangered. Some of these native plants and animals are also found in the city limits of Elizabethton and include vascular plants, invertebrate animals and vertebrate animals.



The Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail is a wonderful example of a beautiful recreational facility that is also protected for it's environmental benefits.

Figure 9:

### Vascular Plants

Fraser Fir	Climbing Fumitory	Round-leaf Watercress
Hitchcock's Sedge	Spotted Coralroot	Pale Corydalis
Fraser's Sedge	Pink Lady's-slipper	Water-purslane
Roundleaf Sundew	Appalachian Gentian	Dwarf Rattlesnake
Rough Hawkweed	Heartleaf Meehanian	American Ginseng
Silverling	Nuttall's Pondweed	Beadle's Mountain Mint
Canada Burnet	Rock Skullcap	Carolina Pink
Tufted Club-rush	Carolina Hemlock	Alleghany Cliff-fern

### Invertebrate Animals

Cave Spider	Carter Threetooth	Cupped Vertigo
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### Vertebrate Animals

Common Raven	Eastern Small-footed Myotis	Allegheny Woodrat
Tangerine Darter	Longhead Darter	Weller's Salamander
Long-tailed Shrew	Barn Owl	

The Elizabethton Park and Recreation Department makes an effort to provide homes for and preserve these various endangered wildlife in the parks so that they can be enjoyed by future generations.





## Action Plan and Recommendations

### 1 to 3 Years

#### Programming

Objective: **Create and Strengthen an organized "Friends of the Parks:" Program**

- Actions:
- Research other Parks and Recreation Agencies inquiring about similar volunteering groups within their communities
  - Establish a listing of goals the Parks and Recreation Department would like to accomplish in which volunteers can be used.
  - Elizabethton Parks and Recreation Staff will create a listing of rules and regulations for all volunteers and will seek approval of this program's expenses by way of acquiring local sponsorships
  - Staff will market the program in the community

Objective: **Develop a variety of half-day youth camps for various sports**

- Actions:
- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see what current sports half-day camps they are offering
  - Establish a listing of goals the Parks and Recreation Department would like to accomplish by offering this program
  - Target various youth age groups during planning stages
  - Offer camps to both male and female participants
  - Seek public funding for these camps and market this program in the community school system

Objective: **Work more closely with UT Extension to host programs to youth and adults such as cooking, canning, gardening and economics**

- Actions:
- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see what current programs they offer in home economic fields
  - Establish a listing of goals Parks and Recreation would like to accomplish by offering this program
  - Create a schedule for the year for each program
  - Market to the community and local school systems

Objective: **Develop an annual fun walk on the Tweetsie to "kick off" trail season**

- Actions:
- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
  - Bring awareness and celebration local walking and biking trails
  - Secure local sponsorships to host program
  - Registration would be offered to all demographics
  - Award winners of various categories

Objective: **Develop a "Ghost Ride" on the Tweetsie Trail in conjunction with Halloween**

- Actions:
- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar events
  - Secure local sponsorships to host program
  - Registration would be offered to all demographics
  - Award winners of various categories and ages

Objective: **Create a Flashlight Candy Cane Quest at Covered Bridge Park following the Tree Lighting Ceremony**

- Actions:
- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs



-Use program to build a successful, but short current event, into a full evening-long celebration geared toward individuals and families to kick off the Christmas season

Objective: **Create a music/movie in the park bi-weekly or monthly at Walter Curtis Park for senior citizens**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Take a detailed census as to what seniors in our area would enjoy by way of music and movie types
- Market heavily throughout the community
- Secure sponsorships for program

Objective: **Increase Glow Events currently presented by the department**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments who may run this type of programming and compare events
- Create diverse and original events, building upon the popular Glow Dodgeball, to include more sports such as basketball and volleyball
- Create and host tournaments

Objective: **Continue to develop and strengthen at-risk Mentorship Program, including running mobile skate park and building game room and mobile gaming RV**

Actions:

- Research other mentorship programs and what they offer
- Market heavily at schools, housing authorities and within the community to build mentor/mentee matches
- Secure private and grant funding to build components to help draw the community's interest to join the program/refer mentees
- Use an existing room at the Recreation Center for the game room

Objective: **Reinvent Covered Bridge Days Celebration**

Actions:

- Take an existing program and reinvent it to focus less on tourism, and better serve citizens of Elizabethton and Carter County
- Secure sponsorships from local businesses
- Utilize much more local entertainment and make attractions free or low-cost
- Expand programming from one weekend, to a week long celebration

Objective: **Badminton and Pickle Ball**

Actions:

- Establish a badminton and pickle ball league for the citizens of Elizabethton.
- Research and develop site.
- Purchase the equipment needed.
- Host games, practices and tournaments

Objective: **Athletic Tournament Play**

Actions:

- Increase the availability to host travel ball tournament play for softball, baseball and basketball sports.
- Maintain our facilities to a high standard of play and increase facility resources by adding new batting cage and practice facilities.
- Administer and market the athletic facilities within our park system



## **Facilities**

Objective: **Riverfront Linear Trail**

- Actions:
- Work to complete the Riverfront Linear Trail
  - Obtain the additional funding needed to complete this project.
  - Install proper signage, picnic tables, and trash receptacles.
  - Develop a landscape masterplan for the trail system and create an Advisory Committee to oversee beautification projects.

Objective: **Covered Bridge and Edwards Island Park Improvements - Phase I**

- Actions:
- Select an architectural firm to obtain engineered drawings of this project.
  - Seek to obtain grant and private funding for park improvements.
  - Complete Phase I which consist of the construction of a new pavilion, restroom facilities, parking lot, lighting features, landscaping and new entrance to the Covered Bridge.

Objective: **Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail**

- Actions:
- Work closely with Sorba of the Tri-Cities, the Carter County Parks and Recreation Board and Doe River Gorge Ministries on trail expansion, the building of a pump track, the landscaping of the trail head and improvements to facility parking.
  - Seek to obtain an annual maintenance schedule for this facility which would include the assistance from local volunteer.
  - Seek private, grant and governmental funding needed for facility improvements.
  - Market the facility as a regional destination.

Objective: **Surf Betsy White Water Park**

- Actions:
- Conduct research into the building of a white water park along the Watauga and Doe Rivers.
  - Identify an engineering firm that will assist with the research of this project which would include identifying site locations, construction and operations cost.
  - Identify sources of funding for the project and if approved proceed with Phase I construction a new White Water Park.

Objective: **Elizabethton Recreation Center**

- Actions:
- Study the long term use of the Recreation Center and the facility improvements that are needed in order to continue the recreational services at this location.
  - Look into an alternative facility that could provide the valuable resources needed for the day to day recreation operations of this Department including the Franklin Fitness Center.

Objective: **Gap Creek Park**

- Actions:
- Continue a conversation with the Carter County Parks and Recreation Board in regards to a possible future partnership to construct, fund and operate this new park facility located in west Elizabethton.



**Objective: City Park Adult Athletic Field Netting System**

- Actions:
- Work closely with the Engineering Department and an experienced contractor to design a new netting system for the field.
  - Obtain funding that is needed for the project and proceed with installation.

**Objective: Skate Park**

- Actions:
- Identify land for a new skate park facility.
  - Seek funding needed to build a new skate park and promote this project as a community based effort.
  - Construct a new skate park and implement new programs and events associated with skate boarding.

**Objective: Tweetsie Trail Park**

- Actions:
- Develop a site plan for this new park located along the Tweetsie Trail.
  - Proceed with the installation of picnic tables, a bike repair station and water fountains at this park location.

**Maintenance**

**Objective: Maintenance Facility**

- Actions:
- Construct a new Maintenance Facility for this Department.

**Objective: Riverside Park - Outdoor Basketball Court and Parking**

- Actions:
- Renovate and construct a new parking area for Riverside Park.
  - Construct a new outdoor basketball court and landscape park area.

**Objective: Joe O'Brien Field - Infield Improvements**

- Actions:
- Identify an athletic turf company that could assist with infield renovations.
  - Proceed with the laser grading and installation of new grass turf for the infield.

**Objective: Franklin Pool - Resurfacing Project**

- Actions:
- Repair pool deck area and resurface interior pool.

**Objective: Park Pavilions**

- Actions:
- Install new metal roofing to pavilions located at Douglas, City and Kiwanis Parks.

**Objective: Elizabethton Recreation Center - Gymnasium Ceiling**

- Actions:
- Work closely with an engineering firm to identify the best product for insulation replacement.
  - Install new gymnasium ceiling insulation.





## 4 to 7 Years

### Programming

Objective: **Secure 501C3 rights for Friends of the Parks Programming to help with fundraising and funding of various needs**

Actions:

- Submit applications to the state for 501c3 rights
- Appoint a governing board to oversee finances and spending
- Host various fundraising opportunities to build financial accounts

Objective: **Develop a week-long full-day Summer Camp for children that focuses on a variety of topics**

Actions

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Secure volunteers to help lead classes on a variety of topics and skills
- Open programs based on age groups for grades K-5 and 6-8
- Market to families currently participating in half-day camps

Objective: **Create a "Senior Prom" for ages 55+**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Work alongside the Elizabethton Dance Club to help host event
- Secure sponsorships to help fund program
- Market to Senior Citizen's Center and throughout the community
- Award superlatives of the evening

Objective: **Create a Christmas Light Walk along the Linear Trail**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Research costs of materials and utilities
- Map a walking path from Covered Bridge Park to Edward's Island to determine prime location for displays
- Secure private and public funding by way of donations and sponsorships to pay for added materials
- Market throughout community and surrounding areas

Objective: **Develop a Friday night concert once per month to focus on 20-40 year old age group**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Piggyback on a current event occurring the same evening in Downtown Elizabethton for a natural crowd
- Secure sponsorships to fund program
- Secure local entertainment to book
- Market throughout community and surrounding areas

Objective: **Create a biking initiative focusing around the Tweetsie Trail**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Create a mobile app, or utilize an existing app to log miles/trips used on the Tweetsie Trail
- Work with local bike shops and other stores to help incentivize the program
- Market throughout community and surrounding areas



Objective: **Create a Summer Trail/Nature Program called Tails to Scales along City Park, Edward's Island and the Linear Trail**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Meet with local experts to help identify specific areas/wildlife to focus
- Secure volunteer to run program
- Market to community and surrounding areas

Objective: **Create a themed "Zombie Run" 5K for the Tweetsie Trail**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Work with groups familiar with running a 5K, as well as companies to time races
- Encourage dressing up for the Halloween season
- Secure funding to help run the program
- Award winners in various categories

### **Facilities**

Objective: **Covered Bridge and Edwards Island Park Improvements - Phase II**

Actions:

- Complete the Covered Bridge and Edwards Island Park improvements identified in Phase II.

Objective: **Surf Betsy White Water Park**

Actions:

- Proceed with Phase II construction of a White Water Park.
- Aggressively market this new facility as a regional attraction and develop a plan to attract additional white water businesses that would provided economic benefits to our city.

Objective: **Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail**

Actions:

- Proceed with the additional expansion of the trail system and other facility improvements.
- Continue to seek funding needed for these important projects.

Objective: **Elizabethton Recreation Center**

Actions:

- If a new Recreation Center has not been identified for programming needs the Center will receive renovations and a facility expansion to accommodate the growth we foresee in Department future programming and activities.

Objective: **Douglas Park Pavilion**

Actions:

- Construct a new pavilion and restroom facility at Douglas park
- Landscape sections identified along the walking trail.



Objective: **Dog Park**

- Actions:
- Conduct research into the building and operations of a Dog Park
  - Identify land and available funding for such a project.
  - Partner with local volunteers and agencies that are interested in such a project.
  - Construct a new Dog Park for Elizabethton.

Objective: **Splash Pad**

- Actions:
- Identify property needed to construct a new Splash Pad for Elizabethton.
  - Work closely with an architectural firm to create a site plan and design for this project.
  - Construct a new Splash Pad for our citizens.

**Maintenance**

Objective: **Elizabethton Recreation Center - Facility Improvements**

- Actions:
- Replace all facility windows.
  - Install new heating and air units.
  - Resurface the facility roof.
  - Seek funding for these improvements.

Objective: **Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail**

- Actions:
- Conduct a maintenance needs assessment of the bike and hiking trails.
  - Provide the resources needed to make the maintenance improvements to this facility.

Objective: **Facility Drinking Fountains**

- Actions:
- Conduct a survey of all park facilities and recommend new drinking fountains as needed.
  - Request funding for the project and replace with new fountains.

Objective: **Athletic Fields - Infield Renovations**

- Actions:
- Conduct a needs assessment of all baseball and softball athletic fields.
  - Laser grade all facilities and install new athletic field material as needed.

Objective: **Tweetsie Trail - Beautification Projects**

- Actions:
- Work with local volunteer groups to continue beautification projects along the Tweetsie Trail.
  - Establish a new program that would encourage volunteers to adopt sections of the trail to annually maintain.

Objective: **City Park - Playground Equipment**

- Actions:
- Conduct research into the purchasing of new playground equipment for the City Park.
  - Seek private funding for this project.
  - Budget funding needed to replace equipment, bid and then install.



## 8 to 10 Years

### Programming

Objective: **Create an afterschool program to run August-May focusing on helping with enrichment, STEM and arts**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Hire temporary staff to help run programming
- Secure sponsorships to help fund program and activities
- Market to local school groups and throughout the community

Objective: **Commit to contract a bike rental group (such as Citi-Bike) to allow for transportation and recreation within the City limits of Elizabethton**

Actions:

- Research other Parks and Recreation Departments to see if they are running similar programs
- Research best location for housing rental bikes
- Allow bids from several businesses who supply rental bikes
- Market the benefits of bike riding, as well as establish bike tour stops throughout the community
- Secure sponsorships to help fund program

### Facilities

Objective: **Franklin Pool Expansion**

Actions:

- Conduct research into the expansion of the Franklin Pool which would include a new water slide for the facility.
- Construct and build a new waterslide for this facility along with new restroom and picnic facilities.

Objective: **Frisbee Golf**

Actions:

- Identify property needed to construct a Frisbee Golf Course.
- Work to develop a master plan for this Frisbee Golf Course.
- Obtained funding and construct a new Frisbee Golf Course

Objective: **New Playground Fitness Equipment**

Actions:

- Install new playground fitness equipment at Walter Curtis Park.
- Landscape as needed areas within the park.

Objective: **Community Park**

Actions:

- Construct a Community Park preferably in the west end of Elizabethton for future recreational needs.
- Seek grant and private funding for this new park facility.
- The park would consist of several athletic fields, playground equipment, walking trail, picnic pavilions, concessions and restroom facilities, park lighting and other equipment.

### Maintenance

Objective: **Athletic Courts - Lighting System**

Actions:

- Conduct a needs assessment of all athletic court lighting systems.





-Install new lights for tennis, skate park and outdoor basketball court facilities as needed for our park facilities.

Objective: **Douglas Park - Playground Equipment**

Actions: -Research new playground equipment for Douglas Park.  
-Request funding to replace equipment and move forward to purchase and install new equipment.

Objective: **Tweetsie Trail - State Line Road Trail Head**

Actions: -Develop a master plan to construct and update a new Tweetsie Trail Entrance at State Line Road.  
-This plan would include new signage, restroom facility, bike repair station and water fountain.  
-Private and governmental funding would be sought for this project and construction would then begin.

## Recommendations

The recommendation from the Elizabethton Parks and Recreation Staff and our Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is to consider, plan and implement the goals and objectives for future facility improvements, programming and maintenance needs found within this Master Plan. We come at this conclusion after considerable discussion, input from local citizens, and research that has been conducted over a significant period of time. This Master Plan is a guide for current and future recreational needs as it does through the promotion of outdoor recreational opportunities and create an identity for Elizabethton that focuses on the wonderful natural resources that we find in our beautiful city. That being the case, we again recommend that improvements to the Covered Bridge and Edwards Island Parks should be a top priority and that research and consideration of building a white water park known as Surf Betsy should aggressively continue with the hopes of making this one of a kind recreation facility a reality one day. This unique recreational opportunity, along with the expansion and promotion of the Hampton Watershed Bike and Hiking Trail, is something we strongly recommend and advise would be a significant impact to those that enjoy the outdoors. We recommend that we continue to work closely with our local partners, including SORBA of the Tri Cities, Keep Carter County Beautiful, the APES and the Carter County Parks and Recreation Board, as all could play a vital role in the success of future recreational opportunities. For example, we recommend that discussion should continue with the Carter County Parks and Recreation Board as it pertains to the development of a new park in the west end of town as the development of such a facility was a priority in our previous Master Plan. We recommend that the support for recreational programming, special events and athletic leagues and tournaments continue as this will improve the quality and way of life for our citizens.

This Master Recreation Plan should be considered just as that. A comprehensive and far reaching plan of action that is dedicated to making the services the Elizabethton Parks and Recreation Department provides a long standing success.

## Approval and Adoption - Monitoring of Plan

The City Council will review and may make changes to the plan that they feel are significant or will prolong the goals and visions that they have set for the City of Elizabethton. Upon the adoption of this plan by the Elizabethton City Council, a resolution will be approved officially adopting the plan as the official Parks and Recreation Plan of the Elizabethton, Tennessee, Parks and Recreation Department. This plan will be reviewed, at a minimum, annually on the adoption date. This review is to measure progress and conclude if any changes or modifications need to be made due to unexpected circumstances. Changes or modifications will need to be approved by the Elizabethton Parks and Recreation Board.