



Town of Grover

Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Adopted September 10, 2018



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Introduction

Contained herein is the Town of Grover Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This plan involved documenting and analyzing data, taking detailed inventory of existing facilities, conducting a survey of users, and the work of a volunteer committee that is committed to providing quality parks and recreation facilities and programming to the citizens of Grover and the surrounding area.

Currently, the Town of Grover provides passive recreation opportunities for citizens of Grover and the surrounding area. Passive recreation means that these local governments provide parks and recreation areas for individual usage and organized leagues but do not have full time staffs or offer programming. The nearby towns of Shelby and Kings Mountain offer active recreation departments.

Why Plan for Parks and Recreation? Because parks are valuable and desired.

According to City Parks Alliance, there is a public health, environmental, community, and educational value to public parks. "If you want to stay heart healthy, then communing with nature at your local park is a good first step. People living near parks have greater opportunities to be physically active by running, walking or participating in other heart happy activities" (City Parks Alliance - <http://www.cityparksalliance.org/why-urban-parks-matter/public-health-value>). Even a passive, non-recreational park can achieve many public health benefits. Public parks provide opportunities for people of all ages to get in touch with nature without having to travel far from home. Parks are a valuable benefit that everyone can share.

Parks and open spaces also have an economic impact on neighborhoods, homeowners, and local governments. Active Living Research found that "walkable neighborhoods, parks and open spaces can generate economic benefits to local governments, home owners and businesses through increasing property values and related property tax revenues" (Active Living Research - <https://activelivingresearch.org/economic-benefits-open-space-recreation-facilities-and-walkable-community-design>). Additionally, the National Parks and Recreation Association determined that "...parks are one of the most direct ways to put a dent in the approximately \$147 billion direct and indirect costs of the obesity epidemic" (National Research and Park Papers: The Key Benefits).

The Town of Grover not only recognizes the public health, environmental, community, educational and economic values of public parks, but understands citizens' desire for well-planned parks, open spaces, and recreational opportunities. It is not enough to keep parks maintained and operating - which is a big operation in and of itself, but it is important for the town to take a close look at its parks' long-term needs and the needs and opinions of those who use them. This plan will help keep Grover's parks aligned with the constantly changing world around them.

This plan is designed to be implemented over a number of years and should be serviceable through the year 2028.

Purpose and Scope

The main purpose of this document is to provide the Town of Grover with an accurate, usable plan to guide its actions and decisions regarding:

- Future parks and recreation programs and facilities
- Renovation of existing parks and/or facilities
- Cooperative efforts in providing recreation needs
- Possible land acquisitions
- Provide assistance in obtaining grants

This document sets forth a plan for the recreation areas within Grover's municipal boundary but will benefit anyone who uses or will use Grover's recreation system. The recreational needs survey did not limit input to those residing within Grover's municipal boundary – just as access to the parks themselves are not limited.

The Grover Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan is organized into four sections:

- Review of physical, demographic and historical characteristics
- Inventory and analysis of existing recreation facilities
- Community survey and needs assessment
- Recommendations and implementation

Methodology

The information utilized for this plan was gathered from a number of sources including the Town of Rutherfordton Parks and Recreation Survey, The U.S. Census Bureau, North Carolina State Data Center, North Carolina Division of Community Assistance, North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Survey, and town staff.

An inventory of existing programming and facilities was carried out over the course of the planning process.

The Grover Parks and Recreation Survey, handed out at town hall to all visitors between October 2017 and March 2018, was developed and performed during the planning process.

The Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee, a cross section of interest and expertise, assisted the planner in the preparation of the Plan. The two committee's duties and responsibilities included the following:

- Assisting with the creation and review of the community survey
- Analyzing existing programming and facilities
- Identifying the issues, strengths and weaknesses of Grover Parks and Recreation
- Assisting the planner in formulating recommendations
- Reviewing the draft plan and recommendations



Section 1

Review of Demographic, Physical, and Historical Characteristics

Introduction

The analysis of physical, demographic and economic characteristics of a municipality is very important when planning for future growth and development. This is especially true when considering parks and recreation. By reviewing and analyzing past and present data, and projecting future data, we should be able to determine what impacts the Town of Grover may expect regarding parks and recreation.

Physical Characteristics

Location

The Town of Grover is located in the southeastern portion of Cleveland County at latitude North 35 degrees 10 minutes 19 seconds, and longitude West -81 degrees 26 minutes 57 seconds at the intersections of North Carolina Highway 226 and Chestnut St. Grover is bounded to the North Carolina – South Carolina state line to the south. Grover is approximately 90 miles east of Asheville, 40 miles west of Charlotte, and 40 miles northeast of Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Geography

Grover is located within a geographic zone of the State typically referred to as the Piedmont (gently rolling terrain). Elevations within Grover range from approximately 800 feet above sea level at NC 226 to over 878 feet in Downtown.

Grover is part of the Inner Piedmont Terrance. The rock formations include muscovite-biotite gneiss, muscovite schist, and amphibolite. The area has a remarkable diversity of rock formations and mineral resources, and mining has played a significant role in its history from the 1700s to the present. The land cover is predominately oak hickory with shortleaf pine forest. All .96 square miles of the Town of Grover are located within the Broad River Basin.

Climate

Summers in Grover are typically moderately warm and very humid. Winters are moderately cold. Precipitation is evenly distributed throughout the year.

According to data collected for Shelby from the Southeast Regional Climate Center, the average annual temperature is 59.3 degrees, with an average high temperature of 71.4 degrees, and an average low temperature of 47.2 degrees. The highest temperature of 107 degrees was recorded in July of 1952. The lowest temperature of -11 degrees was recorded in January of 1966. In the summer months the average high temperature is 88 degrees, and the average low temperature is 65 degrees. In the winter months the average high temperature is 53.2 degrees, and the average low temperature is 30.1 degrees.

The yearly precipitation average is 47.92 inches, and is generally spread out evenly throughout the year. The heaviest average monthly rainfall amounts occurred during the months of June (4.70 inches), and July (4.66 inches). The lowest monthly averages occurred during the months of November (3.32 inches), and April (3.58 inches). The average annual snowfall amount is 5.9 inches with the heaviest monthly averages occurring in January (2.3 inches), February (1.6 inches), and March (1.2 inches).

Existing Land Use

While much of Cleveland County would be classified as rural, Grover would be classified as developed (urban environment with normal municipal services) and urban transitional (outside municipal areas being developed for urban purposes). The older downtown commercial growth has occurred north along US Route 29. Industrial areas are located along Laurel Avenue and US Highway 29 in the northeast portion of Grover. According to the 2016 ACS data, Grover has a population density of 735 persons per square mile.

Future Land Use

It is anticipated that land uses will continue to intensify within both the municipal boundaries, and transitional areas around Grover. Extensions of water and sewer utilities will encourage growth. It is anticipated the commercial and industrial growth will continue where water and sewer utilities are available. It is also anticipated that residential growth will continue to dominate rural areas outside of the municipalities of Cleveland County. One trend that should be noted is the manufacturing activity located between Grover and Kings Mountain



along Battleground Avenue (NC 29). The Battleground Avenue corridor already contains major companies such as Uniquetex, Eaton Corporation, Kings Mountain International, Commercial Vehicle Group, 84 Lumbar, General Shale Brick and more. The Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership, for instance, has marketed Cleveland County as “Charlotte’s Backyard,” in an effort to attract young professionals and employers to the county, which is likely to increase this growth.

Floodplains

The Town of Grover has flood plains that are delineated on the National Flood Insurance Rate Maps. For most locations, these flood prone areas are within prescribed elevations of known streams or creeks. These maps were updated using LIDAR (Laser Imaging Detection and Ranging) technology. These maps should continue to be used in the future for creating greenways or open space along creeks, streams and rivers —see map 2 in the Appendix.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is typically defined as utilities (water, sewer, electricity, gas) and roads.

Electricity - Duke Energy Carolinas supplies Grover’s electric utilities. This utility also serves areas outside of the Town’s corporate limits.

Water - The Town of Grover purchases water from the City of Kings Mountain.

Natural Gas - Natural gas where available is furnished by Public Service Company of North Carolina.

Wastewater - The Town of Grover operates a 100,000 gallon per day wastewater treatment facility (installed in 1987) with an average daily flow of 56,000 gallons per day. The system’s collection area encompasses approximately 1 square mile.

Streets, Roads and Sidewalks - There are several roads and sidewalks within the corporate limits of Grover. The majority of streets are maintained by the town. Some of the streets and roads falling under state maintenance include:



Battleground Ave (NC 29) and Cleveland Ave (NC 226). Sidewalks, maintained by the town, will be discussed later in the plan.

Historic Characteristics

Grover is located in Cleveland County, North Carolina. A southern North Carolina county, Cleveland is located in the Piedmont region and was culled from the original counties of Rutherford and Lincoln in 1841. The county received its name in honor of Colonel Benjamin Cleveland who served admirably during the Revolutionary War at the Battle of King's Mountain (near Grover). (<http://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/cleveland-county-1841/>). Shortly after the election of President Grover Cleveland in 1885, Cleveland County held a referendum and vote to change its name to the more popular spelling of, "Cleveland".

The railroad-dominated town of Grover started when the Atlanta Charlotte Airline Railway placed a turntable for engines to be spun. They operated from the 1880s to the 1920s and Southern Railway (U.S.) continues to carry passengers to this day (now known as Norfolk Southern). Mail drops and pickups by train occurred several times per day in Grover often with the mail bag put on a hook while the train came through at speed. Today, Amtrak also operates on the line (under permission) and carries passengers from Atlanta to Charlotte, Raleigh, Richmond, Boston, and New York City. Grover was previously named Whitaker and was legally in South Carolina. The name change to Grover in 1885 was in honor of President Grover Cleveland and likely inspired the County's subsequent name change.

Grover was the home of Hatcher Hughes, who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1924 for his Broadway play, *Hell-Bent Fer Heaven*, a show about his own people from the foothills where Grover is located. He was a professor at the Ivy League college Columbia University. Currently, former White House Chef and manager of the presidential resort and conference center Camp David, Martin CJ Mongiello, lives in Grover and operates a bed and breakfast and presidential culinary museum on Cleveland Avenue.

Cleveland Avenue (NC Highway 226) contains "Gingerbread Row," where many colorful old homes are restored or being restored. Several buildings in Grover are registered as historic. Grover's Main Street, which runs parallel to NC 29 (Battleground Ave) on the other side of the train tracks, contains a strip of historic brick commercial buildings.



After the railroad boom of the late 19th and early 20th century, Grover (like much of the surrounding Kings Mountain area) became a hub for the textile manufacturing industry. The textile and manufacturing industry is still a major employer for Grover, which is now in the process of restoring itself to a town with a turn of the century roots.

Demographic Characteristics

Population Characteristics

According to the 2010 US Census, the Town of Grover's population was 708. Cleveland County's population was 98,078. Over the past fifty years there have been substantial changes to these populations (See Table 1).

Location	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Grover	555	597	516	698	708
Cleveland County	72,556	83,435	84,714	96,287	98,078

Cleveland County has experienced a 35.2% increase in population since 1970. The US Census Bureau is projecting 0.08% annual growth rate through the year 2035 estimating that Cleveland County's population will be 100,154. Grover's population has grown by 27.5% since 1970. However, the population only increased by 10 people from 2000 to 2010. Recent estimates see this trend continuing with a projected population of 716 in 2022. It should be noted that the County is still rising out of the 2008 Recession and recent investments in the County and surrounding Region could substantially alter these projections within the next five years. This Plan will remain optimistic and plan for positive population growth.

Since some of the recreation participants live outside of the municipal boundaries of the Town of Grover, we will look at the populations that live with a 5- or 10-minute drive. Within 5 minutes, there are 1,191 people and 429 households. Within a 10-minute drive, there are 6,321 people. They represent 2,278 households.

Grover's 2016 median age of 38.2 is a bit lower than Cleveland County's (41.5), and higher than the state average of 38.3. 183 persons (or 25.8%) within Grover are between the ages of 0 to 19. 234 persons (or 33.1%) are between the ages of 20 to 44. 187 persons (or 26.4%) within Grover are between the ages of 45 to 64. 104 persons (or 14.7%) within Grover are age 65 and older.

Regarding race, 443 (63.0%) persons are white, 198 (28.2%) are African American, and 59 (8.3%) are Hispanic, and less than 10 persons are of either Asian, American Indian descents, or of 2 or more races.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

According to the 2016 ACS data, Cleveland County's labor force participation rate has decreased 8.2 percentage points or 59.7% to 51.5% from 2010 to 2016. However, the actual number of people working has barely budged, from 46,138 workers age 16 and older in 2010 to 46,456 workers 16 and older (2016 ACS data), which suggests that much of the population increase over those years were people that were retirement-aged.

86.6% of the population in Grover has received a high school diploma, compared to 83.5% in Cleveland County, and 86.3% in North Carolina.

13.4% of the population in Grover has received a bachelor's degree, compared to 16.3% in Cleveland County, and 19.6% in North Carolina. Given these facts, it is not surprising that the median household income for Grover in 2015 was \$41,528 (or only 77.7% of North Carolina's).

According to the 2010 US Census, the government sector was the primary employer in the County with 17.3% of the workforce. The health care and social assistance sector was second with 15.2%. Manufacturing was third with 14.9%, and the retail sector was fourth with 11.1%. Today, the government sector still leads with 19.3% of the workforce. Manufacturing is second with 17.0% and then retail and health care and social services sector with 11.1 % and 9.2%, respectively (EMSI 2017).

It is projected that Cleveland County will continue to gain manufacturing jobs. In addition, there will be some job replacement due to gains in service and small business jobs. Because of changes in international trade, it is likely that the manufacturing sector will transition into advanced manufacturing with smaller gains in other industries such as data centers, service and health care.

The Town of Grover has several industries, a small downtown, and several outlying commercial areas along US 29, NC 226, and I-85. Given this and its proximity to South Carolina, there will be opportunities for warehousing, logistics and manufacturing in the future.



Section 1 Summary

Grover's economy has changed plenty since the Great Recession. As Grover and the surround area continue to transition from a manufacturing-dominated economy, a focus on quality of life will be integral to maintaining growth and retaining current residents. According to the National Recreation and Park Association, "just as water, sewer, and public safety are considered essential public services, parks are vitally important to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in a community, ensuring the health of families and youth, and contributing to the economic and environmental well-being of a community and a region." (<https://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Advocacy/Resources/Parks-Recreation-Essential-Public-Services-January-2010.pdf>)

The Town of Grover has laid the ground work for a healthy parks and recreation system. Hopefully, by taking advantage of these studies and enhancing its recreational and cultural resources, the Town of Grover will continue to make positive strides into the future. Regardless of the population estimates used to project future growth in Grover, good planning practices will help maintain the town's positive trends and guide future growth.

Section 2

Inventory and Analysis of Existing Facilities and Programming

Introduction

The Town of Grover offers numerous recreational amenities at the Grover Town Park. In this section, each of the park's amenities will be examined. Park and recreation areas are noted on Map 1 in the appendix. This section will also include other recreational areas in town, nearby recreational offerings and the Grover Town Green in downtown Grover.

Grover Town Park

The Grover Town Park is the only recreation facility owned and operated by the Town of Grover. It is approximately 13 acres and sits mostly south of Maple St. Grover Town Park is often used by residents of the surrounding area in addition to Grover town residents.

The Grover Town Park serves the Town of Grover's active and passive recreational needs. It is popular with town residents and residents of the surrounding area.

History

Minette Mill, a former textile mill that was once the largest employer in the Town of Grover, originally owned the Grover Town Park land. In the 1980s, Minette donated the land for town park. The National Guard worked closely with the Town of Grover to construct the park's original amenities including the playground and baseball field.



Through the years, the Grover Town Park became a popular asset in Grover as amenities increased. Many of the original amenities remain in the park today and need to be replaced in order to better serve park users.

Amenities

- 1 Baseball Field (named Wendell White Field)
- 1 Concession Stand and Bathroom Building
- 2 Movable Picnic Shelters
- 1 Permanent Picnic Shelter
- 1 Horseshoe Area
- 3/8th mile walking track around park, gravel
- 1 parking lot, gravel
- 1 Pedestrian Bridge over Stream
- 1 Children's Play Area
- Chain-linked fence around park



Children's Play Area

The Children's Play Area consists of a playground, a free-standing slide, and two swing-sets. The playground and free-standing slide were originally installed in the 1980s when the park was established. The Children's Play Area is located inside of the 3/8th mile walking track towards the east side of the park.

Wendell White Baseball Field

The Wendell White Baseball Field is inside of the walking track loop. It has a gravel infield and grass-covered outfield.

There is a chain-linked fence around the entire field. There are no dugouts and a few benches for viewing.



Picnic Shelters

The two movable picnic shelters are currently placed inside of the walking track. Each moveable picnic shelter has two long picnic tables and a trash receptacle. One is next to the Children's Play Area and the other is in between the Concession Stand and Horseshoe Area along the North side of the track. The picnic shelters are not moveable by park users but the town has the option of placing them in different areas of the park without much trouble.



The permanent picnic shelter is located down a hill, northwest of the walking track and outside of the walking track loop. There is no path to the permanent shelter, which was recently cleared of overgrowth. The permanent shelter is structurally sound but is in need of a new roof, rewiring, and picnic tables.



Parking Lot

There is a fence separating the parking lot and the walking track for safety reasons. The park is accessed by an opening in the fence near the concession stands. The parking lot is large and gravel, connecting to Maple St by a short driveway.

Pedestrian Bridge

North of the permanent picnic shelter is the pedestrian bridge, which currently leads to a small, wooded slope. The bridge is over a small stream that could be rehabilitated. The bridge could potentially be the beginning of a nature trail around the outer-edge of the park.

The bridge is only accessible by walking down a small, grassy hill – the same hill that leads to the permanent picnic shelter.



Unused Land

To the east of the parking lot is a large hill that is outside of the park fence. There are no park amenities on the hill, but it is a popular place for sledding with it snows.

There is also narrow, sloped land north of Maple St that is owned by the Town of Grover and currently unused. This land may provide more room for additional park amenities in the future.



Sidewalk Connections

There are no sidewalks along Maple Street leading to the front entrance of the park. The closest sidewalk between Grover Town Park and downtown Grover is along Linden St, but stops short of Maple. A sidewalk is needed to connect Linden St to Maple St and Maple St to Cleveland Ave to improve pedestrian access to the park.

Walking Track

The 3/8 mile walking track begins and ends at the park's parking lot gate. The track surrounds the Concession Stand, Wendell White Field, and Children's Play Area and is covered in a fine gravel.

Popular among park users, the walking track provides an opportunity for exercise without sacrificing child supervision. It also offers a great view of the Wendell White Field and the sunset.



Concession Stand

The brick concession stand is inside the walking track, between the parking lot gate and the Wendell White Field. Most of the building is devoted to concessions, with a small kitchen area and covered area in front of the counter. On the side of the concession stand building are bathrooms.

The concession stand bathrooms are typically open between March and October. In the colder months, they are closed for winterization. In the past, a volunteer has assisted the town with bathroom maintenance through an unwritten agreement but more recently, the task has been left with town staff.

Lighting

There are several lights on poles around the Grover Town Park. Most of the lighting is focused on the parking lot, children's plan area, and concession stand. The lights are connected to the street lighting system. There is no park-specific lighting system.

Horseshoe Area

The horseshoe area is located inside the walking track about 50' from the Concession Stand in the direction of the unused picnic shelter.

Grover Town Park Layout

Green areas indicate unused land within the park. Walking track is orange.



Grover Town Park Layout (unlabeled)



Grover Town Green

There is a grassy area next to Grover Town Hall in downtown Grover along Mulberry Street. Currently, the Town Green hosts a large evergreen tree, the “living Christmas tree.” It also serves an important function during town parades and events.



Other Recreational Areas in Grover

There are several community facilities within Grover town limits that expand Grover’s recreational offerings. Though currently not operated by or in partnership with the Town of Grover, residents are able to use these facilities during certain hours with permission of facility operators:

- *Grover Elementary School*, located along Carolina Avenue, has a children’s play area, including a swing set and a short walking track.
- *First Baptist Church*, located along Cleveland Avenue has a large front yard and Children’s Play Area.
- *Shiloh Presbyterian Church* located along Cleveland Avenue has a Children’s Play Area and large, grassy open space.
- *Bethany Baptist Church* located on Hardin Court currently has the only basketball goal post in town and grassy open space.

Nearby Recreational Offerings

The area surrounding Grover has several recreational amenities including:

- *Crowder’s Mountain State Park (NC)*
- *City of Shelby Park System*



- *City of Kings Mountain Park System*
- *YMCA of Cleveland County* (nearby locations in Boiling Springs and Kings Mountain), most amenities require a membership
- *Kings Mountain State Park (SC)*
- *Broad River Greenway*
- *John H Moss Lake*

Budget

The Town of Grover's 2018/2019 Budget Ordinance appropriates \$56,110.00 to maintenance operations and \$19,000.00 to community improvement operations from the General Fund. Additionally, the budget ordinance estimates the town will seek \$6,950.00 in recreational grant monies and will collect \$1,000 in community room/park rental fees.

Section 3

Community Survey of Recreation Needs

Introduction

In an effort to get more public input regarding parks and recreation programming and facilities in Grover, a community survey was conducted. This survey, along with the analysis of existing programming and facilities, the expertise of town staff and the members of the Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee, was to be the basis of this Plan. The survey was used to obtain demographic information, obtain what opportunities the respondent was currently using, obtain what opportunities the respondent was not utilizing but is interested in, and gather specific comments. Also, the meetings of the Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee were open meetings and could be used to gather further information.

Development

In developing the Grover Parks and Recreation Survey, the Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee based the new survey on the Town of Rutherfordton and Town of Forest City's successful Community Needs Assessment, also completed by the Isothermal Planning and Development Commission. Additionally, the survey was developed within the recreational needs survey guidelines set forth in the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) 2017-2018 Grant Application. The goal of the survey was not only to meet PARTF standards, but to find out what type of recreation activities park users and town residents are interested in. The survey also provided an opportunity for the town to find out what recreation needs the Grover Town Park is currently not meeting and what users and town residents would like the town to prioritize in future recreation decisions.

Methodology

A one-page survey was developed and printed for distribution to all households in Grover via utility billing. The header described the purpose of the survey and directions on how to turn the survey in. It also provided a link to the online, Survey Monkey version of the survey. The handouts were primarily intended to direct respondents to the Survey Monkey link - www.surveymonkey.com/r/GroverParks. It also let respondents know that it is ok to prefer the hard copy version. Overall, only 79 surveys were filled out by hand. Those surveys were



entered into Survey Monkey by staff. The handouts provided the Town with the exposure the survey needed.

In addition to the mailed handouts, the Town of Grover sent a press release to the Shelby Star, which resulted in an article about the survey (with the link included) and the park planning process. Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee members also sent the survey to their churches, schools, and other community groups, making it clear to recipients that youth and elderly park users are welcome and encouraged to provide responses. Overall, 98 responses were collected between October 2017 and March 2018. The overwhelming majority of surveys were handed on paper due to the Town of Grover's efforts to provide a copy to all town hall visitors.

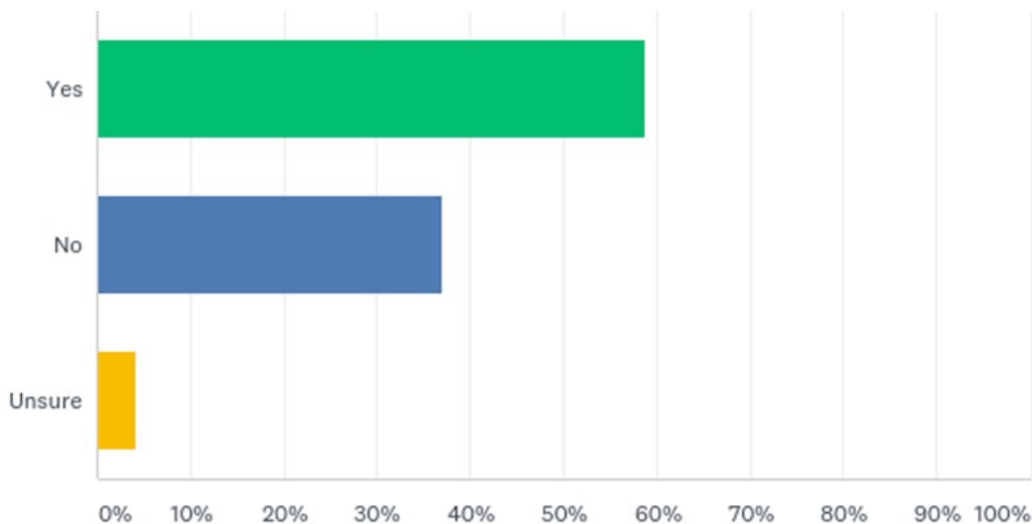
The Shelby Star Article and the survey can be found in this plan's appendix on page 55.

Survey Results

Question 1: Do you live within the Grover town limits?

Answered: 97

Skipped: 1



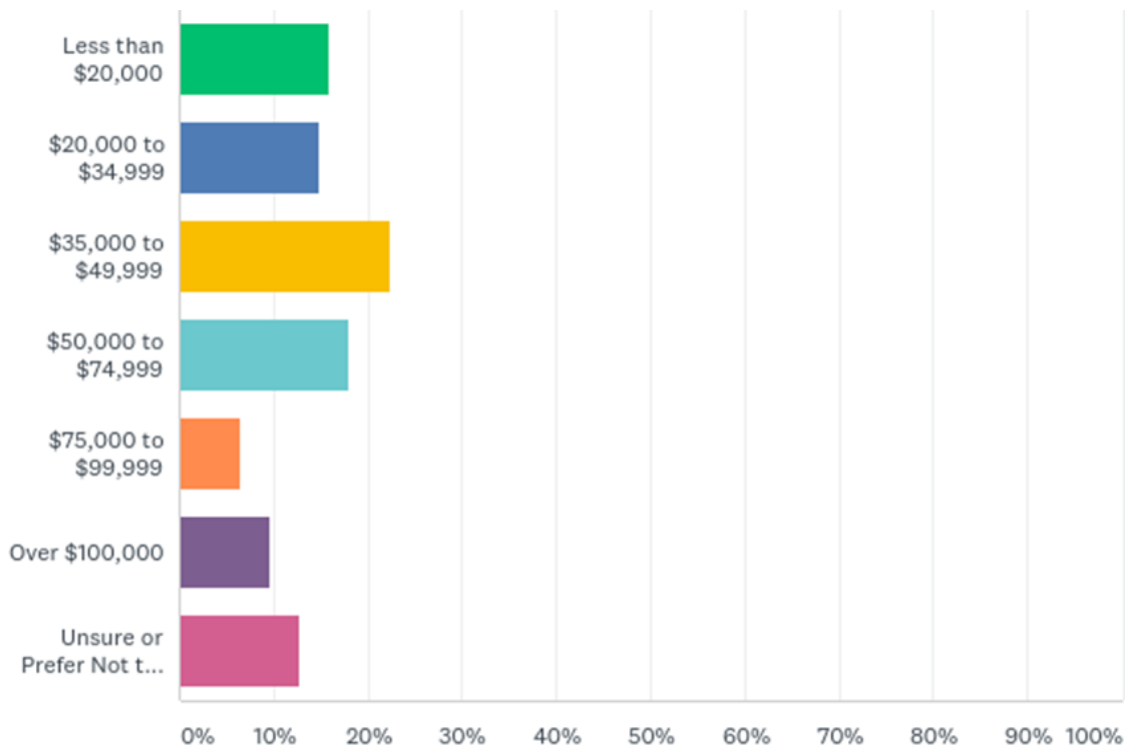
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.76%	57
No	37.11%	36
Unsure	4.12%	4
TOTAL		97



Question 2: What was your approximate household income in 2016?

Answered: 94

Skipped: 4



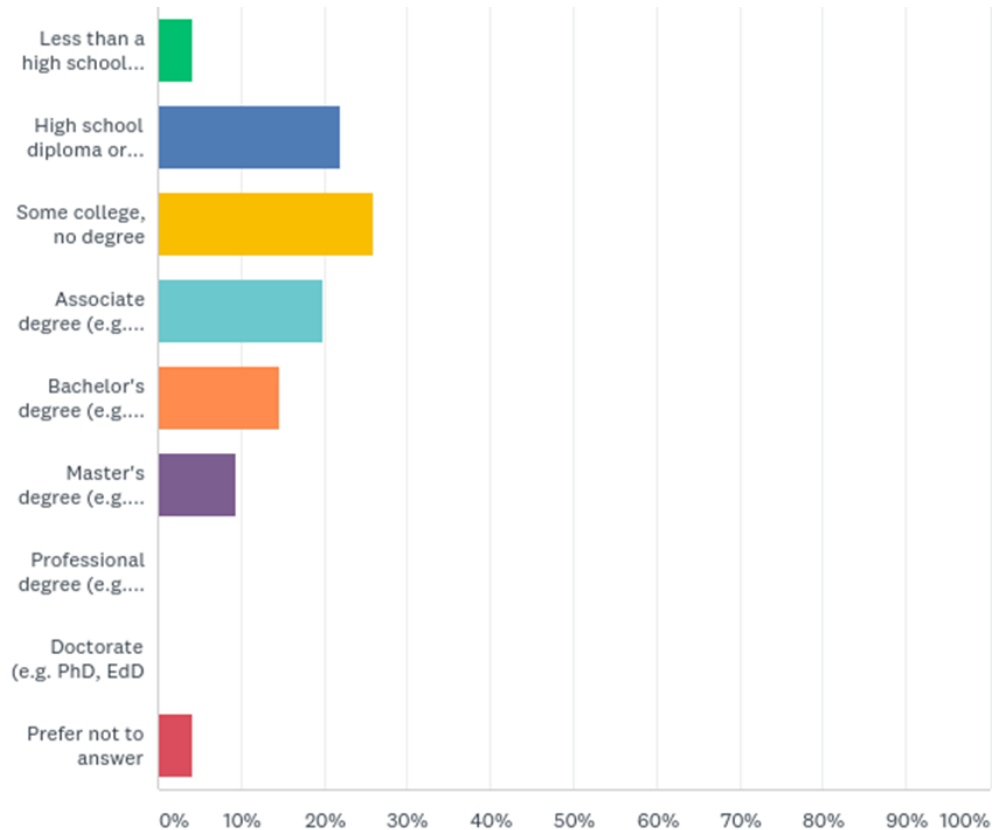
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than \$20,000	15.96%	15
\$20,000 to \$34,999	14.89%	14
\$35,000 to \$49,999	22.34%	21
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.09%	17
\$75,000 to \$99,999	6.38%	6
Over \$100,000	9.57%	9
Unsure or Prefer Not to Answer	12.77%	12
TOTAL		94



Question 3: What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (if you are currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have received).

Answered: 96

Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than a high school diploma	4.17%	4
High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)	21.88%	21
Some college, no degree	26.04%	25
Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)	19.79%	19
Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)	14.58%	14
Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)	9.38%	9
Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM)	0.00%	0
Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)	0.00%	0
Prefer not to answer	4.17%	4
TOTAL		96



Question 4: For each individual in your household, please indicate their age and gender. Example: *Individual 1* [12, Male] *Individual 2* [34, Female]

Answered : 96 Skipped: 2

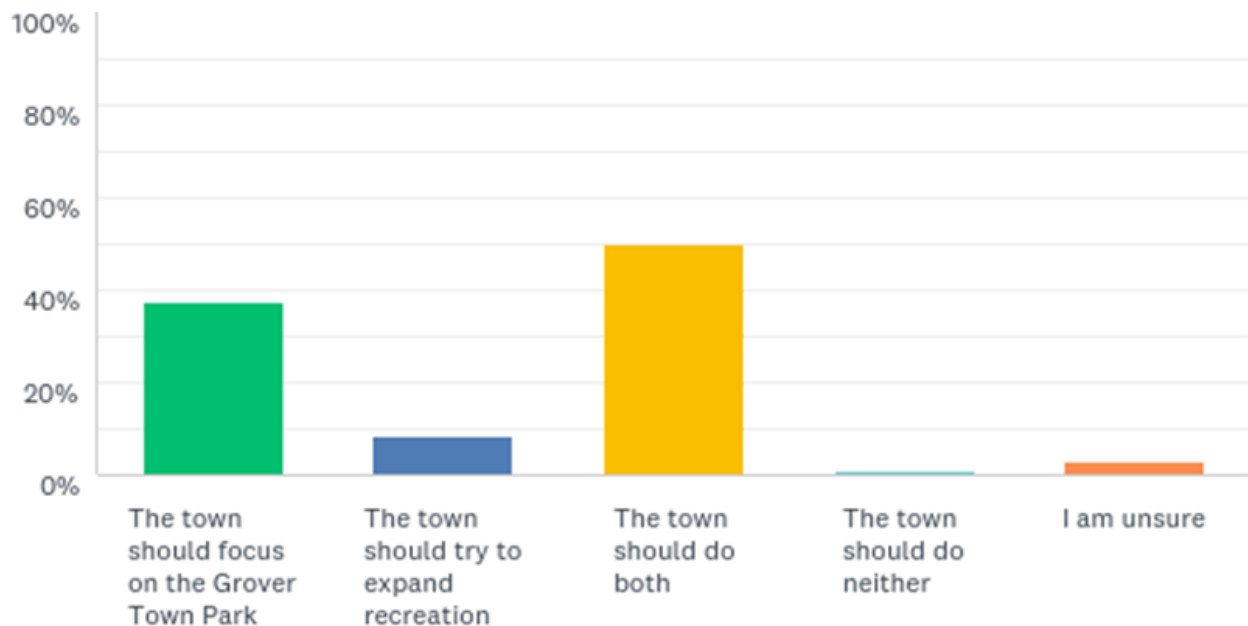
40 respondents live in a household with at least 1 child under the age of 18.

25 respondents live in a household with at least 1 adult age 65 or older.

5 respondents live in a household with both

Question 5: Should the Town of Grover focus its recreational resources on improving the Grover Town Park at 415 Maple St or expand recreational opportunities to other areas of town?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 2



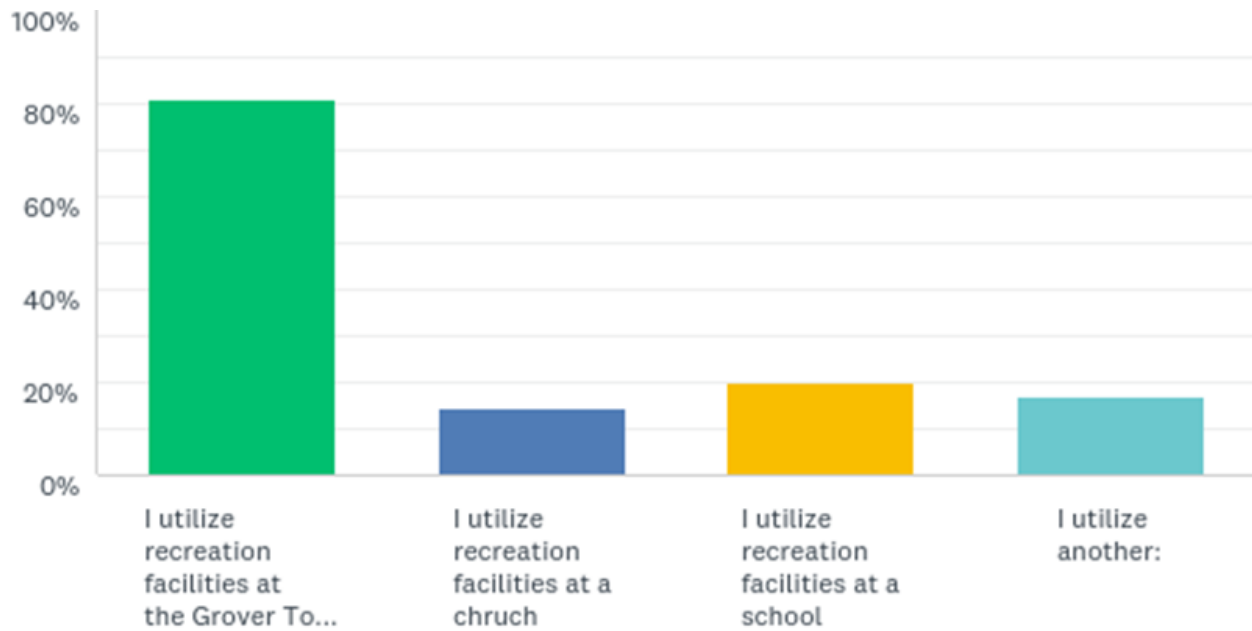
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
The town should focus on the Grover Town Park	37.50%	36
The town should try to expand recreation	8.33%	8
The town should do both	50.00%	48
The town should do neither	1.04%	1
I am unsure	3.13%	3
TOTAL		96



Question 6: Do you utilize recreational facilities in Grover?

Answered: 89

Skipped: 9



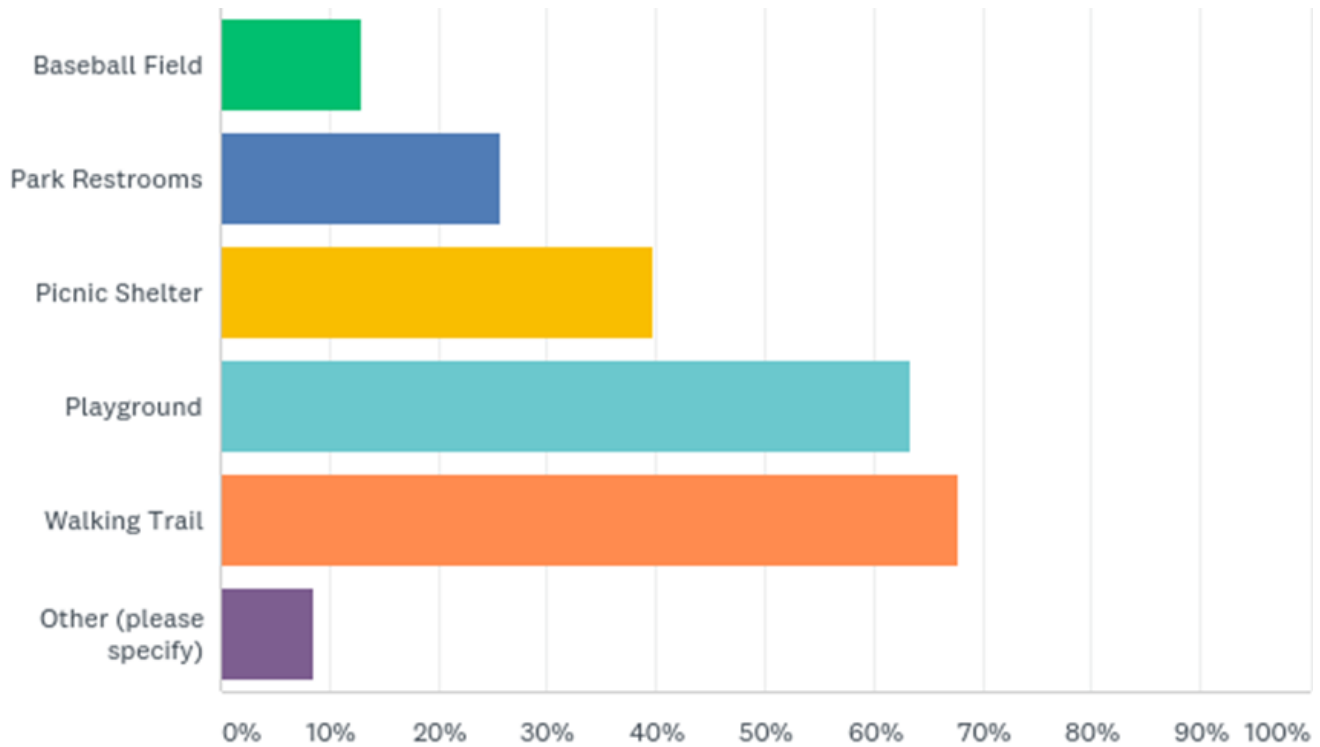
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I utilize recreation facilities at the Grover Town Park	80.90%	72
I utilize recreation facilities at a chruch	14.61%	13
I utilize recreation facilities at a school	20.22%	18
I utilize another:	16.85%	15
Total Respondents: 89		



Question 7: Which Grover Town Park amenities have you utilized during the past year? (select none or all that apply)

Answered: 93

Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Baseball Field	12.90%	12
Park Restrooms	25.81%	24
Picnic Shelter	39.78%	37
Playground	63.44%	59
Walking Trail	67.74%	63
Other (please specify)	8.60%	8
Total Respondents: 93		



Question 8: Are there enough walking or biking opportunities in Grover?

Answered: 92

Skipped: 6

62 respondents answered **No**

26 respondents answered **Yes**

Comments

There are enough walking opportunities. I am not sure about biking opportunities.

Not really much besides the park.

Walking - yes but sidewalks need to be fixed.

No biking opportunities. It would be nice to be able to see kids bike there.

No. I would like to see more walking trails.

If you are close to other sidewalks. Otherwise there is no where to walk.

No there needs to be more walking and biking opportunities in the area.

Yes. The track is uneven, and can cause foot/leg injuries.

No and a lot of sidewalks are broken and overgrown.

Yes but needs work on clearing sidewalks.

No. It needs to be an asphalted track.

No - need more paved lighted paths.

Yes but the trail can be improved (traction).

No - would like a nature trail.



Question 9: Please share your thoughts on any needs for the Grover Town Park (e.g. lighting improvements, equipment upgrades, more sport facilities)

Answered: 85

Skipped: 13

Top Answers:

Equipment/Playground Upgrades
Basketball Court
Lighting Improvements
Walking Track Improvements
Security Improvements
Amphitheater/Pavilion
Picnic Shelter Upgrades

Other Common Answers:

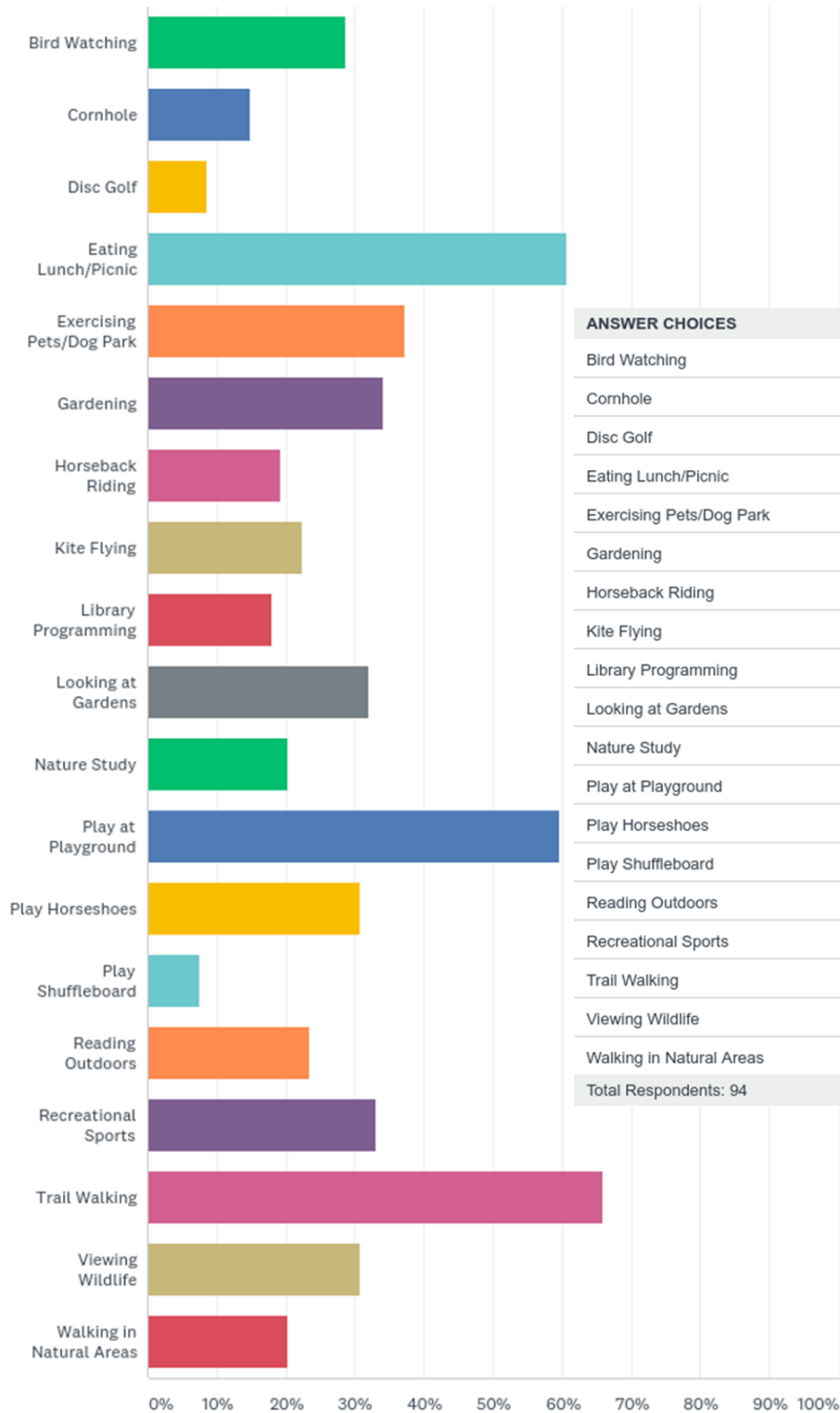
More Space for Private and Community Events
Restroom Improvements
Cleanliness
Use of the Brick Shelter
Sidewalks
Paved Parking Lot
Workout Stations along Walking Track
Equipment for Small Children
Cornhole Boards
Grills
Expand Track around Pond
Use of the Ball Field as a Multi-purpose Field



Question 10: Which leisure activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)

Answered: 94

Skipped: 4



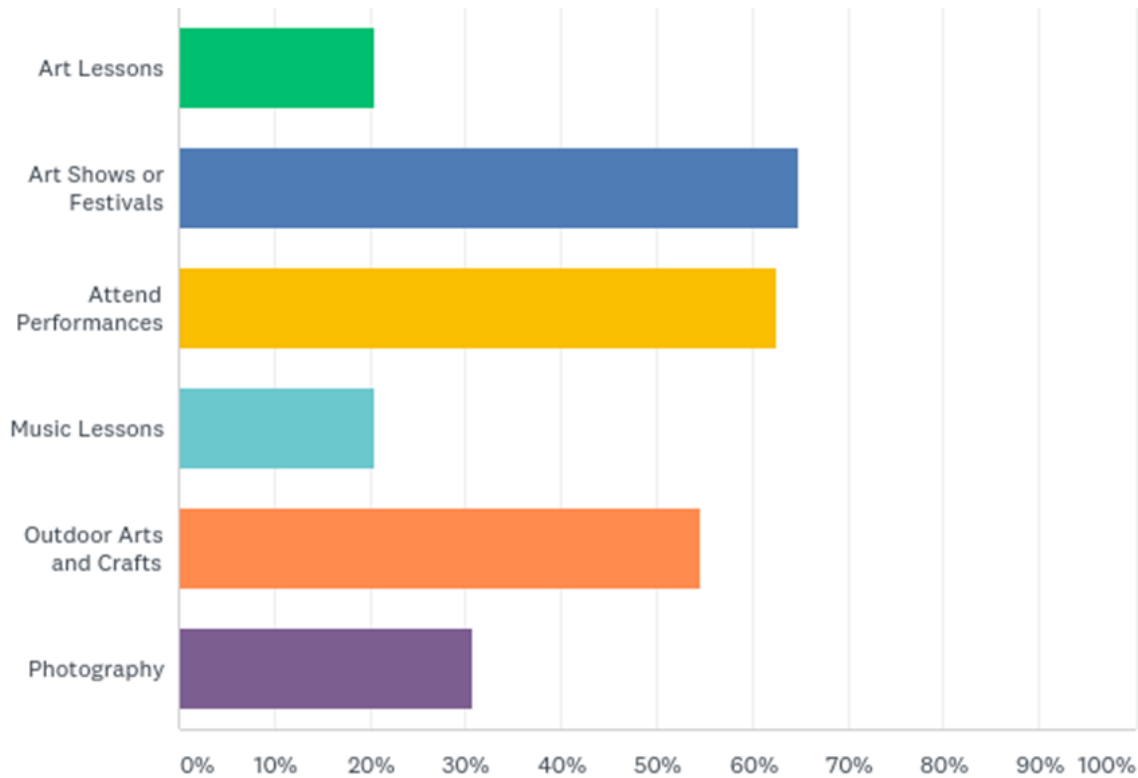
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bird Watching	28.72%	27
Cornhole	14.89%	14
Disc Golf	8.51%	8
Eating Lunch/Picnic	60.64%	57
Exercising Pets/Dog Park	37.23%	35
Gardening	34.04%	32
Horseback Riding	19.15%	18
Kite Flying	22.34%	21
Library Programming	18.09%	17
Looking at Gardens	31.91%	30
Nature Study	20.21%	19
Play at Playground	59.57%	56
Play Horseshoes	30.85%	29
Play Shuffleboard	7.45%	7
Reading Outdoors	23.40%	22
Recreational Sports	32.98%	31
Trail Walking	65.96%	62
Viewing Wildlife	30.85%	29
Walking in Natural Areas	20.21%	19
Total Respondents: 94		



Question 11: Which artistic activities are you interested in?

Answered: 88

Skipped: 10



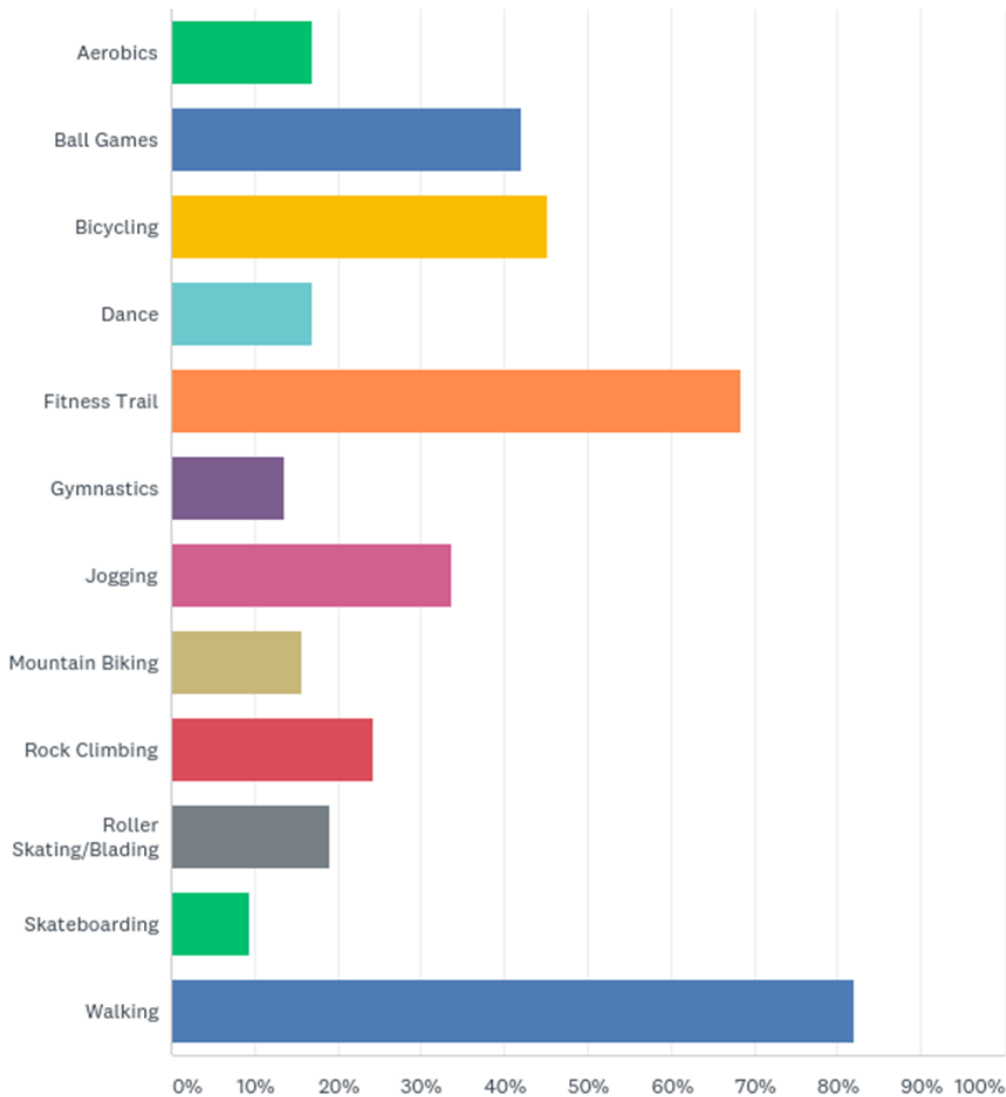
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Art Lessons	20.45%	18
Art Shows or Festivals	64.77%	57
Attend Performances	62.50%	55
Music Lessons	20.45%	18
Outdoor Arts and Crafts	54.55%	48
Photography	30.68%	27
Total Respondents: 88		



Question 12: Which fitness activities are you interested in?

Answered: 95

Skipped: 3



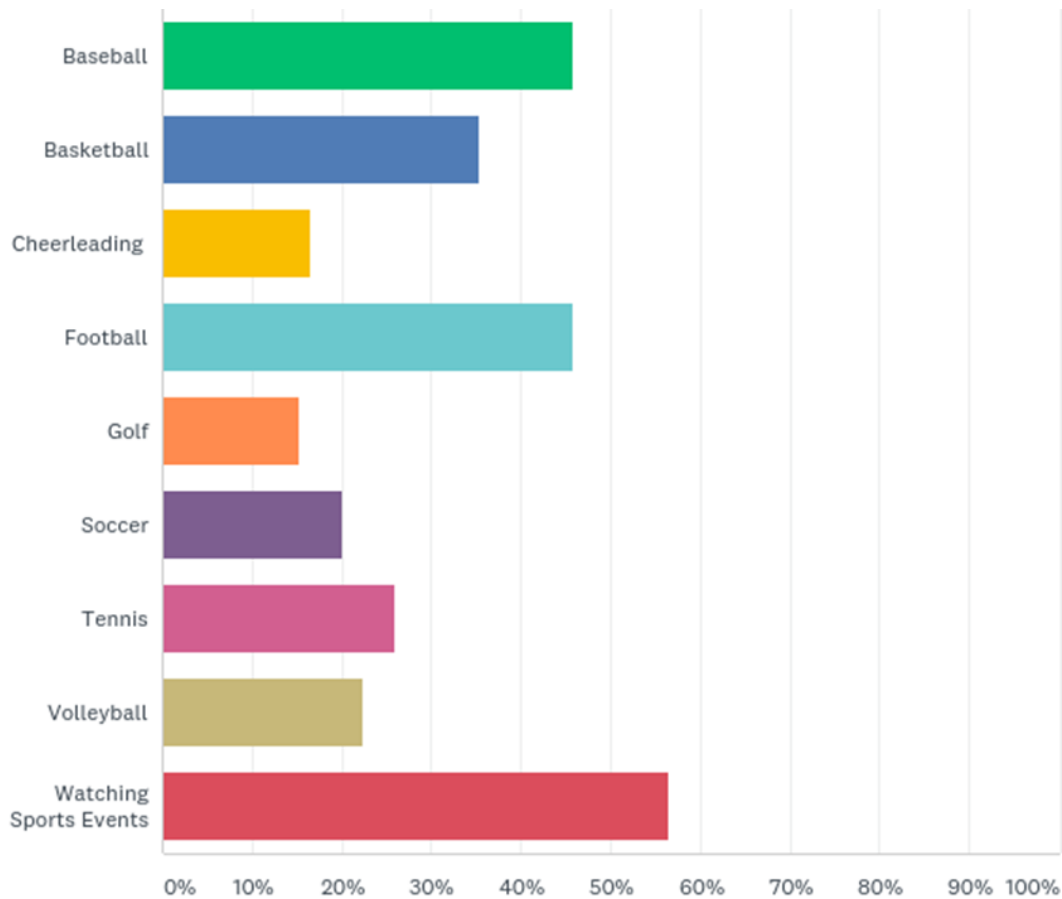
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Aerobics	16.84%	16
Ball Games	42.11%	40
Bicycling	45.26%	43
Dance	16.84%	16
Fitness Trail	68.42%	65
Gymnastics	13.68%	13
Jogging	33.68%	32
Mountain Biking	15.79%	15
Rock Climbing	24.21%	23
Roller Skating/Blading	18.95%	18
Skateboarding	9.47%	9
Walking	82.11%	78
Total Respondents: 95		



Question 13: Which sport activities are you interested in?

Answered: 85

Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Baseball	45.88%	39
Basketball	35.29%	30
Cheerleading	16.47%	14
Football	45.88%	39
Golf	15.29%	13
Soccer	20.00%	17
Tennis	25.88%	22
Volleyball	22.35%	19
Watching Sports Events	56.47%	48
Total Respondents: 85		



Question 14: If there are recreational needs the Town of Grover is currently not meeting, please describe below:

Answered: 50

Skipped: 48

Top Answers:

Youth Sports Programming
Basketball Court
Equipment Upgrades
Safety
Walking Track Improvements

Other Answers:

Space for teenagers to hang out
Space for Cook outs
Family Gathering Space
Walking Club
Fishing Pond
Seating around Baseball Field



Question 15: What should the Town of Grover's top recreational priorities be? (name as many as you want)

Answered: 71 Skipped: 27

Top Answers:

Youth Activities, Equipment, and Programs
Equipment Upgrades
Walking and Biking Opportunities
Walking Track Improvements
Basketball Court
Music Stage/Pavilion

Other Answers:

Safety Improvements
Lighting Improvements
Sports Programming
Programming to Engage Youth and Adults
Use of Pond
Shaded Pet Areas
More Benches around Track
Establish a Beautification Committee
Expand Park Areas around Town



Section 3 Summary

The Town of Grover sent a provided a hard copy of the survey in all town residents' utility bills, reminded all town hall visitors (including utility bill payees) to take the survey - providing additional copies, and sent a press release to the Shelby Star resulting in an article about the survey and the parks plan. Considering that the 98 survey responses account for roughly 14% of town residents (708 according to the 2010 Census) and that not more than 500 surveys were printed and distributed, we are very confident in this survey's response rate. We feel that we received quality responses from a representative population of park users.

The information gathered from this survey will help the Town of Grover make system-wide parks and recreation decisions over the next 10 years. Additionally, the success of this survey should instill confidence in town staff that these surveys can be done periodically to effectively update the town's knowledge of its park users' needs and/or concerns.

Section 4

Recommendations and Implementation

Introduction

The Town of Grover Parks and Recreation Plan is based upon a review of the community, an analysis of existing programs and facilities, identification of user needs, and an adherence to stated proposals and recommendations. The plan is designed to provide a framework from which the Town of Grover can enhance its parks and recreation system. This plan is intended to be implemented over a period of 10 years.

Instrumental to implementation of the plan is the identification of adequate funding, at a time when balancing municipal budgets throughout the state has become increasingly difficult. The North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identified funding as a major challenge, but something that must be met head-on to ensure the continued high quality of life, an environment that North Carolinians have come to love and expect. Though funding for parks and recreation is and will likely remain a challenge statewide, it does not appear to impact the high value citizens place on parks and recreation.

Implementing the plan will result in meeting the present and future needs for parks and recreation services, as well as preserving conservation areas in Grover. The Town of Grover will have to continue to consider parks and recreation as an important part of its budget and earmark funds to continue this important service. In this section we will transform the thoughts collected from the community needs assessment (Section 3) and our observations into recommendations with a implementation strategies.

In addition to the assessment and our observations, this section considers input gathering during the parks and recreation steering committee's public input workshop. The workshop, which was held at town hall and advertised on Facebook, gave attendees a chance to review the parks and recreation survey



results in addition to Section 1, Section 2 and the maps presented in this section and throughout the plan. While we feel that all of the recommendations are important, we realize that some are more important than others, so as we identify each recommendation we will give it some type of prioritization. The Section 4 Summary Chart is located on page 62.

Funding Sources

(High Priority)

We have found that the key issue to the implementation of this plan involves the ability to be able to fund the recommendations. We recommend that the Town of Grover utilize various means to plan for and fund these recommendations such as Capital Improvement Programs, general tax revenues, partnerships, user fees, sponsorships, and various grant programs (such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Community Development Block Grant, Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and NCDOT grants).

Capital Improvement Program - This important budget tool would allow the Town to plan for and prioritize large projects, and then fund them. Generally, capital improvement programs include all Town departments and show what services or facilities the Town will build or replace, where these services or facilities will be located, and when the construction or replacement will take place. Usually these CIP's are 5 to 10 year plans.

User Fees and Sponsorships - User fees are paid by the participant and help to offset whatever program the participant is utilizing. Most municipalities charge a higher fee for participants from outside the municipal boundaries. Sponsorships are generally paid by an individual, business or industry and generally include the team name, uniforms and equipment to be used in team sports programs.

General Tax Revenues - The operation and maintenance of most parks and recreation departments are funded primarily by general tax revenues.

Recreation is a public service, and funding should be scheduled along with other Town services. It is also important that as other sources of recreation revenue increase, the town should not decrease the amount of funds available from general tax revenues for recreational purposes. Ultimately, it is the decision of the governing body to distribute general tax revenues, but as budgets have been increasingly difficult to balance, recreation budgets seem to be the first cut.

Grant Programs - There are numerous grant programs that can be utilized for parks and recreation programs. Federal programs include the Land and Water Conservation Fund (which can be used for land acquisition and park development), the Appalachian Regional Commission (goal 4 supports natural and cultural assets), and Community Development Block Grants (which along with housing and infrastructure may be used for recreation purposes). State programs include the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund which provides a dollar for dollar match up to \$500,000 for the development and rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund which provides funding for acquisition of riparian property and greenways, and NCDOT which can provide enhancement funding for bikeways, sidewalks and other types of trails. The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, based in Winston-Salem and the Duke Endowment, based in Charlotte both fund projects that strengthen communities in North Carolina. There are numerous other grant programs, foundations, and funding sources that could be utilized.

Partnerships

(High Priority)

Parks and recreation opportunities are provided in contemporary societies through a diverse collection of organizations that exist at the neighborhood, state and national level. Leisure service organizations meet the needs of the community by operating within a broad range of missions, motivations, structures, resources and techniques. With such a large number of organizations (public, private, and non-profit), playing vital roles in the community, coordination and cooperation between providers is crucial. Partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities.



Opportunities for recreation in both the Town of Grover and in Cleveland County may include partnerships with the following types of entities:

- Cleveland County Government
- Cleveland County Schools
- Cleveland Community College
- Other Municipalities (priority: Kings Mountain, Shelby)
- User Groups
- Adopt a Park Programs
- Adopt a Trail Programs
- Carolinas HealthCare System Cleveland, Carolina HealthCare System Kings Mountain or another medical provider (Fitness Activities)
- Cleveland County YMCA
- Private Sector (such as Business, Industry, Developers, etc.)
- Tryon International Equestrian Center
- Churches in and around Grover
- Non-Profits (such as Boy Scouts, 4-H, Youth Empowerment, etc.)

Partnership agreements are essential to demonstrate the commitment of each party and identify the resources each party will contribute. Regardless of which party (or combination) contributes acquisition, development, operational, maintenance, replacement or other resources, tracking these contributions to strive for a dollar for dollar cost sharing between partners over the life of the project is the goal. Negotiations for these contributions should focus on demonstrating the advantages and disadvantages of each partner's participation. Issues need to be identified between both parties and solutions to overcome them need to be demonstrated. Some of the key priority issues that need to be addressed within a partnership agreement are:

- Liability issues that face both parties.
- Addressing how both parties will try to reach an equity position of 50/50 cost sharing during a specific time frame.
- Land use and management needs to be addressed so neither parties'

environmental concerns are compromised.

- Joint capital cost development and how both parties need to be involved in the design component, equipment needs, and storage needs.
- It is important that each party share with the other what their mission statement is so there is a greater appreciation of what each party desires to achieve. The key is to getting both parties to think on behalf of the overall community first and their respective needs second.
- In the partnership agreement, each party needs to make a decision on how they will resolve conflicts with each other.
- The partnership agreement is a living document and needs to change in time based on the needs of the community. Facility usage and contribution philosophy will remain consistent in the agreement, but the conditions of the agreement may change.
- Contributions by each partner need to be tracked and shared with all parties while trying to achieve the 50/50 cost sharing goal within the time frame agree upon.
- If both parties jointly develop a facility or park, a capital enhancement fund needs to be established for ongoing maintenance and facility upgrades.
- Usage within facilities, pricing of activities, schedule of events, equipment, operational issues, tracking process of partner contributions, and review sessions need to be evaluated periodically by all entities involved in the partnership.

Potential partners for the Town of Grover would include Cleveland County Schools, the City of Kings Mountain, the City of Shelby, or the Town of Earl (nearby municipalities). The Town of Grover could also partner with Cleveland County to offer programming at its facilities (for example: the partnership between the Town of Boiling Springs and Cleveland County for the Broad River Greenway property).

Partnerships can start small, like joining together to host a 5k, joining together to host a special event, or offering naming rights to a facility (like the Wendell White baseball field, the concession stand or future outdoor stage could be named) for a

recurring fee. A great example of a successful partnership between municipalities was the Thermal Belt Rail Trail master planning process in nearby Rutherford County. Through that process, the Towns of Forest City, Spindale, Rutherfordton, Ruth, and Rutherford County met together regularly to plan for the trail that passes through each jurisdiction with planning consultants and other regional leaders. Though the trail itself will not benefit each jurisdiction equally, the partnership enhanced the benefit of the rail trail for all and resulted in a lasting document to guide the growth of the trail.

Park Maintenance

(High Priority)

Because Grover is a small Town with limited personnel and financial resources and because Grover's parks and recreational opportunities are passive, the Town does not have a full time recreation department with staff whose sole responsibility is maintenance and upkeep of the parks and recreation areas. The Town relies upon the public works department for maintenance and upkeep of parks and recreational areas. The public works department can handle park maintenance, but their responsibilities go far beyond parks and recreation (garbage collection, recycling collection, grass and leaf collection, sidewalk and street maintenance, cemetery maintenance, etc.). Couple this with the fact that in a small town like Grover, the public works staff can end up being pulled in many directions, it is easy to understand why parks maintenance may not be the highest priority.

The Town should continue utilizing its public works crew for park maintenance activities. Though park maintenance and upkeep cannot realistically be their sole responsibility, it should be a part of the crew's regular routine. A two or three person crew plus equipment could cost the town in the range of \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually. If additional public works employees are needed, funding for the additional positions would come from general tax revenues. The Town should also ensure that a portion of the public works staff is trained in risk management for recreation areas to make playground equipment safety inspections. Playground equipment gets a lot of usage and should get monitored periodically to ensure that the children utilizing the equipment remain safe from accidents.



Install Basketball Court at Grover Town Park

(High Priority)

Through the process of developing Section 2 of this plan, it was noticed that the only basketball goal not on residential property in Grover is in the parking lot of Bethany Baptist Church. This goal does not provide adequate access to a basketball facility to the residents of Grover. The issue of adequacy is not question of the quality of the basketball goal at Bethany Baptist Church, but an observation of a missing need at the Grover Town Park. If the church parking lot is full, it may be impossible for residents to play – it is also likely that the church management would ask that the game be stopped due to the risk of personal property (cars of church goers and staff) or facility property (church windows).

Additionally, Section 3 has clearly identified a need for a public basketball court in Grover. Over 35% of respondents are interested in basketball as a sport activity (question 13). Respondents were only more interested in baseball, football, and watching sport events. Due to the lack of adequate access to basketball in Grover and the resident's interest in basketball, the Town of Grover should seek funding for a full basketball court at the Grover Town Park. The basketball court should be placed either inside of the walking track near the south end of the walking track at an appropriate distance from the baseball field or outside of the walking track across from the concession stand and parking lot. The placement of the basketball court should be considered in public meetings, and will likely be most appropriate inside of the walking track, farther from the parking lot to limit potential damage to cars.

Move and Upgrade Playground Equipment

(High Priority)

The playground equipment currently at Grover Town Park is the park's original equipment. This original equipment has aged and is not nearly as safe as new equipment. The Town of Grover should seek funding to purchase more modern and safer playground equipment. The town should consider requesting new playground equipment within a PARTF funding request and should be open to buying used playground equipment from nearby organizations. The ladder slide

in the Children's Play Area at the Grover Town Park should be removed in addition to the core playground area.

The new playground equipment should not be placed in the same location as the current playground equipment. Playground equipment is not the highest use for the far eastern point of the walking track and the playground equipment should be in a more central location. The best location for playground equipment at the Grover Town Park is where the horseshoe area is located currently (west of the concession stand and north of the baseball field, inside of the walking track). The horseshoe area should be removed from the area and can be reinstalled outside of the walking track. A picnic shelter should always be located near the playground and concession stand to make it easier for parents to relax at the park while supervising their children on the playground equipment. This location is also more central to the walking track so it will be easier for parents to supervise their children while walking, encouraging a longer stay.

Walking Opportunities

(High Priority)

Section 3 shows that walking is a high priority and strong recreational interest for Grover park users - specifically the results of questions 8, 10 and 12.

Considering that walking is such a popular activity, the Town should consider providing as many walking opportunities as possible in all areas of town limits. Walking opportunities can be provided by constructing walking trails, hiking trails, more sidewalks, trails along greenways, as well as others. Some areas that should be prioritized include:

- Developing a sidewalk along Maple Street and Linden Street to not only provide access to Grover Town Park, but to improve pedestrian safety in that populated area of town.
- Connecting sidewalks from Linden Street to downtown to aid in downtown-park linkage.
- Connecting the town's churches and schools to downtown Grover.
- Require all new subdivision developments to build sidewalks that connect to

existing sidewalks.

- Ensure that all areas of town are within a 10 minute, safe walk to the Grover Town Park and downtown Grover.

Funding for sidewalks on state roads could be accomplished by utilizing NCDOT enhancement grants or discretionary funding. Powell Bill Funds could be utilized to construct sidewalks on Town streets. Land and Water Conservation Funds, Parks and Recreation Trust Funds, and Clean Water Trust Funds could be utilized to purchase land and construct greenways. Map 2 in the Appendix shows floodplain areas in Grover, which will help when locating greenway opportunities.

Designate the Grover Town Green

(High Priority)

The Town of Grover should continue to utilize the green space next to town hall as a passive park area. This Grover Town Green should be established as a permeant, passive town park. Utilizing this area as a passive park will provide a gathering space in downtown Grover and draw visitors into downtown Grover. Establishing a focal point in the Grover Town Green is key – the “Living Christmas Tree” is currently a great focal point but a statue or fountain should also be considered. Additionally, a welcome mural or sign should be placed on the side of town hall that faces the green.



In addition to a focal point in the center of the Grover Town Green, there should be a paved surface in the center of the green and a path that leads to it from Mulberry Street and from the town hall parking lot. There should be benches and information about Grover which could include an aerial map kiosk that includes information about town assets or a kiosk explaining Grover’s unique history.

To help draw in visitors, the town hall parking lot should be opened with a curb-cut to Mulberry Road and street parking should be labeled along Mulberry Road. The Grover Town Green should be established as downtown Grover's core. One of the responses gathered in Section 3 asked the town to utilize "Keeter Corner" as a park area, which is near the Grover Town Green. The Keeter Corner request was received as a call for a park area in downtown Grover.

Expand Walking Opportunities at Grover Town Park

(High Priority)

The popular Grover Town Park walking track provides views of the sunset in the evening and views of the entire park, providing access to a calming exercise and leisure activity. The Town of Grover should continue to regard the walking track as an important asset to the Grover Town Park and should focus on improving the walking experience for park users. The first step should be to resurface and expand the existing walking track. The track should be expanded at its northwest corner to provide space for new playground equipment. The town should also seek funding to pave the walking track with asphalt or a more runner-friendly material and provide lighting for the entire track.



To provide for more walking opportunities at the Grover Town Park and to provide park visitors with access to the park's outer limits, the Town should seek funding for a nature trail. A nature trail does not have to be paved and can be constructed by volunteers. The pedestrian bridge near the currently unused picnic shelter should be the gateway to the nature trail, connecting to the walking path's

northwest corner. It should continue through the wooded area south of the park, go by the pond on the town property south of the park and connect back to the southern side of the walking path. This will not only provide access to the park's natural areas and pond, but will give regular walking path users more room. It may be necessary to work with neighboring property owners to locate the nature trail.



Establish Recreation Programming Options

(Medium - High Priority)

A major asset to many parks and recreation systems is recreation programming for residents. The town does not have a parks and recreation department to develop and execute recreation programs on a regular basis but similar municipalities have proven that programs can be established when partnering with other organizations.

The town should pursue youth sports programming that can utilize existing park facilities (sports were identified as a major priority in Section 3) as well as more low-maintenance programming opportunities. Health-oriented and senior-service organizations can assist the town in developing programs for senior citizens including leisure activities such as field trips and organized indoor games, low-impact cardio programs and other creative ways to keep senior citizens active and involved in their community. Once the Town is able to find a partner for recreational programming (the town providing the park as a location for the



programming, and the partner providing the program itself), the partner can work with town staff and town residents on which specific programs are desired and which will be successful in Grover.

In addition to providing low-impact senior programming, non-sport youth programming in should be established. Programs focused around community service and environmental education would not require dedicated facilities and would be a benefit to existing summer camps, regional Boy Scout Troops and other youth or environmental-oriented organizations. Interactive and educational signage along trails can enhance youth environmental education throughout the Grover Town Park and the Town of Grover.

Information and Communication

(Medium Priority)

The Town of Grover should work closely with the Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership and Cleveland County Tourism to ensure that information about the Town of Grover stays accurate and up-to-date. The Grover's recreational facilities should be included in all information about regional assets. The Town needs to identify a contact person to work with these groups for information related to Grover.

Town of Grover staff should also create its own means of information sharing such as brochures, web site or social media pages to inform Grover's citizens and visitors about their parks and recreation system. A recreational resource guide designed for visitors and available at strategic locations in the area would make a great project for a town staff member or volunteer group. Communicating Grover's recreational assets with visitors and town residents is an important part of maintaining park use and support.

Establish Concession Stand Use

(Medium Priority)

The Town of Grover should consider partnering with a local food vendor to open the concession stand during town events and regular hours during peak-use

times. The concession stand is a well-located asset to the Grover Town Park that is currently seldom used. If any programming is established at the park or if regular town events are hosted at the Grover Town Park, the Town should be prepared to partner with a local food vendor to open the concession stand. To begin this process, the Town can offer the concession stand to a vendor free of charge. Though the Town will not profit from this initial partnership, residents will appreciate seeing the concession stand open – hopefully increasing park use.

If the initial partnership events are successful, the Town can begin charging a small fee to cover the cost of running the concession stand when the concession stand is operated at peak times. For example, the vendor may choose to open on Saturday afternoons for several hours on regular basis during spring and summer months. Communication from town staff to residents and park users about the concession stand hours will be necessary for success. In addition to opening the concession stand, the Town should utilize public works staff or a volunteer to regularly clean and maintain the concession stand bathrooms. The bathrooms should be open consistently during daylight hours.

Create Grover Town Park Stage

(Medium Priority)

During a public meeting of the Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee, it was noted that a few residents in Grover host music events at their homes. The events are popular but private residences are not ideal locations due to their seating capacity and bathroom facilities. An outdoor stage was also identified as a need in Section 3. The Town of Grover should seek funding for a music stage at the Grover Town Park. A stage will enhance town events, increase usage at the Grover Town Park and provide opportunities for additional partnerships. The Town of Grover should allow private events to rent the stage for a fee.

An ideal location for the stage is in the northeast or east side of the park. Challenges of this location include the unused hill and the walking track. There must be enough flat green space in front of the stage for the audience to place their chairs and there should also space for equipment to be loaded onto the stage (heavy music equipment may need to be driven up to the stage to be

unloaded from a car or large truck).

The Town of Sylva's Bridge Park stage provides a great example:



Photo from Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

Other Capital Projects

(Low - Medium Priority)

Several other projects have been identified as needs for Grover's recreation system including:

- Solve accessibility issues for citizens with disabilities - improving park accessibility and inclusion.
- Shorten the Wendell White outfield to provide more space inside of the walking track
- Rebuild unused picnic shelter and allow parks users to rent for private events
- Clean and paint moveable picnic shelters, replace tables
- Remove fence around the unused hill
- Pave the parking lot
- Build dugout structures and install benches along Wendell White infield
- Install angled parking spaces on the portion of Grover Town Park across Maple Street
- Install cameras on light poles and the Concession stand at Grover Town Park

Section 4 Summary

The Town of Grover needs to make a positive commitment to parks and recreation. Parks and recreation funding is an easy mark for budget cuts, particularly when there is no active department. It was proven in this plan's public involvement process that the Grover Town Park means a lot to town residents and residents of the surrounding area. The parks system is a major asset to Grover residents, Southern Cleveland County residents and visitors.

It is important that the Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee continue to meet on a quarterly basis and periodically report to Town Council about the health of the park system and progress on park improvements. The steering committee can become an ad hoc committee of the Town Council and does not need to continue to include the entire Town Council. The Town of Grover should work with town staff to create and maintain a website and social media pages to advertise park system assets and news.

The Grover Town Park is worthy of the town's continued development and attention. It currently serves park users well and has the potential for growth. Providing ample opportunities for wellness and community involvement through park usage should be a high priority for the Parks and Recreation Steering Committee and the Grover Town Council. There are many funding opportunities to achieve the park system's goals and this plan's recommendations.

As stated earlier, this plan is to be implemented over the next 10 years. However, as with all plans, changes and amendments should occur as they are anticipated. This plan and its recommendations should be reviewed on a yearly basis by the Parks and Recreation Committee, Town Council and town staff to review what recommendations have been implemented, which recommendations need to be addressed in the short term, and to determine if any changes or new recommendations need to be addressed or included within this plan. Additionally, this plan should be completely updated in 2028.

Section 4 Summary Chart

Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
High	Funding Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize various means to plan for an fund this plan's recommendations including Capital Improvement Programs, general tax revenues, user fees, sponsorships and various grant programs.
High	Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The town should seek partnerships with a range of organizations to assist with park system programming and/or fundraising Consider local groups with a consistent mission Identify and solve potential challenges before entering into a partnership Partnerships can start small (5k, naming rights, co-hosting special events)
High	Park Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to establish park maintenance as a routine matter for the public works staff Train current public works staff and future park maintenance crew on risk management as it relates to park use
High	Install Basketball Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore PARTF application for a basketball court in FY 2019. Place basketball court at Grover Town Park in response to community interest an inadequate public basketball facilities in town.

Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
High	Upgrade Playground Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase new, modern and safer playground equipment. • Move playground equipment closer to the concession stand and establish it as a youth area
High	Walking Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add a sidewalk along Maple Street and Linden Street • Provide pedestrian access to the Grover Town Park from downtown • Connect schools and new subdivisions to existing sidewalks • Prioritize sidewalk development and maintenance near park locations
High	Designate Grover Town Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage the Grover Town Green's downtown location as a passive park area • Create a focal-point (living Christmas tree, statue, fountain) and add seating areas • Continue to landscape the area as a downtown open-space and downtown's core
Medium	Expand Walking Opportunities at Grover Town Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the town-owned land around the perimeter of the Grover Town Park • Build a nature trail that should begin and end near the existing walking trail, utilizing the pedestrian bridge • Work with property owners on the west side of the park for permission to build the trail across the stream if necessary • Expand the northwest corner of the walking track to provide more space for the playground

Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
Medium-High	Establish Programming Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue youth sports funding and partnerships • Explore low-maintenance programming opportunities that utilize existing facilities • Partner with health-oriented or senior-service organizations to assist with developing programs for senior citizens • Offer youth programs focused around community service and environmental education
Medium	Information and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely with the Tourism Development Authority and Cleveland County to maintain information about Grover • Create a Recreation Resource Guide to help residents and visitors find park amenities • Develop a website and social media pages to share park system news and communicate with visitors and town residents • Parks and Recreation Steering Committee should meet on a quarterly basis
Medium	Establish concession stand use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider partnering with a local vendor to open the concession stand during town events or regular hours during high-use times. • Establish a volunteer, community service opportunity for regular bathroom maintenance, supervised by town staff. • Allow initial vendors to use the concession stand free of charge for an agreed upon amount of time as a trial period.

Priority	Recommendation	Action Steps
Medium	Create Grover Town Park Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a stage a the Grover Town Park for music events • Allow residents and visitors to rent the stage for private events for a fee • Place the stage somewhere on the east side of the park, allowing enough room for visitors to bring chairs and talent to load in gear
Low-Medium	Other Capital Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solve accessibility issues for citizens with disabilities - improving park accessibility and inclusion. • Shorten the Wendell White outfield to provide more space inside of the walking track • Rebuild unused picnic shelter and allow parks users to rent for private events • Clean and paint moveable picnic shelters, replace tables • Remove fence around the unused hill • Pave the Grover town Park parking lot and driveway • Build dugout structures and install benches along Wendell White infield • Install angled parking spaces on the portion of Grover Town Park across Maple Street. • Install cameras on light poles and the concession stand at Grover Town Park



Appendix

Map 1 - Recreation Areas

Page I

Map 2 - Floodplain Areas

Page II

Grover Parks and Recreation Survey

Page III

All survey responses are available at Grover Town Hall

Public Input Workshop Questionnaire

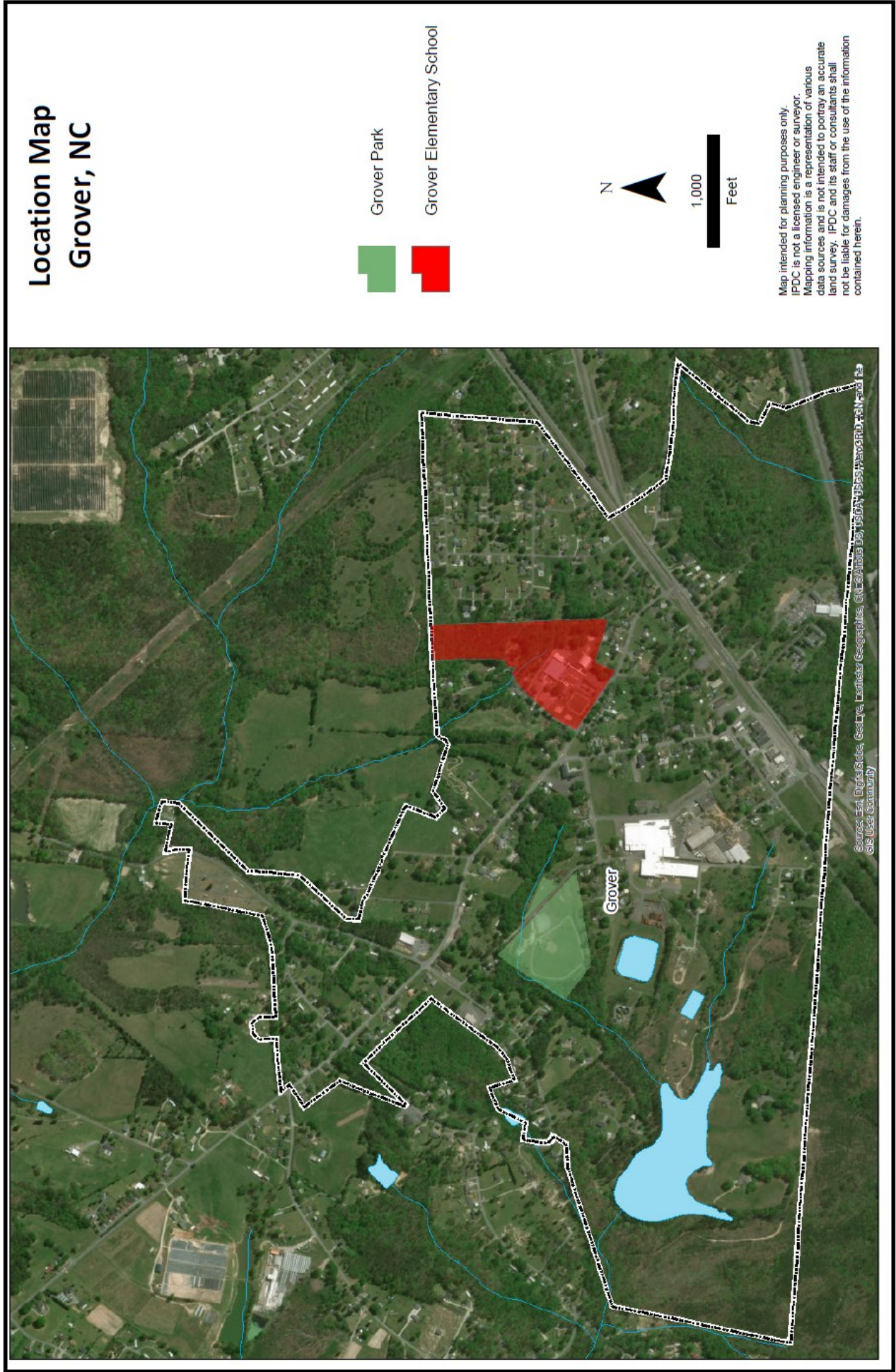
Page IX

All questionnaire responses are available at Grover Town Hall

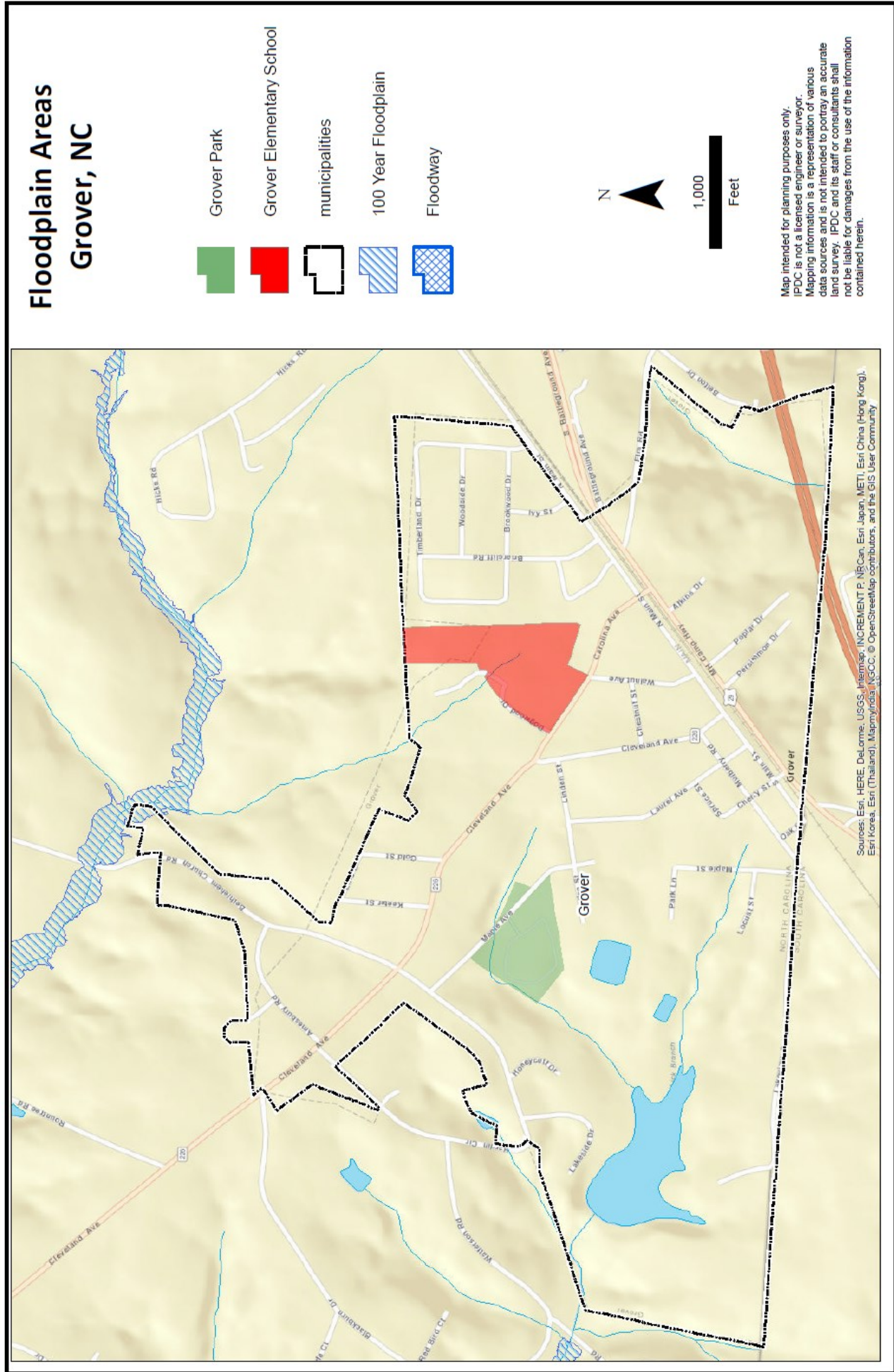
Shelby Star Article

Page X

Map 1 - Recreation Areas



Map 2 - Floodplain Areas





Grover Parks and Recreation Survey

Town of Grover Parks and Recreation Plan Survey

The Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee is in the process of developing Grover's Parks and Recreation Plan on behalf of the Grover Town Council.

Your input is the most important part of this process. Please take a few moments to tell us about the recreational activities you and your family enjoy and provide some feedback on our parks system.

We appreciate your response. If you have any questions or need help regarding the survey, please contact Ben Farmer at (828)-351-2338 or bfarmer@regionc.org.

1. Do you live within the Grover town limits?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

2. What was your approximate household income in 2016?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than \$20,000 | <input type="radio"/> \$75,000 to \$99,999 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$20,000 to \$34,999 | <input type="radio"/> Over \$100,000 |
| <input type="radio"/> \$35,000 to \$49,999 | <input type="radio"/> Unsure or Prefer Not to Answer |
| <input type="radio"/> \$50,000 to \$74,999 | |

3. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (if you are currently enrolled in school, please indicate the highest degree you have *received*).

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than a high school diploma | <input type="radio"/> Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd) |
| <input type="radio"/> High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED) | <input type="radio"/> Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM) |
| <input type="radio"/> Some college, no degree | <input type="radio"/> Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD) |
| <input type="radio"/> Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS) | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="radio"/> Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS) | |



4. For each individual in your household, please indicate their age and gender:

Example: **Individual 1** [12, male]. **Individual 2** [34, Female].

Individual 1

Individual 2

Individual 3

Individual 4

Individual 5

Individual 6

If there are more than 6 individuals in your household, please let us know how many there are here:

For the rest of this survey, you may answer on behalf of the children in your household in addition to yourself.

5. Should the Town of Grover focus its recreational resources towards improving the Grover Town Park at 415 Maple St or expand recreational opportunities to other areas of town?

- ☐ The town should focus on the Grover Town Park ☐ The town should do neither
- ☐ The town should try to expand recreation ☐ I am unsure
- ☐ The town should do both

6. Do you utilize recreation facilities in Grover? (select none or all that apply)

- ☐ I utilize recreation facilities at the Grover Town Park
- ☐ I utilize recreation facilities at a church
- ☐ I utilize recreation facilities at a school
- ☐ I utilize another:



7. Which Grover Town Park amenities have you utilized during the past year? (select none or all that apply)

- ☐ Playground
- ☐ Picnic Shelter
- ☐ Park Restrooms
- ☐ Walking Trail
- ☐ Baseball Field
- ☐ Other (please specify)

8. Are there enough walking or biking opportunities in Grover?

9. Please share your thoughts on any needs for the Grover Town Park (e.g. lighting improvements, equipment upgrades, more sport facilities)



10. Which leisure activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Bird Watching
- ☐ Eating Lunch/Picnic
- ☐ Play Horseshoes
- ☐ Play at Playground
- ☐ Reading Outdoors
- ☐ Play Shuffleboard
- ☐ Exercising Pets/Dog Park
- ☐ Walking in Natural Areas
- ☐ Looking at Gardens
- ☐ Viewing Wildlife
- ☐ Trail Walking
- ☐ Kite Flying
- ☐ Nature Study
- ☐ Library Programming
- ☐ Horseback Riding
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Recreational Sports
- ☐ Cornhole
- ☐ Disc Golf

Add any other activities here

11. Which artistic activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Performances | <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Arts and Crafts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art Shows or Festivals | <input type="checkbox"/> Art Lessons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Music Lessons |

Add any other activities here



12. Which fitness activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain Biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Climbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Skateboarding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fitness Trail | <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roller Skating/Blading | <input type="checkbox"/> Aerobics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> Ball Games |

Add any other activities here

13. Which sport activities are you interested in? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Watching Sports Events
- ☐ Golf
- ☐ Baseball
- ☐ Soccer
- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Tennis
- ☐ Volleyball
- ☐ Football
- ☐ Cheerleading

Add any other activities here

14. If there are recreational needs the Town of Grover is currently not meeting, please describe below:

15. What should the Town of Grover's top recreational priorities be? (share as many as you want)



The Grover Parks and Recreation Steering Committee is in the process of developing **Grover's Parks and Recreation Plan** on behalf of the Grover Town Council. Your input is the most important part of this process. **Please take a few moments to tell us about the recreational activities you and your family enjoy and provide some feedback on our parks system.**

We appreciate your response. If you have any questions or need help regarding the survey, please contact Ben Farmer at (828)-351-2338 or bfarmer@regionc.org.

Note: This survey is available online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/GroverParks. If you choose to take the paper version, please drop the completed copy off at Grover Town Hall, mail it to Town Hall (ATTN: Parks Plan, 207 Mulberry Rd, Grover, NC 28073) or scan to bfarmer@regionc.org. Additional copies can be picked up at Town Hall.

BEGIN HERE

1. Do you live within the Grover Town Limits?
(circle or check your answer)

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

2. What was your approximate household income in 2016? (circle or check your answer)

☐ Less than \$20,000 ☐ \$20,000 to \$34,000
☐ \$35,000 to \$49,999 ☐ \$50,000 to \$74,999
☐ \$75,000 to \$99,999 ☐ Over \$100,000
☐ Unsure or Prefer Not to Answer

3. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (circle or check your answer; if you are currently enrolled, please indicate the highest degree you have received).

☐ Less than a high school diploma
☐ High school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED)
☐ Some college, no degree
☐ Associate's degree (e.g. AA, AS)
☐ Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)
☐ Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)
☐ Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)
☐ Prefer not to answer

4. For each individual in your household, please indicate their age and gender:

Example: *Individual 1* [12, Male] *Individual 2* [34, Female]

1 _____ 4 _____
 2 _____ 5 _____
 3 _____ 6 _____

If there are more than 6 individuals in your household, please let us know how many there are here: _____

For the rest of this survey, you may answer on behalf of the children in your household in addition to yourself.

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☐ The town should focus on the Grover Town Park
☐ The town should try to expand recreation
☐ The town should do both
☐ The town should do neither ☐ I am unsure

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☐ I utilize recreation facilities at a school

I utilize another: _____

7. Which Grover Town Park amenities have you utilized during the past year? (check or circle none or all that apply)

☐ Playground ☐ Picnic Shelter ☐ Park Restrooms
☐ Walking Trail ☐ Baseball Field
 Other _____

8. Are there enough walking or biking opportunities in Grover? (write yes/no and/or comment below)

9. Please share your thoughts on any needs for the Grover Town Park (e.g. lighting improvements, equipment upgrades, more sport facilities)

10. Which leisure activities are you interested in? (check all that apply):

☐ Bird Watching ☐ Looking at Gardens ☐ Viewing Wildlife
☐ Eating Lunch/Picnic ☐ Play Horseshoes ☐ Trail Walking
☐ Play at Playground ☐ Kite Flying ☐ Reading Outdoors
☐ Gardening ☐ Nature Study ☐ Play Shuffleboard
☐ Library Programming ☐ Exercising Pets/Dog Park ☐ Cornhole
☐ Horseback Riding ☐ Recreational Sports ☐ Disc Golf

Other _____

11. Which artistic activities are you interested in? (check all that apply):

☐ Attend Performances ☐ Outdoor Arts and Crafts ☐ Photography
☐ Art Lessons ☐ Music Lessons ☐ Art Shows or Festivals

Other _____

12. Which fitness activities are you interested in? (check all that apply):

☐ Mountain Biking ☐ Bicycling ☐ Fitness Trail
☐ Roller Skating/Blading ☐ Dance ☐ Gymnastics ☐ Rock Climbing
☐ Skateboarding ☐ Jogging ☐ Aerobics ☐ Walking ☐ Ball Games

Other _____

13. Which sport activities are you interested in? (check all that apply):

☐ Watching Sport Events ☐ Golf ☐ Baseball ☐ Cheerleading
☐ Soccer ☐ Tennis ☐ Playing Volleyball ☐ Football ☐ Basketball

Other _____

14. If there are recreational needs the Town of Grover is currently not meeting, please describe below:

15. What should the Town of Grover's top recreational priorities be? (share as many as you want - flip page if needed)



Grover Parks and Recreation Master Plan Workshop Questionnaire

Please fill out this quick questionnaire before you leave the workshop so we can add your input to the final plan. You can use the back of the page if needed. Thank you!

What are the top 3 recreational changes or additions you want to see in Grover?

Are there any recreational activities you leave Grover to do? Please share:

Check any of the activities you are interested in from the list below:

☐ Corn Hole ☐ Disc Golf ☐ Foot Golf ☐ Ladder Ball
☐ Gaga Ball ☐ Pickle Ball ☐ Croquet ☐ Badminton
☐ I want to share another: _____

What did you see at this workshop that stood out to you as particularly important?

Please share any other thoughts on what needs to be included in the final plan, recreation in Grover, Grover's current/future parks, or additional points here:

(Optional) We may want to follow up with you after the workshop. If you are ok with us getting in touch with you, please include your contact information below:

Name _____ Phone _____
Email _____

Grover looks to improve town park

By Casey White

Posted Feb 12, 2018 at 10:19 AM

Updated Feb 12, 2018 at 10:19 AM

Officials in Grover hope local residents will share their vision for the future of the town's modest park.

Located at 415 Maple Street, Grover Town Park features a baseball field, a walking track, a playground and a picnic area.

Town leaders would like to take on some minor renovations and make bigger changes at the park, all dependent on what residents would like to see.

A steering committee featuring Grover Mayor Bill Willis, town council members and other local leaders, is working to develop a master plan for the future of parks and recreation for the town. Willis said he has his own ideas for the park, but that the most important feedback the town can get is from the people who would be utilizing it.

"I'm just a bus driver here," Willis said. "If the town tells me where they want to go, I'll get them there. I just need them to tell me where to go."

A survey is [available online](#) and at the Grover Town Hall to give residents from Grover and the surrounding area a chance to weigh in on what they would like to see done to the park and other recreation opportunities in the town.

Grover has partnered with the Isothermal Planning and Development Commission to complete the master plan, with hopes to have it finalized by the end of April.

"We're waiting to get somewhere around 50 to 75 results from the survey," said Ben Farmer, a project manager with the commissioner.



According to Farmer, the plan will be broken down into four parts: the demographics and history of Grover parks and recreation, inventory of the existing parks and other recreational opportunities in the area, analysis of the survey results and recommendations and implementation.

The Grover Parks and Recreation master plan is being designed to meet the standards of the North Carolina State Parks and Recreation Trust Fund scoring process, so the town could be eligible for dollar-for-dollar matching grants.

Once the plan is complete, the town can contract the commission to help pursue funding for the projects through the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and other grant program.

Any changes that could come to the park will be dependent on the feedback and the amount of funding the town receives when the planning process is complete.

No timeline is set in terms of when renovations or additions could be made at the park, as that all depends on if and when the town secures any funding. The planning process is all about being ready when an opportunity does arise.

"If you don't plan for it, you'll never get anything done," Willis said.

Casey White can be reached at 704-669-3339 or cwhite@shelbystar.com.