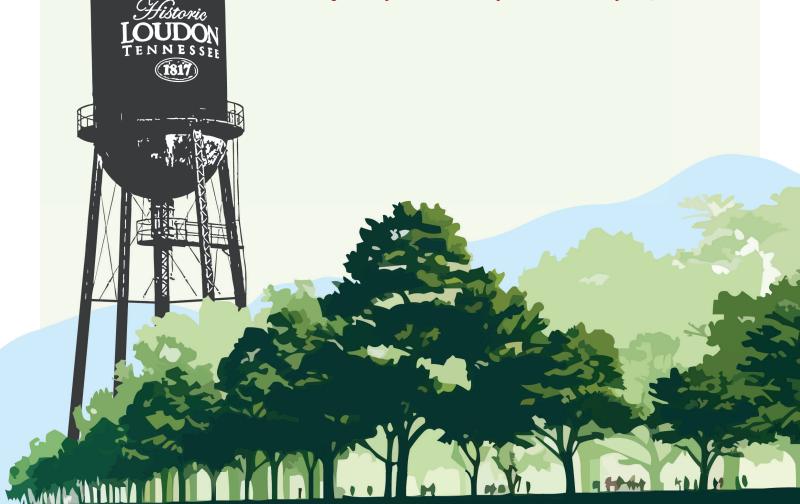


-2025 -

Adopted by Loudon City Council: July 28, 2025





### SPECIAL THANKS

We are greatly appreciative of the Loudon residents, City Council, Recreation Advisory Commission, and city staff who came together in the public surveys, comment forms, meetings, and the thorough planning process. This critical input guided the development of the Master Plan and will result in positive impacts on the city.

### CITY OF LOUDON

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Amy Millsaps, Board Member
LeaAnn Chihasz, Board Member
Elena Mejia, Board Member
Bill Davis, Board Member
Matt Gentry, Board Member
Eric Newman, Board Member
Jessica Gammons, Board Member
Ed Fendley, Board Member

### KIMLEY-HORN CONSULTANT TEAM

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### INTRODUCTION

Nestled in the heart of Tennessee, the charming City of Loudon traces its roots back to the late 1700s. Originally known as Blair's Ferry after its first settler, James Blair, this quaint city blossomed in the mid-1800s as a key rail route. Today, Loudon beautifully blends its historic charm with modern amenities, offering a unique getaway with historic tours, scenic waterfront views, and a vibrant downtown filled with shops, eateries, and a welcoming community. Over 6,500 people live in Loudon, a place where they can truly experience the hometown feel.

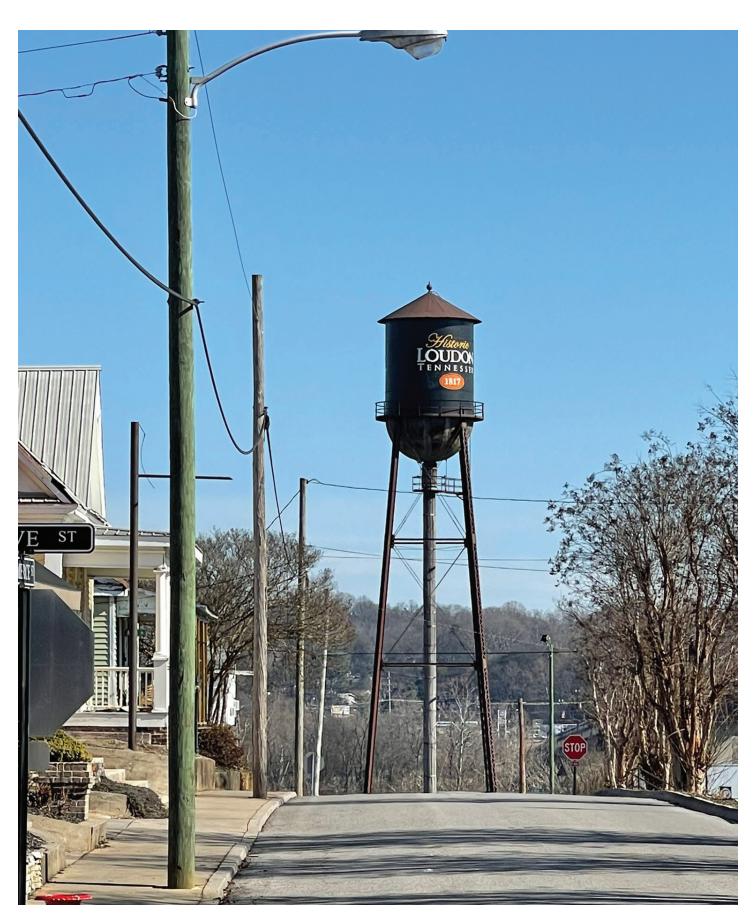
The goal of Loudon's Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to serve as a long-range strategy for decision making and financial investments for the creation, optimization, and maintenance of the city's assets over the next five years. It is important to ensure the the community, stakeholders, and data align around a central vision as noted and outlined throughout this document.



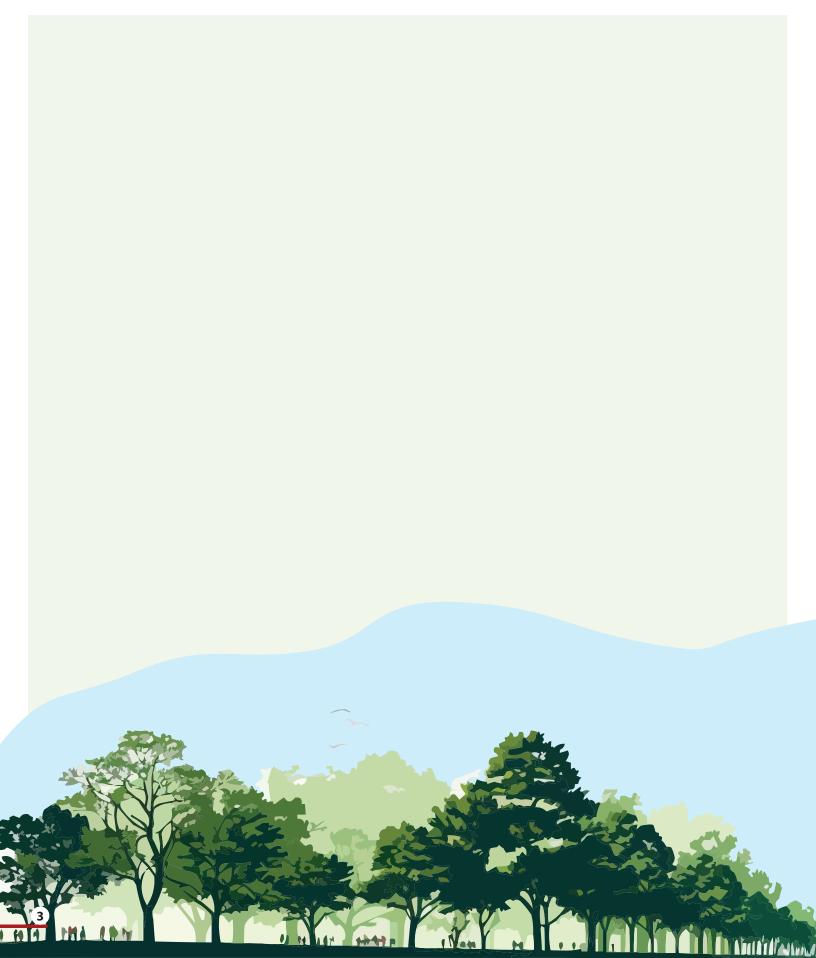
To maintain the rich character of Loudon, it is essential to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with consideration for both the community and envisioning the needs of the growing and changing community. Meaningful stakeholder and staff engagement, a demographics study, and public feedback were vital steps of the planning process. The demographic analysis was conducted to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the community's current and projected composition to better understand current trends and anticipate future needs in areas of population, age, households, race and ethnicity, and education. The data collected through the community engagement was supplemented with a complete inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities to produce recommendations to build upon the city's existing successful park system.

This master plan provides recommendations and implementation strategies for existing and new facilities, existing and new programming, financial and budget strategies, staffing and maintenance recommendations, and aims to set realistic goals and expectations for feasible implementation strategies. As the community continues to grow and change, the recommendations in this plan may need to be revisited and reworked every two years to continue to successfully meet the need of Loudon's community. It is recommended that the department do annual or bi-annual check-ins with the community to determine if they are on the right track or need to adjust their strategies.









# Demographic Analysis





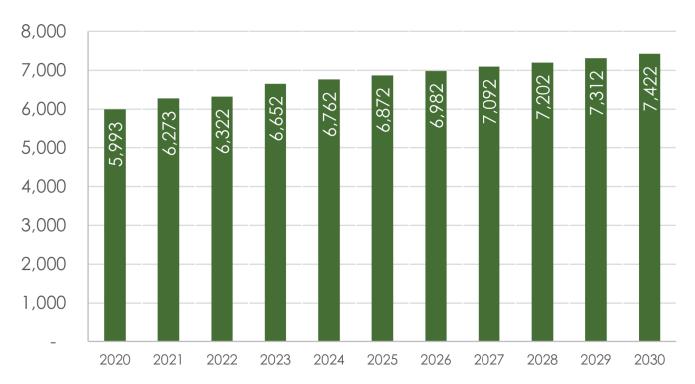
### **DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

Utilizing the comprehensive data from the US Census Bureau (2023), the consultant team aimed to gain further insight into the Loudon community. A thorough understanding of Loudon's demographic trends is essential to developing a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that effectively serves the community. Examining factors such as population growth, age, race and ethnicity, income levels, and educational attainment provides valuable insight into the needs and preferences of residents. Demographics influence park accessibility, programming demand, facility design, and overall recreational engagement. This analysis will ensure that the recommendations of this plan align with the diverse interests and abilities of Loudon's population, fostering inclusive and equitable public spaces.

### Population Trends & Projections

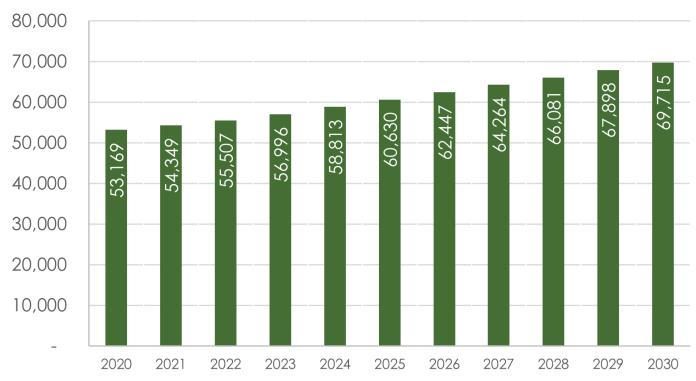
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of Loudon in 2023 was 6,652 residents. Loudon's steady upward growth pattern since 2010 is in line with trends across the state of Tennessee. Loudon has seen an overall average population growth of 1.66%, slightly higher than Tennessee's 0.88%. The charts below plots the change in population between 2010 and 2023 in Loudon, as well as Tennessee as a whole.

### Population Estimates for the City of Loudon



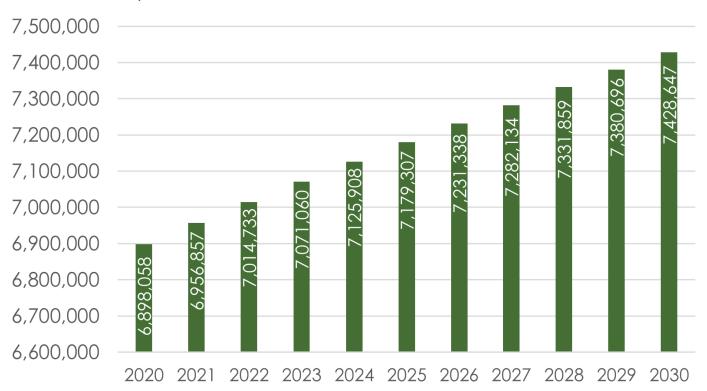
Source: Percentage Projections of City and Town Population Totals (census.gov)

### Population Estimates for Loudon County



Source: Percentage Projections of County Population Totals (census.gov)

### Population Estimates for the State of Tennessee



Source: General Health Data (Population) (TN.gov)



### Age

Loudon residents have a median age of 39.8 years old, which is consistent with the statewide average of 39 years old. The largest age group includes individuals ages 10 to 14 years old, who make up 9.0% of the population. The second largest age group is individuals aged 35 to 39 years old, who make up 8.5% of the population. Approximately 25% of Loudon's population is composed of youth under the age of 19; 39% are from 20 to 54 years old; and 35% are above the age of 55 years old.

This demographic data should be used in conjunction with the results of community engagement and programming analysis to ensure that the population is accurately represented and age-appropriate activities are adequately provided.

Age distribution data can potentially indicate changes in recreation trends. Loudon may need to increase the amount of teen sports programs to adjust for the high number of residents in the 10 to 14 age group. The large population of middle-aged residents, however, may benefit from expanding offerings for individual sports, childcare services, and other programs. As residents between 45 and 59 years old (19% of the population) approach retirement age, the parks and recreation services should anticipate a potential change in their recreation preferences.

### Age of Loudon Residents



Source: 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates (https://data.census.gov/)

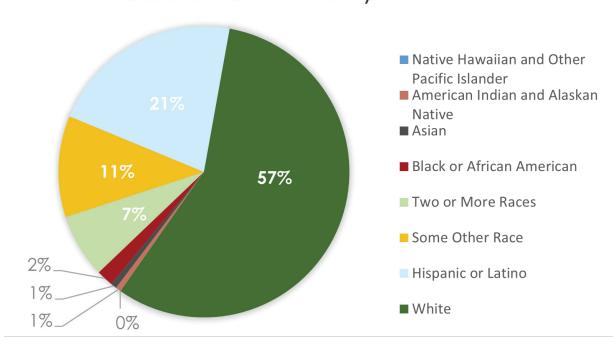


### Race and Ethnicity

The U.S. Census Bureau defines the race and ethnicity data as follows: "The racial categories included in the census questionnaire generally reflect a social definition of race recognized in this county and not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. In addition, it is recognized that the categories of the race item include racial and national origin or sociocultural groups. People may choose to report more than one race to indicate their racial mixture, such as 'American Indian' and 'White.' People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be of any race."

The following charts illustrate Loudon's race and ethnicity data gathered by the U.S. Census Bureau. Most Loudon residents identified as White (72.53%), while the second largest racial group includes Hispanic or Latino populations (27.53%). Approximately 14.37% of Loudon's population is of "some other race." A small percentage of the population identifies as Black or African American (2.37%). The least populous races in Loudon include American Indian and Alaskan Native, Asian, or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, which each comprise less than 1% of the population. While race does not determine what programming and facilities should be provided, analyzing racial demographic data is essential to understanding the community served by parks and recreation and identifying inequity within the community.

### Race and Ethnicity in Loudon



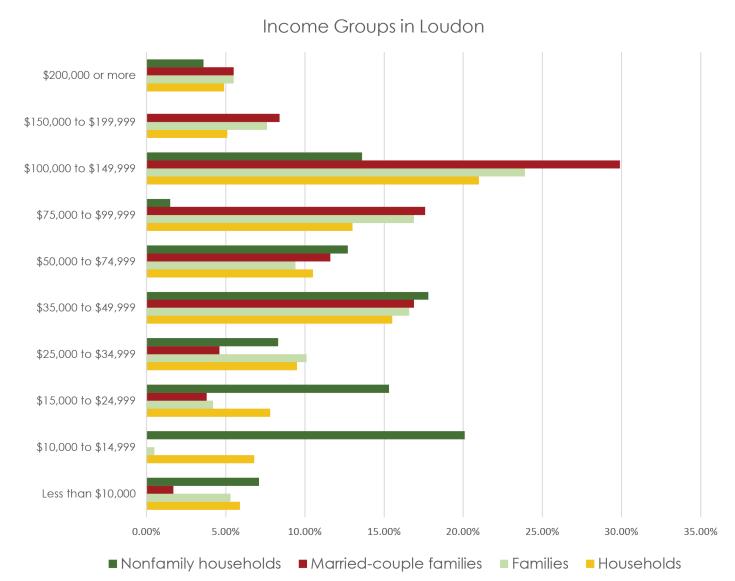
Source: "RACE." Decennial Census, DEC Redistricting Data (PL 94-171) (U.S. Census Bureau)



#### Income

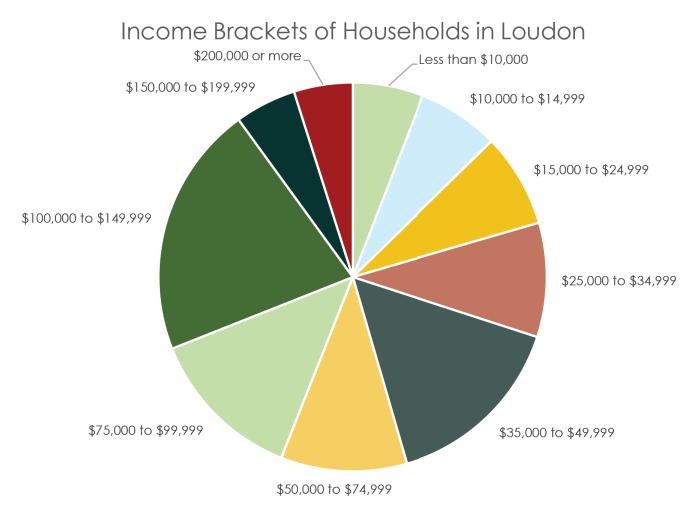
Understanding the financial stance of the community can inform how to set affordable registration fees for programs and services, in addition to informing what programs and facilities would be of the most need. High fees could limit the accessibility of services to low-income households. Low-income households may benefit from increased availability of childcare, after-school programs, and other essential services that promote quality of life and well-being.

Household income is measured as the total annual income before taxes received by all members of the household 15 years old and older, regardless of their relationship to the householder. A nonfamily household consists of a householder living alone (a one-person household) or where the householder shares the home exclusively with people to whom they are not related.



Source: Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2023 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) (U.S Census Bureau)

The median household income in Loudon is \$58,810, which is slightly higher than the state median household income of \$53,320. The pie chart below breaks down the number of households in Loudon within each income bracket. A large percentage of households (21%) have an income between \$100,000 to \$149,999.



Source: Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2023 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) (U.S Census Bureau)



### Education

Understanding the education levels of a community can guide how parks and recreation services might be tailored to meet the needs of its residents. A parks and recreation department structured to complement the community's educational profile can benefit residents by providing specific and accessible programs. Offering after-school clubs, mentoring, and tutoring programs can improve high school graduation rates and school attendance. Vocational training or employment support can also foster community development through tutelage.

Compared with averages across the state of Tennessee, Loudon has lower overall higher education attainment levels compared to Tennessee. The gap in the population between bachelor's and graduate degrees indicates that fewer professional and high-skilled jobs exist in the area. Loudon has a high percentage of adults without a high school degree (16.18%). Younger adults are more likely to have a high school degree but are less likely to pursue a collegiate, master's, or doctoral education.

### Educational Attainment among population aged 25 and over



- Bachelor's degree
- Some college or associate's degree
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Less than high school graduate

Source: Educational Attainment (U.S Census Bureau)



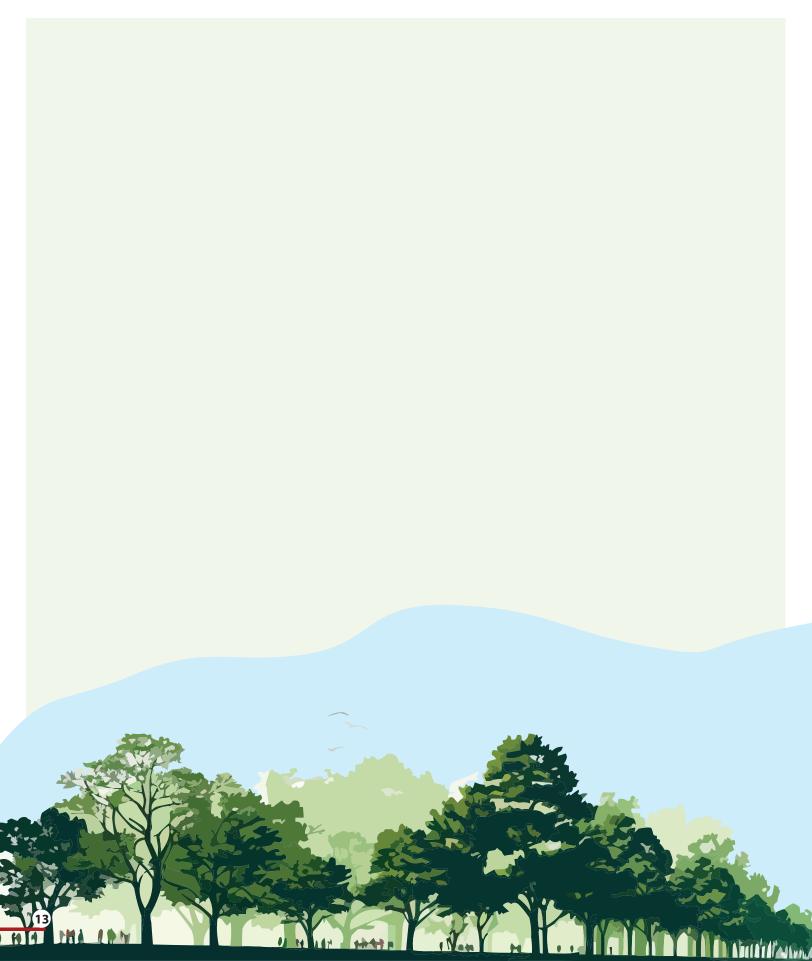


Source: City of Loudon Facebook Page



Source: City of Loudon Facebook Page





# Community Engagement





### **PUBLIC SURVEY**

### Approach

An online survey served as a key public engagement strategy to gathering feedback from the community. The 17 questions in the survey were developed to gather data regarding perceptions, programming, and user trends across the community's parks and recreation facilities. The survey was promoted through social media, email lists, and flyers (see figure on following page). The survey received 468 responses and was opened March 17th, 2025 and closed the morning of April 30th, 2025. The results summarized in the following exhibits reflect the feedback provided by the participants that completed the survey. The input they offered provided the master plan team with critical insights that will be utilized by the City to determine future focus areas, current shortcomings, and proposed improvements. Users were allowed to "skip" answers, resulting in some responses not totaling 100%.

The public survey had a total of 17 questions that can be grouped into five categories:

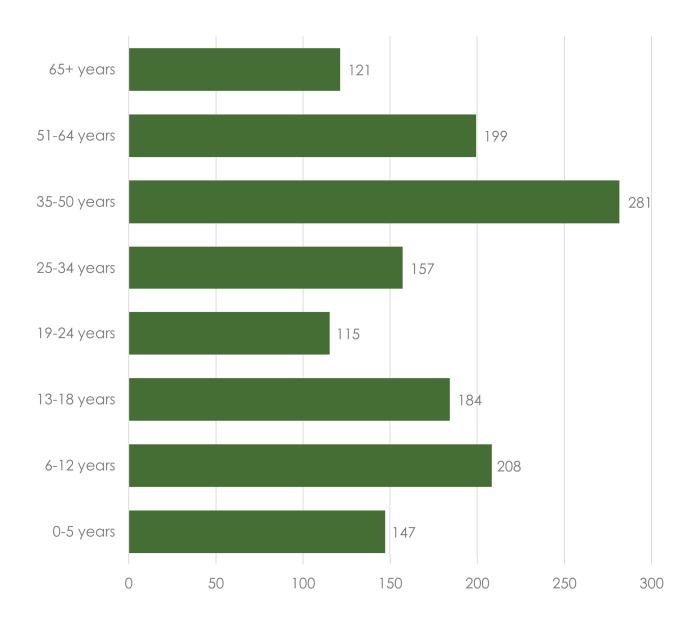
- 1. Demographics
- 3. Current Facility and Amenity Usage
- 4. Current Facility and Amenity Perception
- 3. Future Facility and Amenity Usage
- 4. Future Programming





### Provide the number of people in each age group present in your household:

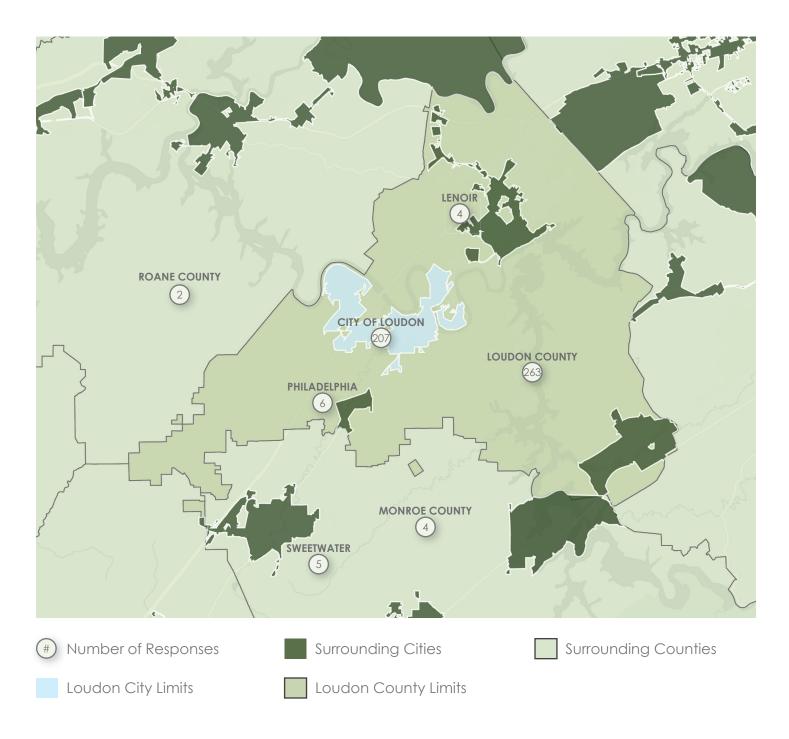
Survey participants were asked about the age groups in their individual homes. Approximately 38% of the participants' households have individuals under the age of 18 years old, 53% have individuals who are between 19 and 64 years old, and 9% have individuals over the age of 65 years old.





### Which of the following residential categories best describes you?

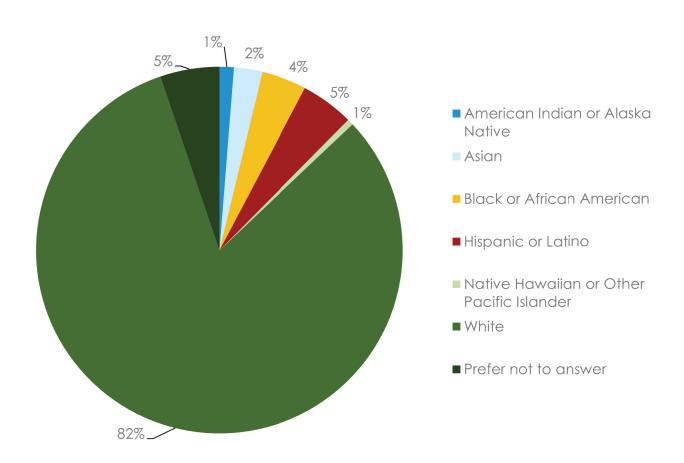
Survey participants were asked for the location of their permanent residence to help the City get a better understanding of the region that utilizes the City's park and recreation facilities. The figure indicates that the City's parks and recreation system serves a larger area than just the city limits. Loudon County residents were the largest group of respondents, with 52% of respondents living in Loudon County while 41% live in the city of Loudon. Amongst those that live in surrounding cities and towns, Philadelphia, Lenoir City, Sweetwater, and Monroe County were the most popular answers.





### What ethnicity/race is represented in your household:

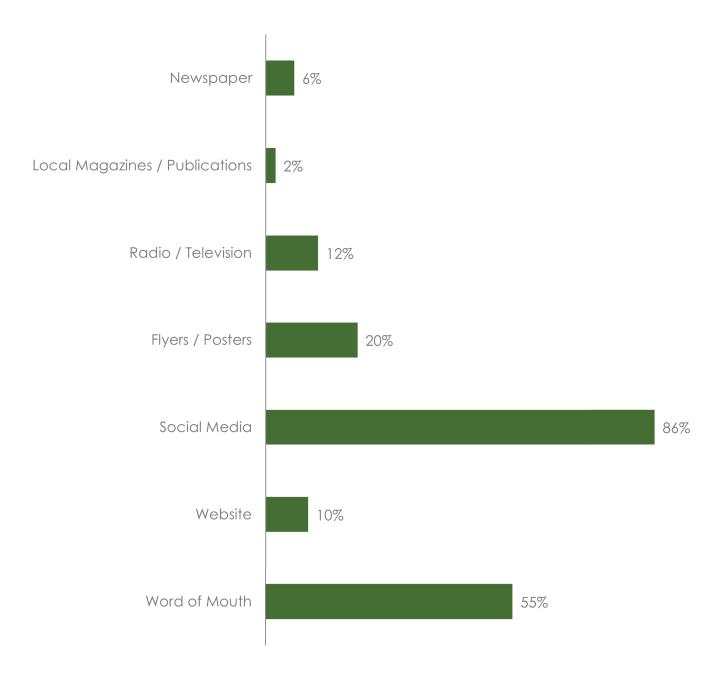
Survey respondents' were asked what ethnicity or race they identified as. Out of the respondents approximately 90% were White, 5% were Hispanic or Latino, 4% were Black or African American, 2% were Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaska Native, and less than 1% were Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. 5% of respondents declined to share their ethnic identification. These results generally follow the reported U.S. Census data for the race and ethnicity data of Loudon County. Collecting and analyzing race data is crucial for the city to accurately identify and address any underserved populations when compared to the US Census data, ensuring equitable resource distribution and targeted community support.





### How do you learn about community events?

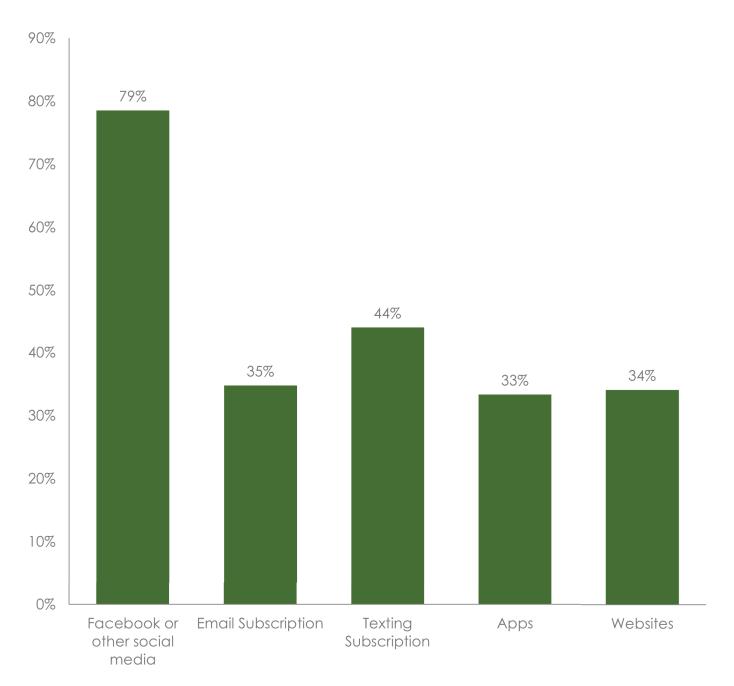
Survey participants were asked to share how they learn about community events. They were encouraged to select each of the avenues of engagement they utilize to learn more about community events. The figure below shows social media and word of mouth as being the most popular responses. In the comments, many expanded upon their answers and wrote in Facebook as a popular social media platforms for learning about community events. Many others wrote in banners or signs posted in the park as their primary source of information about community events.





How could the City more effectively communicate to participants of leagues, programs, classes and facility users to update them on deadlines, any schedule changes or specific program information?

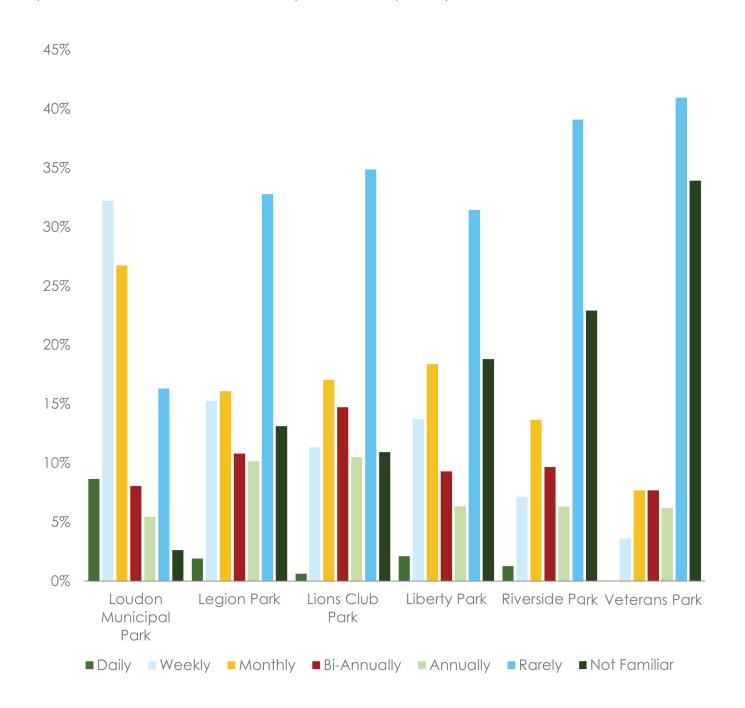
Survey participants were asked to share how the city can better reach its residents regarding leagues, program, classes, etc.. Overwhelmingly, the respondents prefer to increase communications on social media. The next most popular answer was the implementation of a text subscription. Other responses include the desire for communication through phone calls, newspapers, and the radio. These results are shown in the figure below.





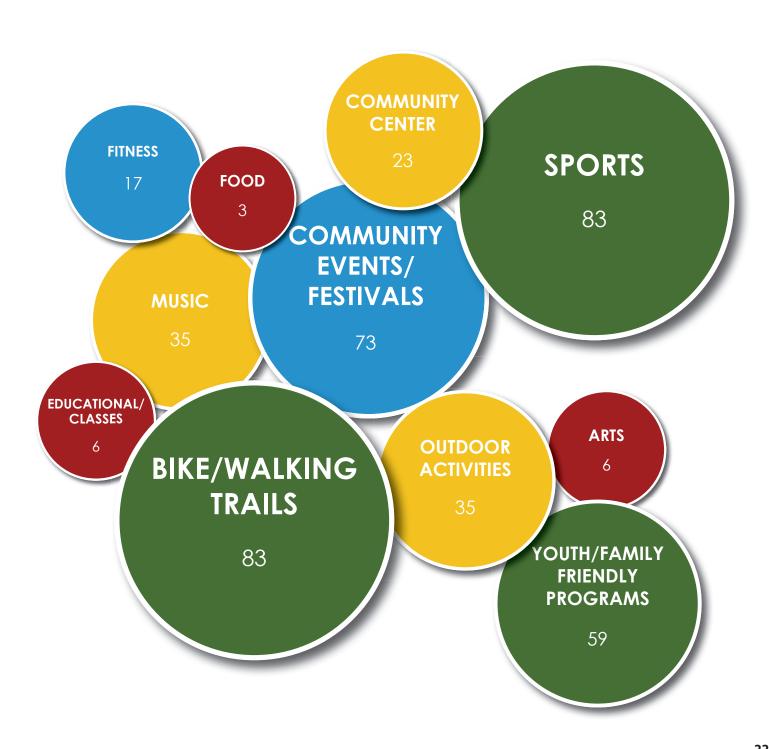
# How often does your household visit the listed Loudon facilities, parks, and greenways?

Survey respondents were asked how frequently they visited Loudon's parks and recreational facilities. Based on the responses, Loudon Municipal Park, Legion Park, and the Lions Club Park were the top visited facilities on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Veterans Park was identified as the park respondents were most unfamiliar with (33% of the responses).





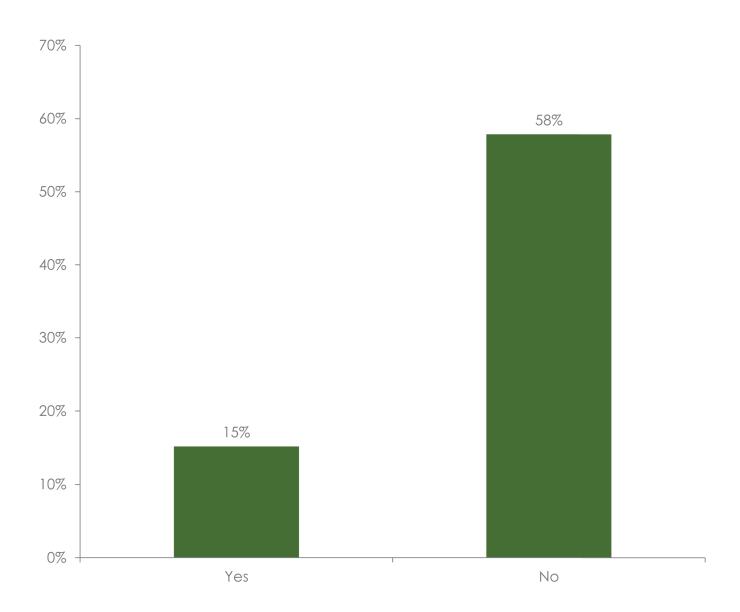
When asked what activities, programs, or events residents would like Loudon to add, the most popular answers were the addition/expansion of walking/bike trails, sports facilities and activities, community events, and events targeted toward families. These results are shown in a word cloud, which highlights common responses.





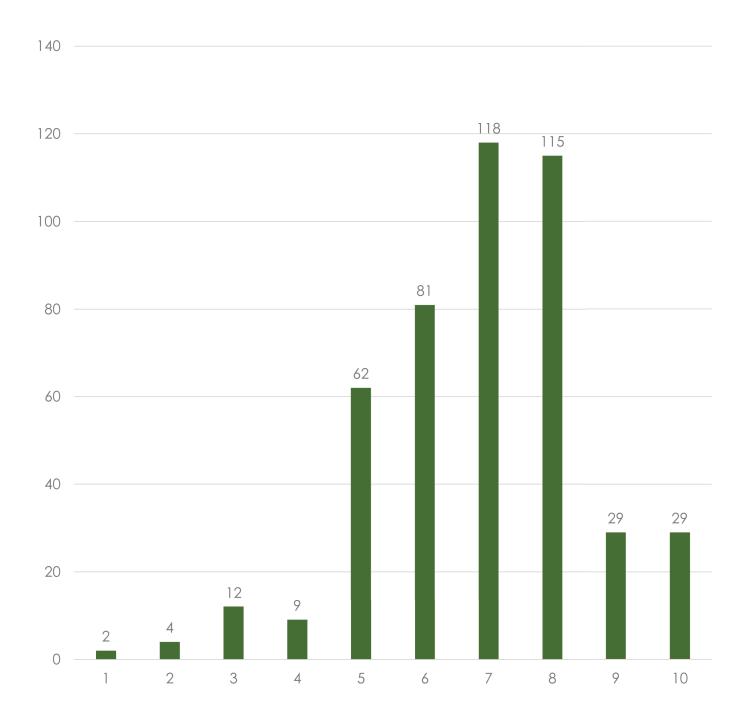
Do the City's recreation facilities have operational or maintenance issues that need to be addressed and improved upon? If yes, please provide additional comments below.

Survey respondents were asked if the facilities have operation or maintenance issues and the majority said that there were not issues (57%). However, those who made additional comments (26%) discussed that many things could be improved upon. The most prevalent of these responses were the maintenance of sports fields, bathrooms, and overall cleanliness.





Survey respondents were asked overall, how they would rate the parks and facilities that Loudon offers. The average overall rating was approximately 7 out of 10. The majority rated the facilities at a 7 out of 10, followed closely with the rating of 8 out of 10.





Based on your answer from the previous question, where should the City focus its resources to improving the City's Parks and facilities?

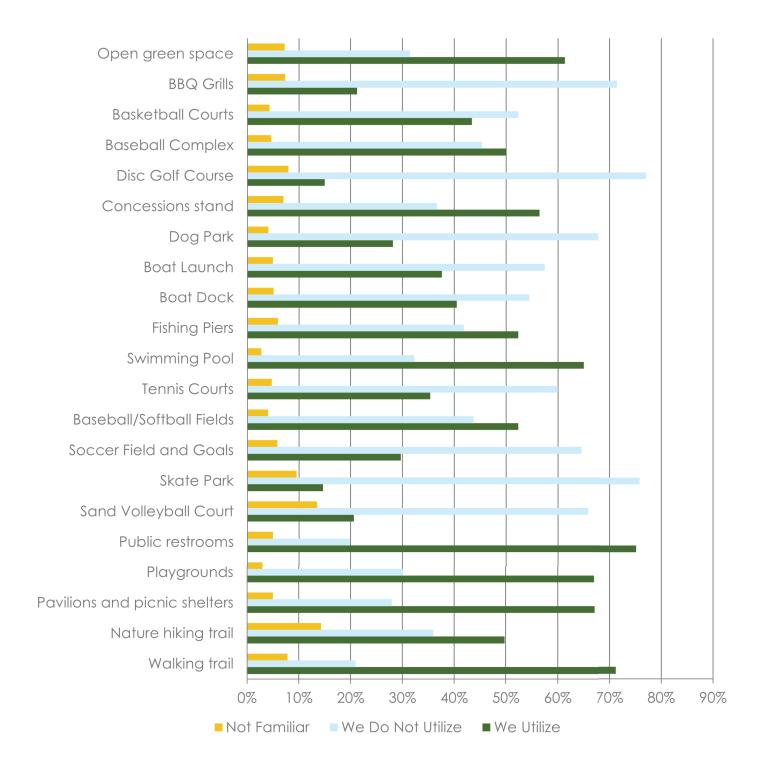
When asked where the City should focus its resources, respondents indicated that one of the most pressing needs is the improvement of maintenance and facilities. Respondents also commonly stated that they would like to see an emphasis on bike/walking paths and indoor activities such as a community center.





### Which facilities and amenities does your household utilize?

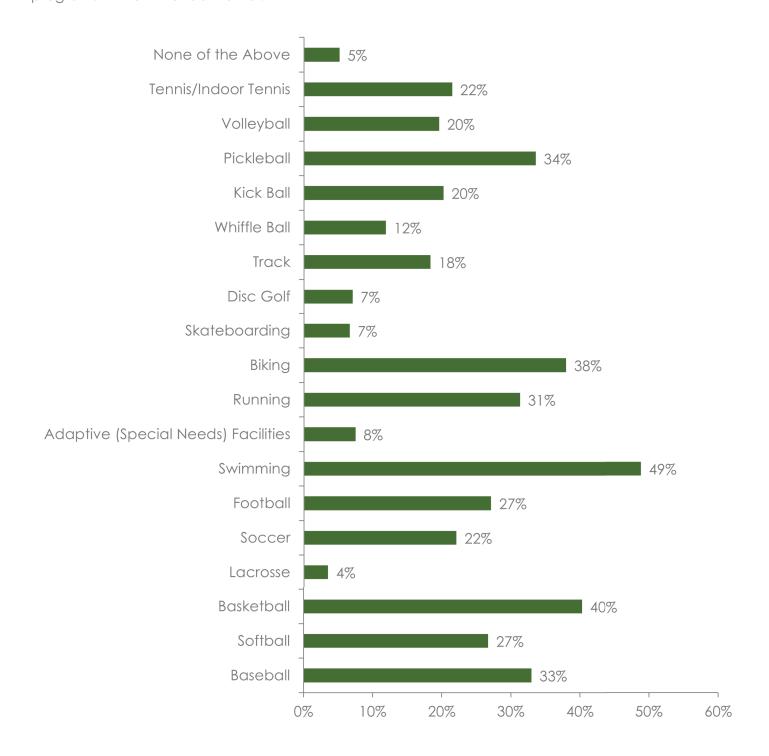
The most utilized facilities selected were public restrooms (75%), walking trails (71%), pavilions and picnic shelters (67%), playgrounds (66%), and the swimming pool (65%). The least utilized facilities included the skate park (14%), disc golf course (15%), sand volleyball court (20%), and BBQ grills (21%).





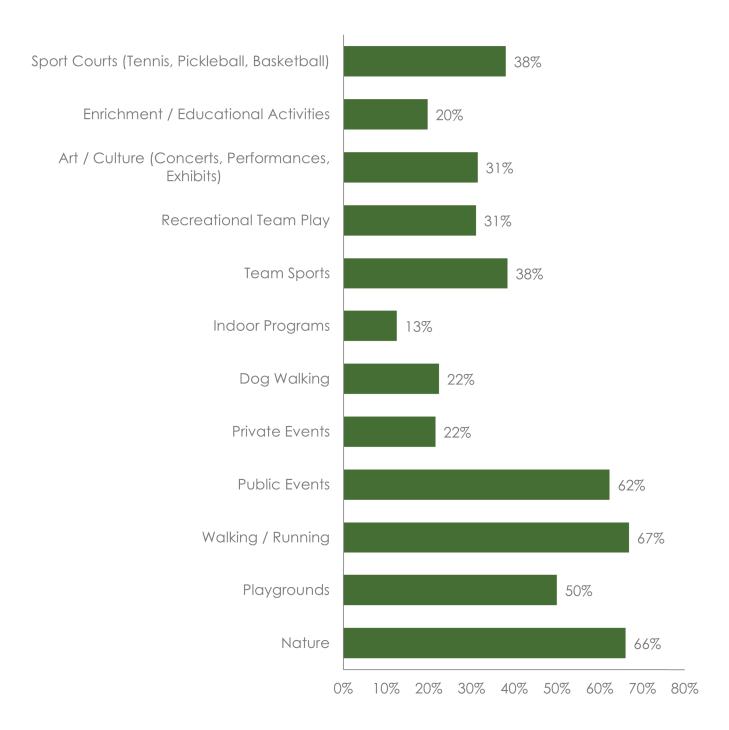
### What type of athletic facilities/programming would your household utilize if available?

Respondents were asked to select all the recreation facilities and programming their household would utilize if it were available. Swimming (49%) was most popular answer, with biking (47%) being the second, and running (41%) was marked as the third highest response. The least desired activities were lacrosse (4%), whiffle ball (6%), and football (6%). Walking, yoga, and climbing were top programs written in under "other."





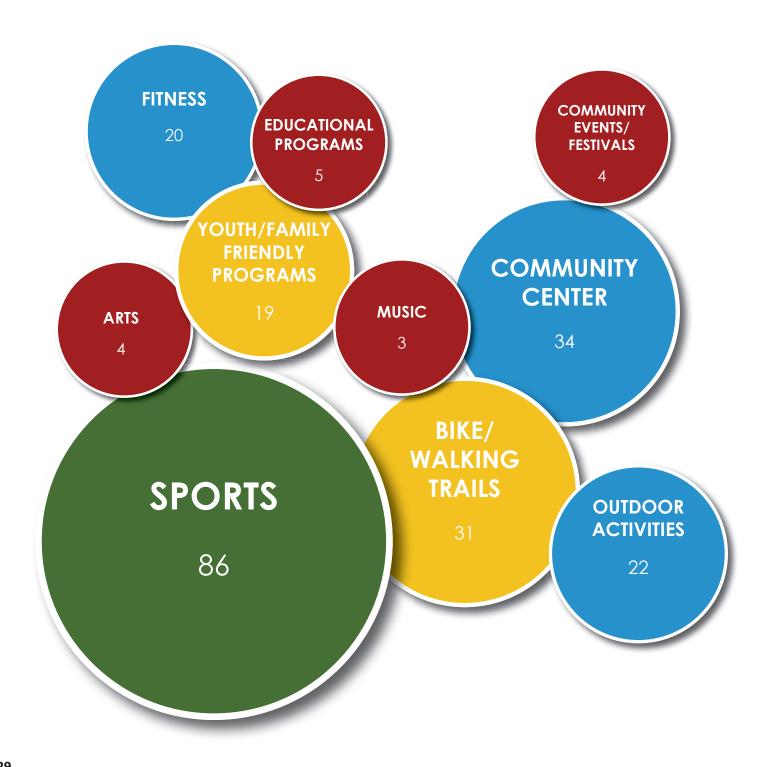
Residents were asked what attracts them to their local park or facility, with walking/running being the favorite at 67%, nature being a close second at 66%. The lowest attractions identified were indoor programs at 12% and enrichment/educational activities at 19%. Sports/training, family/friends, and skating were the top attractions that were written in under "other."





### What type of facilities would you like Loudon to add or expand?

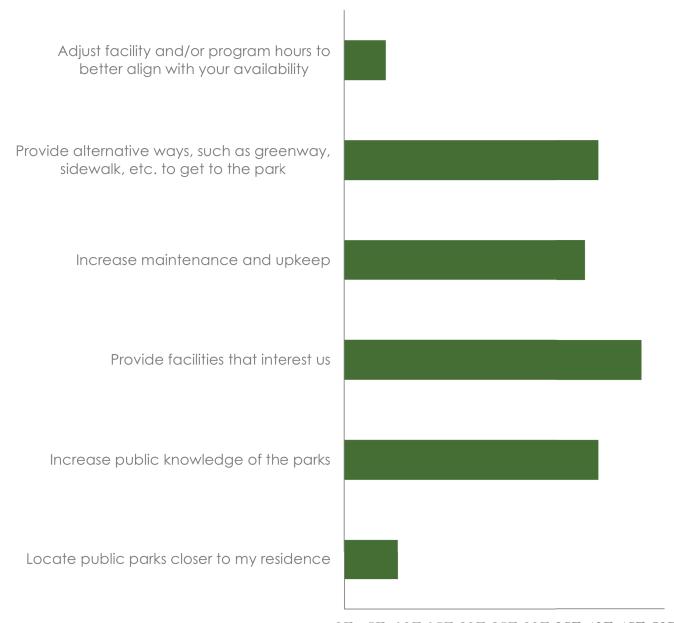
Respondents identified the type of facilities they would like to see added or expanded upon in Loudon, and the most common responses were sports. There was also a strong desire for the addition of a community center along with the expansion of bike/walking trails. Other noteworthy responses include the addition of more outdoor activities and the expansion of youth programming.





# What could the City do to increase the number of times you visit a Loudon park or facility?

Survey respondents cited a wide variety of ways that the City could increase the number of times they visit the parks and recreation facilities. The graph below shows the most frequent answer at 46%, was to provide facilities that interest more of the community. The next most common responses were to increase the public knowledge of the parks (39%), to provide alternative routes into the parks (39%), and to increase maintenance/upkeep (37%). Around 16% of respondents added an additional comment, and the most common responses were to upgrade facilities and increase activities/events.

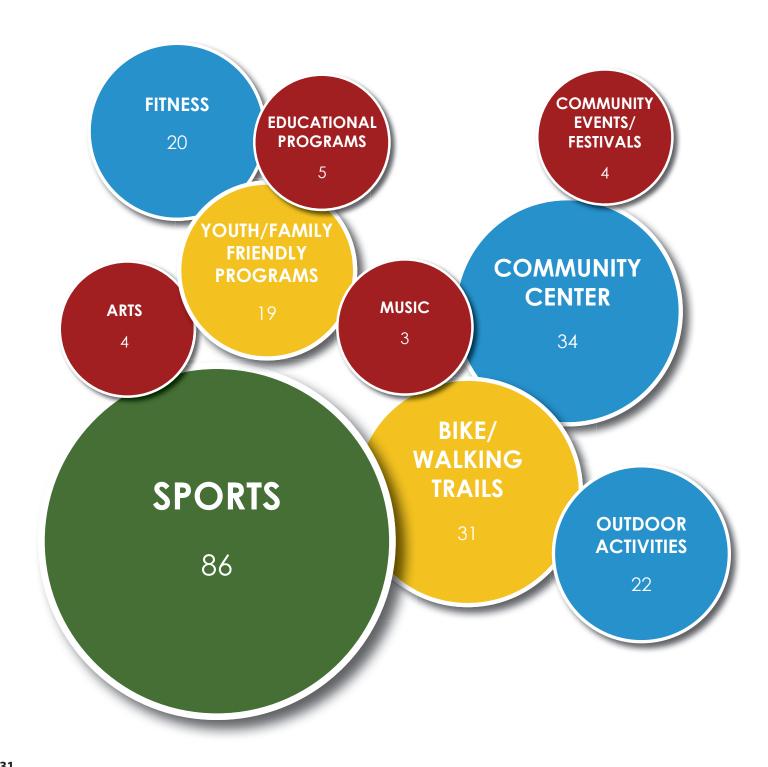


0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% 45% 50%



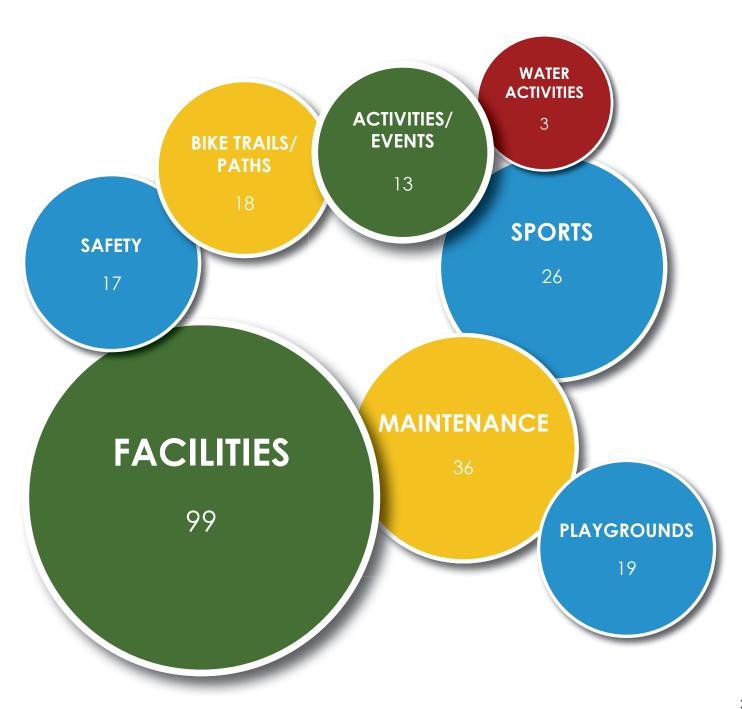
### What type of facilities would you like Loudon to add or expand?

Respondents identified the type of facilities they would like to see added or expanded upon in Loudon, and the most common responses were sports. There was also a desire for the addition of a community center along with the expansion of bike/walking trails. Other noteworthy responses include the addition of more outdoor activities and the expansion of youth programming.



# What are the weaknesses of the parks in Loudon that we need to suggest improving in this master plan?

Respondents identified several weaknesses of the parks and recreation system in Loudon, but overwhelmingly the lack of facilities was the most popular answer. Additional frequent responses included the need to improve upon maintenance issues and the desire for more sports programs. The word cloud illustrates some of the frequently mentioned weakness in the comments.





# What are the strengths of the parks in Loudon that we need to build upon for this master plan?

Respondents identified many strengths of the parks and recreation system in Loudon, including expanding on activities/events and increasing the maintenance standard. Additional frequent responses included the desire to enhance sports programs, aesthetics, and accessibility. The word cloud illustrates some of the frequently mentioned strength in the comments.



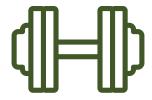






#### **SWOT ANALYSIS**

The planning team conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) workshop with the City Commission, Recreation Advisory Board, and community stakeholders on January 22, 2025. The SWOT analysis provides Loudon an opportunity to reflect on a wide variety of topics that identify both internal and external factors impacting the parks and recreation system. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified in the session are illustrated below.



#### Strengths

- The existing parks each have their own unique natural beauty
- The county and city have good volunteerism and support for community events (especially Riverfest and Christmas in the Park)
- Parks are very clean and well maintained
- Parks are home to youth and adult sports leagues, where participation is high
- Dedicated sales tax for Parks and Recreation help maintain park quality
- Existing park signage
- Location of parks and proximity to the river front and interstate



#### Weaknesses

- Deferred maintenance to aging facilities has resulted in a backlog of upkeep
- Poor communication to public about parks and events, lack of a central location for information
- Lack of facilities to support competitive play (including indoor basketball courts, pickleball, and tennis courts) and community gathering
- Lack of partnerships with local businesses
- Lack of year-round programming (including for youth activities, tournament play, events)
- No apparent "home base" for staff, making it difficult to find and communicate with staff members
- Poor technology



#### **Opportunities**

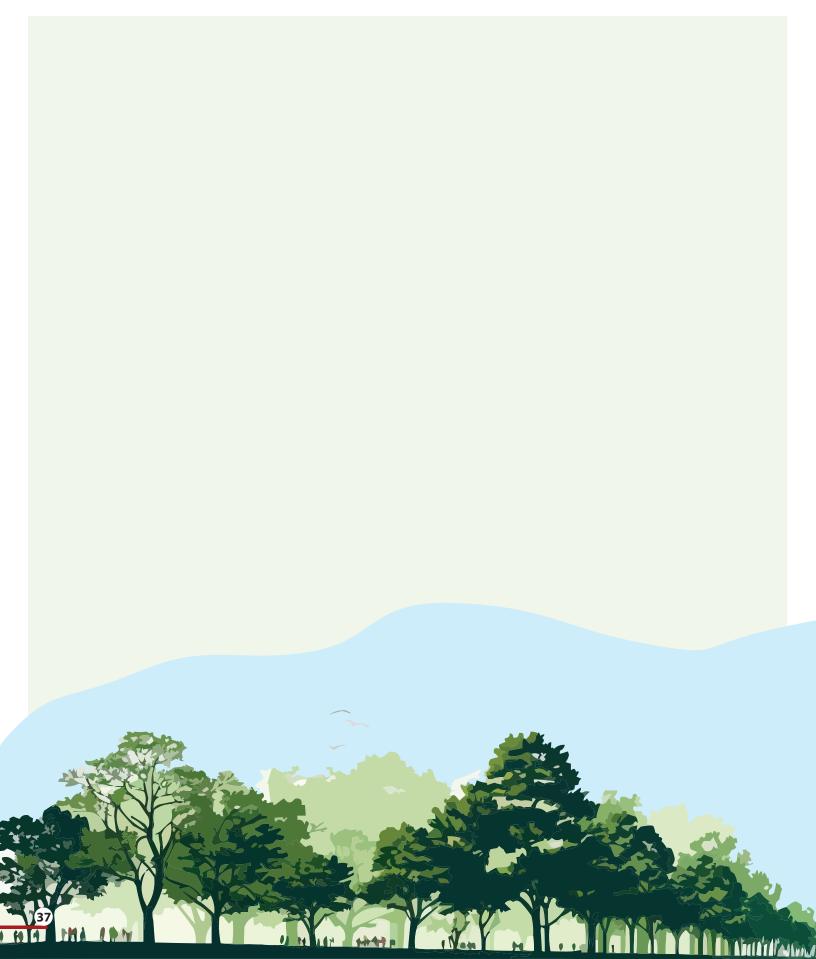
- Acquire properties that generate income (including amphitheatre, turf field, community center with event space and indoor basketball courts)
- Hire a communications specialist for the City (to serve recreation and other departments)
- Waterfront access from park properties is a unique asset, can add waterfront activities, rentals, and improve ways to access the water
- Partner with local organizations, schools, and businesses to create sponsorship and funding opportunities
- Available space to expand existing facilities (pickleball, disc golf)
- Generate revenue through organized adult sport leagues



#### **Threats**

- Competitive relationship with neighboring towns (including Lenoir City)
- Unknown operating cost of future community center
- Lack of public attendance at city council meetings and parks advisory board meetings
- Lack of dedicated funding for larger projects
- Inability to evolve
- Not enough staff, which can lead to staff being stretched too thin



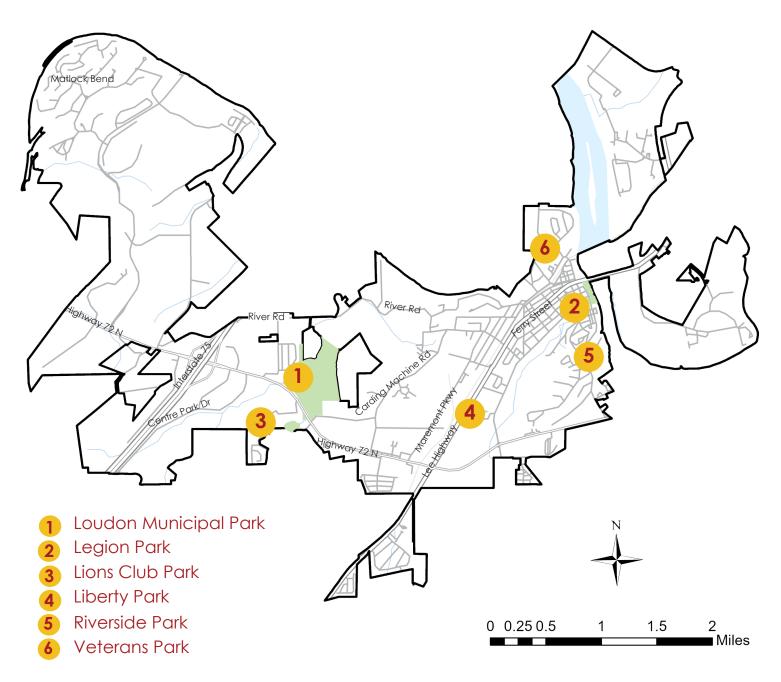


# Existing Facility Assessment



#### **OVERVIEW AND EVALUATION COMPONENTS**

For a better understanding of the existing assets Loudon is providing, the consultant team and Department staff visited each park location to document existing conditions and identify amenities. Each amenity was given the rating good, fair, or poor. A "good" amenity or facility is in new or likenew condition and will not require any major foreseeable maintenance updates within the next 5 years. A "fair" amenity or facility shows signs of normal wear and tear, but is still in usable condition at the time of inventory and will likely need updates after five years. A "poor" amenity or facility is in a condition unsuitable for use and should be replaced or upgraded within the next five years. The consultant team performed an existing facility evaluation of the following facilities:







Source: City of Loudon



#### LOUDON MUNICIPAL PARK

#### 1470 Roberson Springs Road, Loudon, TN 37774, 131.15 Acres

Loudon Municipal Park is one of the city's most popular parks. It hosts events for many holidays such as: Easter egg hunts, Fourth of July fireworks, and Christmas light displays. The park is surrounded by rolling hills, abundant trees, and walking trails. Additionally, the park offers a variety of play activities, including disc golf.



AMENITY	CONDITION
4-Field baseball complex	Good
18 Hole disc golf course	Fair
Soccer field	Fair
Sand volleyball court	Fair
0.5 Mile walking track	Poor
Nature hiking trail (primitive)	Good
Maremont picnic shelter	Good
Restrooms	Fair
Dog park	Fair
Performing Arts Center (amphitheater)	Good





#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Short-term

- Restripe stair treads at playground
- Repaint handrail at playground
- Update playground equipment
- Install poured-in-place playground surface
- Restripe parking lots
- Improve disc golf wayfinding signage on course
- Overseed fields
- Improve wayfinding signage leading to and within park
- Upgrade lighting at ballfields to LED
- Add more shaded seating options throughout the park and at ballfields
- Add striping to ballfields to allow for multiple age groups to play
- Convert grass ballfields to artificial turf

#### Long-term

- Improve traffic flow and entrance to park
- Build Community Center







#### **LEGION PARK**

#### 201 Ferry Street, Loudon, TN 37774, 40.27 Acres

Legion Park is surrounded by quaint neighborhoods with a small retention pond and access to the Tennessee River, offering both passive and active recreational opportunities such as picnicking and hiking. The open green space allows for multi-purpose activities and large community gatherings such as Loudon's Riverfest.



AMENITY	CONDITION
Basketball court	Good
Restrooms	Fair
0.43 Mile walking trail	Poor
Playground	Fair
Skate park	Poor
Soccer goals	Fair
Backstop (old baseball field)	Poor
Open green space	Good
Multipurpose field (soccer)	Fair





#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Short-term

- Add more shaded seating options throughout the park such as picnic tables and benches
- Add benches along walking trail
- Repave walking trail and widen to 10'
- Add mile markers along walking path
- Repave and restripe parking
- Install poured-in-place playground surface
- Update playground equipment
- Provide ADA access to playground
- Update walking trail from accessible parking stall to be ADA compliant



#### Long-term

- Improve ballfield
- Update and repair pedestrian bridges
- Kayak /Paddle Board rental and boat dock







#### LIONS CLUB PARK

#### 1522 Roberson Springs Road, Loudon, TN 37774, 4.2 Acres

The Loudon Lions Club, people dedicated to serving the needs of their community, built Lions Club Park in hopes to bring the community together through parks and recreation. It provides locals with outdoor amenities to host large outdoor parties and bring their friends and family together in the City of Loudon . The park provides access to Sweetwater Creek and has both formal and informal picnic areas near Sweetwater Creek.



AMENITY	CONDITION
Basketball court	Poor
Large picnic shelter	Fair
Small picnic shelter	Fair
Playground	Fair
Hiking trail (primitive)	Fair
Restroom building	Fair
Sweetwater Creek	Good





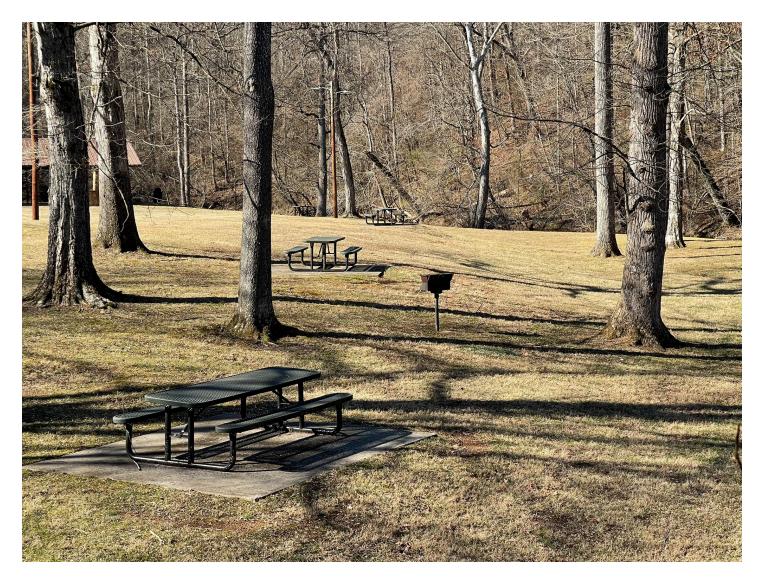
#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Short-term

- Install riparian habitat educational signage
- Improve wayfinding signage for hiking trail
- Repave and restripe parking lot
- Remove remaining barbed wire along fence
- Replace fence and gate
- Pave parking area at trailhead
- Add removable bollards at trailhead

#### Long-term

- Resurface basketball courts
- Add pickleball courts
- Add picnic shelters along hiking trail
- Consider building creek access (i.e. kayak launch)
- Demarcate edge of hiking trail
- Resolve flooding issue

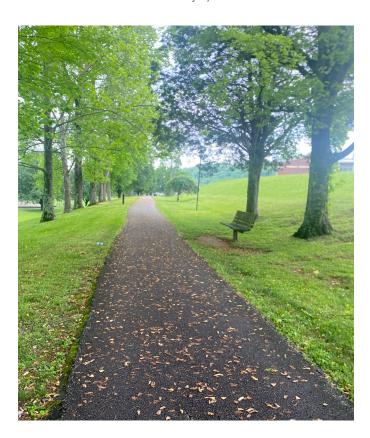




#### LIBERTY PARK

#### 1051 Mulberry Street, Loudon, TN 37774, 10.53 Acres

Liberty Park sets itself apart from Loudon's other parks because it is home to the community's outdoor pool and splashpad. It is conveniently surrounded by Fort Loudoun Middle School and Loudon High School for students to enjoy. There are countless recreational opportunities for all ages.



AMENITY	CONDITION
Softball field	Fair
Playground	Fair
0.4 Mile jogging trail	Good
Basketball court	Good
Tennis courts	Good
Pool	Fair
Concession stand	Fair
Pickleball courts	Good
Picnic pavilion	Fair





#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Short-Term

- Improve wayfinding signage
- Repave and restripe parking
- Improve ADA accessibility throughout park amenities including playground
- Provide more ADA accessible seating options including companion seating next to benches and accessible picnic tables
- Address and repair any damaged pavement along the walking trail
- Increase waste bins along high traffic areas

#### Long-term

- Replace rusted playground equipment
- Install poured-in-place playground surface around playground and exercise equipment





#### **RIVERSIDE PARK**

#### 899 Main Street, Loudon, TN 37774, 10.53 Acres

Riverside Park provides a peaceful riverside escape where the community can immerse themselves in nature and unwind. Riverside Park provides a perfect setting for a picnic, fishing, or a leisurely walk for the public. It is approximately a thirty minute walk from Legion Park and from Loudon County's Senior Citizen Center.



AMENITY	CONDITION
Restrooms	Poor
Picnic shelter	Fair
Fishing piers	Fair
Boat launch	Fair
Boat dock	Fair

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Short-term

- Repaint pavilion, fishing pier shelter, and all metal (handrails, structure, shelters)
- Improve existing landscape beds
- Improve wayfinding signage

#### Long-term

- Restripe shuffleboard or update based on community survey feedback
- Repave ramp to make ADA accessible
- Improve ADA accessibility





#### **VETERANS PARK**

#### 300 Wharf Street, Loudon, TN 37774, 0.23 Acres

As visitors and residents exit the Loudon Bridge and enter the city, they are greeted by Veterans Park to their right on Wharf Street. The park is home to a digital sign which updates the community with upcoming events. Additionally, it faces the iconic and historic City of Loudon water tower. This greenspace is designed for people to remember our country's lost veterans and appreciate the city's historic views.



AMENITY	CONDITION
Memorial monument	Good
Digital sign and mural	Good

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### Short-term

#### Long-term

- Improve signage and wayfinding to site
- Add dog waste station

N/A







# Programming





#### **APPROACH**

This chapter analyses the athletic and recreational programs offered by the City of Loudon. The analysis identifies how those programs are performing and if programs adequately provide for all age ranges.

This plan defines athletic and recreational programs as activities, clubs, or events that promote physical activity, social interaction, and enhance public well-being. These programs cater to various age groups and interests and often focus on fitness, education, social interaction, or environmental stewardship. Programs play a vital role in the success of parks and recreation agencies by generating revenue and providing indirect economic benefits to the community. Registration and rental fees can be key funding sources supporting operational costs and facility maintenance. Moreover, local businesses can benefit from increased activity and tourism generated by sports tournaments, special events, and festivals hosted in the community.

This section evaluates the program offerings in Loudon and makes recommendations based on data from the public survey results, National Recreation and Park Association Performance Review (NRPA) metrics, and comparison with peer agencies in the area. This analysis reviewed the age segment distribution and lifecycle of Loudon's current program offerings.



Source: Loudon Parks and Recreation Facebook Page



#### Athletic Leagues

The City of Loudon offers a variety of successful youth athletic programming options. The public survey responses identified a desire for an expansion of current youth and adult athletic league offerings. This interest is reflected in the programming assessment, which shows that all of Loudon's current youth athletic leagues are either mature or growing.

Based on survey responses and feedback from staff and stakeholder interviews, it's clear that the city's athletic leagues serve residents not only from the city itself but also from the county and surrounding communities. However, the staffing assessment and interviews revealed that securing referees and coaches can sometimes be challenging. This issue adds strain to the system and may lead to turning participants away due to a lack of sufficient staff. It is recommended that the city hire a full-time athletics and programming director to help manage and run the athletic leagues and coordinate scheduling. Another limitation to expanding Loudon's athletic league offerings is the absence of an indoor athletics facility.



Source: Loudon Parks and Recreation Facebook Page

There is a strong desire for adult athletic leagues, as indicated by both the community survey results and the SWOT assessment, as well as during city staff interviews. It is recommended that the city conduct a feasibility study and engage in partnerships with surrounding municipalities to introduce adult athletic programs that meet the community's needs.

The tables on the following pages list athletic leagues provided by Loudon and provided by local organizations.



CITY OF LOUDON ATHLETIC LEAGUES						
PROGRAM/EVENT TARGET AGE GROWING/MATURE/DECLINING						
Loudon NFL Flag	Youth (5-12)	Growing				
Loudon NFL Flag	Teen (13-17)	Growing				
Coed Softball	Adult (18-49)	Growing				
Cornhole League	Adult (18-49)	Growing				
Flag Football	Adult (18-49)	Growing				
Adult Basketball	Adult (18-49)	Growing				
Disc Golf League	Adult (18-49)	Growing				
Senior Softball League	Senior (50+)	Growing				

ATHLETIC LEAGUES (NOT RAN BY LOUDON)						
ORGANIZATION PROGRAM/EVENT TARGET AGE GROWING/MAT						
Loudon Diamond Club	Youth Baseball	Youth (5-12)	Growing			
Loudon Diamond Club	Youth Baseball	Teen (13-17)	Growing			
Loudon Diamond Club	Youth Softball	Youth (5-12)	Growing			
Loudon Diamond Club	Without Limits Baseball	All Ages	Growing			
Loudon Diamond Club	Softball	Youth (5-12)	Growing			
Loudon Diamond Club	Wee Ball	4-year-olds	Growing			
AYSO Region 325	AYSO Youth Soccer	Youth (5-12)	Growing			
AYSO Region 325	AYSO Teen Soccer	Teen (13-17)	Growing			
Upward Basketball	Youth Basketball	Youth (5-12)	Mature			



#### Program & Events

Alongside athletic leagues, Loudon also offers social and recreational events, festivals, and activities. The table below lists the programs and events offered by the City of Loudon and other local organizations within the City. Loudon currently offers a wide variety of programs and annual events to their residents throughout the year. There was a strong desire to expand upon the annual social and recreational events throughout the year in the public survey responses. It is recommended that the City hire a dedicated events programmer to help run and coordinate annual events.



Source: Loudon Parks and Recreation Facebook Page

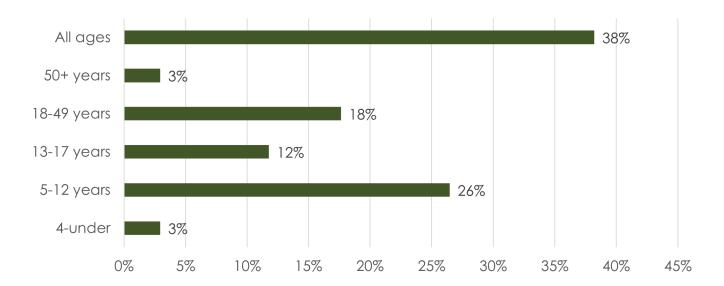
CITY OF LOUDON SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS AND EVENTS					
PROGRAM/EVENT	TARGET AGE	GROWING/MATURE/DECLINING			
Annual Easter Egg Hunt	Youth (5-12)	Growing			
Community Yard Sale	All Ages	Growing			
Free Family Fishing Day	All Ages	Growing			
Independence Day Celebration	All Ages	Growing			
Independence Day Parade	All Ages	Growing			
Loudon Riverfest	All Ages	Growing			
Loudon Lights	All Ages	Growing			
Kindergarten Tree Decorating	Youth (5-12)	Growing			
Christmas in the Park	All Ages	Growing			
Loudon Christmas Parade	All Ages	Growing			
Smoky Valley Riders	All Ages	Growing			
Jammin in June	All Ages	Growing			
Wags N Waves	All Ages	Growing			



#### Age Segment Distribution

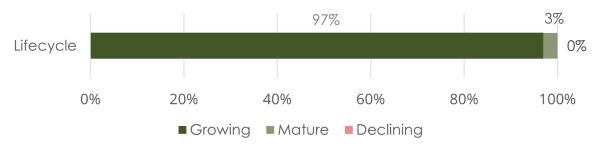
An age segment distribution analysis was conducted to understand the target audience for each existing program. This analysis helps to better comprehend how the current program system serves each age group in the community.

Currently, 38% of Loudon's programs cater to all ages. Additionally, Loudon offers a healthy amount of activities for youth. However, in contrast to the strong offerings of programs for all ages and youth, there is a lack of programming that caters to seniors and pre-school age groups. It is recommended that department staff review age segment distribution annually, in conjunction with user feedback surveys, to better understand the level of service provided to each age group and ensure a balanced offering of programs.



#### Lifecycle Analysis

All programs, including those provided by local organizations, were evaluated based on their current participation trends. The lifecycle analysis is positive, showing a single program that is mature (3%) and the rest are growing (97%). There aren't any programs that are in decline. The high number of growing and mature programs is an indicator that the city is providing successful programs to the community. The city and its partners should anticipate the increased staff and effort required to support growing programs into maturity, and sustain existing mature programs. The graphic below represents the current programs and their lifecycle stages.





#### **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this program analysis is to identify the strengths and shortcomings of the recreational, social, and educational programs and events offered by the City of Loudon. Evaluating the status of existing programs with the results of the public survey will continue to help guide future decisions.

Loudon's current program offerings are successful with the community as all programs are either growing or mature. Based on this lifecycle analysis, it is recommended that the Department continue to offer the current programs and athletic leagues. Based on the public survey results, there is a desire from the community for the City to offer a wider range of athletic programming for both youth and adults.

The Department may explore options for program expansion based on suggestions from the public survey results. Program expansion could increase the economic and social benefits provided to the community. However, successful program expansion could be challenged by a lack of adequate facilities, staff and technology. Improvements to department technology such as scheduling and registration software would provide an effective solution for saving costs and staff effort while providing exceptional service to the public. It is recommended that Loudon allocate resources such as additional facilities and staff to improve administrative capacity and sustain successful programs to better meet the needs of both the existing community and the projected future growth.



Source: Loudon Parks and Recreation Facebook page





# Benchmark Analysis





#### NRPA BENCHMARKING APPROACH

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) collects data and performance measures from various agencies and park departments across the United States. This benchmarking analysis section uses the 2024 NRPA Performance review data, the most recent figures available at the time this master plan was written. The information provided to the NRPA is also self-reported and thus may have some variations and discrepancies due to tracking methods.

To create a useful comparison for Loudon's Parks and Recreation Department, five primary metrics were used to identify relevant NRPA data for the benchmarking analysis:

- Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents
- Park and Recreation Agency Staffing: Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)
- Programming
- Annual operating expenditures
- Parks and recreation revenue per capita

The most recent population estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau showed the city of Loudon with a population of 6,652. As a result, this benchmarking section compares Loudon to other jurisdictions with populations with less than 20,000 residents for a more relevant comparison in addition to the national averages which encompasses data from municipalities of all sizes across the nation.





#### Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents

This metric analyzes the 2023 population of Loudon and the most recent acreage quantity against similar sized communities. The city currently has 196.91 acres of parkland, and a 2023 population count of 6,652. This equates to 29.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which means Loudon is above the upper quartile for both similar sized communities and the national average. This means that the city is currently providing an above-average number of parklands for its residents compared to similarly sized communities. It should be noted that not all of this parkland is programmed or accessible to the community due to steep topography. Therefore, the city should identify areas where underutilized or inaccessible parkland can be programmed for the community. Additionally, with the 1.66% projected annual growth in population, this number will still exceed the upper quartile benchmark metric based on Loudon's projected 2030 population size.

While this number indicates that the city has a high number of park acres, it does not indicate the dispersion of park acres within the city or identify populations without equitable access to nearby parks facilities. This is an overall number and does not reflect the high volume of parkland in some areas and lack of parkland in others. The map of existing facilities in the facility inventory and analysis section provides an overall map to note areas of the city without a nearby parks and recreation facility.

Acres of Parkland Per 1,000 Residents					
All Agencies Less than 20,000					
Upper Quartile	18	20.9			
Median Quartile	10.6	12.6			
Lower Quartile	5.1 6				
Loudon	29.6				





#### **Annual Operating Expenditures**

The Annual Operating Expenditures calculates operating expenses per capita, offering a more precise insight into the allocation of parks and recreation funds. Loudon's 2024 fiscal year budget was \$1,202,012. Compared to other communities with populations under 20,000 people, Loudon spends around the same as the national average;s median quartile.

This indicates that Loudon's spending on parks and recreation is average compared to most other communities. Although the Parks and Recreation Department has substantial savings, there's an opportunity to optimize the allocation of these funds. By strategically investing in operating expenses, we can ensure the continued maintenance and high-quality operations of our parks and recreational facilities. For a more detailed breakdown of expenditure allocation, please refer to the Maintenance and Operations section.

Annual Operating Expenditures Per Capita					
All Agencies Less than 20,000					
Upper Quartile	\$	183.96	\$		263.21
Median Quartile	\$	99.47	\$		135.53
Lower Quartile	\$	53.44	\$		74.22
Loudon		\$135.46			

#### Parks and Recreation Revenue per Capita

This metric measures the revenue generated by the Parks and Recreation Department per person, calculated by dividing total revenue by the population. According to the city's 2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, Loudon's parks and recreation revenue totaled \$1,714,573, which includes charges for services, rentals, and donations. The revenue per capita is \$257.75. Loudon's revenue per capita rises over the upper quartile among national averages and similar-sized cities, which indicates that it is relatively high for its population. This is unusually high because it includes sports courts improvements. Therefore, the department should prioritize the allocation of funds to enhance maintenance and operations.

Revenue per Capita				
	All Agencies \$ 10.53			
Upper Quartile	\$	63.07	\$	109.72
Median Quartile	\$	22.58	\$	47.71
Lower Quartile	\$	7.57	\$	13.22
Loudon	\$257.75			



#### Programming

Programs and activities provide both active and passive opportunities to residents and are important for Loudon's Parks and Recreation Department. The NRPA provides data on programming offered by peer parks and recreation agencies around the United States and reports that nearly 9 in 10 agencies offer themed special events, team sports, and social recreation events.

Consistent with similar sized communities, Loudon offers more programs that relates to athletic, social, and themed recreation events. The city can benefit by offering a variety of classes to the community, including wellness, fitness, cultural, and arts programs. The percentages below reflect the amount of peer agencies that offer the listed programs and events.

Programming Offered By Parks and Recreation				
	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	Does Loudon offer this program? (y/n)	
Themed Special Events	89%	83%	У	
Social Recreation Events	88%	82%	У	
Team Sports	86%	81%	У	
Fitness Enhancement Classes	82%	69%	n	
Health and Wellness Classes	80%	64%	n	
Individual Sports	76%	66%	У	
Safety Training	73%	64%	n	
Racquet Sports	70%	57%	n	
Aquatics	66%	36%	У	
Performing Arts	68%	52%	n	
Visual Arts	63%	43%	У	
Natural and Cultural History Activities	63%	45%	У	
Cultural Crafts	62%	39%	У	
Trips and Tours	62%	42%	У	
Martial Arts	56%	36%	n	
Running/Cycling Races	53%	42%	n	
Golf	49%	22%	n	
eSports/eGaming	26%	14%	n	



#### Parks and Recreation Agency Staffing: Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)

The next comparison is Parks and Recreation FTEs. This metric analyzes the quantity of staff against other similar sized communities. Full-time employees are vital to the success and operation of a parks and recreation agency. Understaffed agencies are not able to provide a standard of service to their community and may be unable to support the required maintenance and programming offerings.

The City of Loudon has 6,652 residents and 4 FTEs. This is lower than the lower quartile for communities of similar size and national averages.

Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs)			
	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	
Upper Quartile	144	30	
Median Quartile	58	14	
Lower Quartile	20	6	
Loudon	5		

#### **SUMMARY**

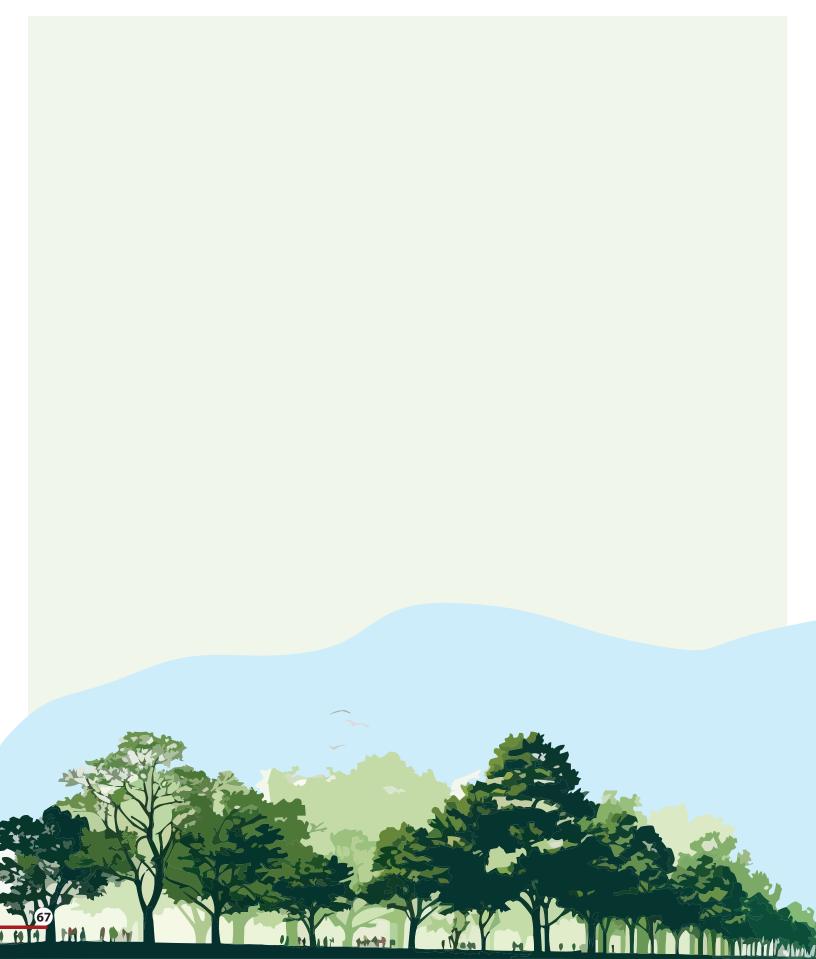
These benchmarking findings offer a baseline for Loudon to compare itself to the average for the population. This information, combined with results of the community engagement, facility analysis and other assessments in this report, will inform the recommendations in the implementation plan. The benchmarking analysis using NRPA metrics provides a useful analysis of the city of Loudon's and Recreation Department's performance relative to other park and recreation systems across the state and the country. The number one takeaway from this analysis is Loudon is performing above average compared to peer communities but generally has room for improvements. The city manages a larger amount of park acreage in comparison to similar sized communities yet has less staff to help maintain these facilities. It is recommended that the city focuses on creating a staffing plan and adding additional FTEs to care for existing facilities and acquire new land in the future. An opportunity exists for expansion and increased profitability if Loudon can provide the staff to support new facilities.

The benchmarking index has identified several areas for improvement, nonetheless it should be noted that the city has a strong core of assets upon which to build. Increasing the agency's staffing and funding, expanding the programming and events offered, and providing a variety of recreational facilities related to other communities will make additional investments over the long term, but will result in more recreational opportunities for the community.









# Maintenance and Operations



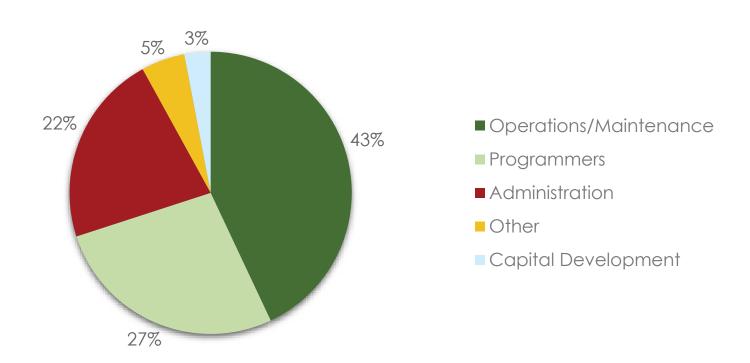


#### MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

#### **Approach**

This section examines current staffing and maintenance operations, identifies crucial issues, and offers recommendations with a prioritized implementation plan for Loudon's future Parks and Recreation Department staff. The objective of this analysis is to uncover opportunities for increased efficiency within the Department. The assessment draws on information from staff interviews, industry best practices in parks and recreation, and data metrics from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA).

Recreation departments across the nation are entrusted with various community responsibilities. It's common for these professionals to fulfill multiple roles to operate effectively. The NRPA categorizes these responsibilities into several main areas: operations and maintenance, programming, administration, capital development, and a miscellaneous category for other duties. The chart below shows the average allocation of staff time to different responsibilities for communities with populations with less than 20,000 residents.



Source: Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Workers, Jurisdictions of Less Than 20,000 Residents (NRPA)



#### **Current Staffing Operations**

Loudon's Parks Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of six parks and manages approximately 196.91 acres of parkland. Areas in need of improvement indicated in the public survey include upkeep related to restrooms, parking lots, and maintenance of existing grounds and facilities.

The City of Loudon currently has five full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). According to the NRPA's 2024 Field Report, the median park and recreation agency in communities with populations less than 20,000 residents have an average of 14.0 FTEs. Based on Loudon's metrics of five FTEs, the Department is operating below average compared to similar sized communities and will require an additional nine FTEs to be comparable to the national average. The Department's organizational chart is shown in the figure on the following page.

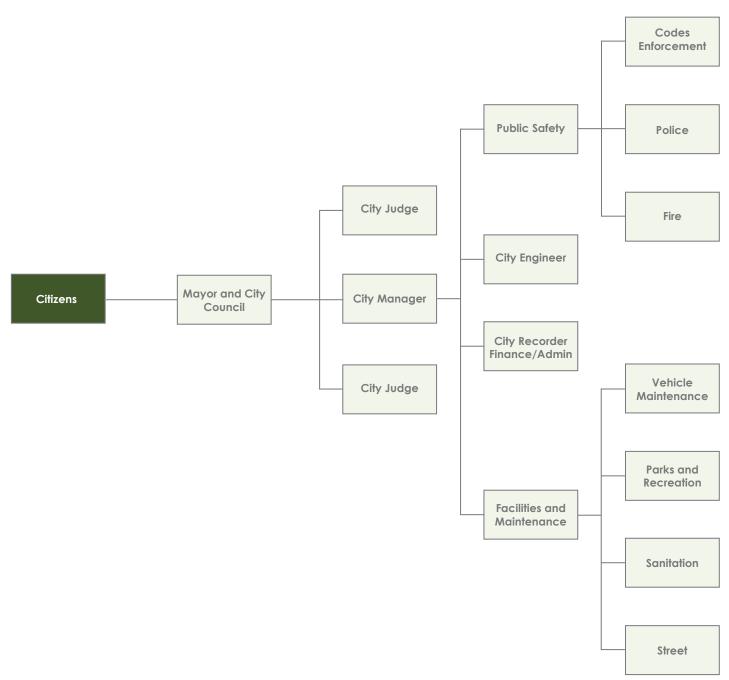
Another area of focus identified in the staff interviews was finding and maintaining seasonal staff. Staffing with the sports programs can be challenging as a large percentage of lifeguards, referees, and umpires in Loudon are student athletes who have their own athletics conflicting with the schedule. Additionally, the city often loses its referee and umpires to surrounding municipalities who host large tournaments.



Source: City of Loudon Facebook Page



### City of Loudon Organziational Chart



Source: City of Loudon, Tennessee Annual Financial Report for the FY Ended June 30, 2024



#### Maintenance Operations and Equipment

Interviews with staff members were conducted by the Master Plan team and based on these interviews, it is evident that the work needed to maintain the city parks and recreation spaces has outgrown available personnel. Currently, there are two full-time employees handling all of the parks and recreational maintenance with support from the Building Department's staff assisting with the upkeep of restrooms and pavilions, but this support is insufficient to meet the increasing level of maintenance demand. Additionally, there is a growing need for more volunteers as recreational programs, youth sports tournaments, and athletic leagues continue to expand, outpacing the capacity of the current staff. The number of parks and recreation facilities needing updates is significantly higher than the number of employees available to carry out the renovations and upkeep.

Due to Loudon's below average number of staff, hiring additional staff within the first five years will be an important first step for the department, then a continued hiring plan based on need and increased demand as population growth increases. Additionally, it is recommended that the city focuses on forming strategic partnerships, establishing a formal volunteer program, and utilizing technology to maximize resources.

Many public survey respondents cited restroom cleanliness as a major issue. With restrooms open year-round, maintaining them with limited staff is challenging. Additional system-wide maintenance updates identified during the staff interviews include inadequate lighting at the parks facilities and parking lots, aging facilities, and old equipment. The number one maintenance comment from the public survey and staff interviews was the need for drainage improvements as facilities currently do not adequately drain after rain events. The city should consider installing one or multiple turf fields to address these ongoing maintenance issues.

The city should regularly budget for specialized maintenance staff to attend training to ensure they are being efficiently utilized with their time and talents based on ever-changing technology. For example, employees must be aware of the procedures to maintain ballfields since baseball is such a large sport in Loudon. Sending staff to trainings to get certifications and qualifications will increase efficiency and reduce the amount of additional costs to the city from outsourcing work.

Loudon's current maintenance equipment is outdated and minimal. Based on staff responses, any current equipment needs replacing. There are not enough trucks for the current staff to get around the city, let alone the expanding staff. The City of Loudon currently shares two service tucks and one tractor between all departments. An infield groomer would be very beneficial for ball field upkeep, along with a skid steer for landscaping and minor projects at the parks.





Source: City of Loudon Facebook Page

#### Technology

The complexity of the work performed by the Parks and Recreation Department would be eased with a digital maintenance management system. Currently, Loudon does not have a system for work orders, and employees communicate with each other through their cell phones or a walkie talkie system. This removes all sense of urgency and prioritization, which could eventually lead to employee burnout.

Loudon's outdoor spaces, pavilions and shelters are very popular to rent. The current system to reserve these spaces is by calling the department or by reserving in person. The department receives numerous calls each day, and during peak season, they have received up to forty calls a day regarding rentals. Respondents in the public survey mention that they are constantly waiting on the line for someone to pick up since the Parks and Recreation Department is so busy. This system has become outdated. Transitioning to an online registration platform could enhance efficiency and significantly improve the customer experience.

Furthermore, the technology development is not growing with the sports programs. Registration and payment for the sports programs offered by the city are all done over the phone and in person. It is causing unnecessary inefficiencies to the current system. Emailing registration forms back and forth, driving to the main office to pay and exchanging credit card numbers over the phone has become outdated for the volume of participants being served by Loudon's recreation system. It would be beneficial to have residents complete these tasks on the City of Loudon's website. Additionally, the sports teams may benefit from team manager applications, as these platforms allow users to access game/practice schedules, communicate with teammates/coaches, view weather updates, and more.

Currently, the existing extension cords and drop cords are no longer sufficient electrical connections at the parks to support technology such as wifi at the parks or large events. This has led to poor video quality, making it difficult to capture clear footage, especially at night. Some security cameras are even non-functional. Upgrading the electrical connection and security cameras in the parks would significantly enhance safety.

Having partnerships with local businesses is very important for a city's maintenance and operations. Resource sharing allows for the pooling of equipment, expertise, and manpower, reducing the burden on the city's budget and personnel. Not only that but, they can also bring in specialized knowledge and skills that may not be available within the Loudon's existing workforce, improving the quality of maintenance and operations. Engaging with local businesses and organizations fosters a sense of community involvement and support, leading to better outcomes. Moreover, partnerships provide greater flexibility in addressing unexpected challenges and adapting to changing needs.

#### Marketing and Communications

After compiling survey responses, about 80% of residents learn about community events through social media, primarily Facebook. The City of Loudon should continue to expand its presence on Facebook, but also on other popular social media platforms to engage a wider variety of age groups and users. The second most popular information source is a texting subscription, which is highly effective given the integral role phones play in people's daily lives. However, compared to other cities, Loudon's website is underutilized as an information resource. Enhancing the city's website could provide residents with essential tools such as event calendars, facility maps, rental information, and registration services, making it a key resource for the community.



#### Summary

The analysis of Loudon's stafPng and maintenance operations highlights several critical issues and offers recommendations for improvement, drawing on staff interviews, industry best practices, and data from the NRPA. Loudon's Parks Department, responsible for maintaining six parks over approximately 196.91 acres, is currently operating below the NRPA's median with only 5 full-time employees. This understanding leads to challenges such as poor restroom upkeep, inadequate lighting, and insufficient maintenance of park facilities and ballPelds. Interview feedback reveals that existing staff and volunteers are struggling to keep up with the expanding demands. To address these issues, the department needs to reassess staff utilization and consider adding more staff to meet the community's growing needs.

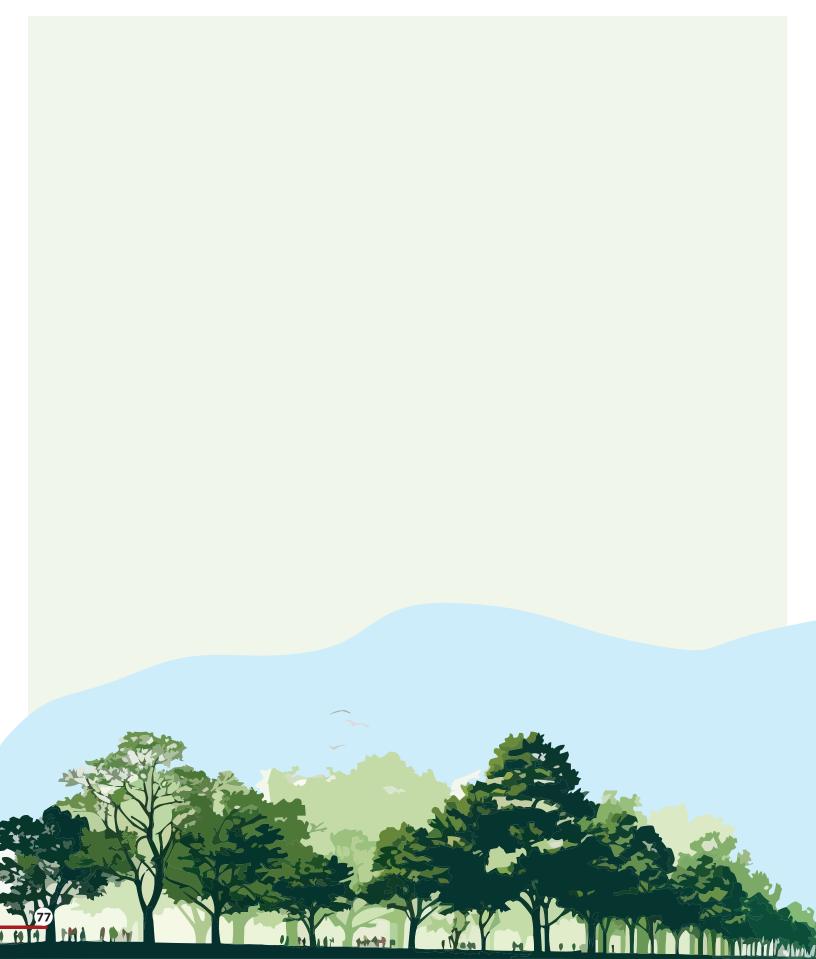
The current maintenance equipment is outdated, and there is a pressing need for newer tools and vehicles to support the staff in addressing the backlog of maintenance issues. Additionally, there's a lack of a digital maintenance management system, making it difPcult for employees to manage work orders efPciently. Improved technology solutions, such as an application for facility rentals and online systems for sports program registration, would alleviate burdens on the staff and enhance the user experience for residents. Partnerships with external organizations can also provide resource sharing opportunities, reducing costs and increasing operational efPciency. Finally, the city should expand its marketing and communication efforts by better leveraging social media platforms and enhancing the city's website to serve as a more comprehensive information resource.











# Financial Analysis





#### **FEE ANALYSIS**

A snapshot of fees for several facilities in Loudon is captured in the table below. Fees for reserving certain amenities vary per location and style of amenity. This fee breakdown includes Loudon's current pricing policies, differentiating between time frames, age groups and party sizes. Additionally, the table provides a comparison of the city's fees to its surrounding peer communities.

AMENITY	FEES	COMPARED TO PEERS
Lions Club Pavilion	Monday-Friday rental \$160 (5 hours) Saturday-Sunday rental \$200 (10am-10pm)	Comparable
Park Picnic Shelter	No fee is charged, only a facility use application is required	Comparable
Amphitheater	\$750 per event	Above Average
Field Reservations for Tournaments	\$375-\$1110 depending on number of fields rented Field lights: \$10 per field, Additional field prep: \$35 per field, Umpire room fee: \$50, security deposit: \$250	Comparable
Loudon Pool	\$2 day pass for spectator, \$4 day pass for youth; \$5 day pass for adult; \$50 annual individual pass; \$120 annual family pass (up to four people, \$20 per each additional person); \$180 pool reservations, \$200 76-100 people; \$225 over 100 people	Comparable

The following table lists the current athletic program offerings, fees charged, and the fee comparison to peer agencies. While these registration fees are paid to the civic organizations that operate the leagues, some of the leagues provide a portion of the registration fees back to the parks and recreation department to provide the maintenance of the fields they play on within Loudon's parks.

Most of the leagues are below average or comparable to league fees within East Tennessee. Based on the quality of the league programs serving Loudon's youth, it is suggested that the organizations evaluate registration fees and consider increases where feasible. Loudon can also charge an increased rate for non-residents. According to the public survey, Loudon serves a wide variety of the county, so they can make revenue if they were to have a different rate for non-residents.

PROGRAM	FEES	COMPARED TO PEERS
Loudon NFL Flag Football	\$45 registration fee	Comparable
Loudon Diamond Club Youth Baseball	\$55-\$65 depending on age group	Comparable
Loudon Diamond Club Girls Softball	\$55-\$65 depending on age group	Comparable
Loudon Diamond Club Baseball without Limits (for children with disabilities)	Free	Comparable
Adult Coed Softball	\$350 per team	Below Average
Adult Cornhole League	\$10 league fee	Comparable
Adult Disc Golf League	\$10 league fee	Comparable
Adult Basketball	\$350 per team	Below Average
Adult Flag Football	\$350 per team	Below Average
Senior Softball League	\$350 per team	Above Average



#### Operating Expenses

During the 2024 fiscal year, the city budgeted \$1,202,012 for parks and recreation related expenditures which is consisted of administration (10%), recreational programming (10%), swimming pool(10%), amphitheater (1%), adult sports programming (1%), and parks maintenance (44%). Based on Loudon's current population, this total budget equates to approximately \$180.70 in expenditures per capita. Compared to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) benchmark metrics for similar sized communities, Loudon falls between the upper and lower quartiles. Although the numbers appear promising, there is currently no specific funding allocated to the Parks and Recreation Department, as it falls under the jurisdiction of the Public Works Department. An adequately funded Parks and Recreation Department is crucial for enhancing community well-being, promoting physical health, and offering safe, enjoyable spaces for all residents to connect and engage in recreational activities.

When a parks and recreation department is funded adequately, it can successfully manage, operate, maintain, and build its parks and recreation system to meet the needs of its residents. Loudon's annual projected growth rate of approximately 1.66% at the city level and 3% at the county level is expected to result in increased operating expenses. With more operating expense comes more facilities, programming, and staff as well as better maintenance. Additional funding will need to be allocated to cover what the city already has and maintain it in a state of good repair and then to expand and grow the system. As the city expands its facilities, program offerings, and staffing, it will need to focus additional funding on the parks and recreation department, in addition to adequate funding for maintenance of existing assets.

CATEGORY	TOTAL EXPENDITURES
Administration	\$128,228
Recreation Program	\$114,779
Swimming Pool	\$116,353
Amphitheater	\$7,750
Youth Baseball/Softball	\$10,000
Adult Ball Programs	\$6,827
Parks Maintenance	\$527,136
Grand Total	\$901,073



#### Revenue Sources

In the 2024 fiscal year, Loudon generated a total of approximately \$1,714,573 in revenue for parks and recreation related sources. These are earned or generated revenues that come from local option sales tax, swimming pool income, sports tournaments, interest income, adult ball programs, other recreation programs and miscellaneous charges. In the 2024 fiscal year budget, the city anticipated generating approximately \$1,773,712 in revenue, however, they fell short of that goal by a little under \$60K. It is recommended that the city explore additional revenue generating sources to help supplement the daily maintenance and operations costs in addition to helping support both the backlog of maintenance updates to existing facilities and additional new facilities.

Based on the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review, the parks and recreation agency generates \$47.71 (median quartile) in revenue annually per resident in communities with less than 20,000 residents, while Loudon makes \$257.75 per resident. This demonstrates Loudon's strong capability in maximizing revenue generation to benefit its community.

REVENUES	FINAL BUDGETED  AMOUNTS	ACTUAL AMOUNTS
Local Option Sales Tax	\$1,663,312	\$1,475,412
Swimming Pool	\$55,500	\$87,904
Tournaments	\$4,500	\$1,600
Interest Income	\$26,900	\$115,041
Adult Ball Programs	\$2,500	\$8,755
Other Recreation Programs	\$21,000	\$18,837
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$7,024
Total Revenues	\$1,773,712	\$1,714,573



#### **REVENUE STRATEGIES**

Based on the existing budget and revenue numbers, a considerable investment in parks and facilities renovations and expansions will be necessary to meet the needs of both the existing community and projected population growth. These needs become even more acute when considering the continued population growth projected for the community and desires to build a community center. While the costs associated with purchasing parkland and developing facilities is significant, these projects become more feasible when multiple funding sources are considered and utilized. Developing a long-term capital improvements plan to prioritize funding for short-term and long-term needs will allow the increased costs associated with both department growth and systemwide expansion to be planned and funded over a longer timeline, further enhancing funding feasibility.

#### **Bond Funding**

Bond funding has been used by many communities to finance investments in parks and recreational infrastructure. These can be a particularly cost-effective strategy for capital improvements that are then repaid from a dedicated funding source, such as a hotel-tax or portion of local property taxes. These can also be funded through the creation of special taxing authorities, or TIFs, which leverage the value created for adjacent properties by assessing a tax on the increase in value of those properties after the park and recreational improvements are built.

#### League Fee Increases

In Loudon, many of the leagues offered are below nearby communities' league fees. With the large number of users and participants in Loudon leagues, which includes residents and non-residents from surrounding municipalities, this small increase would have a large impact in revenue. Additionally, scholarships could be made available for low-income families to ensure that all community members have the opportunity to participate.

#### Corporate Sponsorships

Local businesses in the community can also play a role in supporting community park facilities. These businesses are often interested in giving back to the community in the form of funding or in-kind donations (labor, materials, land), and may be interested in positive media attention generated by these partnerships. Additionally, some businesses may also be willing to pay for naming rights or can also open additional avenues for funding. Local businesses already sponsor some local recreational organizations such as the Diamond Baseball Club, indicating they are likely to also support the parks and recreation department.



#### **Developer Contributions**

Encouraging developers to donate land or easements for parks or greenways can also be a successful strategy, particularly if the new recreational infrastructure will be located near or adjacent to the rest of the new development, enhancing the value of the development. Some communities have found this to be a successful approach for a variety of public improvements, such as trails, parks, or schools. This could be a potential revenue option for a future community center or on greenway connection projects.

#### **Grant Funding**

There are a variety of state and federal grant programs that can be used to fund recreational infrastructure. Sometimes, pairing recreational enhancements as a component of other project types can also open additional avenues for funding. Some examples of grants may include STP (Surface Transportation Program), Land and Water Conservation Funds, Local Parks and Recreation Fund (LPRF), or Built Environment Grants. Loudon currently does not utilize grant funding as a regular funding source and should be considered as a viable option going forward. The city should plan to apply for each LPRF grant cycle, which typically occurs every two years to help implement the comprehensive systemwide master plan that outlines goals for the next 5 years.

#### Fundraising/Community Activism

A successful fundraising strategy in many communities around the country is the implementation of adopt-a-trail or adopt-a-park programs, where community groups or corporate entities can commit to donations of time or money to maintain specific pieces of park and recreation infrastructure. Other options for fundraising can include community events to raise funds, or the ability to pay for names to be included on park equipment, benches, bricks, or other items. The Annual Christmas Parade always has a large community turn out and would be a great event to do fundraising, along with the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Community Yard Sale, Independence Day Celebration, Loudon Riverfest, and Wags N Waves.

#### **Partnerships**

Partnerships can play a key role in leveraging the resources of the community together with other public or non-profit entities to accomplish larger projects or more complex goals than might otherwise be possible by the city alone. Partnerships with other governmental units, such as Loudon County, Lenoir City, or other local school systems, can be particularly effective strategies. These are like corporate sponsorships and developer contributions in that the partner receives positive media attention while providing funds for the city.



#### Usage Fees

While it should always be a priority to provide recreational opportunities free of charge so all members of the community can participate, it may be necessary in some instances to charge usage fees to pay for maintenance or prevent over-use of facilities. Loudon currently utilizes these fees for certain facility rentals like shelters, fields, and the amphitheater. To improve this system, non-residents could be charged to rent a facility. The tournaments in Loudon are currently a lucrative way usage fees provide revenue for the city.







Source: City of Loudon Facebook Page





# Implementation Plan





#### **APPROACH**

This five-year comprehensive parks and recreation master plan will serve as the City of Loudon's first formal parks and recreation master plan and will act as a living document the city can refer to when making strategic long- and short-term decisions for the parks and recreational facilities in the coming years. The purpose of this master plan is to examine Loudon's existing assets and determine their ability to meet the needs of the community. Then, outline the steps for closing the gap between the current level of service and where the city should be compared to both national and local standards. in addition to providing for the growing population. The implementation plan lays out strategies to improve the city's parks and recreation system by organizing recommendations based on priority, scope, and potential budget impacts. These recommendations will serve as a guide to help the department approach the implementation plan methodically and create realistic goals while also preserving Loudon's identity and character.

Implementation of this plan will require more than recommendations and funding strategies; it will also require buy-in from the community and decision-makers. Responses from both the SWOT Assessment, stakeholder interviews, and the public survey indicated that there is a desire for more investments and expansion of Red Bank's existing parks and recreation facilities. This can be achieved through investing in a few short-term projects with a 6-to-12-month implementation to build momentum for continued investment. Key stakeholders and the public should be engaged at every step in the planning of these new facilities to ensure the facilities reflect the needs of the public and to increase future buy-in and ownership from the greater community. Additionally, the adoption and implementation of this plan makes the city eligible for grant funding for parks and recreation-related grants from the state.

The recommendations in this section are intended to address existing shortfalls within the city's parks and recreation system based on current population levels. The overarching goal is to form a solid foundation for the city by addressing the current deficiencies within the system, then moving onto growing amenities, staff, and programming.



#### **EXISTING PARKS**

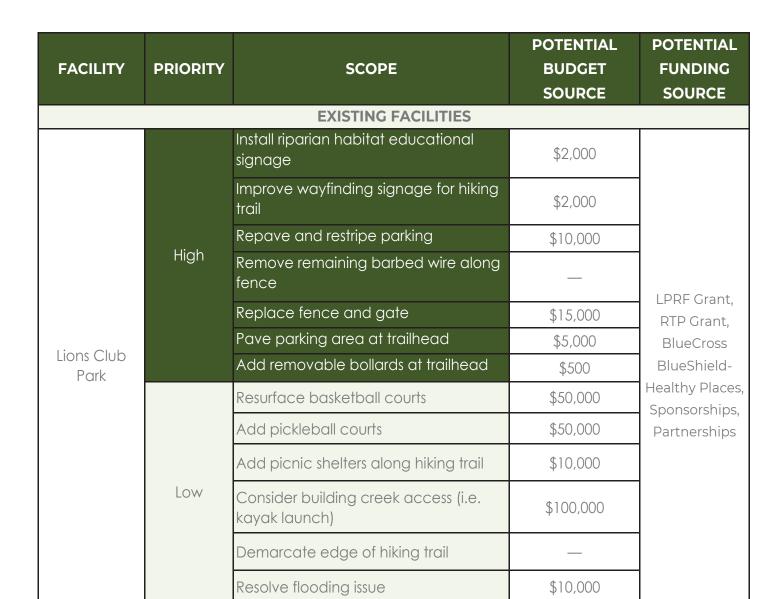
Loudon's current parks provide the community with many passive and active recreation opportunities. As found in the community survey and staff interviews, investing in the renovation and maintenance of existing facilities is of high importance. Providing essential upgrades and improvements ensures that users continue to enjoy the facilities provided. After analyzing the existing parks and facilities, the following overarching goals are recommended.

#### **Priority Recommendations**

- Renovate or build new restroom facilities throughout the parks
- Invest in security cameras to enhance safety within parks
- Resolve flooding issues with baseball fields
- Set a long-term maintenance plan for athletic fields
- Add LED lighting throughout the athletics fields, courts and parking lot
- Add high-demand amenities including pickleball courts, tennis, volleyball, soccer, baseball, trails, concerts etc.
- Expand on the existing community pool and skate park
- Invest in the existing park facilities before acquiring new facilities



FACILITY	PRIORITY	SCOPE	POTENTIAL BUDGET SOURCE	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE
		EXISTING FACILITIES		
		Restripe stair treads at playground	\$500	
		Repaint handrail at playground	\$500	
		Update playground equipment	\$80,000	
		Install poured-in-place playground surface	\$10,000	
		Restripe parking lots	\$5,000	
		Improve disc golf way finding signage on course	\$2,000	
	Hiceh	Overseed fields	\$90,000	LPRF Grant,
Loudon	High	Upgrade lighting at ballfields to LED	\$1,800,00	TRIP, ORLP, Scotts Field
Municipal Park		Add shaded seating throughout parks and at ballfields	\$200,000	Refurbishment Program
		Add striping to ballfields to allow for multiple age groups to play	\$20,000	
		Convert grass ballfields to artificial turf	\$6,000,000	
		Improve wayfinding signage leading to and within park	\$2,000	
	Low	Improve traffic flow and entrance to park	_	
		Build Community Center	\$10,000,000	
		Add more shaded seating options throughout the park such as picnic tables and benches	\$10,000	
		Add benches along walking trail	\$9,000	7
		Repave walking trail and widen to 10'	\$50,000	]
		Add mile markers along walking path	\$1,000	
	High	Repave and restripe parking	\$10,000	
Legion Park	9	Install poured-in-place playground surface	\$10,000	LPRF Grant, TRIP, ORLP
		Update playground equipment	\$80,000	
		Provide ADA access to playground	\$10,000	
		Update walking trail from accessible parking stall to be ADA compliant	\$5,000	
		Improve ballfield	\$1,000,000	1
	Low	Update and repair pedestrian bridges	\$1,500,000	7

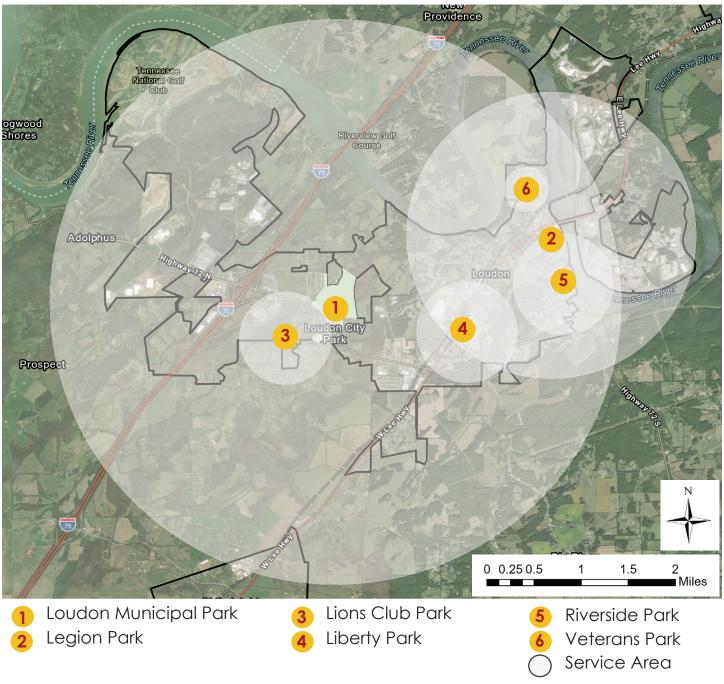




FACILITY	PRIORITY	SCOPE	POTENTIAL BUDGET SOURCE	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE
		EXISTING FACILITIES		•
		Improve wayfinding signage	\$2,000	
		Repave and restripe parking	\$10,000	
	High	Improve ADA accessibility throughout park amenities including playground	\$50,000	LPRF Grant, TRIP, ORLP
Liberty Park	9	Provide more ADA accessible seating options including companion seating next to benches and accessible picnic tables	\$10,000	
	Low	Replace rusted playground equipment	\$80,000	
		Install poured-in-place playground surface around playground and exercise equipment	\$20,000	
	High	Repaint pavilion, fishing pier shelter, and all metal (handrails, structure, shelters)	\$2,000	
Riverside Park		Improve existing landscape beds		LPRF Grant,
NIV OISIGO I GIR		Improve wayfinding signage	\$2,000	TRIP, ORLP
		Restripe shuffleboard	\$25,000	1
	Low	Repave ramp to make ADA accessible	\$5,000	1
Veterans Park	High	Improve signage and wayfinding to site	\$2,000	LPRF Grant,
veierans Park		Add dog waste station	\$1,000	<ul><li>Partnerships,</li><li>Sponsorships</li></ul>
	Low	N/A	-	5p0113013111p3

<sup>\*</sup> Local Parks and Recreation Fund Grant (LPRF), Tennessee Recreation Initiative Program (TRIP), Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP)

#### LEVEL OF SERVICE COVERAGE MAP



Based on the map of the level of service coverage above, the western northeastern and northwestern side of Loudon is underserved by a lack of accessibility to the parkland, as parks are located on the central and eastern areas of the city. Most are not safely accessible to pedestrians or cyclists due to a lack of pedestrian infrastructure and I-75. Identifying these areas is vital to understanding where new parks and pedestrian infrastructure should be created as well as where to enhance existing parks.



#### **NEW FACILITIES**

Based on current and future population projections, Loudon has ample parkland for the next 10 years. However, some of this available parkland is not yet being utilized. Additionally, there is a noticeable need for additional recreational facilities, such as multi-use courts, indoor recreation options, and venues for indoor community gatherings. This would include constructing new buildings, as well as acquiring new property for establishing new parks. The following recommendations focus on the parks facilities to fill gaps and expanding the potential of Loudon's parks and recreation system.

#### **Priority Recommendations**

- Build a community center
- Build a bike trail and add walking trails at Loudon Municipal
- Construct hardcourt and racquet sport courts facilities

#### PROPOSED PARK CONCEPTS

#### Approach

Conceptual plans were created for two park locations in Loudon based on recommendations for existing parks. Priorities identified through stakeholder interviews and public surveys have guided the selection of these two sites for proposed park facilities aimed at addressing gaps in service and better meeting the Town's needs. These plans provide a high-level schematic site master plan, illustrating the recommended improvements that can be implemented to enhance Loudon's current park facilities and program offerings.







#### LOUDON MUNICIPAL PARK

The proposed concepts for Loudon Park aim to significantly enhance the park's amenities, accessibility, and recreational facilities. A new main entrance and several access roads will improve connectivity within the park, while expanded and new parking areas will accommodate more visitors. The park will feature a combination of existing and proposed paved and unpaved trails, including a new nature trail, offering scenic walking experiences.

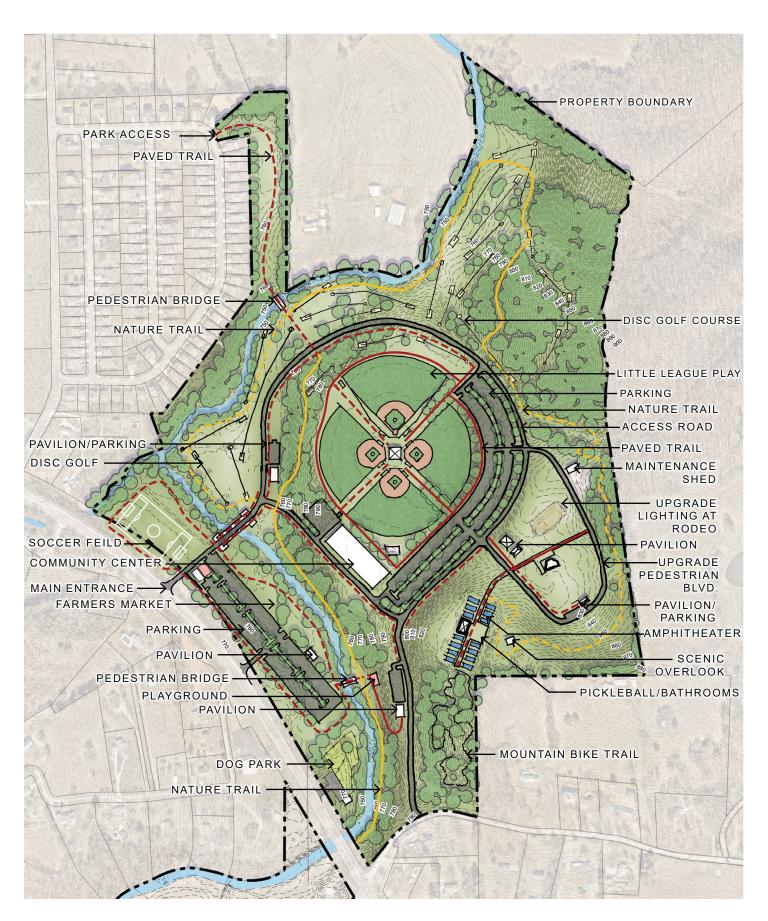
Recreational facilities will include an expanded disc golf course, a new mountain bike trail, and pickleball courts complete with a pavilion and bathrooms. Existing sports fields will be upgraded with artificial turf, and the north field will be converted for Little League play. Moreover, new vehicular and pedestrian bridges will enhance internal connectivity.

The park will host several new pavilions, some with scenic overlooks, and an upgraded pedestrian boulevard. Noteworthy amenities such as the existing amphitheater (Tate and Lyle Performing Arts Center), a community center with a gymnasium, and a farmers market area are included in the plan.

Enhancements to lighting at the rodeo arena, expansion of the dog park fence, and updates to the playground enhance safety and comfort for visitors. Overall, Loudon Park's development focuses on creating a more varied and enjoyable experience for the community while maintaining its natural beauty and existing facilities.









#### **LEGION PARK**

The proposed concepts for Legion Park aim to significantly enhance the park's amenities, accessibility, and recreational offerings. The plan includes the replacement of existing boat docks and ramps, ensuring safe and updated facilities for boating activities. Additionally, the existing fishing dock will also be replaced.

To cater to pedestrian traffic, a new pedestrian crossing across Main Street and the replacement of existing pedestrian bridges are proposed. For families and children, a proposed enclosed playground and a splash pad are part of the plan to offer safe and engaging play areas. The existing skate park will be relocated, and a new skate park is proposed.

Parking and access in the park will be improved by repaving existing parking areas and access drives. Multiple new picnic shelters and a large pavilion with bathrooms are planned, while some existing bathrooms and concession stands will be removed. The park will also preserve open green spaces for events and remove existing baseball backstops to open up more versatile areas.

Additionally, a walking loop will be expanded across Grove Street and Steekee Creek, promoting more extensive trail connectivity. Completing the enhancements is a proposed monument sign to identify and beautify the park's entrance. Overall, these upgrades and new amenities aim to create a more enjoyable, safe, and versatile space for the community, enhancing the existing structure while introducing valuable new features.









#### **PROGRAMMING**

Loudon currently serves a variety of ages and successfully provides diverse programming. The results of the program assessment in combination with the public survey provide insight into existing level of service as well as future needs. Specifically, teens (13-17) and adults would greatly benefit from the increased programming offered to them. Based on the existing programming evaluation, public survey results, stakeholder interviews, and SWOT analysis, the following programming recommendations have been developed.

#### **Priority Recommendations**

- Provide more programs targeted towards teens and adults
- Formalize volunteer management, sign-up, and communication
- Expand festival and concert program offerings
- Introducing health and wellness classes
- Expand on racquet sports
- Create a youth basketball league
- Create a after-school youth program held at the community center
- Create a youth golf league

#### **STAFFING**

As Loudon's parks and recreation programming and facilities increase in popularity, additional staff is necessary to support that growth. To keep up with the growing demands, it is recommended that the department implement the following recommendations.

#### **Staffing Priority Recommendations**

- Hire at least 2 more full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) within the first five years
- Hire and maintain seasonal staff such as lifeguards, referees, and umpires
- After hiring employees, create a continued hiring plan based on need and increased demand
- Provide relevant short in-house sessions to comprehensive ceritification programs or specialized training (e.g. ballfield maintenance) for staff

#### **Equipment Priority Recommendations**

- Purchase new utility vehicles to more adequately keep up with both staff and maintenance demand
- Invest in all-season equipment (e.g., for snow and ice events)
- Purchase an infield groomer and skid steer
- Develop a Maintenance, Repair, and Replacement (MRR) schedule

#### **Technology Priority Recommendations**

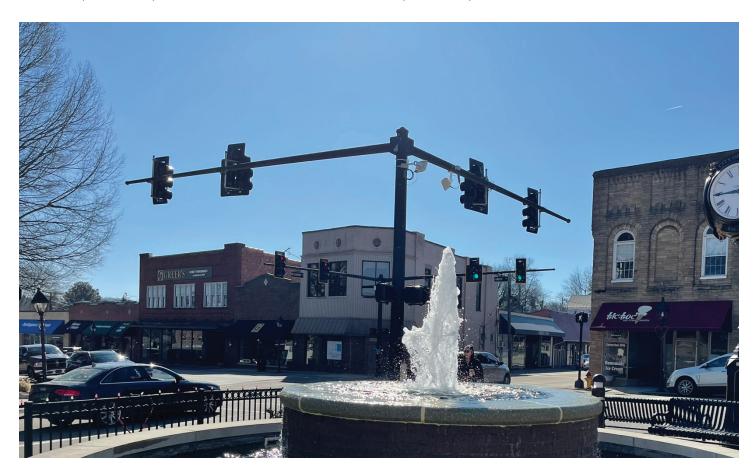
- Invest in a singular software or program to improve daily operations such as scheduling, maintenance requests, and administration
- Invest in a singular software for community members to sign up for programs, pavilion rentals, and make payments

#### FINANCIAL REVENUE AND STRATEGIES

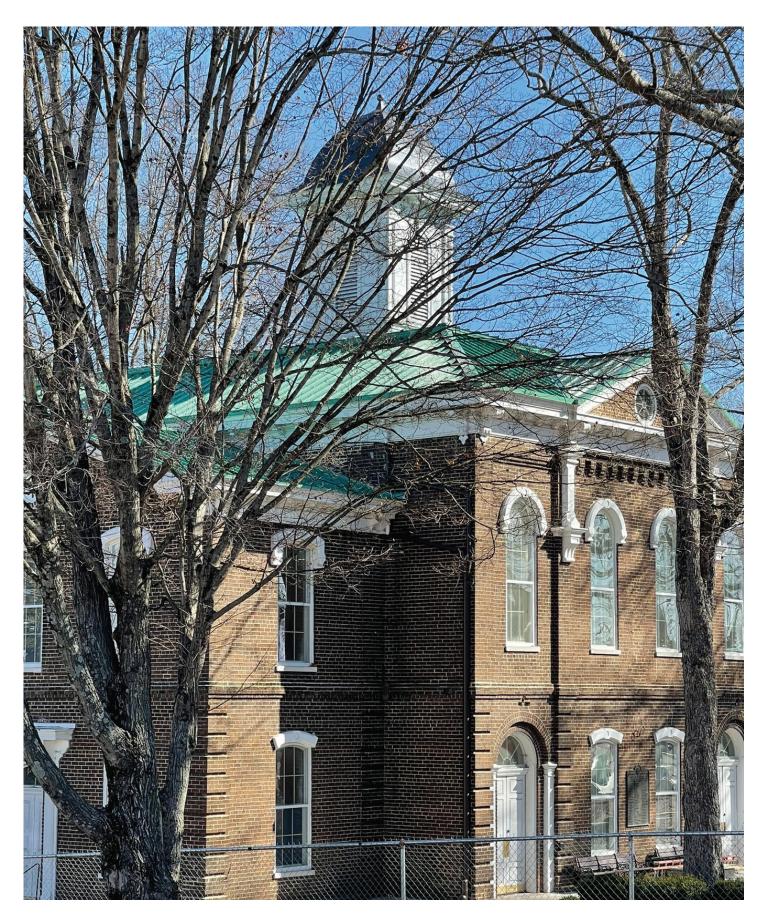
Based on interviews with city staff, the department is open and willing to seek grant opportunities and explore alternative financial revenue strategies for funding parks and recreation-related operations.

#### **Priority Recommendations**

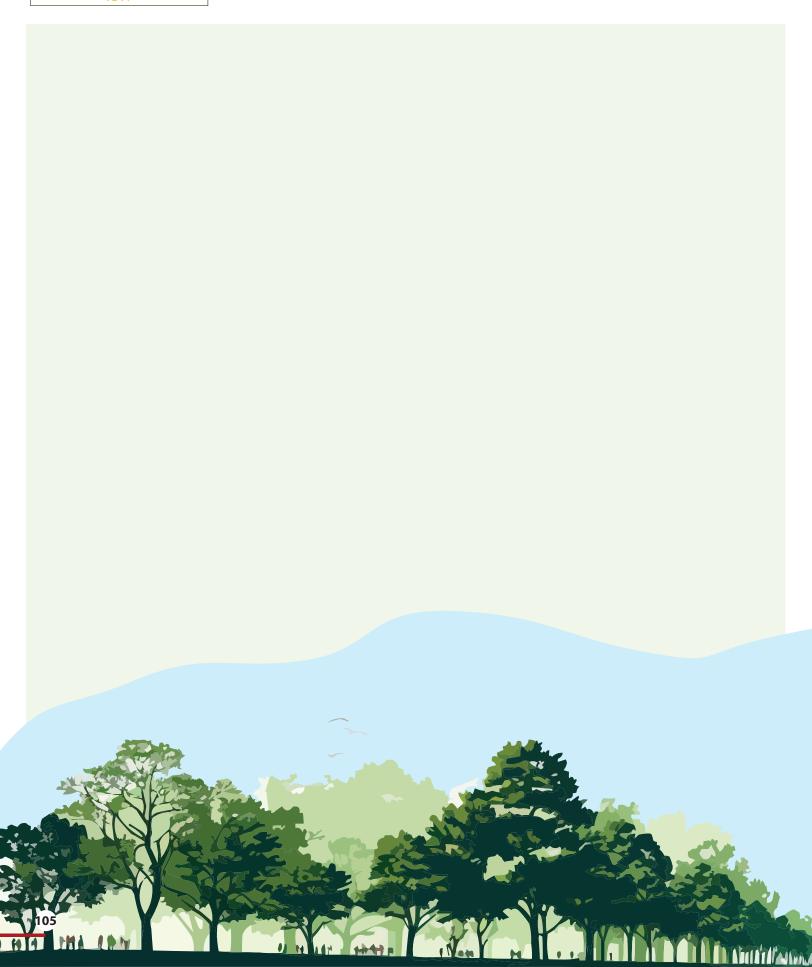
- Pursue grants and other sources of alternative funding options
- Seek out additional permanent funding sources
- Evaluate the pros and cons of increasing registration fees
- Consider the implementation of a user fee distinction between residents and non-residents for programs
- Increase fundraising and community involvement
- Form partnerships with local businesses to receive sponsorships

















#### CONCLUSION

Overall, the current demands and expectations placed on Loudon's parks and recreation system outweigh what is being provided largely due to worn out facilities, limited staff resources, outdated technology, and lack of funding. The purpose of this master plan is to help alleviate the imbalance of users and facilities by providing a realistic implementation plan based on Loudon's current and future resources, partnerships, and funding scenarios that can be applied over the next five years.

The demographic analysis provided a thorough understanding of the residents within Loudon's community. According to the U.S Census, the population of Loudon in 2023 was 6,652 residents. The city's population has been substantially growing since 2010, with an overall average increase of 1.66%. As the city continues to grow, the demands and expectations placed on the community's parks and recreation system will continue to amplify.

To preserve Loudon's identity and historic character while also meeting the needs of a growing and changing community, meaningful public engagement and community feedback was an essential part of the planning process. Interviews were held with key city staff and stakeholders in which valuable input regarding existing and future park facilities was shared. Stakeholders across the city were asked their opinion on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) in Loudon. Additionally, an online public survey was used to gather feedback from the community regarding perceptions, programming, and user trends across the community's parks and recreational facilities. The top desired facilities to add or expand upon were walking/bike trails, sports facilities, and community events.

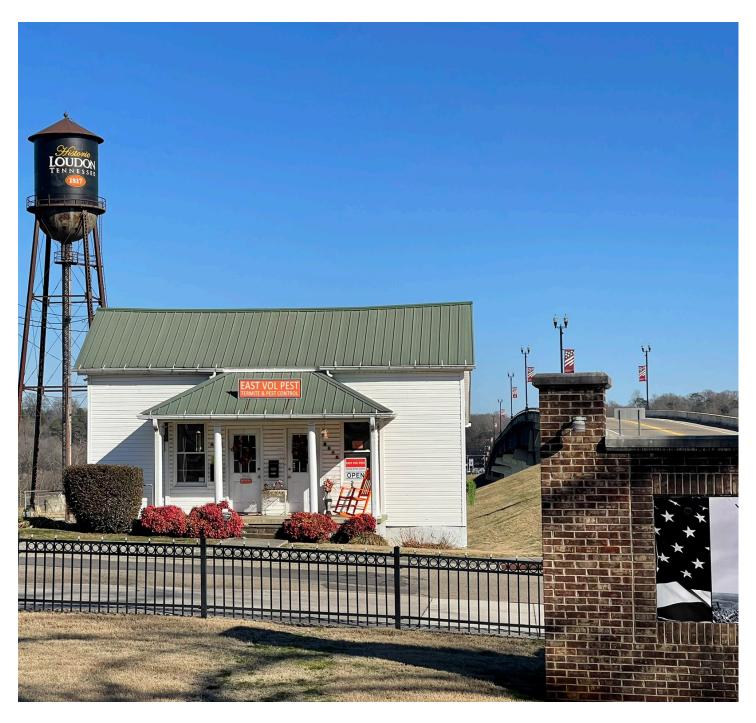
The consultant team conducted an inventory and analysis to assess the existing parks, recreation facilities, and programs. An analysis with short- and long-term recommendations for each facility have been listed and organized into high- and low priority in the implementation matrix with monetary values associated with each recommendation. Alongside the facility analysis, an evaluation of the programs revealed both deficiencies and opportunities for growth. Loudon has many growing and mature programs that require additional staff to keep them flourishing. The age segment distribution identified a lack of programming and events tailored specifically for teenagers. Furthermore, there is a high priority for several sports programs that the City of Loudon does not offer, such as: soccer, volleyball, lacrosse, track, swimming, tennis, pickleball and youth basketball.

Overall, the benchmark analysis reveals that the demands of the growing population are outweighing the current level of service in terms of the ratio staffing, provided per the number of residents in the community. As the community grows and places more demand on the city for this public service, city leadership will need to consider when and how to implement a plan to stay up to date with staff allocation, maintenance and technology.

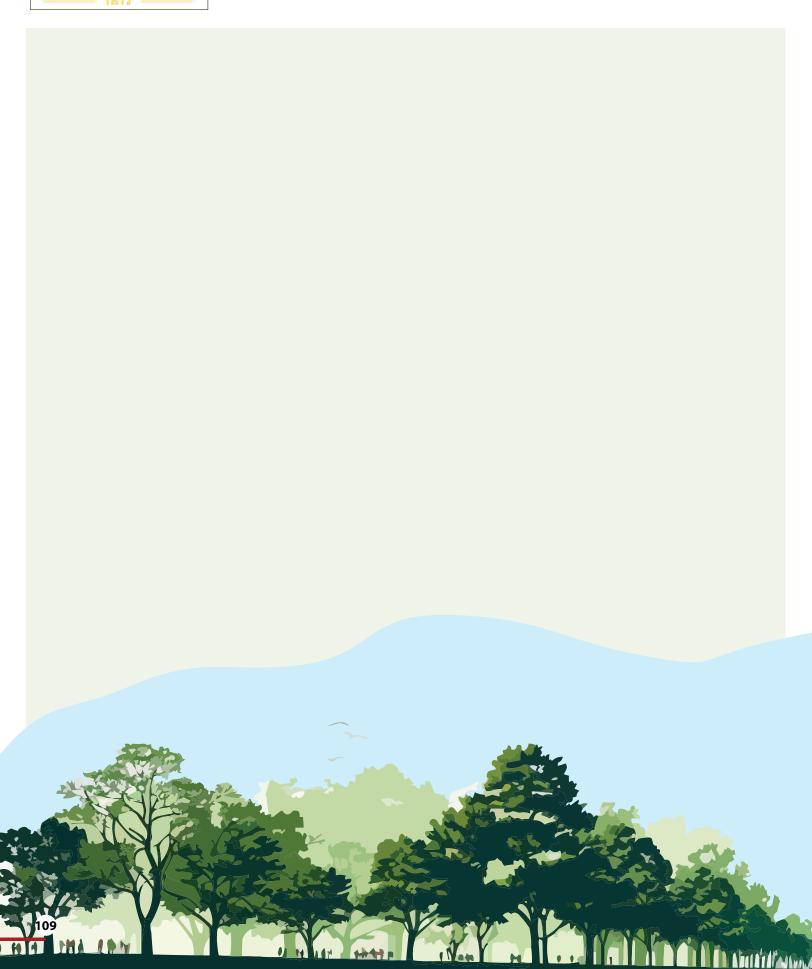
By developing this master plan, Loudon has recognized the need to make key investments to support existing facilities, build more athletic programs and increase staffing to remain competitive with peer



communities both locally and across the country. This plan provides recommendations for how and where to focus those investments, which allows the city to strategically expand and improve its parks and recreation system that enhances the livability of the city and promotes outdoor recreation for residents.









# Appendices





#### **SWOT ANALYSIS**

Conducted with the City Council, Recreation Advisory Commission, staff, and key stakeholders on January 22, 2025.

#### MEETING ATTENDANCE SHEET

#### LOUDON PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN - SWOT ASSESSMENT

Loudon Municipal Building – 2480 TN-72

January 22, 2025 5:30 pm

	Name	Agency	Telephone	Email
1	Kevin Goins	Lordon City/LU		
2	Tim Dixon	LOUDON City		
3	Melisse Huskin	City of Louden		
4	KENNY RIDIUS	City of Lavor		
5	Ed Fenchey			
6	Michelle Sindy	atingo		
7	Brott Knowley	J		
8	Justin Notion			
9	Rachel Gerden	1		
10	Key Kers	207 Guden		
11	32 Horden			
12				
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Kimley » Horn

January 22, 2025 Page 1 of 2



The Draft Master Plan report was presented to the Recreation Advisory Board as a project update on May 28, 2025.

# CITY OF LOUDON PARKS AND RECREATION DRAFT MASTER PLAN PRESENATION

Recreation Advisory Board 2480 TN-72, Loudon, TN 37774 @ 5:30 pm

Name	Address , A	Telephone	1	Email
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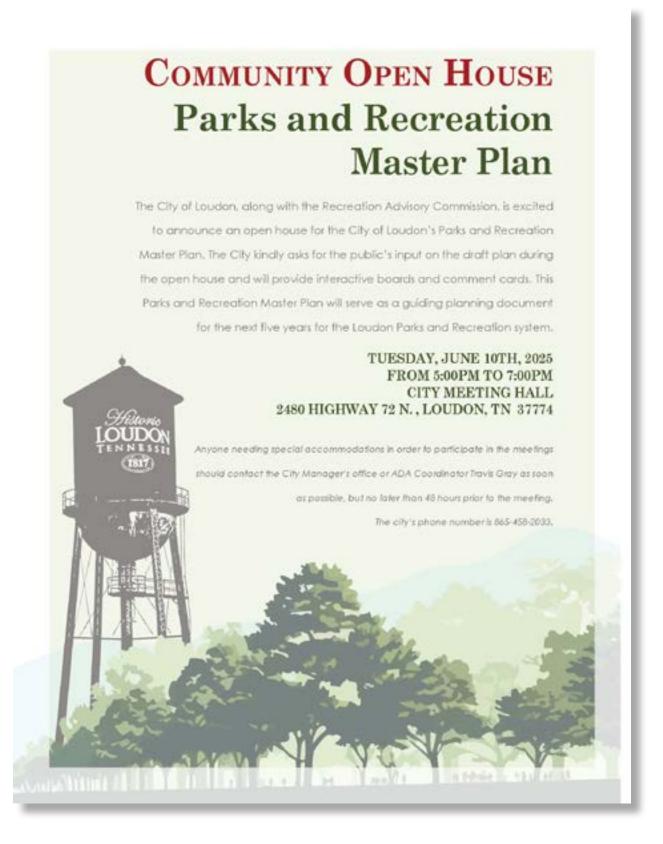




May 28, 2025

#### PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE AND INPUT MEETING

Open house held on June 10, 2025 from 5:00pm-7:00pm





## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE AND INPUT MEETING (CONTINUED)

Open house held on June 10, 2025 from 5:00pm-7:00pm

#### LOUDON PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN - DRAFT PLAN

PUBLIC MEETING - JUNE 10TH, 2025

	Name	Address	Telephone	Email
1	Matt Gentry			
2	Ed Foudley			
3	TIM" COKCHT" HENRY			
4	Rackel Harvell			
5	Brott Knowles			
6	BILL DAVIS			
7	Nexton Panela			
8	Sue Pancle			
9	early Render			
10	ARNOLD HAWKINS			
11	Tom Hickman			
12	DAYrenLowen			
13	Jake Quina			
14	Flena Mina			
15	DAVIL CONARD			
15	Sherri L. Polvard			
17	Ashley Collins,			
15	Shannen Mott			
19	Moeth Gunners			
20	Joff Garmas			
21	Kerin Corne			
22	Vim Deiton			
23				
24	Mitch Miller			
	Adriance Guider			
25				
26				





June 10, 2025

