

2013

City of New Bern Parks &
Recreation Comprehensive Plan
for a Healthy Community



Microsoft

Standards for Public Facilities

In the past standards have been set on a per population basis for recreational facilities, but it is now generally acknowledged that each community is different and that interest in certain sports come and go over time. The following is a table that was presented in the 2006 plan. This table has been updated with 2013 statistics:

Public Facilities Needs

Facility	2013 Standards	Existing Facilities	Current Demand 30,000 ¹	2030 Demand 35,000 ²	Projected Additional Need
Fields					
Baseball	1/5000	4	6	7	3
Youth Fields	1/3000	4	10	11	6
Softball	1/6000	2	5	6	4
Football	1/6000	0	5	6	6
Soccer	1/6000	3	5	6	3
Courts					
Basketball	1/5000	4	6	7	3
Tennis	1/2000	6 ³ (4)	15	17	11 ⁴ (4)
Volleyball	1/5000	1	6	7	6
Indoor Facilities	1/10000	2	3	3	1
Outdoor Facilities					
Picnic Shelters	1/3000	12	10	11	0
Recreation Acres	14ac/1000	191 ac	420 ac	490 ac	299 ac
Swimming Pool	1/20000	1	1	1	0

Multi-purpose fields are used for either football or soccer, therefore, the above standard shows them separated when they are actually combined by the City.

Soccer is very popular and therefore the need for soccer fields is greater than this standard shows. Lacrosse is a growing sport in New Bern and it utilizes the same open fields as soccer.

Interest in tennis comes and goes over the years, depending on whether or not leagues are formed and lessons given on a regular basis. Older tennis players favor clay courts of which the City has none.

The recreation centers have the capability of being used for indoor basketball and indoor volleyball. Only the designated outdoor facilities are listed in this table.

New Bern's indoor facilities are used for more than just active sports; they are also true community centers in that they provide space for various clubs and groups to meet. Therefore, these centers are more heavily utilized than is reflected in the listed standards.

Picnic shelters are not defined by this standard. Only the large group shelters were counted here.

A higher level of acres per 1000 population for recreation areas was chosen as New Bern to enhance the quality of life and to make New Bern an attractive tourist destination.

For the purpose of this table, the active and passive recreation areas were combined as the larger parks contain elements of both.

¹The Census 2012 Population Estimates show there are 30,316 people living in New Bern. It was rounded to 30,000 for the purpose of this table.

²There are no municipal population projections; however, there are projections for the County. The committee knows the developments that are currently underway and those that are in the planning stages. It was felt that 35,000 was a reasonable 2030 population figure for planning purposes.

³The number of tennis courts that exist is accurate, however two of the courts are not usable and the Department is planning to demolish them as part of a redesign of the George Street Park. There are only four playable tennis courts in the system.

⁴Four additional courts located together would be adequate to meet future needs.

There is only one outdoor volleyball court, but the two recreation centers each have the capability of indoor volleyball, making the real total three. The outdoor volleyball court at the West New Bern Recreation Center is being converted to a sand volleyball facility at the time this report was being drafted.

The facilities recorded as existing were only those that are owned by the Department and did not take into account facilities owned/operated by the school system, community college or private parties.

Twelve additional smaller family picnic shelters are needed. These can be spread among the parks according to the usage of the park for picnics.

The Parks

Various organizations and individual governmental agencies have established a varying range of definitions and standards including park type, size, access requirements, and site development guidelines. The standard was the expression of acres of park land per unit of population. Over time, six to ten acres per 1,000 population came to be the commonly accepted standard recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Association and used by a majority of communities.

Experts caution against the use of standards without consideration for local factors such as existing land use, housing densities, demographic characteristics, economic feasibility, topography, and perceived needs. Other factors for consideration included proximity to other communities with park and recreation facilities, proximity to county park and recreation facilities, adequacy of public school facilities, and availability of church, private and other

institutional facilities. While church and private facilities were factored into the mix, they are essentially unavailable to the inner City's economically disadvantaged population.

Riparian, wetland, sensitive habitats, unusual topography and other natural constraints limit the usable land within certain parks. While these are certainly desirable resources, it limits what can be done on the parcel. Craven County falls under the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) and the Neuse River Buffer Rules. These two sets of rules serve to further constrain what can be done on certain parcels. As minimum guidelines, the standards are intended to be used as a flexible planning tool. In practice, some standards will most likely not be met while others may be abundantly met due to need.

Mini, neighborhood, community parks, and district parks were the terms used for this assessment. The standards established in this plan have resulted from analysis of existing conditions, user needs, demographic information, and the desire by the community to support a program of park development and recreational programming. (See chart at the end of this section)

Mini Parks (less than 4 acres)

A facility designed to provide recreational opportunities for a small area within a neighborhood. Generally, a mini-park is designed for young children, however in some cases it may be designed for aesthetic purposes. 1/2 acre is the recommended minimum size to provide adequate buffer space and diversity of uses; however, in some cases smaller sites may be developed. One or more mini-parks should be provided in each neighborhood. Mini parks have a service radius of up to .5 miles

Neighborhood Parks (4 to 12 acres)

The neighborhood park is designed to serve the recreational needs of children 6-15 years of age, as well as adults, preschoolers, and seniors. It would typically include family picnic areas, open turf areas for informal sports and play equipment. Lighted athletic fields would not be included. At least one neighborhood park should be provided in each neighborhood planning area. Neighborhood Parks have a service radius of .5 to .75 miles.

Community Parks (13 to 50 acres)

This park is designed to serve a wide variety of needs for youths and adults in both active and passive recreation. Facilities for sports fields, open turf areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, and off-street parking could include restrooms and related facilities. The park should also include facilities for preschoolers, young children, senior citizens and families. Components of neighborhood parks and mini-parks should be included in the Community Park. Lighted athletic fields for active sports are included. The Community Park includes facilities which serve neighborhoods and/or the City of New Bern, and maybe the community center/recreation building complex. Community Parks have a service radius of 1-2 miles.

District Parks (over 50 acres)

Open space areas characterized by significant natural resources which provide passive recreation opportunities for both the local population and the surrounding metropolitan area;

small portions of a district park might be allocated to fulfill neighborhood park requirements. District Parks have a City-wide service radius.

Special Facility

A facility such as a community center with recreation building, gymnasium, teen center, aquatic center, or other cultural or athletic facility that serves a specific need for a portion of the area population. These facilities may be constructed as part of a Community Park. Special Facilities have a City-wide service radius.

Table for Park Types

Park Type	Acres/Pop 1000	Size in acres	Service Radius
Mini	0.5 or less	Less than 4	0.25 to .5 miles
Neighborhood	.5 to 1.5	4 to 12	.5 to .75 miles
Community	4	13-50	1-2 miles
District	10	Over 50	City wide
Special Facility	varies	varies	City wide

Projected need

Park Type	Standards Ac/1000	2013 Existing Facilities	Current Demand 30,000	2030 Demand 35,000	Projected Additional Need
Mini	.5/1000	13 acres	15 acres	17 acres	4 acres
Neighborhood	1.0/1000	26 acres	30 acres	35 acres	9 acres
Community	4/1000	54 acres	120 acres	140 acres	86 acres
District	10/1000	191 acres	300 acres	350 acres	159 acres
Special Recreation Ctr.	N/A	2	2	3	1

Parks 2013

Name	Type	Acres
Bear Plaza	Mini	.24
Council Bluff Green	Mini	.18
Donald Miller	Mini	.12
George Street	Mini	2.7
James Reed Lane	Mini	.08
Kafer Park	Mini	2.3
Lourenco Park	Mini	.2
Mary White	Mini	.3
Monk Mallard	Mini	1.13
Pierce	Mini	3.7
Speight	Mini	.75
Tryon Village	Mini	1
Total	Mini	12.7
Fort Totten	Neighborhood	5.4
Leander Morgan	Neighborhood	7
Pleasant Hill	Neighborhood	7.43
Union Point	Neighborhood	6.45
Total	Neighborhood	26.28

Name	Type	Acres
D.E. Henderson	Community	30
Seth West Parrott	Community	24.33
Total	Community	54.33
Glenburnie	District	51
Lawson Creek	District	140 (60 in use)
Total	District	191

Total	System-wide	284.11
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The following is a description of each park, a review of its condition and a list of desired changes. In general the following are noted at several parks:

- Picnic table tops and seats are warped and need to be painted/replaced
- The slats on the benches need to be painted
- Every picnic shelter should have water and electric run to it
- Restrooms, while clean, are in need of makeovers—some have evidence of rotting wood
- Bike racks are desired at each park, and several racks are desired at larger parks
- The 55 gallon drums for trash would look nicer if painted with a design or scene like those at Lourenco Park
- More consideration be given to stormwater BMPs in parking areas, especially those nearest the water
- Bulletin boards at parks should be maintained on the exterior and interior. They are excellent vehicles for dissemination of information and public education.
- Park signage is worn and needs to be refurbished. In some places it is obscured by foliage.

Parks that are heavily used, that are lighted for evening use, or that are in close proximity to problem areas should have security cameras. Signs to that effect should be posted.

Some parks with unique features have use-specific signage. That is certainly needed, but it is important that all parks have the same basic signage for things that are not allowed in any park. It is also good to provide phone numbers and specific instructions as to how problems or issues can be reported.