

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Working on behalf of the Town of Fairfield, BL Companies explored options for renovating existing and establishing additional athletic and recreation facilities at strategic locations throughout the Town. The following study provides a comprehensive inventory and analysis of all existing conditions and a series of recommendations for improving or adding new facilities throughout the Town. We have looked specifically at the properties that the Town's Parks and Recreation Department operate and manage.

A Needs Assessment was prepared and is based on our examination of the physical conditions of all fields and information gathered during a series of Public Workshops, meetings with key user groups and stakeholders. This process included soliciting input from Town of Fairfield residents, the Parks and Recreation Department, various Town representatives & commissions, and the Town's youth sport organizations. In addition, an online community survey was released for this project to encourage input from the park user groups outside of the scheduled meetings. As work progressed, the following became apparent:

- There is a heavy demand for high-quality athletic fields in the Town of Fairfield. Many of the existing fields are well maintained and in good condition providing acceptable level of play. However, there are some fields that are currently heavily utilized due to large demand from youth, adult and school sports leagues. With demand of these fields expected to increase over the upcoming years, new athletic fields and field improvements should be prioritized to continue to provide an acceptable level of play. Refer to Appendix B – Field evaluation analysis for field use data and the Site-by-Site Analysis section of this report for more information regarding specific athletic field recommendations.
- Many playground facilities have recently been replaced or are planned for replacement in the near future. The site assessments identified many playgrounds that are displaying signs of heavy use that should be scheduled for repair and/or replacement in the near future.
- Many facilities have a lack of adequate and efficient parking, ADA access and pathways
- In general, sites lack amenities and features for multi-generational use (e.g., walking paths, fitness stations and playgrounds).
- There was significant interest for additional pickleball courts.
- There is a lack of available indoor gym and pool space for the general public's use. The Town of Fairfield should look for opportunities to create either more access to existing gymnasium and pool space, or to construct a new indoor venue for use by the general public.
- Bike amenities (including bike storage) throughout the park system was lacking.
- The parks system should consider 'green' infrastructure improvements as part of any upcoming planned projects. Green infrastructure can include rain gardens, permeable pavements, rainwater harvesting for irrigation, tree plantings to increase Town-wide canopy coverage, and more.



Old Field Park



Owen Fish Park



Tunxis Hill Park

We invite you to review the larger document that follows and to actively participate in the endeavor to provide improved recreational and athletic opportunities to all residents of Fairfield.