



# Parks and Recreation MASTER PLAN



September 2016

PREPARED BY

*SageDesign*

**alta**  
PLANNING + DESIGN





## Acknowledgements

Newton, NC

Parks and Recreation Department

### STEERING COMMITTEE

Sean Hovis, Assistant City Manager

Sandra Waters, Parks & Recreation Director

Carol Stiles, Assistant Parks & Recreation Dir.

John Stiver, City Council

Randy Williams, Planning Director

Dennis Falder Jr., Assistant Public Works &  
Utilities Director

Bradley Martin, Recreation Maintenance

Kyle Smith, Parks and Recreation Advisory  
Committee

### CONSULTANT TEAM

Sara Burroughs, RLA, SageDesign

Alta Planning+ Design

*SageDesign*



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Meeting Minutes ..... n/a  
PRORAGIS (national) Data..... n/a  
Raw Survey Data ..... n/a

### **ATTACHMENT- ACTION BOOKLET (MASTER COPY ONLY)**

itemized recommendations.....  
(booklet attachment)

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## SECTION ONE

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### overview



## Introduction

Newton is located in the western part of the state in Catawba County at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains and within close proximity to Winston Salem, Asheville, and Charlotte.

Newton was incorporated in 1855 and is the second largest city within the county having a current population of 13,035 according to the 2010 Census. Newton was historically a manufacturing based city but has diversified from its manufacturing base over the past several years.

The City has low cost of living, diverse cultures, a variety of recreational opportunities, and access to arts and culture. All of these factors helped Catawba County gain recognition as being one of the top ten areas in America to raise a family.

## Purpose

The Newton Parks and Recreation Department was established in 1948 with its first Master Plan being created in 1988 and updated in 2001. The population, community demographics, and industry have continued to change and grow in Newton since the initial Parks and Recreation Master plans were prepared, and many of the immediate phase recommendations in the 2001 plan still remain as needs. With the high use of facilities, so does additional demand for quality recreation facilities and programs.

## Master Planning Process

OVERVIEW

DEMAND + SUPPLY

INVENTORY

PUBLIC INPUT

ANALYSIS & TRENDS

RECOMMENDATIONS

*SECTION TWO*  
*demand and supply*







# NEWTON NORTH CAROLINA

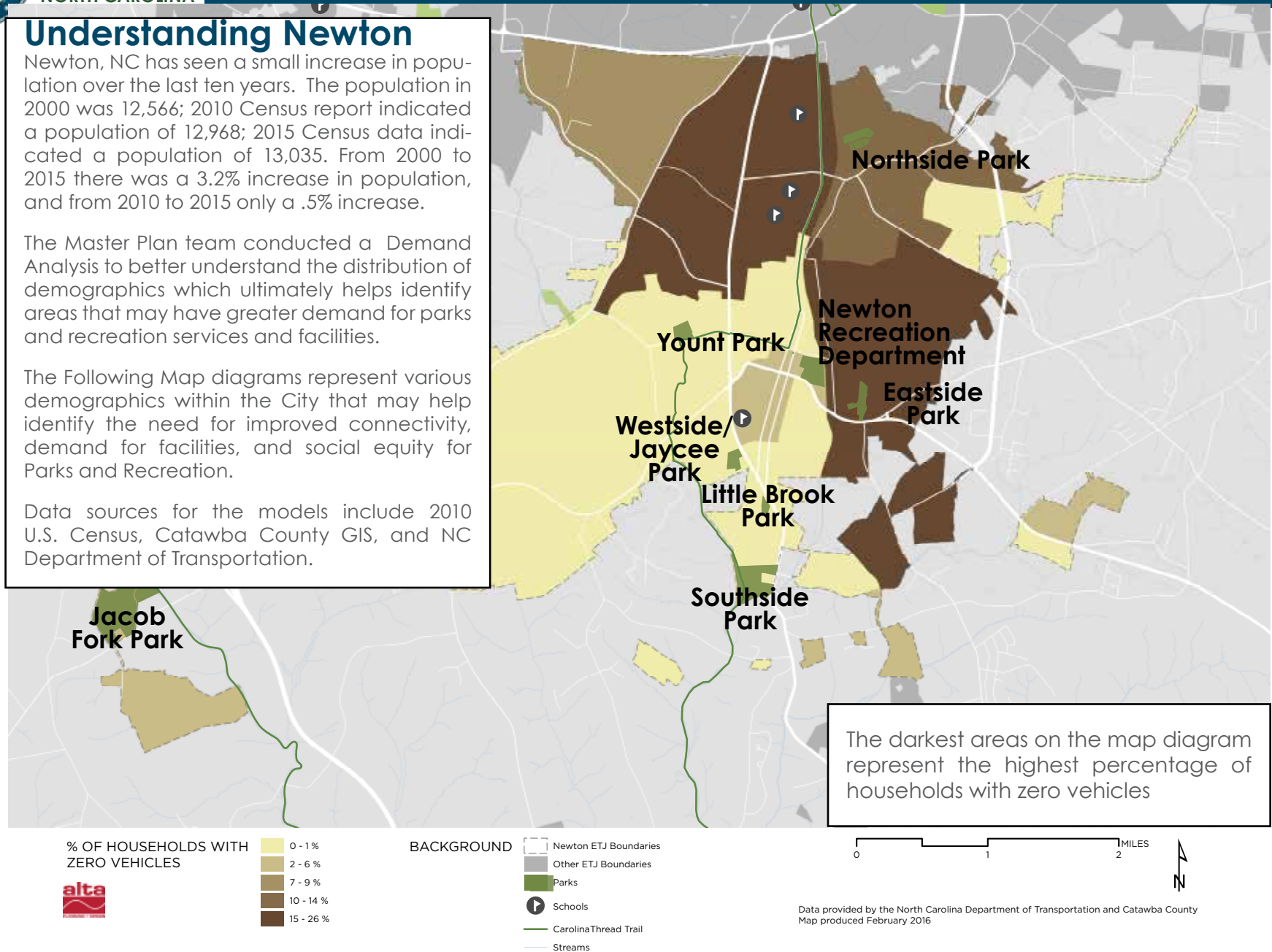
## Understanding Newton

Newton, NC has seen a small increase in population over the last ten years. The population in 2000 was 12,566; 2010 Census report indicated a population of 12,968; 2015 Census data indicated a population of 13,035. From 2000 to 2015 there was a 3.2% increase in population, and from 2010 to 2015 only a .5% increase.

The Master Plan team conducted a Demand Analysis to better understand the distribution of demographics which ultimately helps identify areas that may have greater demand for parks and recreation services and facilities.

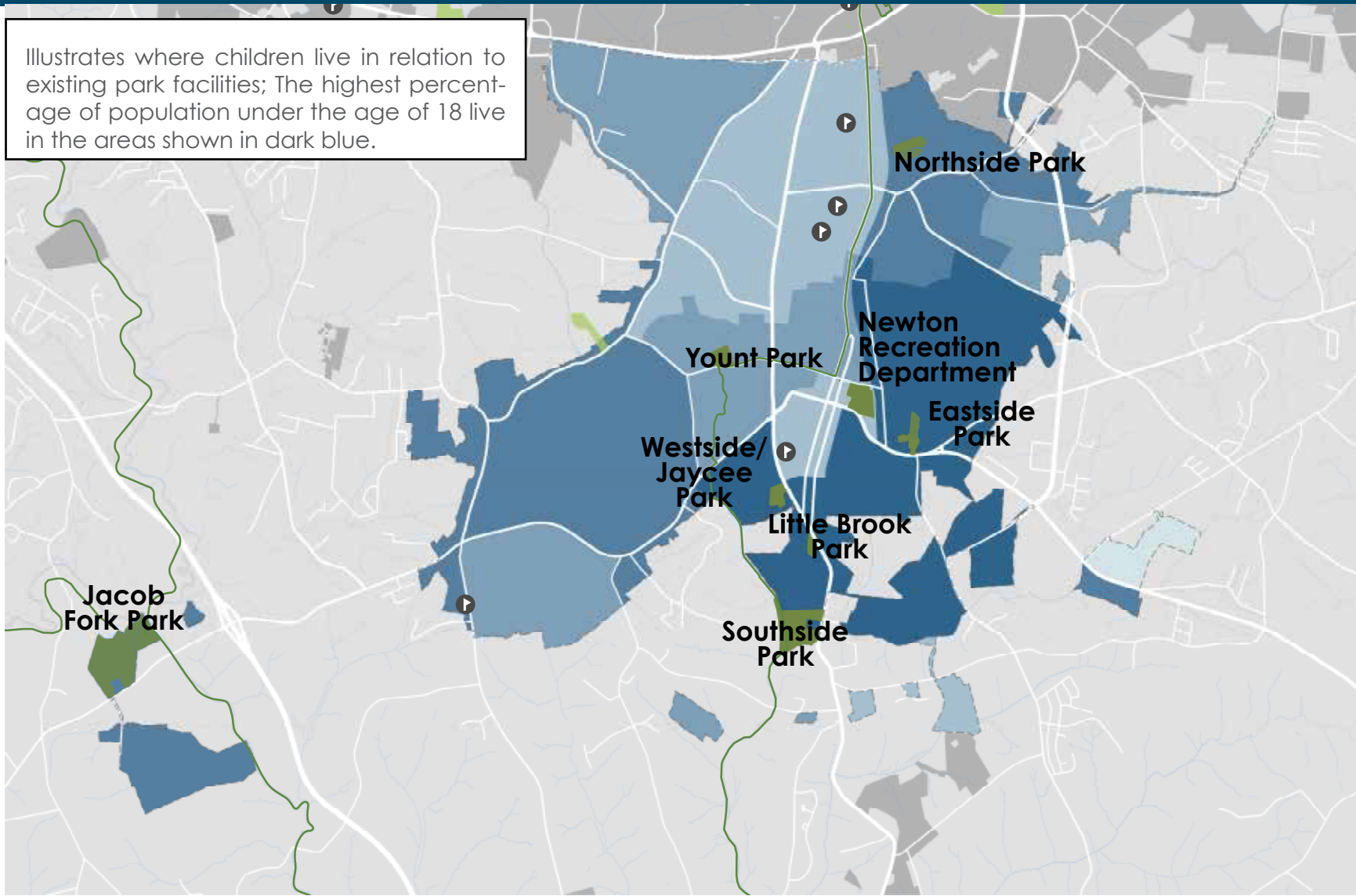
The Following Map diagrams represent various demographics within the City that may help identify the need for improved connectivity, demand for facilities, and social equity for Parks and Recreation.

Data sources for the models include 2010 U.S. Census, Catawba County GIS, and NC Department of Transportation.

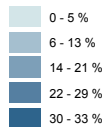




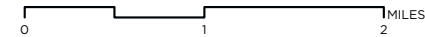
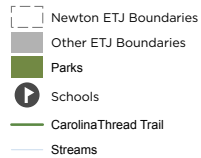
Illustrates where children live in relation to existing park facilities; The highest percentage of population under the age of 18 live in the areas shown in dark blue.



% OF POPULATION THAT ARE BELOW THE AGE OF 18



BACKGROUND

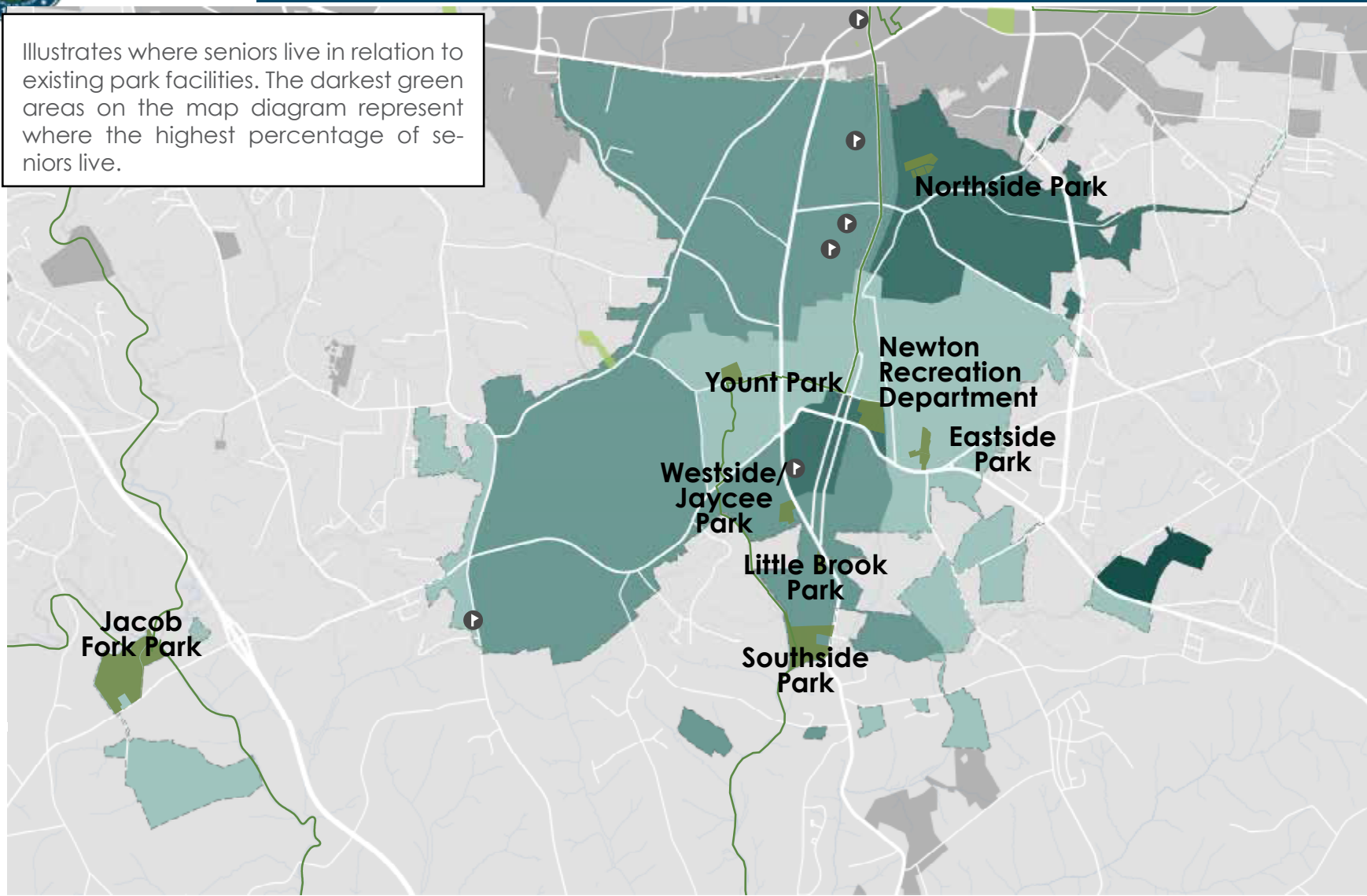


Data provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Catawba County  
Map produced February 2016

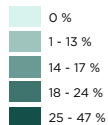


# NEWTON NORTH CAROLINA

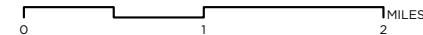
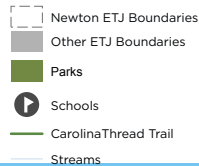
Illustrates where seniors live in relation to existing park facilities. The darkest green areas on the map diagram represent where the highest percentage of seniors live.



% OF POPULATION THAT  
ARE ABOVE THE AGE  
OF 65



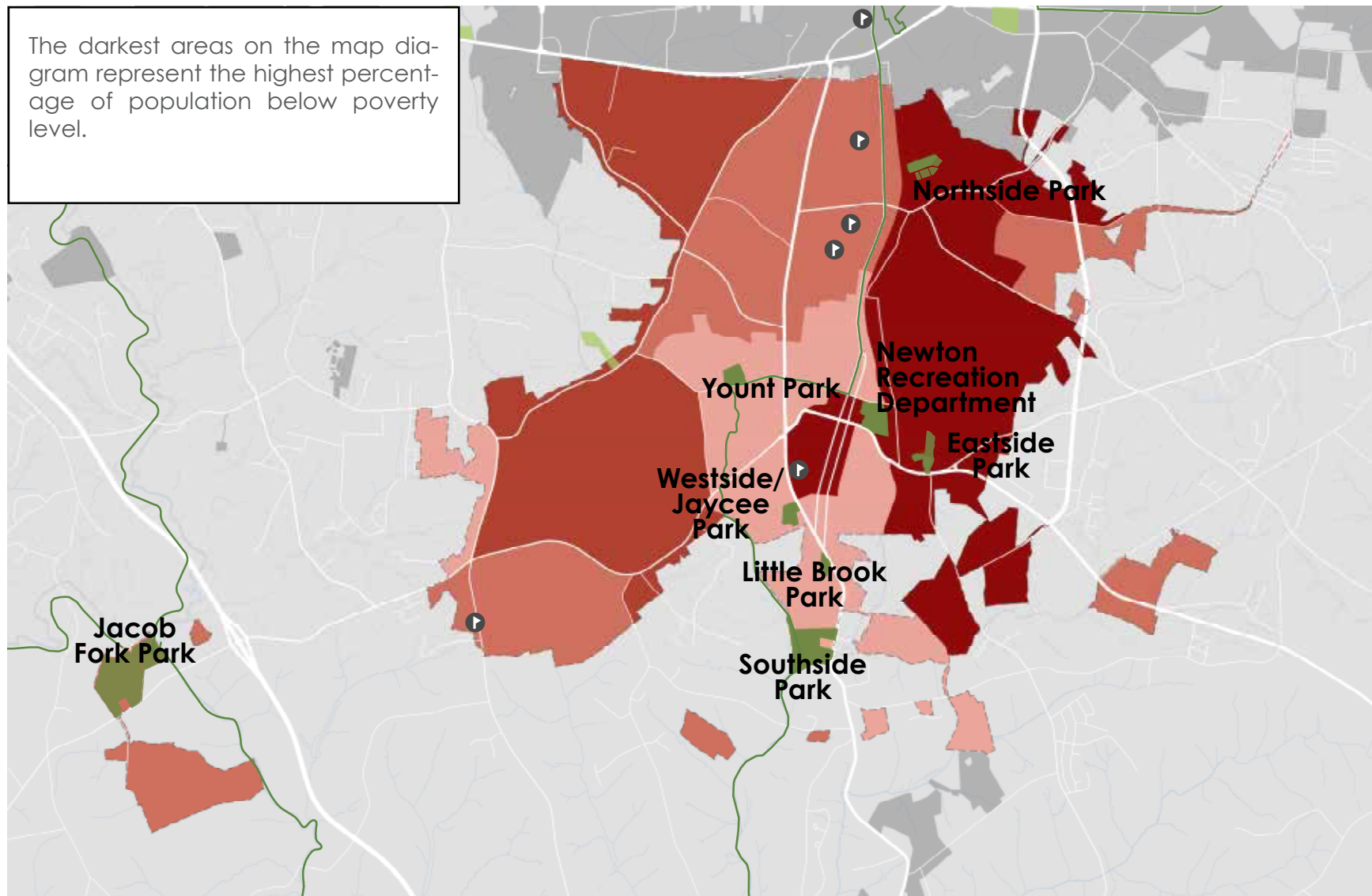
BACKGROUND



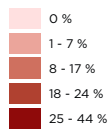
Data provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Catawba County  
Map produced February 2016



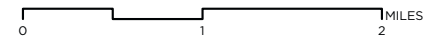
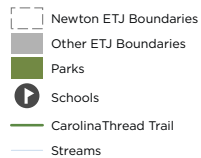
The darkest areas on the map diagram represent the highest percentage of population below poverty level.



% OF POPULATION THAT ARE BELOW 100% OF POVERTY LEVEL



BACKGROUND

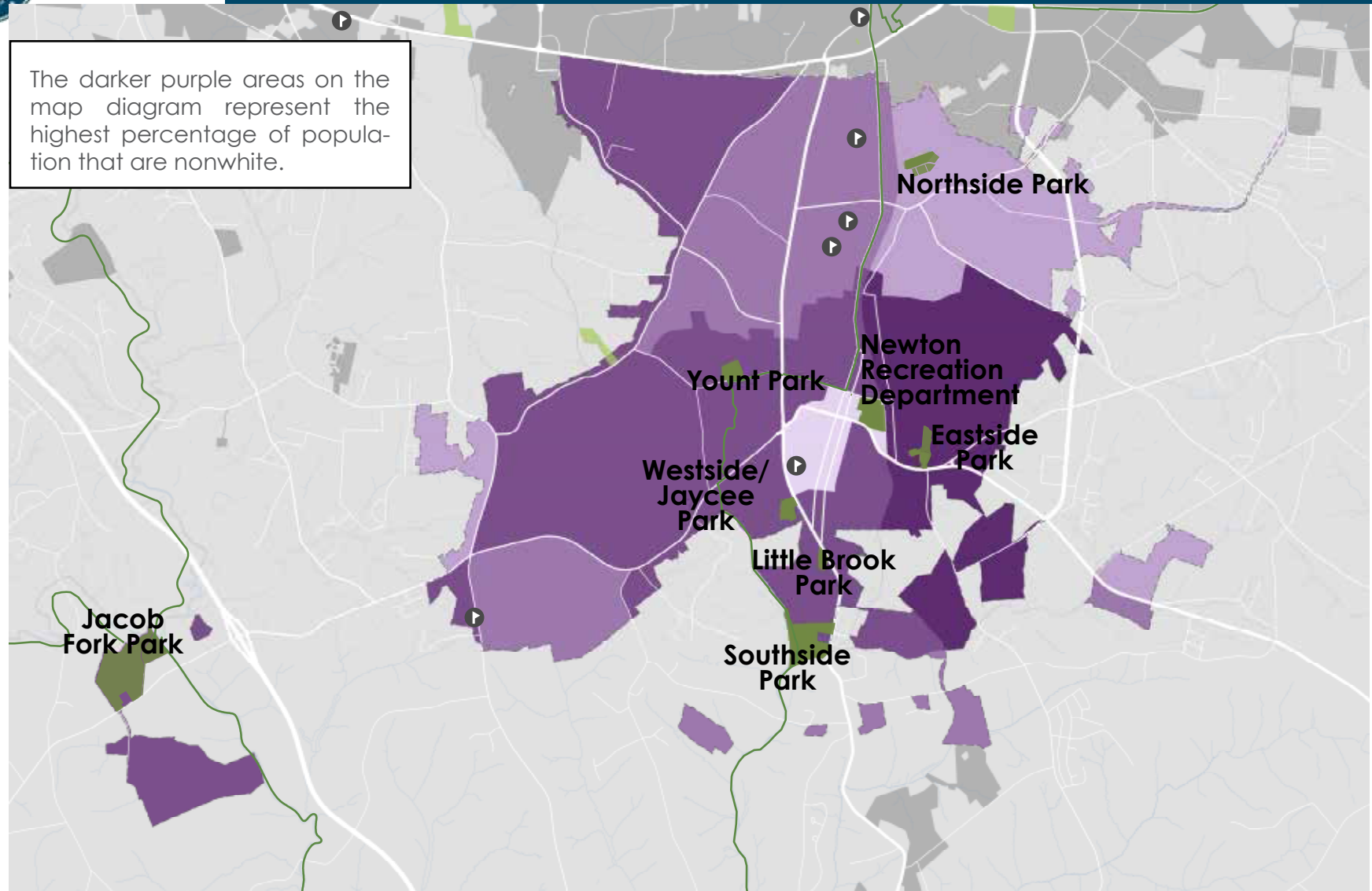


Data provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Catawba County  
Map produced February 2016



# NEWTON NORTH CAROLINA

The darker purple areas on the map diagram represent the highest percentage of population that are nonwhite.



% OF POPULATION THAT ARE NONWHITE



0 %  
1 - 12 %  
13 - 23 %  
24 - 31 %  
32 - 45 %

BACKGROUND

Newton ETJ Boundaries  
Other ETJ Boundaries  
Parks  
Schools  
CarolinaThread Trail  
Streams

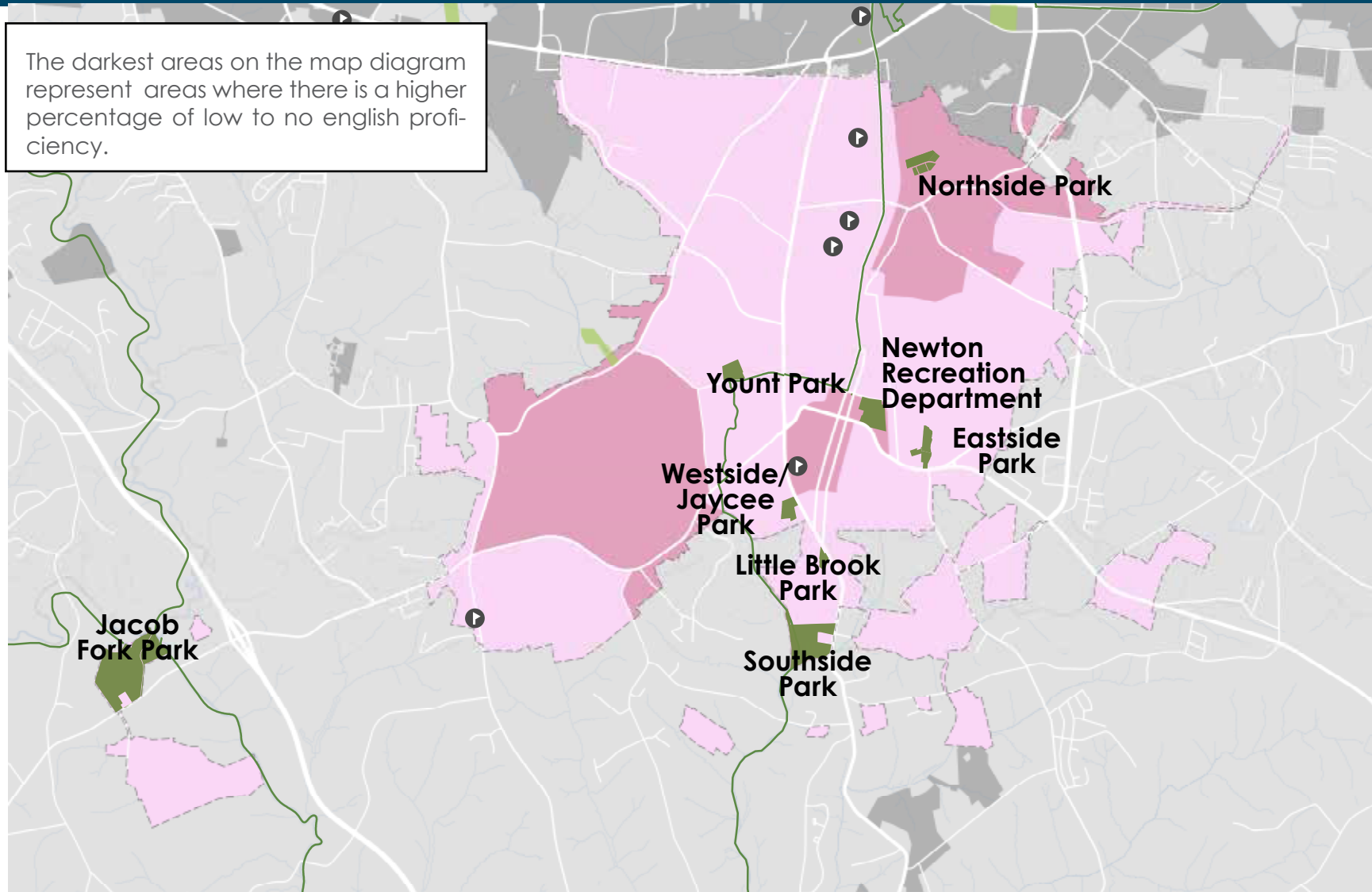
0 1 2 MILES



Data provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Catawba County  
Map produced February 2016



The darkest areas on the map diagram represent areas where there is a higher percentage of low to no english proficiency.



% OF POPULATION WITH  
LOW TO NO ENGLISH  
PROFICIENCY



0 - 5 %  
6 - 10 %  
11 - 15 %  
16 - 20 %  
21 - 25 %

BACKGROUND

Newton ETJ Boundaries  
Other ETJ Boundaries  
Parks  
Schools  
CarolinaThread Trail  
Streams

0 1 2 MILES

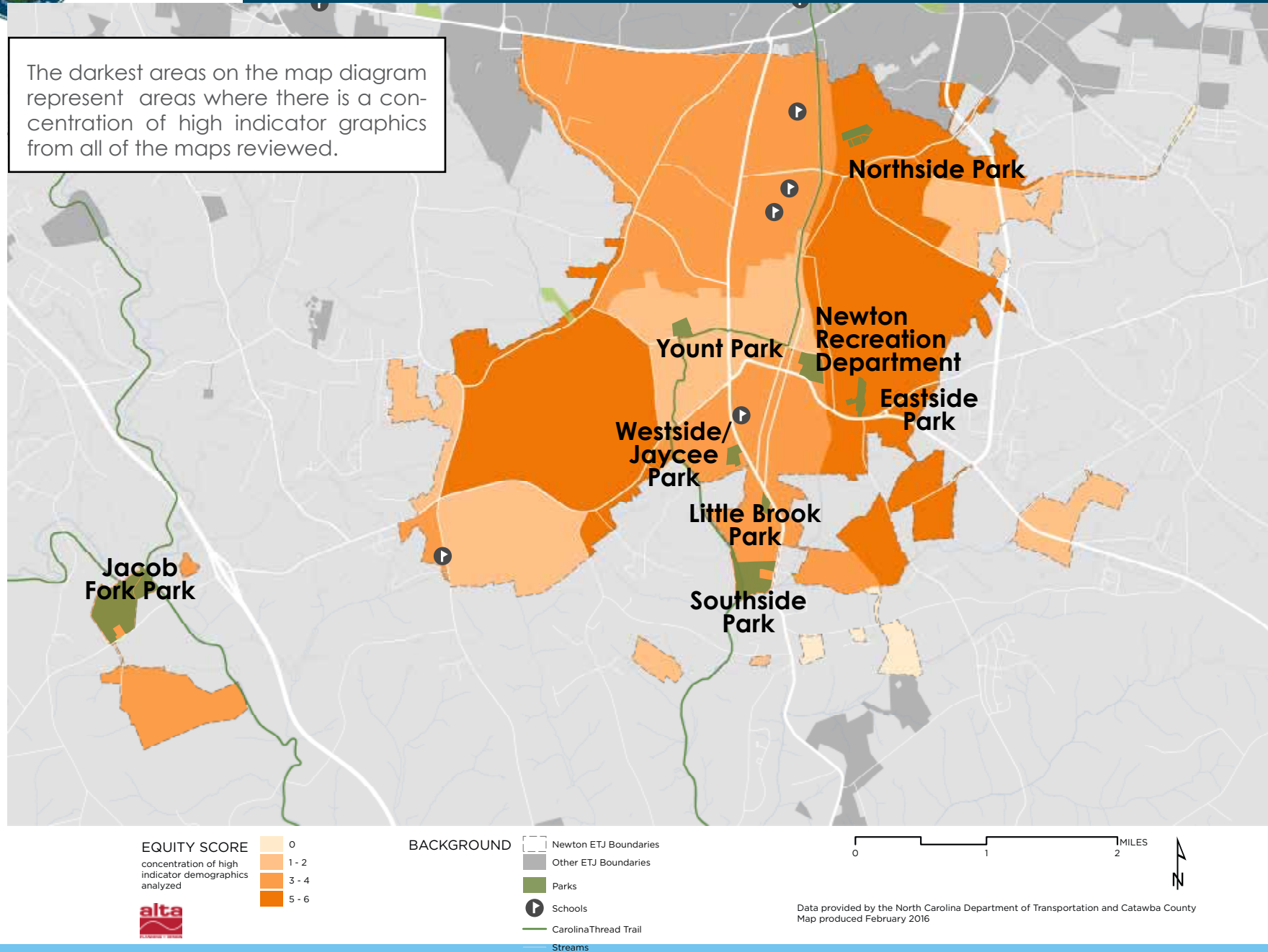


Data provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Catawba County  
Map produced February 2016



# NEWTON NORTH CAROLINA

The darkest areas on the map diagram represent areas where there is a concentration of high indicator graphics from all of the maps reviewed.





*SECTION THREE*  
*Park and Facility Inventory*





## Parks and Recreation In Newton

### The Mission:

*"The Newton Parks and Recreation Department strives to enhance the quality of life to all citizens by providing a diverse and comprehensive program of recreational, educational, and cultural leisure opportunities. These services aim to assist in the growth of the community through our open spaces, parks, and recreational facilities while contributing to their physical, social and emotional well being through all aspects of life."*

### ABOUT THE SYSTEM

The Newton Parks and Recreation Department maintains six parks (including numerous ball fields, tennis courts, walking/jogging trails, and picnic tables/shelters), a swimming pool, two recreation centers with gymnasiums, and a fitness center.

### Facilities Overview

The following facilities are owned and/or maintained by the City of Newton:

- Northside Park
- Southside Park
- Westside/Jaycee Park
- Central Recreation Center/Eastside Park
- Recreation Center/Swimming Pool
- Yount Park
- Little Brook Park
- Greenway Trails

### PROGRAMS

The City of Newton provides an incredibly diverse set of program offerings for a wide spectrum of ages and interests. In order to ensure programs offered serve the departmental mission, the program department has outlined a series of objectives for the services provided.

Programs are provided in the following categories:

- Catawba Valley Community College Classes
- Senior Citizens
- Instructional Classes
- Children's Athletics/ Adult Athletics
- Special Events
- Swimming Pool

### OTHER INFLUENCES

The City of Newton and Catawba County have completed several plans that influence Parks and Recreation Department facilities and programs. Plan findings and recommendations from previous efforts have been reviewed so items within this report are consistent with other City and County initiatives.

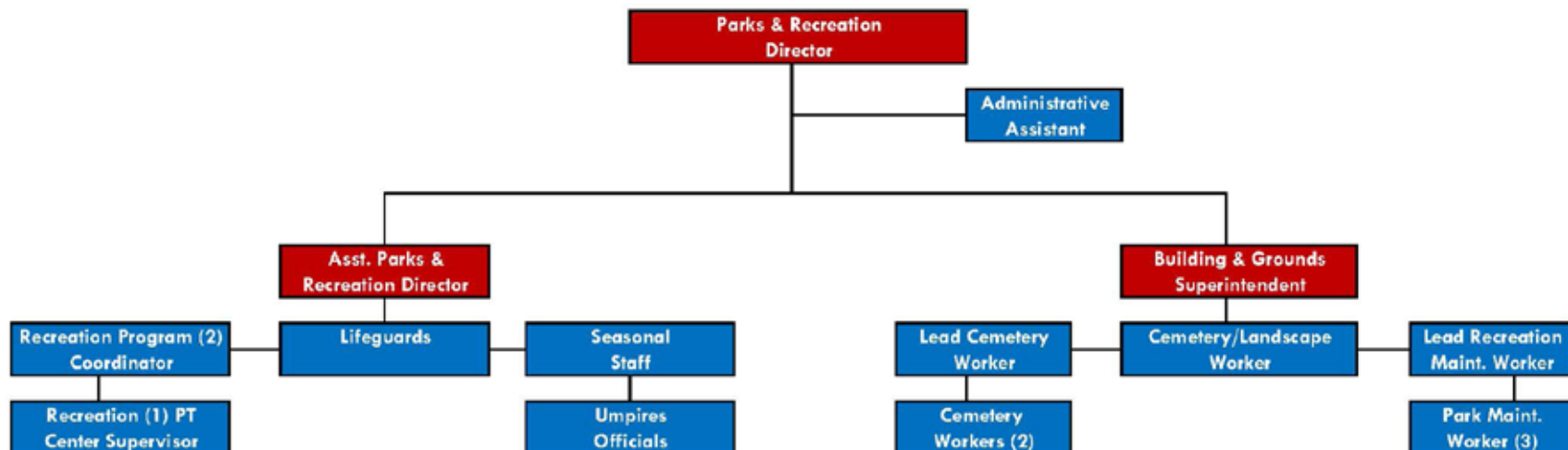
- **The 1988 and 2001 Parks and Recreation Master Plans** both outline immediate, near term, and long term goals for Parks and Recreation. Plans have been reviewed to determine what has been implemented and what still remains a need.
- **City of Newton Small Area Plans** were completed for: St. Pauls, Eastside, Southeast, Core, and the Southwest. Each of these plans identifies goals and objects for the City to address Open Space and Recreation within plan area.
- **The 2015 Strategic Plan** presents specific Actions that influence Parks and Recreation with the Community Appearance and Image Policy Reference and the Recreation Policy Reference.

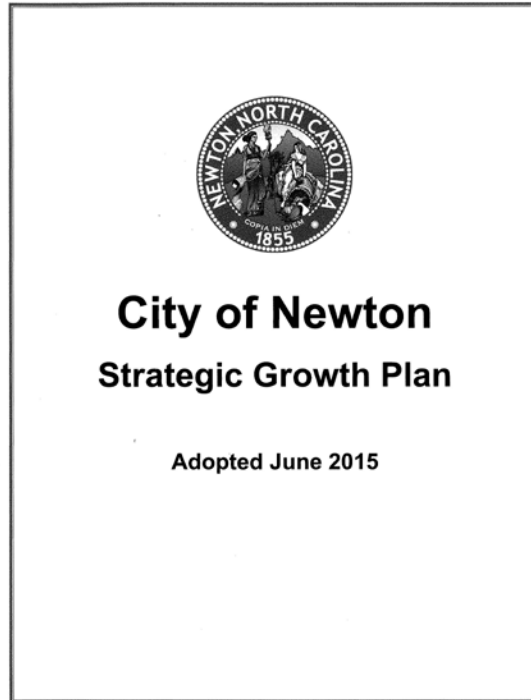


- **Newton Streetscape Plan and North Newton Master Plan** outlines recommendations for sidewalk widening and open space improvements, accompanied by wayfinding signs, improvements to the corridors approaching Downtown, and increased marketing.
- **Catawba County Parks and Recreation Plan** outlines specific Action Steps for the management, operations, and expansion of County owned Parks and recreation facilities. Connections to, and awareness of offerings helps determine what County service offerings may aid in City recreation demand.
- **Carolina Thread Trail** is a network of trails, greenways, blueways and conservation corridors linking 15 counties in North and South Carolina. This trail outlines a primary North/South Greenway route through Newton and a primary Blueway Route linking Jacob Fork park. Both links should be high priority within this plan as they link Newton to important regional cultural, natural, and recreational resources.

## STAFF

# **Newton Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart**

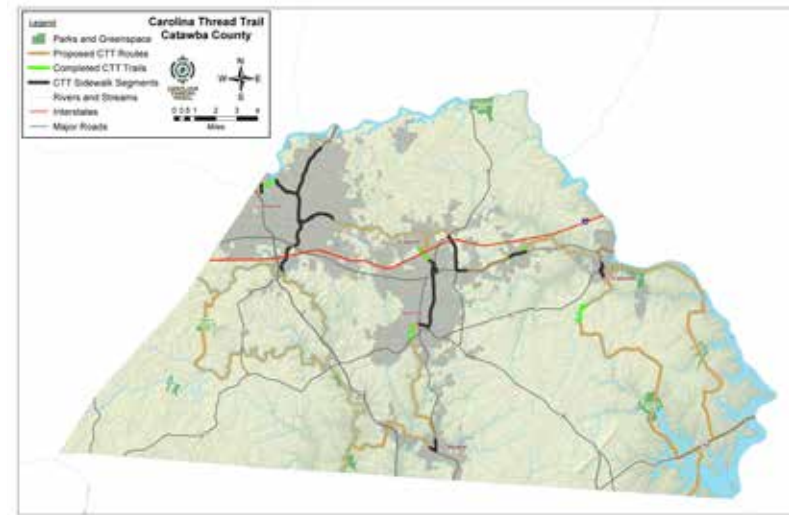




*Adopted Strategic Growth Plan*

Related Plan	Highlights
<b>1988 Parks and Recreation Master Plan</b>	This plan recommended a Land Dedication Ordinance be included in the Subdivision ordinance requiring developments dedication recreation land proportional to the development they were proposing. This was implemented and is in use. Park facility improvements and land acquisition were implemented. Greenway recommendations were made and not all have been implemented
<b>2001 Parks and Recreation Master Plan</b>	There are items in the 2001 plan presented as an immediate need that were not implemented. Listed below are the items that have not been implemented from the 2001 plan: <b>Northside Park</b> calls for a new toilet/storage building. <b>East Newton Recreation Center</b> calls for a new floor, bleachers, and HVAC; <b>Southside Park</b> recommended a large shelter for 150 people, expanded play area, and bridge to access property on west side of creek <b>Jacobs Fork Park</b> proposed two large soccer/football fields, walking and hiking trails, an family and group picnic areas <b>Greenways</b> were listed, some have been implemented, continued efforts to link parks, schools, and sidewalks should be made. <b>Land Acquisition</b> to accommodate population increase.
<b>The 2015 Strategic Plan</b>	Action 2.1.4: Add additional amenities including a dog park, outdoor theater space, a mini park, and a splash pad to attract commercial and residential development. Develop a new destination for Newton Action 3.1.1: Develop a new destination for Newton (e.g., Sports complex) Action 3.1.8: Create a new Public Art Program Actions 8.1.1: Update recreation master plan Actions 8.1.2: Identify capital projects utilizing Sue Jones estate: new playground equipment (Southside, Westside/Jaycee, Central and Jacob Fork Park), New Central Recreation Facility, Splash Pad, Lighting of Baseball Fields at Jacob Fork, Disc Golf Course, Flow Track or Exercise Trail Jacob Fork, Regulation size Soccer Field, Dog Park, Outdoor Stage, Actions 8.1.3: Determine outcome of Central High School and develop associated implementation strategies Actions 8.1.4: Complete Jacob Fork Park Phases II and III Actions 8.1.5: Create a strategy to support tourism with emphasis on the Historic 1924 Courthouse and museum and the Newton Depot Actions 8.1.6: Set aside Matching Funds or whole project cost to complete Heritage Trail Greenway including completion of NC 10 to Southside Park; Continue Greenway south of radio station road along west A Street, Continue downtown to tie into the existing sidewalk.

Related Plan	Highlights
	<p>Actions 8.1.7: Locate new operational facilities for the recreation (maintenance) staff</p> <p>Actions 8.1.8: Develop activities/programs that the senior adult population including, but not limited to, the creation of a senior center</p> <p>Actions 8.1.9 : Construct a dog park</p> <p>Actions 8.1.10: Construct a columbarium or mausoleum (Could Be Combined With 8.1)</p> <p>Actions 8.1.11: Construct a splash pad</p> <p>Actions 8.1.12: Develop a community garden</p> <p>Action 8.1.13: Greenway - Apply to NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative for funding Assistance for a Pedestrian plan</p> <p>Actions 8.1.14: Resurface Tennis courts at Broyhill and Jaycee Parks</p> <p>Actions 8.1.15: Complete a citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan</p>
<b>Newton Streetscape Master Plan</b>	<p>Include Improvements to the downtown square, Yount Park, sidewalks and streetscapes</p> <p>Recommends incorporating Arts into the downtown</p>
<b>Catawba County Parks and Recreation Plan</b>	<p>It is recommended connections to these facilities via greenway or outreach be available to Newton residents</p>
<b>Carolina Thread Trail</b>	<p>Blueway and Greenway connections are planned for Newton including a major North South Route through town to key features and parks in addition to Jacob Fork Park serving as a major Blueway stop and access location along the water trail.</p>



Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan



Newton Streetscape Master Plan

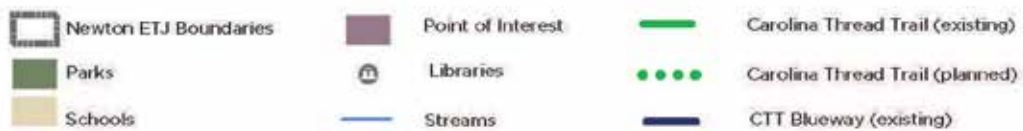
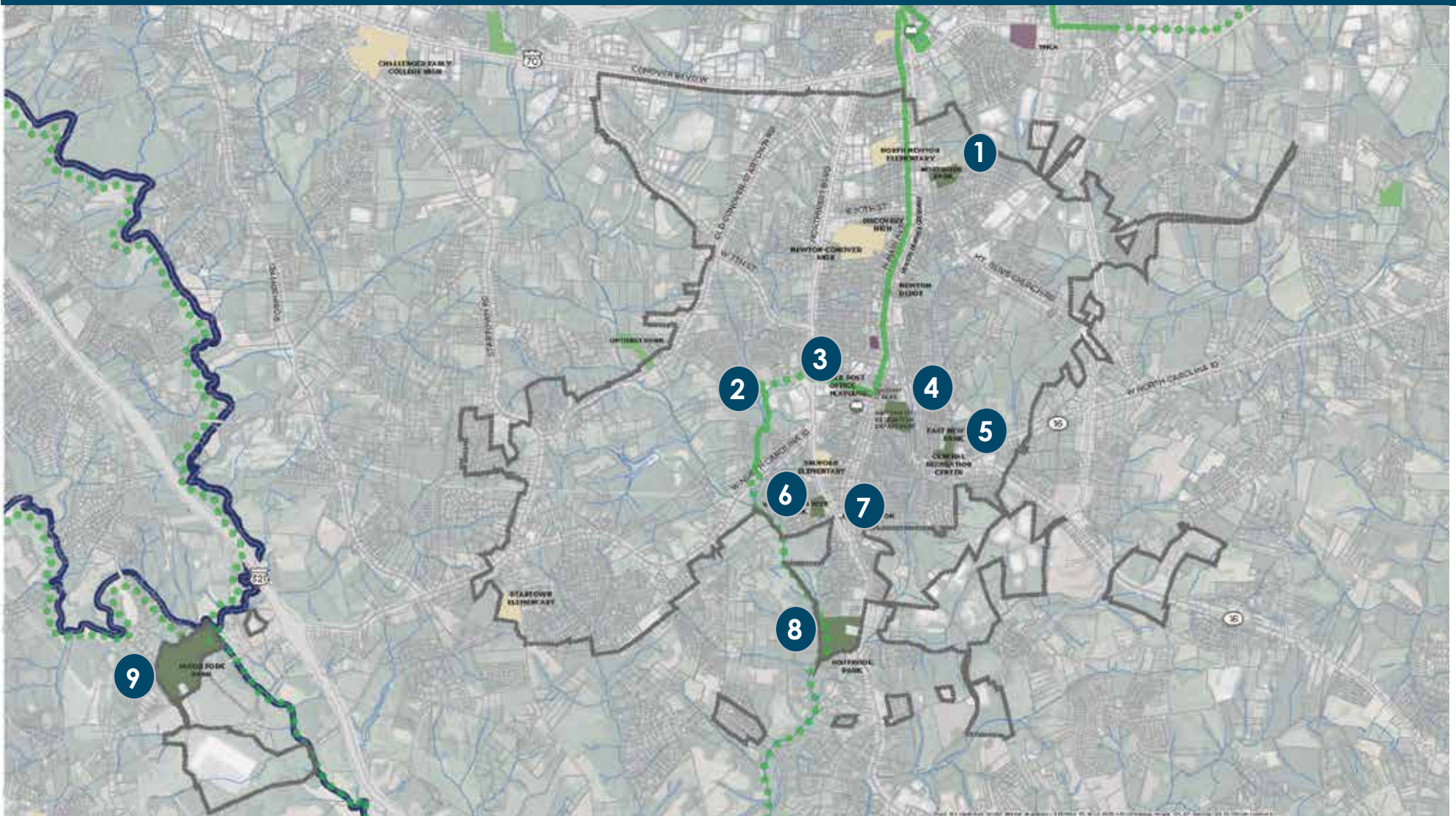




## EXISTING PARKS

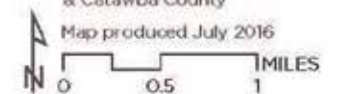
- 1 Northside Park
- 2 Newton Heritage Greenway
- 3 Yount Park
- 4 Newton Recreation Department
- 5 East Newton Park & Central Recreation
- 6 Westside Jaycee Park
- 7 Little Brook Park
- 8 Southside Park
- 9 Jacob Fork Park

## EXISTING CONDITIONS MAP



Data provided by the  
North Carolina Department  
of Transportation  
& Catawba County

Map produced July 2016





## NORTHSIDE PARK / BROYHILL BALLFIELD

Location:

**EAST 22ND STREET AND COLLEGE AVENUE; 506 EAST 22ND NEWTON, NC 28658**

Ownership

Hours

Size (Acreage):

**12 ACRES**

☐ Private

No Posted Hours

Predominant Use:

**ACTIVE RECREATION**

☒ Public

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	1,500 l.f. 8'-1'-wide crushed stone walking trail		
Play Area	New and Old Play Area	C- new play area N- older play Area	New Play area has mulch & updated play equipment, mulch, access ramp and edging; Older play area does not have edging, safety surfacing depth, or access route
Picnic Shelters	3.5	S	
Horseshoe Pits	2		
multi-use field (shared use)	1	S	Positive use of shared space, outfield multi-use field; (look at sports demand)
Open Space/Open Play	Y		Small area of open space adjacent to the play ground
Tennis Courts	2	S	Lighted;
Basketball Courts	1	N	This area could benefit from upgraded pavement markings, back-board, and fencing
Softball /baseball-Fields with Dugouts, Concession, Bleachers	2	S	Positive use of outfield space (Shared use) evaluate sports demand. Lighted; Both areas could benefit from spectator and participant shading over bleachers and benches
Restrooms	1	N	With the park separated by roadways, it would be beneficial to have a restroom on the south side of E 22nd and/or larger restrooms centrally located near the playground area with a crosswalk
Soccer field	1	S	Lighted & fenced; Multi-use field

Notes:

- Park Identification Signage at East Side of Park; could benefit from having one at west end of site(s)
- Ample paved parking with ADA spaces and route to features
- Due to through streets on site, it would be great to establish a slow park zone and improve crosswalk areas



# NORTHSIDE PARK



## Observations:

- **Sun/Shade-** There is a balance of sun and shade on the northern portion of this park site.

- **Connectivity-** Opportunity to link this park to the City sidewalk system

- **Access-** Could have improved wayfinding with identification at the western side of the site.

The park is bisected by a local through road so careful attention to pedestrian crossings and vehicular notification should be completed.

There is not currently a link to community sidewalks, other parks, or nearby schools.

- **Use Level-** Features appear to be in high

Northside Park/Broyhill Ballfield

0 125 250 Feet







Northside Park





## YOUNT PARK

Location: **33 EAST A STREET (AT NORTH COLLEGE AVENUE) NEWTON, NC 28658**

Size (Acreage): **+ 2970 SF. (1/10 AC)**

Predominant Use: **PASSIVE URBAN PARK**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

None Posted

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	Internal Sidewalks	C	
Planting		C	
Open Space		S	
Benches	2	S	

### Notes:

- Nice Urban park and area to rest while in town
- Positive link to Eat Smart/Move More information
- No Identification Signage/Hours/or park information
- Beautiful Town clock adjacent to site, could have interpretive information and/or area history
- Could benefit from having shade over seating areas/ seating areas in shade

### Observations:

- **Sun/Shade-** There is a balance of sun and shade,however, placement of benches could be moved to shade location.
- **Connectivity-** This park is well linked to City Sidewalks
- **Access-** The park could benefit from identification signage.
- **Use Level-** Park appears to be used but no wear and tear visible.



# YOUNT PARK



Yount Park

0 20 40 Feet







## NEWTON RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Location: **23 SOUTH BRADY AVENUE, NEWTON, NC**

Size (Acreage): **21.95 AC (INCLUDES CEMETERY ACREAGE)**

Predominant Use: **COMMUNITY BUILDING, ACTIVE RECREATION AND POOL**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

Varies based  
upon use

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	n/a		This site can serve as a starting point and destination along route with a downtown walking network. Work to link key features such as this on a downtown walking circuit.
Meeting Rooms	4		Wonderful community opportunity for programs, identify from primary entrance.
Multi-Purpose Rooms	(3 meeting rooms combined)		
Gymnasiums	1	S	Regulation size gymnasium
Office Space	5		(did not review; do spaces meet staff needs?)
Concession	1		
Fitness Room	1		
Newton Swimming Pool	Outdoor		Opportunity for expansion/upgrades improved access from Recreation Center; improve access (zero entry and/or spray features for non-swimmers)
Restrooms	Y		

Notes:

- The pool and Center could benefit from improved connections
- valuable resource to all ages
- Could improve signage for first time users, where to go for pool, gym, and/or meetings

### Observations:

- **Sun/Shade**- The pool area could benefit from additional shade;
- **Connectivity**- This park is well linked to City Sidewalks and should be considered as part of a walking network.
- **Access**- The park could benefit from identification signage.





Newton City Recreation Department





## EAST NEWTON PARK AND CENTRAL RECREATION CENTER

Location: **301 SOUTH ERVIN AVENUE NEWTON, NC 28658**

Size (Acreage): **6 ACRES**

Predominant Use: **COMBINATION OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

No Posted Hours

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Play Area	1	N	This areas is not accessible to the remainder of the park; the equipment, surfacing, and potentially the location need to be replaced
Picnic Shelters	2	S	lower area, not accessible to upper uses
Open Space/Open Play	Y	N	There is open space located on this tract that could be accessible with the inclusion of trails, and/or sidewalks, and signage
Basketball Courts	1	N	Lighted; Court Access and lighting are satisfactory, backboards and pavement markings could be upgraded.
Softball/baseball Field with Dugouts, Concession	1	S	The area falls within a flood prone area; upgrading the fields, infield and drainage away from the field may improve usage
Restrooms	1	S	locked at time of visit

### Notes:

- This site could benefit from a site specific Master Plan with the Newton Recreation Center and entire park parcel.
- There is no signage from East D street directing you to South Ervin or Stadium Drive to access the park
- There are opportunities to connect this site via sidewalk and greenway from East B Street, Ervin Avenue, and East E Street
- The outfield and open playfield were not accessible due to the gated parking lot

### Observations:

- **Sun/Shade-** There is a balance of sun and shade, the upper level does not have shade, the lower level fields do.
- **Connectivity-** Opportunity to link this park to the City sidewalk system
- **Access-** Could have improved wayfinding with Park identification signage. The park is bisected by a local through road so careful attention to pedestrian crossings and vehicular notification should be completed.
- **Use Level-** Upper features are not easily accessed and upgrades needed; the City needs to determine alternatives for building removal, upgrades, and /or partial usage. This will affect the overall site master plan.





East Newton Park

Map Not to Scale







East Newton Park





## WESTSIDE JAYCEE PARK

Location: **W J St NEWTON, NORTH CAROLINA**

Size (Acreage): **9 AC**

Predominant Use: **ACTIVE RECREATION**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

No Posted Hours

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	2,054 l.f. of 8'-10' wide gravel trail; 260 l.f. of sidewalk	S	Primary crushed stone trail in good condition
Play Area	1	N	Sand is not considered an accessible surface; equipment, surfacing, and access to the areas could be upgraded
Picnic Shelters	1.5	S	1 full shelter; small shelter and shaded area near tennis courts.
Horseshoe Pits	8+	S	
Ballfields	1	S	Lighted; Multi-use field in outfield of baseball/softball
Tennis Courts	4	S	Lighted; inquire about resurfacing schedule of all courts
Basketball Courts	1	S	Lighted; inquire about resurfacing schedule of all courts
Softball Fields with Dugouts, Concession, Bleachers	1	N	Lighted; the fields, lighting, and scoreboard are an asset to this facility. Spectators and participants could benefit from shade over bleachers.
Restrooms	1	S	
Benches	5	N	Benches along Walking trail, near tennis, and basketball area could improve user ability

### Notes:

- This park site is fully developed and some upgrades are needed; look at park expansion opportunities, this park appears to be in high use
- This site could have a better balance between sun/shade
- Ample paved parking with ADA spaces and route to features

### Observations:

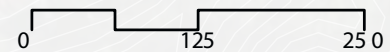
- **Sun/Shade**- Limited access to shade
- **Connectivity**- Opportunity to link to Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) , adjacent neighborhoods, and nearby Little Brook Park
- **Access**- Park has good access with a hardpack trail on exterior of property. Access to features (ie. playground) could be improved,
- **Use Level**- Features appear to be in high demand with wear and tear; playground surfacing and equipment need replacement.



## WESTSIDE/JAYCEE PARK



Westside Jaycee Park





Westside Jaycee Park





## Little Brook Park

Location: **SOUTHWEST BOULEVARD AND SOUTH MAIN AVENUE**

Size (Acreage): **.32 AC**

Predominant Use: **PASSIVE PARK**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

not currently used

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	n/a		
Open Space/Open Play	open space	S	Great location for improved landscape, signage, or community art
Benches	1		

Notes:

- This park is bordered by Southwest Boulevard, South Main Street, and Little Brook Creek.
- There is no parking or sidewalk linking this park.
- This is a visible lot as you enter town has the potential to be a wonderful community passive park and community entrance with enhanced landscape, signage, and/or community art

**Observations:**

- **Sun/Shade-** There is a balance of sun and shade
- **Connectivity-** This park could be accessed via sidewalks from town.
- **Access-** currently no parking or sidewalks
- **Use Level-** low



Little Brook Park

Map Not to Scale







## SOUTHSIDE PARK

Location: **1775 S US 321 HWY. NEWTON, NC**

Size (Acreage): **27 ACRES**

Predominant Use: **PASSIVE RECREATION**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

6am- Dark

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	5,015 linear feet of crushed stone paths	S	Primary Crushed Stone Pathways and sidewalk in good condition; secondary internal pathways to picnic areas and playground need improvement for access
Open Air Amphitheater	1	S	Could add paved walkways to and through seating area to improve access
Play Area	1	N	Access ramps to play areas were flooded; could add accessible routes to and around play areas; playground and swings could be updated.
Picnic Shelters	3 (1 brick)		Good locations for variety of uses;
Sand Volleyball Courts	2		Could add pathway linking courts and horseshoe pit area
Horseshoe Pits	4	N	Not visible and no trail nearby for access;cannot see from primary park area
Multi-Use	soccer/multi-use	S	Multi-Use Field could be upgraded for expand uses.
Open Space/Open Play	yes	S	Good balance of sun and shade open play areas within this park; several trees damaged/removed.
Picnic Tables	30+		Could add ADA accessible tables along crushed stone trail
Restrooms/Concessions	1	S	Could update restroom area for improved access
Benches	Y		

### Notes:

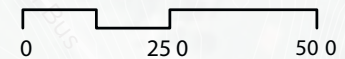
- 2 Park Identification Signs
- Good Balance of Sun and Shade
- Ample paved parking with ADA spaces
- Opportunity for additional development, park expansion, and upgrades



**Observations:**

- **Sun/Shade**- Great balance of Sun and Shade
- **Connectivity**- Opportunity to link to C.T.T. and west side of creek
- **Access**- Could have improved wayfinding, accessible trails/features; no link to community sidewalks or other parks.
- **Use Level**- Features appear to be in high demand with wear & tear; opportunity for upgrades and expansion areas.

Southside Park







Southside Park







## JACOB FORK PARK

 Location: **3730 NC HIGHWAY 10, NEWTON, NC 28658**

 Size (Acreage): **100+ ACRES**

 Predominant Use: **PASSIVE AND ACTIVE**

Ownership

☐ Private

☒ Public

Hours

 April-Oct.-  
 7am-8pm  
 Nov.-March  
 7am-5pm

PARK ASSET/AMENITY	QUANTITY	CONDITION N=NEEDS IMPROVEMENT S=SATISFACTORY C=COMMENDABLE	NOTES
Walking/Jogging Trails	Approx. 1/2 mile 8'-1'-wide gravel walking loop	C	Nice Crushed stone walking trail; could link lower park area with trails to extend this 1/2 mile loop
Mountain Biking	Trails and Pump Track	C	Very nice pump track and mountain biking trails; kiosk good. Could add informational lot and access from lower lot near ballfields
Picnic Area	6-8 table	S	Wooded picnic area near the canoe launch; nice shaded area. Could benefit from walking trail access ,accessible tables, site furnishings in other parts of park
Open Space/Open Play	Y	S	Open Space surrounding ballfield areas have no shade, could benefit from shade; good open space near canoe launch
Soccer Fields	2	N	Undeveloped multi-use areas could be formalized/upgraded to expand use
Canoe Launch	Y	C	This is an incredible asset as it links to the C.T.T. this site can serve as a destination and resource for blueway users, upgrade trail head
Baseball Fields with Dugouts, Concession, Bleachers	2	C	Not Lighted;
Restrooms	1	C	good condition; appear to be fairly new; note location near canoe and mountain biking trail heads.
Benches	?		Did not see any benches, trail could be more user friendly with benches and shade trees

### Notes:

- This site is a major location for the Carolina Thread Trail and Blueway Access locations, this should be a highlighted feature
- This site has future phasing to include playground, soccer, disc golf, these features should be designed and included.
- Park Identification Signage at Entrance
- The ballfield complex area, park, and trailhead could improve conditions for use with shade/shelters

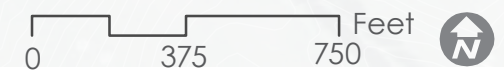


### Observations:

- **Sun/Shade-** There is a balance of sun and shade, the upper level does not have shade, the lower level fields do.
- **Connectivity-** Opportunity to link this park to the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) and expand park features.
- **Access-** This park is part of the Carolina Thread Trail Blueway System and could have regional trail connectivity.
- **Use Level-** While the park appears to be in high demand, the existing features are not worn and appear to be newer than other features within the system.



## Jacob Fork Park



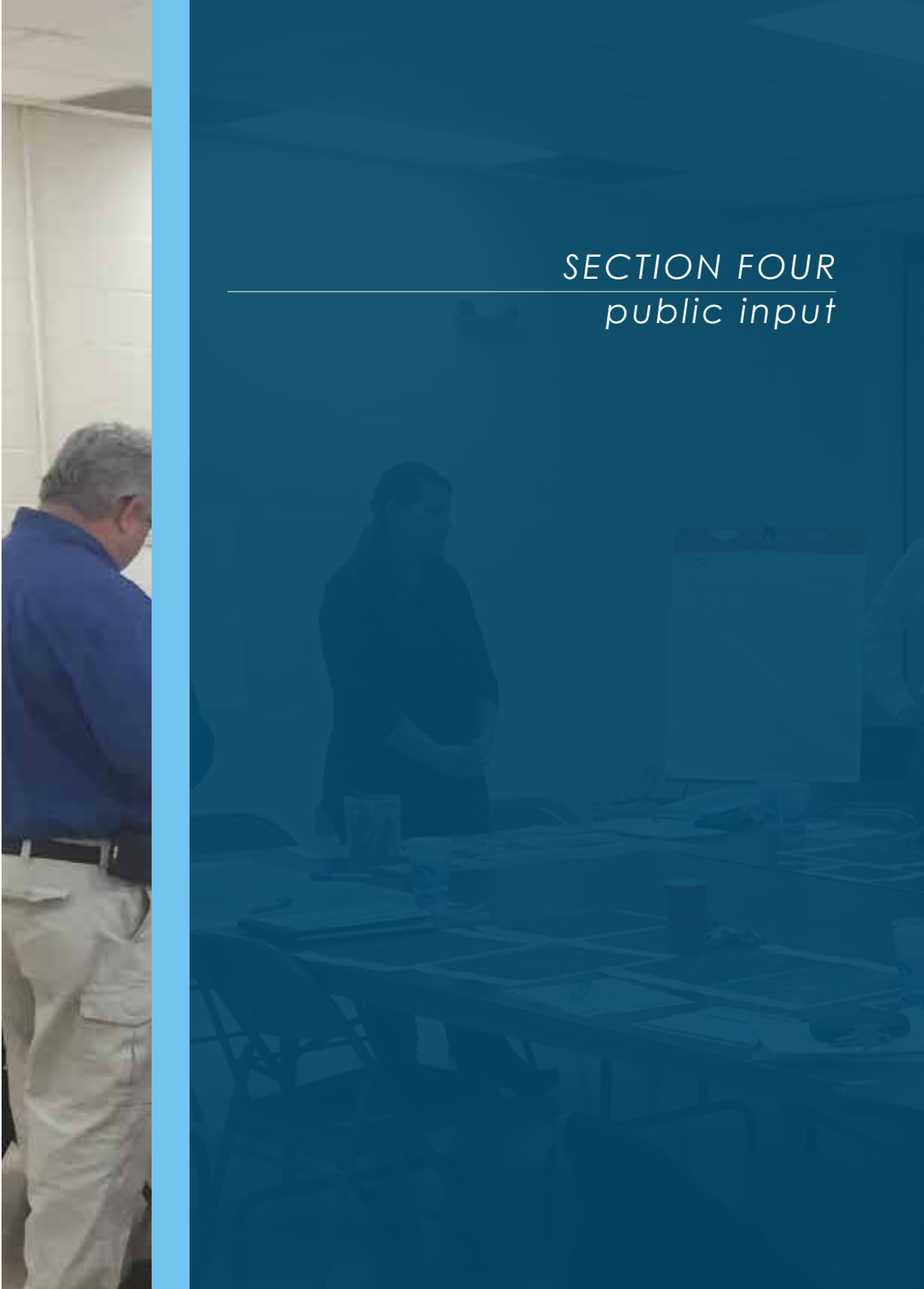






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*SECTION FOUR*  
*public input*





## Public Input

### Community Input

Public engagement is a critical part to understanding resident need. The City of Newton staff began the engagement process through a series of community meetings in January and February of 2016. This engagement process was conducted by staff in different locations throughout the community in an effort to gain input from areas throughout the City. Community Members were asked to respond to two statements: "I love Newton Because...", and "I think Newton needs...". Residents participated in the following meetings:

- Grace Reformed United Church of Christ (January 25, 2016)
- Abernathy Laurels (January 27, 2016)
- Central Recreation Center (January 28, 2016)
- North Newton Elementary (February 4, 2015)

In summary, and in relation to the park master planning efforts, representatives responded they "loved Newton because" of its small town feel and the history of the area. When asked to list items they "think Newton Needs", participants requested the City listen more to the youth and provide more opportunities for this age group. They would like to have the City pursue more grant opportunities, provide more outdoor events and concerts, and provide better access by adding sidewalks, as well as support facilities for biking and walking. For meeting minutes please contact the City.

### Community Survey

As a key component of the public input process, a Parks and Recreation survey was distributed to assess residents' needs, attitudes and opinions related to improving its parks and recreation facilities, and to gain an understanding about preferences. The questionnaire and engagement efforts began with a visioning session that included members from the Newton Park and Recreation Commission and project steering committee. The resulting ideas helped develop the survey which was available to residents in hard-copy at special events and classes, as well as online through the City website. Survey participation ran from the end of March 2016 until the beginning of May 2016. There were a total of 488 responses, of those responses, 192 were completed on-line and the remainder through hard copy entry with the majority of the participants (56 percent) being Newton residents and a high percentage (40 percent) living in Newton for more than 15 years. Of the total participants, 61 percent of respondents were female and 39 percent were male. Respondent profiles indicated there was a fairly even distribution of age groups represented in each of the households with the most representation in the 45-54 age group category, and the least represented age category being 15-19.

When respondents were asked if they or a family member visit(ed) Newton Park facilities (78 percent) stated they or a family member have visited Southside park, followed by Newton Recreation Department (58 percent), Westside Jaycee Park (37 percent), Heritage Greenway Trail (34 Percent), and Jacob Fork Park (34 percent).

When asked which park is their favorite, the majority of respondents (50 percent) stated Southside Park, followed by Jacob Fork Park (14 percent), Heritage Greenway Trail (10 percent), Northside Park (7 percent), and Westside/Jaycee Park (6 percent).







In order to understand what new features would be desired, participants were asked to identify the top five (5) park features or programs for the City to add as a new component. The most popular responses were:

1. greenways and trails, this received the most #1 responses and the highest total (39 Percent),
2. new picnic areas (29 percent),
3. dog park(s)
4. disc golf (24 percent),
5. playgrounds (22 percent),
6. water access (21.5 percent),

Events lawns and open space, Mountain Biking trails, rock climbing, adventure programs, and public art and soccer all ranked 10th. The open ended responses resulted in high requests for a skate park followed by a splash pad.

Participants were asked to prioritize the age group they would like to see more programs offered, the highest support was for youth ages up to 12 (67 percent), followed by Senior Programs ages 55 and over, then Teen Programs (Ages 13-17).

There was high response for all Newton Special Events, when participants were asked to rank their top three (3), Community Festivals totaled the highest, followed by Outdoor Movies then Concerts. However, all of the special events received strong support within all three rankings. (There were several open ended comments in response question 10 that can be found in the appendix of this report.)

These results are consistent with the 2015 Catawba County Community Health Opinion Survey which stated Sidewalks, walking routes, Greenways, and proximity to Parks would make it easier for residents to be more physically active. Additionally, the second ranked behavior that residents "Needed more information about is Exercising and fitness" (40 percent), is consistent with the findings in this study survey. The County reported Better/more recreational facilities as one of the community service sectors needing improvement.

## SECTION FIVE

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### *Analysis*

NO BIKES  
ON TRAIL







## Analysis

The previous Newton Parks and Recreation Master Planning efforts (1988, 2001) offered guidance by recommending “ratios” for parks, facilities, and/or programs based on acres or facilities per thousand people. Ratios were adapted over the years using a variety of methods by a number of communities, however, this resulted in noticeable inconsistencies because geographic distribution and condition of facilities were not identified, and breakdown of demographics were not addressed. As a result, the National Recreation and Park Association has worked to establish a process of understanding “supply and demand” for recreation services. Solely using the population ratio method does not factor in demographics, current demand, the Town's capacity, other relevant planning efforts, and unique community contributing elements. They have implemented a national recreation data base called “PRORAGIS” that houses recreation data from all over the country allowing municipalities to query many different layers of information pertinent to their department. Recent trends in determining and measuring the success of recreational offerings are a result of understanding Newton's vision and goals for recreation and reaching out to users to understand if residents are receiving the desired level of service. This approach is used to present recommendations, determine action steps for implementation, and establish priorities to meet the goals presented.

The following information is a summary of how Newton Parks and Recreation Department compares to North Carolina agencies with similar population, and National summaries.

In order to obtain complete comparative data the City of Newton Parks and Recreation Department should enter all of the recreation data available for facilities, programs, and departmental operations. There are several steps that will allow Newton to refine data queries and obtain higher level of analysis. The database basic features can be used without data entry and was used for these planning efforts: <http://www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS/About/>

When a basic query was conducted for comparison, the following filters were applied: Agencies within North Carolina, a population no

greater than 15,000, and public agencies that fell into the following categories: city, town, special district, county, state, other. This query resulted in the following 2015 data agency comparisons: Aberdeen, NC Parks and Recreation; Ayden, NC Arts and Recreation; Black Mountain, NC Parks and Recreation; Fletcher Parks and Recreation; Highlands Parks and Recreation; Oak Island Parks and Recreation; Warsaw Parks and Recreation.

In addition to that, no filters were applied to obtain 2015 national data comparisons. National information is a guide as the population information skews the ability to directly compare service per population.

## Summary of Data

General Information			
NEWTON POPULATION:	13,005		
NEWTON POPULATION PER SQUARE MILE:	942/sq. mi.		
PARK ACRES:	Total	176.34	This includes acreage for current parks, greenway totals in linear footage not in this acreage
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT FULL TIME STAFF:			
PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS OFFERED:			
Facility	Location	Quantity	Comments/Notes
BASKETBALL:		5	
INDOOR	CR, NRD	2	
OUTDOOR	NSP, ENP, WJP	3	
BASEBALL	N S P ENP, WJP, JFP	6	
MULTI-USE FIELDS	NSP, SSP	2*	* There are currently 2 stand along multi-use fields, there is 1 shared use field at North Side Park
PLAYGROUNDS	NSP, ENP, WJP, SSP	1*	
SWIMMING	NRD	1	
TENNIS	WJP, NSP	6	
TRAILS:			
Greenway (Multi-Use)	HGT	1.5 Miles	This includes two 3/4 mile sections of the Heritage Greenway Trail
Internal Park Trails (walking/hiking)	SSP, WJP, NSP, JFP	1.85	These are unpaved trails with varied widths
Mountain Biking / trail running	JFP	2.25	Natural Surface Trail
VOLLEYBALL (SAND)	SSP	2	

### KEY OF LOCATIONS:

Central Recreation	CR
East Newton Park	ENP
Jacob Fork Park	JFP
Northside Park	NSP
Newton Recreation Department	NRD
Southside Park	SSP
Westside Jaycee Park	WJP



## Comparison

The PRORAGIS database presents data queries in range where data is available. If data is not available, a notation of ISD= Insufficient data appears. Data ranges are presented as lower quartile, Median, and Upper Quartile. In some cases data averages are available. For the purposes of this study and comparison, Median data was used for both National and North Carolina agency comparisons. Reports are called "Agency effectiveness ratios" and have several layers of information available. Raw data can be found in the appendix or queried: <http://www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS/About/>

CATEGORY	NEWTON QUANTITY	NATIONAL MEDIAN PER POPULATION PER FACILITY *	NC PUBLIC AGENCY QUERY MEDIAN DATA (POPULATION OF 15,000)**	NEWTON PER POPULATION BREAKDOWN	ABOVE OR BELOW NC (+ ABOVE, = EQUAL, - BELOW)	COMMENTS
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	60	n/a	16	n/a	+	Newton Operating well above reported programs in this query. National data breaks program type but not total
<b>PARK ACREAGE PER 1000 RESIDENTS</b>	176.34 AC	7.9	7.2	13.5	+	Distribution of Park Acreage and type (active/programmed versus passive/unprogrammed) is noted on Parks and Recreation Master Plan, additional acreage is needed in order to have balanced park distribution within the community.
<b>BASKETBALL:</b>	5	7102	4565	4335	=	Comparison data compiled uses outdoor courts only
<b>INDOOR</b>	2					
<b>OUTDOOR</b>	3					
<b>BASEBALL</b>	6	5319	2107.5	2167	=	
<b>MULTI-USE FIELDS</b>	2	8187	2500	6502	-	
<b>PLAYGROUNDS</b>	1	3614	3750	13,005	-	1 current playground is up to date and accessible
<b>SWIMMING</b>	1	34149	8145	13,005	=	
<b>TENNIS</b>	6	5000	1650	2167	-	
<b>TRAILS:</b>						
<b>GREENWAY (MULTI-USE)</b>	1.5 Miles	1217	no data	8670	-	under national listing, however, greenway comparisons are difficult because connections are destination based
<b>INTERNAL PARK TRAILS (WALKING/HIKING)</b>	1.85	no data	no data	n/a		
<b>MOUNTAIN BIKING</b>	2.25	no data	no data	n/a		
<b>VOLLEYBALL (SAND)</b>	2	19,858	no data	6502		

\* National Park database includes communities with much higher populations therefore some of the median data skews the comparisons to Newton facility comparisons

\*\* This query resulted in the following 2015 data agency comparisons: Aberdeen, NC Parks and Recreation; Ayden, NC Arts and Recreation; Black Mountain, NC Parks and Recreation; Fletcher Parks and Recreation; Highlands Parks and Recreation; Oak Island Parks and Recreation; Warsaw Parks and Recreation.



*SECTION SIX*  
*recommendations*



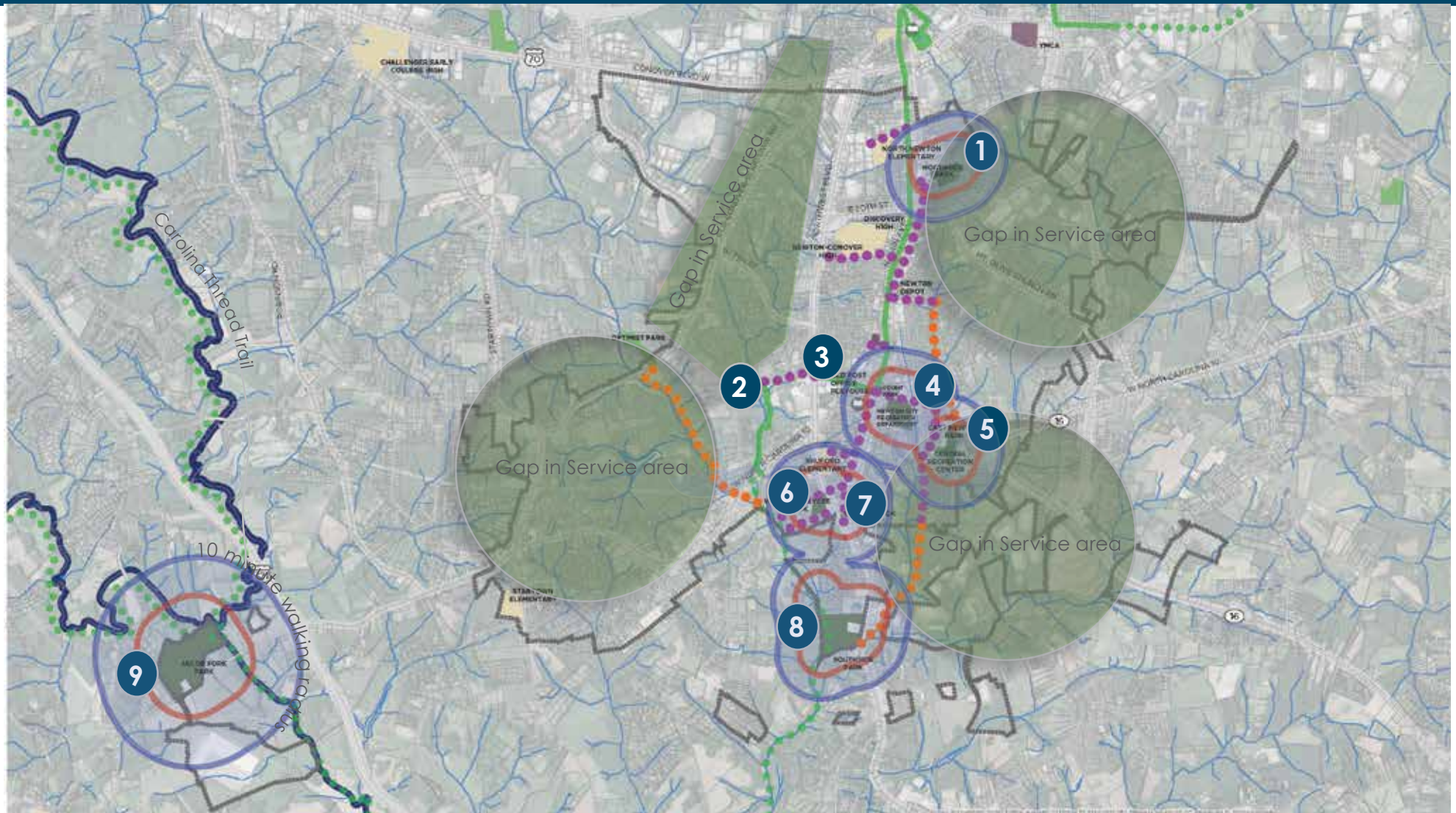


## EXISTING PARKS

- 1 Northside Park
- 2 Newton Heritage Greenway
- 3 Yount Park
- 4 Newton Recreation Department
- 5 East Newton Park & Central Recreation
- 6 Westside Jaycee Park
- 7 Little Brook Park
- 8 Southside Park
- 9 Jacob Fork Park



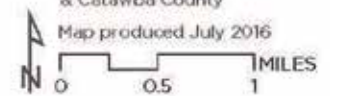
# PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN MAP



- |                       |                                  |  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Newton ETJ Boundaries | Streams                          | New Greenway                           |
| Parks                 | Carolina Thread Trail (existing) | Sidewalk Improvements                  |
| Schools               | Carolina Thread Trail (planned)  | 5 minute (1/4 mile) walkshed           |
| Point of Interest     | CTT Blueway (existing)           | 10 minute (1/2 mile) walkshed          |
| Libraries             |                                  | Area outside of immediate park service |

Data provided by the  
North Carolina Department of  
Transportation & Catawba County

Map produced July 2016







## Recommendations- Facilities

As mentioned in the analysis, the previous Newton Parks and Recreation Master Planning efforts (1988, 2001) offered guidance to by recommending “ratios” for parks, facilities, and/or programs based on acres or facilities per thousand people. The National Recreation and Park Association has worked to establish a process of understanding “supply and demand” for recreation services. Solely using the population ratio method does not factor in demographics, current demand, the City’s capacity, other relevant planning efforts, and unique community elements. NRPA has implemented a national recreation data base called “PRORAGIS” that houses recreation data from all over the country allowing municipalities to query many different layers of information pertinent to their department. Recent trends in determining and measuring the success of recreational offerings are a result of understanding Newton’s vision and goals for recreation and reaching out to users to understand if residents are receiving the desired level of service. This approach is used to present recommendations, determine action steps for implementation, and establish priorities to meet the goals presented.

Therefore recommendations presented for Newton Parks and Recreation Department take into consideration:

- *The Mission and goals of the Department*
- *The population characteristics growth over a period of time*
- *The needs of the population and their vision for existing and future facilities.*
- *The accessibility of Parks and Recreation facilities and how they could be better connected to where users live and work.*
- *How Parks and Recreation facilities and programs can help with implementation of the strategic growth plan.*
- *How Newton compares to other North Carolina Departments of similar demographic and departmental size utilizing available data in NRPA’s PRORAGIS database*

Recommendations are presented by addressing overall needs and individual park needs.

### Overall

#### IMMEDIATE (0-2)

- **Comparative Data tools for parks:** It is recommended Newton Parks and Recreation Staff input departmental data, including the inventory information found in this report, staff #'s, budget data, population and program information, and operating funds. Adding this information to the PRORAGIS data base will allow Newton to continually assess how they compare to communities of similar size in North Carolina, and if desired, across the U.S.
- **Walking, Biking, and Sidewalk Connectivity:** Survey respondents repeatedly highlighted greenways, walking trails, and improved sidewalk connectivity, as the highest priority and recreational need. There is opportunity to improve the existing sidewalk system, provide improved signage, support facilities, and links to greenways, neighborhoods, parks, and schools.
  - It is recommended the City complete an NCDOT Pedestrian plan to thoroughly assess sidewalk gaps, connections to schools, and linkage of parks. Adding crosswalks, signage, curb cuts and gaps will help improve the walkability and access to your parks.
- **Greenways:** There is strong support for the expansion of the Heritage Greenway Trail and the addition of new greenways linking the city. The overall Master Plan Map highlights some of the recommended links, but the immediate need would be to improve internal park trails (See individual park recommendations) and to complete key connections to nearby parks and schools to the Newton Heritage Greenway trail and CTT designated sidewalks.
- **Playgrounds:** Playgrounds ranked high as a need among survey participants. This, along with demographics, playground location show the demand for updating all playgrounds within the system except for Northside Park. There are several trends in non-traditional play spaces including nature based play, adult fitness equipment, adventure based play, and children’s fitness,

challenge play, and climbing features. All of these trends and theme should be considered when updating this equipment not only to better serve a variety of ages but also to reflect current trends and changes in play environments. This is a high priority for the city.

- **Staff:** The city of Newton provides a wide range of programs, special events, and activities for residents and visitors. Based upon the number of staff and programs provided Newton is currently maximizing resources for programs. In order to keep up with trends and resident program needs the city should provide additional program staff. Based upon programs offered and staff, there should be an additional full time program provider in addition to a part time program provider. They programmers should be focused on special populations, special events and program trends.



*Newton Heritage Greenway Trail, photo City of Newton*

### NEAR TERM NEED: (3-5)

- **Interactive Water Feature:** There is high interest in providing a splash pad, interactive water feature, and or interactive fountain. These systems can vary greatly in cost and care depending on type and design. Consideration should be given to the best location and type of feature to include, but it is clear that residents support the inclusion of some type of interactive water feature for play. In looking at location, Southside Park, the swimming pool, and/or and interactive feature downtown should be examined for potential sites.
- **Dog Park:** survey participants expressed strong interest for a dog park. This is a low cost way to provide residents a great resource and community area. There are several potential locations including: Southside Park, Jacob Fork Park, or a new location. Consideration should be given to access to water, parking, and size (minimum of 1 Acre, preferably 2 AC).
- **Community Event and Performance Space:** Community Events were strongly supported. Survey participants ranked all of the special events as desired activities. Having a community events space in the downtown area supports the Strategic Growth Plan recommendations, Newton Streetscape Master plan recommendations, and efforts to improve connectivity and community events opportunities downtown.



### LONG TERM (5-10)

- **New Parks:** After evaluating the survey responses, recreational needs, growth and development, and immediate recreational needs, the development or acquisition of parks remain a future need. While the results of all of the past studies, growth, and recreational needs don't illustrate the immediate need for new park development, it is recommended Newton Plan for future



growth and need now as land is still available in the areas identified as “gaps in service area”. These are areas that are outside the walking radius and are within areas identified on the demand analysis maps. Analysis of park distribution and service areas to residents, shows there is a gap in the southwest portion of the city. This area, along with the east side of Newton, should be considered for future park Land acquisition and/or park development.

## Northside Park

### IMMEDIATE (0-2)

- Improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage to nearby schools and N Main Avenue to better connect this park to students, neighborhoods, and the sidewalk sections of the Carolina Thread Trail. This includes: Crosswalk improvements, increased sidewalk widths, connecting the missing sections between these locations, and signing where needed.
- Look for opportunities to work with NCDOT and Safe Routes to Schools for these connections (SRTS)
- The New Playground is a great addition to this site. Providing an accessible route from the sidewalk and adjacent perimeter trail and benches would make it more accessible to users.
- The older playground, swings, and equipment, need to have edging and surfacing upgrades along with an accessible route to each.
- Update Basketball lighting and goals

### NEAR TERM NEED: (3-5)

- Update restrooms and concessions. With the amount of recreation services provided on this site, larger and/or an additional restroom is needed on this site.
- Upgrade multiuse fields (irrigation) and provide shade around the fields (trees)



### LONG TERM (5-10)

- Define a Park Corridor between along East 22nd between N College Avenue and the east side of the park with park entrance signage at each end, sidewalk bump outs to narrow crossings for users, change in pavement, and streetscape. These features will help identify the park from the west and define the park space between N College Ave. and the end of the park.

## Newton Heritage Greenway/ Carolina Thread Trail Connections

Greenways, walking, and improved connectivity ranked the highest the resident survey needs. This is consistent with state and national trends. Residents enjoy the Heritage Greenway trail and would like to see additional length and community connectivity to this trail.

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS (0-2)

- Immediate needs are to provide connections to nearby Westside Jaycee and South Side Park. These parks could not only serve as trail heads, but also provide internal park trails that provide extra length and support facilities for users.



- Improved sidewalk connections (Along S. Cline Avenue, W. J Street, and Westside Drive) from Westside Jaycee to the proposed CTT route and to the nearby South Newton Elementary school would provide links to park, school, and nearby neighborhoods.



## Historic Newton Depot and North Depot Area

### NEAR TERM (3-5)

- The Rail line, Depot, and North Depot Area are an important part of Newton History, character, and to the Heritage Trail. Making visitor improvements such as shade, signage, benches, and trails & sidewalk connections to and between the facilities will help link the North Depot and Historic Depot and Museum.

## Yount Park

### IMMEDIATE (0-2)

- Identify the area as a Newton Park with signage
- Make sure the walking route map box is identified and visible to users from both sides of the park
- The downtown area, not specifically Yount Park, is a good consideration for an interactive fountain



*Newton Recreation Department photo City of Newton*

## Newton Recreation Center

### IMMEDIATE TERM (0-2)

- Complete missing sidewalk sections from Newton Recreation Center to the Heritage Greenway Trail

### NEAR TERM (3-5)

- Newton Recreation Department and the swimming pool site should be considered for improvements such as a splash pad, zero entry, and/or spray features. Facilities in place such as restrooms and lockers would make this an ideal area if connected to the Recreation Center. Upgrades should be considered for this site to keep it up to date.
- Improve the connection from the Recreation Center to the Pool facilities
- Provide walking Route Maps to nearby Parks, greenway, and downtown



### **NEAR TERM - LONG TERM (3-10)**

- Complete building upgrades as outlined in the 5/10/15/20 year Parks and Recreation Department Goals and Objectives

### **East Newton Park/Central Recreation**

#### **IMMEDIATE NEEDS (0-2):**

- Finalize decision on Central High school Building Reuse determination. Based upon interior square footage the primary focus should be on the gymnasium and improvements to it and Master Planning the Parks.
- Proceed with Demolition of the Three Classroom building as none of the alternatives include the reuse of this structure.
- Complete upgrades to gymnasium as outlined 5/10/15/20 year Parks and Recreation Department Goals and Objectives.
  - Air Conditioning
  - Basketball goals
- This Park site has several site challenges including access, aging structures, and topography. All issues need address in order for this park site to become better connected, more user friendly, and accessible to park users. It is recommended a site specific Master Plan be completed for East Newton park that Addresses these issues above and sets a schedule for park improvements
- Improve connectivity to Downtown with sidewalks, crosswalks, and signage from Central Recreation, along S. Ervin Avenue, Stadium Avenue, and East D Street.

#### **NEAR TERM (3-5):**

- New Playground Equipment. While the need for new playground equipment and access to it is an immediate need, the city should complete a Master plan for the entire site to ensure it is located in the correct area and accessible to users. An intermediate solution is to adjust the fencing so the area is accessible from the upper level parking area adjacent to the basketball and close off the stairs in disrepair.

- Consider a solution to unlocking the gate to the lower area of the park in the near term so this area is accessible to users. If car access is not desired then consider a walking trail, path or sidewalk.

### **Westside Jaycee Park**

#### **IMMEDIATE NEED (0-2):**

- New Playground Equipment, surfacing, and access to the play area are needed in order for the equipment to meet ADA requirements.
- Resurface Tennis and Basketball Courts; consider adding striping that would allow for a variety of play levels and types such as pickle ball or basketball striping for court games.
- Add benches along walking trail, near tennis, horseshoes, and basketball area.
- Add shade trees and /or structures along walking trail and ball-field spectator areas.

#### **NEAR TERM (3-5):**

- Create sidewalk connections to Future Heritage Greenway Trail section

### **Southside Park**

#### **IMMEDIATE NEED (0-2):**

- Provide new Playground Equipment, surfacing, and access to the play area
- Improve multi-use fields
- Improve internal trail connections to park features from parking, to primary trail, picnic areas/shelters, performance area, and playgrounds

### **NEAR TERM (3-5):**

- Provide a connection to unused acreage on west side of creek.
- Plan and develop the greenway connection north west to expand the Heritage Greenway Trail.
- This site is a great consideration for a splash pad/interactive water feature.
- This site would be a good consideration for a dog park, it has parking and acreage.



*celebrate local arts at Little Brook Park,  
photo from <http://www.foothillsfolkartfestival.com>*

### **Little Brook Park**

#### **NEAR TERM (3-5)**

- This Park is currently unimproved but maintained. This site could serve as an entry point to Newton with improved groundcover landscape that covers the major portion of the corner. Newton

Signage, and/or a community/cultural art piece could highlight the entry into the city . While there is currently no sidewalk or parking to the site, residents can access it via S. Main. Adding Benches on the site would allow for a small passive park area in this part of the city .

### **Jacob Fork Park**

#### **IMMEDIATE NEED (0-2):**

- Provide Shelter(s) at this site for shade and picnicking
- If there is need for additional baseball field use, consider the installation of lights to expand the hours of the park use available.
- Implement Disc Golf Course
- Provide Playground Equipment, surfacing, and access to the play area.
- Provide shade around walking trail and ballfields
- Develop the Multi-use Field, complete grading, access, and site improvements to make the multi-use field available for a variety of sports.

#### **NEAR TERM (3-5):**

- Provide support services, kayak rack, canoe rack, and trail head map of park and nearby pullouts along Jacob fork Blueway
  - Celebrate this as a major connection along the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) blueway connecting Jacob Fork and Henry Fork Trails
- Connect east part of park with a walking/multi-use trail
  - Provide shade and more benches along trail
- This site would be a good consideration for a dog park, it has parking and acreage.





## Recommendations- Programs

The City of Newton provides a wide variety of programs, special events through the department and in partnership with other agencies. Here are some of the current programs:

### Youth Athletics and Activities:

Badminton  
Baseball  
Basketball  
Football  
Gymnastics  
Indoor Soccer  
Karate  
Outdoor Soccer  
Volleyball



*youth Basketball, Photo City of Newton*

### Adult Athletics

Adult Soccer League  
East Newton Heritage Basketball Tournament  
Men's Industrial Basketball League  
Men's Industrial/Open Softball League

### Partnership Programs:

2016 Catawba Valley Community College Classes  
Eat Smart Move More  
Catawba County Council on Aging

### Seniors

Seniors Club  
Yoga  
Pickle ball  
Dances  
Rook Club



*Senior Yoga, Photo City of Newton*

### Special Events

Easter Egg Hunt  
Softball Tournament  
Cornhole Tournament  
Pet Mania  
Horseshoe Tournament  
Outdoor Movies/Dive In Movies  
27<sup>th</sup> Southern Biscuit 5k Run/Walk  
& 1 mile Fun Run  
30-60-100 Soldiers Reunion Bike Ride  
Unity Day Celebration



Residents listed special events programs, classes (yoga) youth athletics (volleyball and basketball), as activities they would like to participate in. With Newton's changing age demographic and survey participants' strong desire for additional programs, it is recommended the City examine the addition of a Program Supervisor who focuses on seniors programming to accommodate the aging population, special events programs, and expansion of athletics. This is a way to expand parks and recreation service offerings without immediately needing to expand facilities. Based upon the lengthy offerings and comparison of staff using community comparisons on the PRORAGIS database, it would be difficult to continue the level of service for programs as the population continues to grow and needs diversify. As improvements to facilities occur and additional features are added to the parks, it is recommended the city add an additional program staff person and maintenance staff person in the near term to long term.

Survey respondents showed strong support for outdoor movies and special events such as runs and art festivals. The city should work to bring these events downtown to support the strategic plan goals, streetscape plan, and to bring residents and visitors downtown.

SECTION SEVEN  
APPENDIX





*Note: Appendix and Action Booklet can be found in Master Copy and Digital Copy*