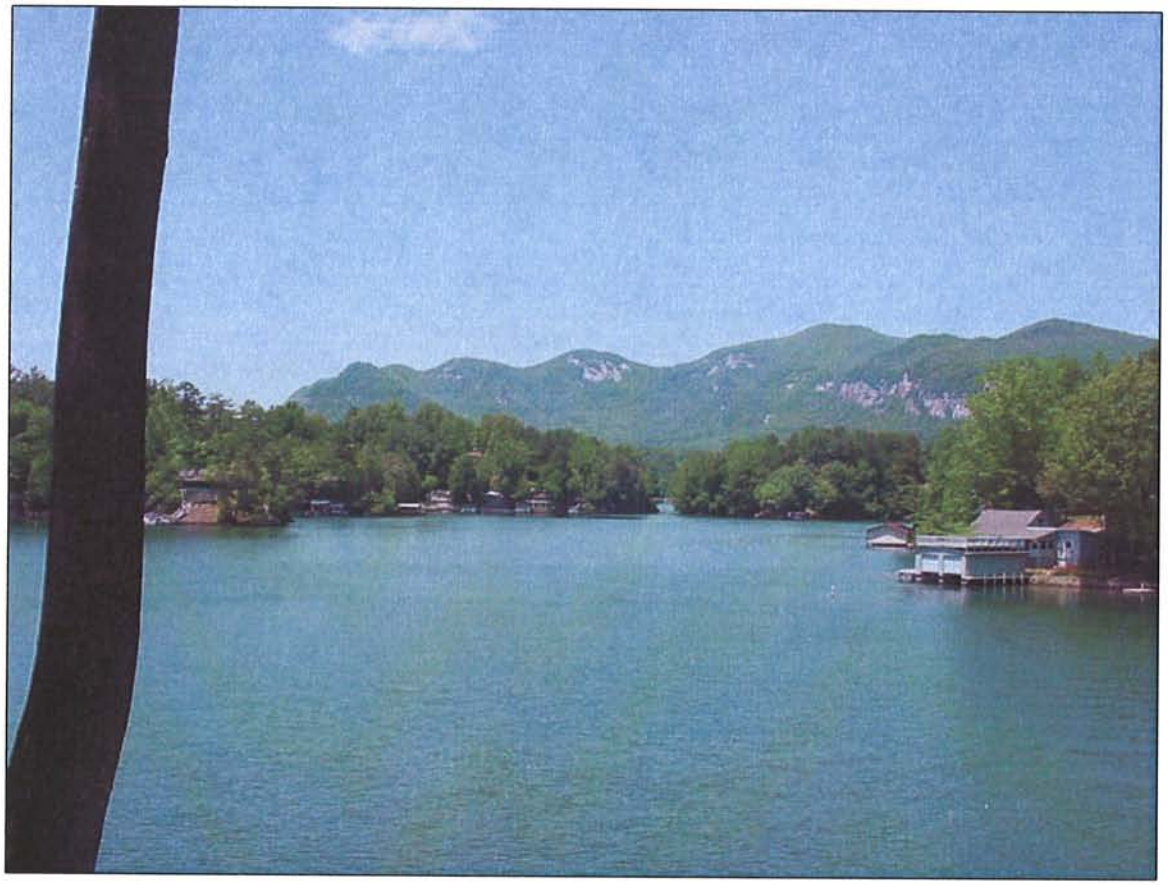
Town of Lake Lure

Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan



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Town of Lake Lure
Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan

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Town of Lake Lure
Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan

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Plan Introduction

Contained herein, is the Town of Lake Lure Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan. This is the first plan developed exclusively for the Town of Lake Lure specifically targeting the topics of parks and recreation. This plan involved approximately one year of documenting and analyzing data, interviewing town personnel, documenting and analyzing facilities, conducting a survey of citizens, and the work of a volunteer Parks and Recreation Board that is committed to providing quality parks and recreation facilities and activities to the citizens of Lake Lure and Rutherford County.

Currently, the Town of Lake Lure provides passive recreation opportunities for citizens and visitors to Lake Lure and Rutherford County as well as Polk County which is located less than a quarter mile from the Town's Boundaries. Passive recreation means that local government provides parks and recreation facilities and areas, for individual usage, but does not have full time staff, or offer programming.

Statistics indicate that during the last census period (1990-2000) Lake Lure has experienced a very high growth rate in comparison to other municipalities in Rutherford County. In addition Lake Lure experiences a very high seasonal population from the months of May through October. How will this affect Lake Lure's parks and recreation? As the population of Lake Lure and Rutherford County continues to grow, additional burdens will be placed upon the Town of Lake Lure's ability to provide recreational services, not only for it's own citizens and vacationers, but also for those in outlying areas of Rutherford and Polk Counties that utilize Lake Lure's park and recreation areas and facilities. Through this planning process, it is envisioned that Lake Lure will be able to meet current and future needs for parks and recreation. It is also envisioned that Rutherford County will take more of an active role in recreation, to take some of the resource load off of the municipalities. Hopefully, all of the local government entities within Rutherford County will work together to assist and complement each other, to offer more diverse types of recreation, and to help each other meet future needs.

Purpose and Scope

This planning process began from a recommendation in the Rutherford County Land Use Plan update completed in 2001. Issue #5 within the Land Use Plan is "The need for recreational opportunities in Rutherford County". The goal to be addressed from this issue is "to inventory all facilities, programs and participants throughout the County to determine what needs exist, and determine how those needs are to be addressed". The final recommendation from the Land Use Plan is that "Rutherford County should form a recreation advisory committee consisting of members from various age groups, and recreational backgrounds". This committee would inventory all public and private facilities, programs and participants to determine what needs exist and how Rutherford County can best address these needs. From this recommendation the Rutherford County Arts , Parks and Recreation Committee was formed. The RCAPRC felt that the inventory of programs and facilities, in conjunction with a Comprehensive Plan would provide the necessary framework for Rutherford County to address current and future recreational

needs. It was also at this time that the larger municipalities (Lake Lure, Rutherfordton, Spindale, and Forest City) were offered the opportunity to become actively involved by creating their own mini-plans based upon the data that the County was accumulating. Lake Lure, Rutherfordton and Forest City accepted this offer. Lake Lure formed a Parks and Recreation Board, and they became actively involved in the planning process by starting development of Lake Lure's Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan. This plan will act as Lake Lure's Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan, and will be placed as an appendix within the Rutherford County Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan.

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

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

The Lake Lure Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan is organized into four sections:

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

Methodology

From commencement until completion, the work on this plan, and also the other recreation plans, spanned from the fall of 2004, until the early fall of 2007. The information utilized for this plan was gathered from a number of sources including the Lake Lure Comprehensive Plan, Town of Lake Lure Recreation Survey, Census Bureau, North Carolina State Data Center, North Carolina Division of Community Assistance, Rutherford County Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Rutherford County Economic Development Department, North Carolina Municipal and County Parks and Recreation Survey, and town staff.

An inventory of existing parks and recreation areas and facilities was carried out over the course of the planning process.

A random scientific survey for Lake Lure citizens was developed and performed during the planning process.

The Lake Lure Parks and Recreation Board, representing a cross section of interest and expertise assisted the planner in the preparation of the Plan. The Board's duties and responsibilities included the following:

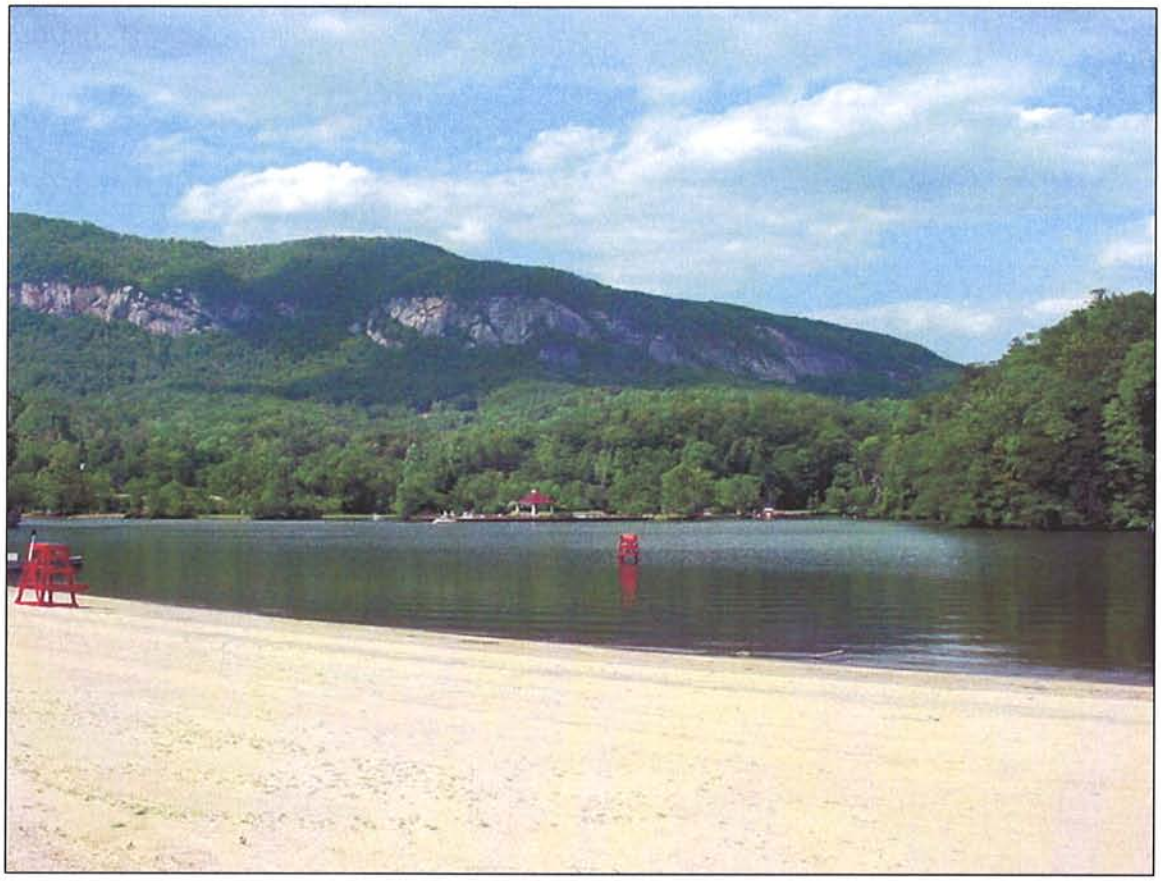
- Assisting with the creation and review of the community survey

- Analyzing existing programming and facilities
- Identifying the issues, strengths and weaknesses of lake Lure Parks and Recreation
- Assisting the planner in formulating recommendations
- Reviewing the draft plan and recommendations

This plan is designed to be implemented over a number of years, and should be serviceable through the year 2018.

Section 1

Review of Physical, Demographic and Historical Characteristics



Review of Physical, Demographic and Historical Characteristics

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

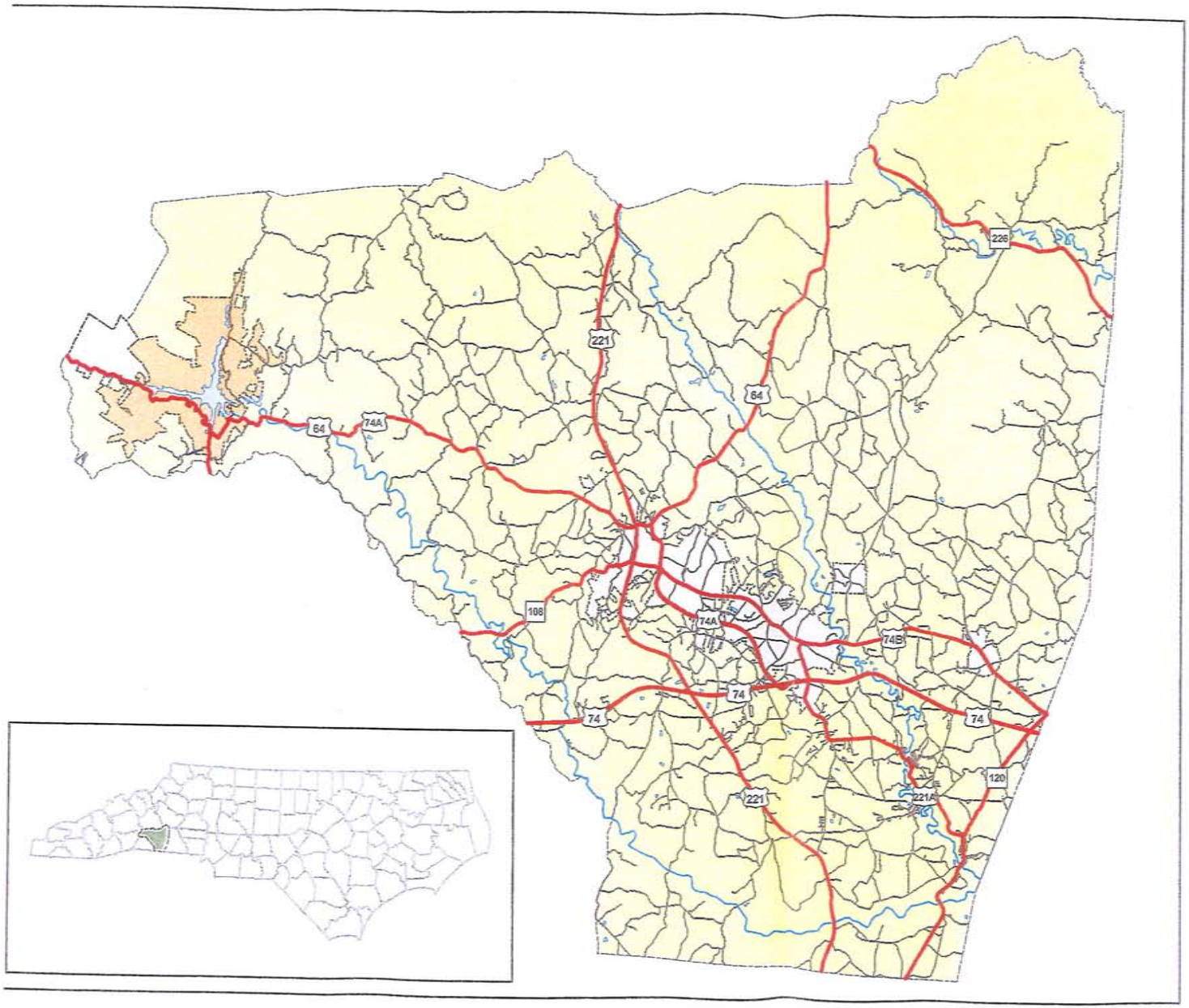
Physical Characteristics
Location
The Town of Lake Lure is located in the western portion of Rutherford County at latitude 35 degrees 44 minutes north, and longitude 82 degrees 23 minutes west at Town Hall. The Town of Lake Lure is located along Highway 64/74 A, just east of Chimney Rock Village, and approximately 20 miles west of Rutherfordton. Lake Lure is approximately 25 miles east of Asheville, 90 miles west of Charlotte, and 30 miles north of Spartanburg, South Carolina. (See **Map 1 Locator Map**)

Geography
Rutherford County is located within a geographic zone of the State typically referred to as foothills (gently rolling terrain). However, Lake Lure is located on the western edge of this geographic zone and is more typically mountainous. Elevations within Lake Lure range from approximately 882 feet above sea level at the Lake Lure Wastewater Treatment Plant, to over 3,020 feet above sea level at Rumbling Bald Mountain. Underlying rock formations are generally gneiss and schist from the Paleozoic Era, and the land cover is that typical of Appalachian hardwood forests. The Town encompasses 13.25 square miles within its corporate boundaries, has 1.13 square miles of lake area, and 20.5 linear miles of shoreline (based upon current GIS technology). All of Lake Lure is located within the Broad River Basin.

Climate
Lake Lure in Rutherford County is located within the western edge of a climate zone in North Carolina known as the Thermal Belt. Summers in Lake Lure are typically moderately warm and very humid. Winters are moderately cold. Precipitation is evenly distributed throughout the year. According to data collected from the Southeast Regional Climate Center, the average annual temperature is 58 degrees, with an average high temperature of 71 degrees, and an average low temperature of 45 degrees. The highest temperature of 107 was recorded in August 1999. The lowest temperature of -8 degrees was recorded in January of 1982. In the summer months the average high temperature is 88 degrees, and the average low temperature is 63 degrees. In the winter months the average high temperature is 53 degrees, and the average low temperature is 28 degrees.

The yearly precipitation average is 50 inches, and is generally spread out evenly throughout the year. The heaviest average monthly rainfall amounts occurred during the months of March (5.26 inches), and January (4.7 inches). The lowest monthly averages

MAP 1
LOCATOR MAP



Legend

- Primary Roads
- Secondary Roads
- Major Rivers
- Water Bodies
- Lake Lure
- Municipalities
- Rutherford County

Map intended for planning purposes only. IPDC is not a licensed engineer or surveyor. Mapping information is a representation of verious data sources and is not intended to portray an accurate land survey.

occurred during the months of April (3.63 inches), and December (3.76 inches). The average annual snowfall amount is 5.5 inches with the heaviest monthly averages occurring in January (2.9 inches), February (1.4 inches), and March (.9 inches).

Existing Land Use

While most of Rutherford County would be classified as rural, Lake Lure would be predominately classified as developed (urban environment with normal municipal services), urban transitional (outlying municipal areas being developed for urban purposes) and rural. Urban in this case would mean mainly residential, although Lake Lure has several commercial nodes. Lake Lure has a mix of several residential zoning classifications, and several commercial zoning classifications. The older commercial growth has occurred along US Highway 64/74 A at the western end of the lake. Newer commercial growth has occurred along NC Highway 9. Still, even with all of the new development, the 2000 US Census listed Chimney Rock Township of having a density of 35 persons per square mile (compared to Rutherfordton, Spindale, and Forest City having a density of over 400 persons per square mile).

Future Land Use

It is anticipated that land uses will continue to intensify within both the municipal boundaries, and transitional areas around Lake Lure. Repair and renovation to the wastewater treatment plant and its collection system will encourage growth. One trend that should be noted within Rutherford County is that most residential growth in the last 10 year census period occurred outside of municipal boundaries. Only the municipalities of Lake Lure, Chimney Rock, and Rutherfordton increased their populations. It is anticipated that commercial growth in Rutherford County will continue where water and sewer utilities are available. It is also anticipated that residential growth will continue to dominate rural areas outside of the municipalities of Rutherford County. It is further anticipated that Lake Lure's population and growth will continue at a very high rate over the next ten to twenty years.

Floodplains

The Town of Lake Lure has flood plains that are delineated on the National Flood Insurance Rate Maps. For most locations these flood prone areas are within prescribed elevations of known streams or creeks. These maps have been updated using LIDAR (Laser Imaging Detection and Ranging) technology. When completed these maps should be much more accurate than what is presently available. This could be helpful in the future for creating greenways, blueways, or open space along creeks, streams, rivers, and lakes. (Greenways along floodplains are also recommended within the Rutherford County Hazard Mitigation Plan to help mitigate flood damage).

Infrastructure

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

Electricity-Lake Lure is served by Duke Energy Corporation. The Town of Lake Lure produces electricity at its hydroelectric dam which it sells to Duke Energy.

Water-Lake Lure operates its own water system. The Town has several wells and storage tanks, 6 linear miles of service area, 287 residential customers and 62 commercial customers. The capacity of the water system is .25 million gallons per day, and the Town is currently operating at .031 million gallons per day. This system is not available to all citizens within the municipal boundaries, but efforts are underway to increase public water distribution within the Town. Areas in the northern part of the Town within the Rumbling Bald Resort are serviced by the Carolina Water System.

Wastewater-The Town of Lake Lure operates its own wastewater treatment system. The plant is located below the Lake Lure Dam, and most of the large collection lines are located under the lake. The plant capacity is .995 million gallons per day, and the average daily usage is .749 million gallons per day. There is approximately 32 linear miles of service line serving 777 residential customers, and 120 commercial customers. The system is not available to all citizens within the municipal boundaries, with many residences relying on septic tank systems. The Town of Lake Lure has embarked on a program to eventually replace the municipal wastewater collection system.

Gas-There are no public gas lines located in Lake Lure.

Streets, Roads and Sidewalks-There are a large number of streets and roads within the corporate limits of Lake Lure. US Highway 64/74 A, NC Highway 9, Buffalo Creek Road, and Buffalo Shoals Road are state maintained. The rest of the network of streets and roads are either maintained by the Town, or are private and maintained by either individuals, or property owners associations.

Demographic Characteristics

Population

According to the 2000 US Census, the Town of Lake Lure's population was 1,027. Chimney Rock Township's population was 2,246.. Rutherford County's population was 62,899. Over the past 30 years there have been substantial changes to these populations. (See **Table 1, 30 Years of Population Change**).

Table 1, 30 Years of Population Change

Location	1970 Pop.	1980 Pop.	1990 Pop.	2000 Pop.
Lake Lure	456	474	747	1,027
Chimney Rock Twp	1,094	1,457	1,700	2,246
Rutherford County	47,337	53,787	56,918	62,899
Polk County	11,735	12,894	14,416	18,184

Rutherford County has experienced a 33% increase in population since 1970. The US Census Bureau is projecting a 22% growth rate through the year 2030 estimating that Rutherford County's population will be 76,885. Over the past thirty years the Town of Lake Lure's permanent population has grown by 125% from 456 to 1,027. Chimney Rock Township's population has grown by 105% from 1,094 to 2,246. Because Lake Lure is a vacation destination, it also experiences large fluctuations in the population during the summer months. Estimates place the summer population in a range of 5,000

to 8,000 persons. If Lake Lure's permanent population continues to grow at current levels, the permanent population could rise above 2,300 by the year 2030. It is believed that as people retire here, and people are more able to work from home that this growth could be even greater than projected.

Lake Lure's median age of 58.6 is higher than Rutherford County's (38.3), and higher than the state average of 35.3. It is estimated that by the next census period the Lake Lure median age could be higher than 60.

114 persons (12%) within Lake Lure are between the ages of 0 to 19. 419 persons (41%) within Lake Lure are between the ages of 20 to 59. 487 persons (47%) within Lake Lure are age 60 and older.

Regarding race, 1009 (98%) persons are white, 15 (1.4%) are African American, and less than 1% are American Indian and Hispanic.

Obviously, regarding population dynamics, Lake Lure is unlike any other municipality within our four county region. The population is older, there are many tourist/vacationers, there are many absent property owners, and there are very few minorities.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

According to the 2000 US Census, Rutherford County's labor force has decreased 3% from 1990 to 2000. The labor force during 1990 consisted of 29,083 workers age 16 and older. This figure represents 65% of the total persons age 16 and older. The labor force examined as part of the 2000 Census was 28,250 workers 16 and older. This represents 45% of the total persons age 16 and older.

According to the 2000 US Census, the manufacturing sector was the primary employer in the County with 40.5% of the workforce. The service sector was second with 15.7%. The retail sector was third with 14.9%, and the government sector was fourth with 13.9%. Lake Lure's largest employers are Rumbling Bald Resort, the Town government, and the new Ingles store located off of NC Highway 9.

Recently, the unemployment rate in Rutherford County has been as high as 11%, as compared to 5% in North Carolina. It is projected that Rutherford County will continue to lose manufacturing jobs, but there will be some minimal job replacement due to gains in service and small business jobs. Because of changes in international trade, it is unlikely that manufacturing (which dominated Rutherford County's economy) will be resurrected. Instead, it is believed that the manufacturing sector will transition into small business, tourism, and service.

The median household income for Lake Lure in 2000 was $38,417, compared to $31,122 for Rutherford County, and $39,184 for North Carolina. The median family income for Lake Lure in 2000 was $45,833 compared to $37,787 in Rutherford County, and $46,335 for North Carolina.

93% of the population of Lake Lure has received a high school diploma, compared to 70.4% in Rutherford County, and 71.8% in North Carolina. 34% of the population in Lake Lure has received a bachelor's degree, compared to 13% in Rutherford County, and 23% in North Carolina.
69% of Lake Lure's population was born outside of North Carolina compared to 24% for Rutherford County, and 36% for North Carolina. 40% of Lake Lure's population lived outside of Lake Lure and Rutherford County five years ago, compared to 13% for Rutherford County, and 22% for North Carolina.

Historical Characteristics
Although Rutherford County was officially formed in 1779, there is much history dating back to the pre-revolutionary period. Prior to white settlers, the area was part of the Great Cherokee Nation. Although Indians did not have permanent settlements here, there were many small encampments and trails that were used to move and trade with their lands to the west and the north. Hernando Desoto led a Spanish expedition through Hickory Nut Gorge in 1540. During the mid 1700's white settlers from the east and south began to filter through using the Indian trails and settled the land beginning in the 1760's, leading to much conflict with the Cherokee. At the time of initial settlement, what is now Rutherford County was a part of Mecklenburg County, but that part of Mecklenburg County west of the Catawba River became Tryon County in 1768. In April of 1779 Lincoln and Rutherford Counties were formed from Tryon County. Rutherford County was named in honor of Brigadier General Griffith Rutherford who fought in the Revolutionary War. The Hickory Nut Gorge became a primary transportation corridor between the foothills and mountains.

The Town of Lake Lure was incorporated in 1927 by an act of the North Carolina General Assembly. Incorporation occurred approximately one year after the construction of the dam that formed the lake. Originally, the lake was built to form a resort community, but the dam enabled the generation of electricity also. Lucius Morse from St. Louis, Missouri, the developer of Chimney Rock Park, was the primary investor in the building of Lake Lure and its incorporation. His wife is credited with naming the lake and town as Lake Lure. In 1965 the Town of Lake Lure acquired the lake and the dam through the sale of revenue bonds. Over time Lake Lure has evolved into a very large municipality (square mileage) with a large resort on the northeast side, and a newly formed state park on the western edge. The development of the resort, with timeshare lodging has done much to bring visitors from all over the country and some foreign countries who have fallen in love with the area and purchased land and built permanent or vacation homes.

Section 1 Summary
The growth potential of Rutherford County and Lake Lure appears to be above average for the twenty first century. Quality of life influences, good infrastructure, strategic location close to major highways, and proximity to larger metropolitan areas are significant factors that enhance its growth potential. Planning for this population growth in correlation with the needs for parks and recreation will be crucial for Rutherford

County and the Town of Lake Lure to provide its citizens with future parks and recreational opportunities.

In a study prepared for the City of Charlotte and reviewed by the Charlotte Observer in February 2005, it was pointed out "that the new generation of workers are more impulsive, they will narrow their choices by where they want to live, rather than who they want to work for." "This is a dynamic change from the baby boomer generation who first looked at who they wanted to work for." In answering the question what makes a location desirable, it was pointed out overwhelmingly in the survey this new generation of persons is interested in local arts, the embracing of local heritage and history, and among other things they like dog parks, and hiking and biking trails.

According to an economic development study performed in 2003, when industrial or commercial users are looking for sites for expansion or relocation, they consider site selection factors and quality of life factors as very important. Under quality of life factors, recreational opportunities ranked eighth, and cultural opportunities ranked ninth.

The Town of Lake Lure has laid the ground work. Town services are in place and infrastructure is being updated. Hopefully, by taking advantage of these studies and enhancing its recreational and cultural resources, the Town of Lake Lure will continue to make positive strides into the future.

Section 2

Inventory and Analysis of Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

Inventory and Analysis of Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

Introduction

The Town of Lake Lure offers numerous opportunities for recreational activities at various parks and facilities. In this section we will examine each location and what activities are offered. Park and recreation areas are noted on **Map 2**.

The Lake

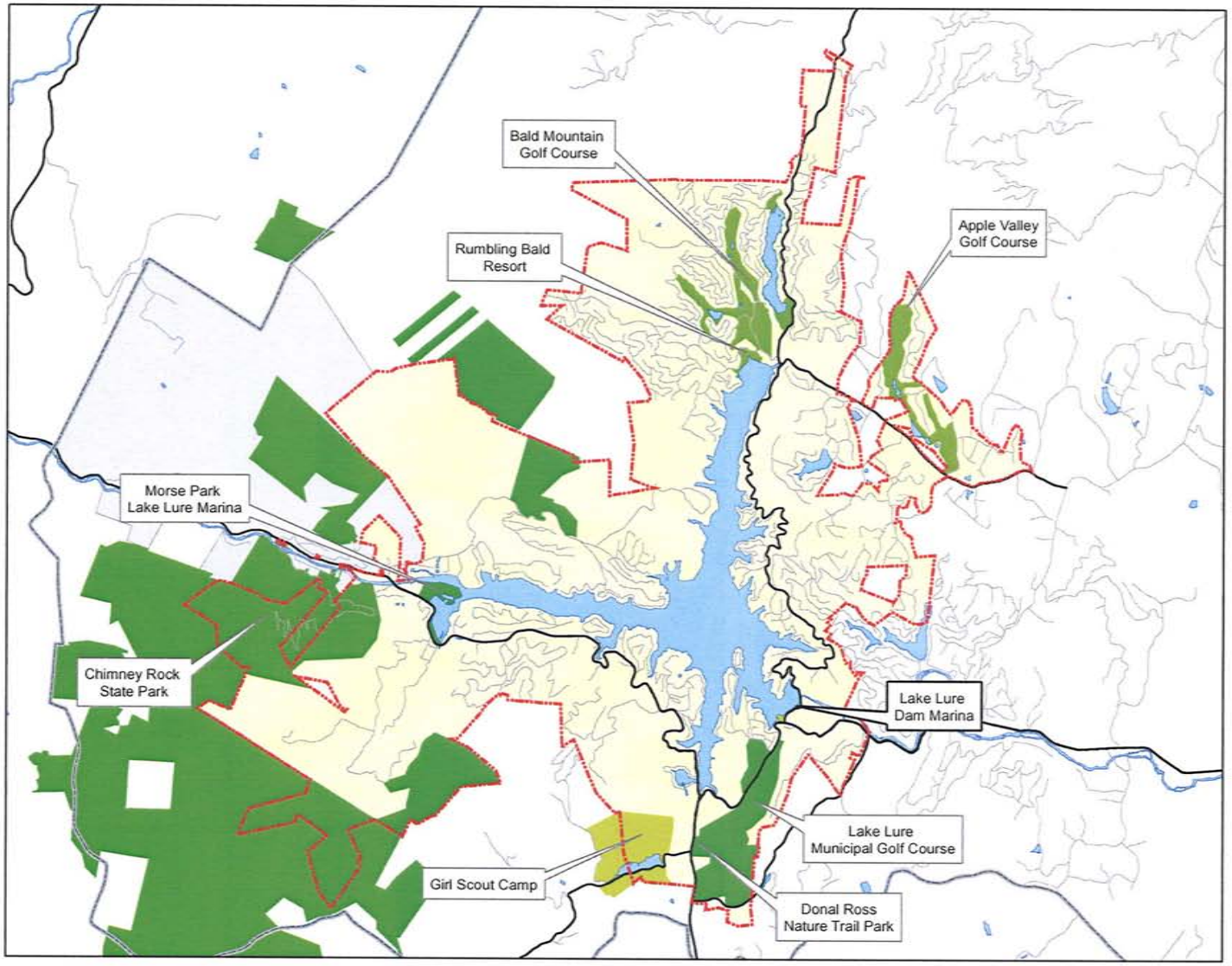
Lake Lure is one of the primary reasons that people are attracted to this area. Lake based recreation (such as boating, sailing, canoeing, fishing, water skiing, tubing, kneeboarding, swimming) is very popular and draws tourists, vacationers, and others during the spring, summer and fall months. The Town of Lake Lure allows access to the lake at the Town Marina, Morse Park, and Lake Lure Beach and Water Park. Privately owned Dam Marina also allows public access to the Lake. Rumbling Bald Resort has access for those persons that own property there, or are vacationing there. There are approximately 700 privately owned parcels around the lake that allow the individuals or families that own them access to the lake.

Lake Lure is approximately 728 acres with approximately 21 miles of shoreline. Lake Lure is considered a cold water lake with the deepest part of the lake being approximately 104 feet deep. Both warm water and cold water species of fish inhabit Lake Lure such as largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, trout, bream/bluegills, crappie, white bass, carp and several species of catfish. In summer months, gradient layers of progressively colder waters form in the lake, but turn over to a uniform temperature in the winter. Other wildlife species that may be seen around Lake Lure include: whitetail deer, squirrels, chipmunks, bobcats, black bear, wild turkey, ducks, geese, shorebirds, several species of birds of prey (such as eagles, ospreys, hawks and falcons), a multitude of songbirds, and various species of reptiles (salamanders, lizards and snakes).

Lake Lure has excellent water quality. The main issue regarding lake based recreation would be Lake Lure's size, and the possibility of overcrowding creating safety concerns.

Lake Lure Beach and Water Park

Lake Lure Beach and Water Park is a special use public recreation facility approximately 2.9 acres in size, located in close proximity to the Town Center area. The facility is currently operated through a contract with a private company and the Town collects a percentage of the facilities revenues. This facility is available for public use between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year and requires a user fee based upon individual,



Map 2
Existing & Potential Recreation Areas (and Lake Access)

Legend

- Public Parks & Recreation Areas
- Potential Recreation Areas
- Privately Owned Facilities

Map intented for planning purposes only. Mapping information represents various data sources and is not intended to portray an accurate land survey.

group and season pass rates. Rental space for a variety of special, corporate, and family events is also available. Lake Lure property owners are allowed free access to the park.

Lake Lure Beach and Water Park facilities include:

- 100 yards of sandy beach and swimming area
- Building used for office, dressing area, bathrooms, snacks
- Covered large picnic shelter
- Individual picnic areas
- Boardwalk along lake (extends to marina)
- Water park (canoeing, paddle boats, water slides, water games)
- Marked parking for 70 vehicles

Lake Lure Beach and Water Park facilities are kept clean, and are in good condition.

Lake Lure Marina

The Lake Lure Marina is a town owned facility adjacent to Morse Park that offers a variety of boating and lake based recreation opportunities. The facility and the marina operations are operated through a concessions agreement with a private company with the Town receiving a percentage of the revenues. The facility is available year round and requires a user fee depending upon what activity is used.

Lake Lure Marina facilities include:

- Boat launch
- Building used for office, bathrooms, snacks
- Picnic tables
- Boatslips (20 covered, 20 uncovered)
- Lake Lure Tours boat excursions
- Boat rentals

This facility is in good to excellent condition.

Morse Park
Gardens / Meadow / Pavilion / Youth Center

Morse Park is a large community park located at the western end of Lake Lure and consisting of approximately 23 acres (including the municipal center). This park is owned by the Town, is open year round, and offers free passive recreation opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

Morse Park facilities include:

- Walking paths/boardwalk
- Water access/decks
- Pavilion (for special events)
- Hickory Nut Gorge Visitors Center/Youth Center
- Multi-purpose field
- 2 outdoor unlighted basketball courts
- 2 regulation tennis courts
- 4 children play areas (for various ages, including slides, swings, climbing)
- 4 individual covered picnic tables with grills and trash receptacles
- Wooden dock along river with temporary mooring slips
- There are 132 parking spaces at the Marina, 52 parking spaces at the Visitors Center, 12 parking spaces at the tennis courts, and up to an additional 40 parking spaces available at Town Hall on weekends.

Morse Park and the other facilities listed are in good to excellent condition. Plans are underway to further landscape and improve Morse Park

Lake Lure Golf Course

The Lake Lure Golf Course is a municipal 9 hole course located along Highway 64/74A. This course was designed by Donald Ross a renowned early golf course architect best known for his design of Pinehurst #2. The golf course is located on a 235 acre Town owned tract utilizing approximately one half of the acreage (the rest may be used for other recreational uses). From the white tees this course is 2,651 yards in length and is a par 70. The course also has a clubhouse (older log structure), and a driving range. Summer fees are $22.75 for 18 holes during the week, and $26.85 during the weekend. The course is open to the public year round and there are no tee times. There are approximately 60 local members, with increased use by non-members and visitors during summer months. There is paved parking for about 25 vehicles, and the clubhouse and course are in good condition.

Donald Ross Nature Trail Park

Lake Lure has recently constructed a series of natural surface hiking trails on the remaining Lake Lure Golf Course property located adjacent to Highway 9, across from Ingles Market. This natural trail system consists of several miles of trail over rolling

terrain, and a graveled parking area. The nature trail is currently being signed and plans for benches and picnic tables are underway.

There are several other hiking trails located on Town property. The undeveloped Point of Rocks Trail is located off Jack London Road on property behind the ABC Store off of Highway 64/74 A close to Lake Lure Beach and Water Park. There are other hiking trails located on the Towns water well property located off of Washburn Road. With the development of Chimney Rock State Park, connecting trails from Lake Lure to the State Park will hopefully be developed in conjunction with the North Carolina State Parks Division.

Town Center Walkway is also in the process of development and construction. Phase 1 from Jack London Road to Boys Camp Road is scheduled to begin construction November 1 and should be completed by March 1, 2008. Upon completion of all phases, there will be connectivity from the Chimney Rock River Walk all the way to the Town of Lake Lure Post Office.

Rumbling Bald Resort

Although this is a private resort facility, it is worthy of mention in this plan because it serves a number of Lake Lure citizens and visitors with superb recreational opportunities. Rumbling Bald is a large resort community located at the northeast end of Lake Lure that offers two 18 hole golf courses, 100 yards of sandy beach, an indoor pool, an outdoor pool with lazy river, miniature golf, horseshoes, lighted outdoor basketball courts, lighted outdoor tennis courts, marina, boat launch, boat slips, beach volleyball, and an indoor facility with game room and work out area. The facilities at Rumbling Bald resort are in excellent condition.

Chimney Rock State Park

This is not part of Town owned or operated facilities, but is worthy of mention. In 2007 the State of North Carolina purchased the 1,000 acres of privately developed Chimney Rock Park and added it to over 2,000 acres of other land to form a new Chimney Rock State Park which has the potential of becoming the premier state park in the southeastern United States. This newest addition to the North Carolina State Park System consists of breathtaking views, hiking trails, monolithic rock formations, waterfalls, and beautiful

natural areas, as well as a 13 story elevator built inside the mountain, a snack bar, and gift shop. Approximately 50% of the property is within the Lake Lure corporate boundaries, and most of the property can be viewed from the Town Center area. As this land is developed as a State Park, new recreational opportunities will avail themselves. The park now offers a variety of environmental and nature education programs, rock climbing instruction, and various camping and scouting programs.

Section 2 Summary

The Town of Lake Lure is very fortunate to be able to offer the number of parks and recreational areas that it has. The Town has done a great job of making the most of the recreational opportunities that it has. In addition to what the Town offers, there are a host of private recreation services providing activities such as: fitness, off road motorcycling, water tours, horseback riding, camps for children, and fishing. As the Town continues to grow in both permanent population and vacation or tourist population, the Town will need to consider the possibility of changing from a passive recreation department, to an active recreation department with a complete staff. The Town needs to continue to take good care of its recreation and park facilities, and to take advantage of partnerships and possible funding sources in the future.

Section 3

Community Survey and Needs Assessment

WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR RECREATION IN LAKE LURE??

Lake Lure Parks and Recreation Plan
Community Survey
Lake Lure Municipal Center

The Town of Lake Lure is currently conducting a community survey regarding the topic of Parks and Recreation in Lake Lure. The results of the survey will be the basis for the Lake Lure Parks and Recreation Plan. The survey is being mailed randomly to approximately 500 property owners in Lake Lure, but the Town would like anyone that is interested to fill out a survey.

To participate in the survey visit Town Hall between the hours of 9:00 AM, and 4:00 PM. Surveys will be available to pick up, fill out and drop off. Deadline for the survey is **February 15, 2007**.

Please come by and fill one out. Your input is very important!

Community Surveys and Needs Assessment

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

Development
In developing the Lake Lure survey, the Lake Lure Parks and Recreation Board utilized examples of other surveys and information obtained during participation in a seminar provided by the North Carolina Division of Environment and Natural Resources Division of Parks and Recreation. The survey was printed on a trifolded piece of 8.5 x 14 paper. On the front was a letter from the Mayor of Lake Lure explaining the importance of gaining public information and data, and how it related to the planning efforts. On the inside was a list of questions trying to determine who the person or persons were completing the survey, what parks they utilized most, distances to the park, a listing of activities that the person actually participated in, and a listing of activities that the person would like to participate in. On the back of the survey was a series of questions to gauge interest in several recreation related topics and if the respondent was informed about arts, parks and recreation in Lake Lure. There were blank spaces for additional comments. A copy of the Lake Lure Survey is included in this section.

Methodology
Once the survey was developed, a methodology was devised for printing, distribution, returning of surveys, and tabulation of surveys. The limiting factor regarding the usage of community surveys is cost. This is an expensive process for the amount of return that Lake Lure received. However, it is believed that the data and information obtained is more random than having a small group of persons (that share common interests) show up and dominate the discussion at public meetings.

Lake Lure had 1,000 green surveys printed, along with special sized envelopes for the initial mail-out. A mailing list was provided by the Town of Lake Lure from a list of citizens prepared by the consultant of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. This list contained names of property owners that live within Lake Lure's corporate limits, property owners that own vacation homes within Lake Lure's corporate limits, and business names. The surveys included instructions about how to seal them and mail them after completion, and were stamped with return postage. Initially 500 surveys were mailed out, and the respondents were given approximately 30 days to complete and return them. The Daily Courier (local newspaper) ran an article detailing the survey and its importance prior to the initial mailing. Posters were also printed and distributed around

Are you interested in Lake Lure **acquiring** additional property for public parks and recreational use that is closer to where you live or more equitably located for all the town residents than is currently available? **(Circle One)**

Not at all Interested	Slightly Interested	Moderately Interested	Very Interested	Extremely Interested
1	2	3	4	5

Please rate your interest level in the following recreational facilities by the following scale:

Not at all Interested	Slightly Interested	Moderately Interested	Very Interested	Extremely Interested
1	2	3	4	5

An indoor performing arts center (theatre)? _____
An outdoor performing arts center (amphitheater)? _____
An indoor, multi-purpose recreational facility? _____

Would you be interested in participating in arts and recreational programming and activities? **(Circle One)**

Not at all Interested	Slightly Interested	Moderately Interested	Very Interested	Extremely Interested
1	2	3	4	5

Are there any other recreational topics that you would like to comment on?

_____

_____

Do you currently feel well informed about arts, recreation programming and events being held in Lake Lure? (Please Circle One)

Not Informed	Somewhat Informed	Informed	Well Informed
1	2	3	4

Explain:

_____

_____

Would you like to volunteer to assist with Town of Lake Lure Recreational Programming in the future (This could include landscaping, coaching, refereeing, coordinating, construction, etc.)?

Yes_____ No_____

(If yes, please contact Shannon Baldwin at (828) 625-9983 to be placed on a volunteer list.)

Please return by February 16, 2007.
Please staple or tape to seal the survey before mailing.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to complete and return this survey. The important information derived from the analysis of these surveys will be used to plan for current and future needs for arts, parks and recreation in the Town of Lake Lure.

Recreation Survey
Isothermal Planning & Development Commission
PO Box 841
Rutherfordton, NC 28139

Town of Lake Lure
Recreation Survey

Dear Citizen of Lake Lure,

Here is your chance! Many times in government, it is said that citizens do not have the opportunity to provide input before elected councils make decisions that affect the community. By participating in this survey, you will have the opportunity to voice your opinion before action is taken by the governing body.

Your elected officials value your input. We ask that you take a few minutes to complete and return the attached survey to let your elected officials know how you feel about certain issues regarding recreation. Survey results will be the basis for a new recreation plan within the Lake Lure Comprehensive Plan.

Read the instructions carefully and complete each question, and record additional comments in the space at the end of the survey. Please tape or staple to seal the survey, and place it in the mail before ***February 15, 2007****.*

We appreciate your participation. Please feel free to contact Town Manager Chuck Place at 625-9983 if you have any questions about the survey.

Sincerely,

Mayor Jim Proctor
Town of Lake Lure

The first section of questions is about your household. This information is confidential.

Head of Household: Please check or fill in responses for this first section of this survey. (Questions 1-6)

1. What is your residential status?

____ Full-time resident
____ Part-time resident
____ Property owner
____ Renter

2. How long have you lived in the Town of Lake Lure?

Less than 1 year ____
1 to 5 years ____
6 to 10 years ____
11 to 15 years ____
More than 15 years ____

3. Household income for 2005?

$_____,000
____ Single income
____ Two-income
____ Other

4. How would you describe your household?

____ Individual
____ Couple
____ Unrelated adults
____ Couple with children
____ Single parent
____ Other

5. How often have you (ANY members of your family) used each of the following recreational facilities during the past year?

Morse Park ____
- Tennis Courts ____
- Basketball Courts ____
- Walking Track ____
- Skateboard Area ____
- Playground ____
- Picnic Shelters ____

Lake Lure Beach ____
- Swimming ____
- Water Park ____

Lake Lure Marina ____
- Launch ____
- Boat Rentals ____

Municipal Golf Course ____
Lake Lure (lake use) ____
Boardwalk ____

6. For each individual in the household please indicate age and gender:

1. Age ___ Male ___ Female ___
2. Age ___ Male ___ Female ___
3. Age ___ Male ___ Female ___
4. Age ___ Male ___ Female ___
5. Age ___ Male ___ Female ___
6. Age ___ Male ___ Female ___

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE RESPONSES IN THE NEXT SECTION REFLECT THE PARTICIPATION AND PREFERENCES OF THE ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD. PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING DEFINITION OF RECREATION CAREFULLY BEFORE RESPONDING.

Recreation, for the purpose of this survey, includes any activity done mainly for pleasure or enjoyment, away from the private home, in a park area or recreation facility. This includes cultural, entertainment, social, group, civic, craft and hobby oriented activities as long as they are done in a park or recreational facility.

ACTIVITIES YOU ACTUALLY DO

Following is a list of recreation activities that you could do at a public or private park or facility in LAKE LURE. Please estimate the number of times you (ANY member of your family) did each of these activities in LAKE LURE during the past 12 months.

Arts	# Occasions
Music Performance	____
Theatre Performance	____
Antique car show	____
Art show/festival	____
Photography	____
Outdoor Arts/Crafts	____
Art lessons	____
Music lessons	____
Dance lessons	____

Sports	# Occasions
Attend sports	____
Football	____
Golf	____
Baseball	____
Soccer	____
Softball	____
Basketball	____
Tennis	____
Volleyball	____
Adult leagues	____

Fitness	# Occasions
Mountain Biking	____
Bicycling	____
Fitness Trail	____
Roller skate	____
Dance	____
Gymnastics	____
Rock Climbing	____
Jogging	____
Walking	____
Weightlifting	____

Water	# Occasions
Canoeing	____
Sailing	____
Rowing	____
Swimming (lake)	____
Swimming (pool)	____
Fishing	____
Water ski/tubing	____
River Tubing	____
Pedal Boats	____
Boater Safety Trng.	____
Motor/Pontoon Boating	____

Other Activities	# Occasions
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____

Leisure	# Occasions
Bird Watching	____
Lunch outdoors	____
Horseshoes	____
Playground	____
Mini-golf	____
Frisbee	____
Read outdoors	____
Shuffleboard	____
Pet exercise	____
Horseback riding	____
Nature walks	____
Archery	____
Garden viewing	____
Wildlife viewing	____
Picnicking	____
Gold/Gem mining	____
Trail Walking	____
Nature Study	____
Bingo	____
Cards	____
Kite flying	____

Senior	# Occasions
Field Trips	____
Exercise	____
Fishing	____
Crafts	____
Programs	____

ACTIVITIES YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO

These lists of activities are things that people might do for recreation in LAKE LURE at a public or private facility. Please indicate your family's interest level.

PLEASE RATE ALL ACTIVITIES by INTEREST LEVEL

Not at all	Slightly	Moderately	Very	Extremely
1	2	3	4	5

Arts	
Music Performance	____
Theatre Performance	____
Antique car show	____
Art show/festival	____
Photography	____
Outdoor Arts/Crafts	____
Art lessons	____
Music lessons	____
Dance lessons	____

Sports	
Attend sports	____
Football	____
Golf	____
Baseball	____
Soccer	____
Softball	____
Basketball	____
Tennis	____
Volleyball	____
Adult leagues	____

Fitness	
Mountain Biking	____
Bicycling	____
Fitness Trail	____
Roller skate	____
Dance	____
Gymnastics	____
Rock Climbing	____
Jogging	____
Walking	____
Weightlifting	____

Water	
Canoeing	____
Sailing	____
Rowing	____
Swimming (lake)	____
Swimming (pool)	____
Fishing	____
Water ski/tubing	____
River Tubing	____
Pedal Boats	____
Boater Safety Trng.	____
Motor/Pontoon Boating	____

Other Activities	
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____
_____	____

Leisure	
Bird Watching	____
Lunch outdoors	____
Horseshoes	____
Playground	____
Mini-golf	____
Frisbee	____
Read outdoors	____
Shuffleboard	____
Pet exercise	____
Horseback riding	____
Nature walks	____
Archery	____
Garden viewing	____
Wildlife viewing	____
Picnicking	____
Gold/Gem mining	____
Trail Walking	____
Nature Study	____
Bingo	____
Cards	____
Kite flying	____

Senior	
Field Trips	____
Exercise	____
Fishing	____
Crafts	____
Programs	____

Town. The mailing list provided was somewhat accurate, although we experienced a 10% rate of undeliverable mail. However, those that were returned were promptly put into a new envelope with a new address label and re-mailed. Five hundred surveys were kept in circulation at all times during the 30 day period. Total cost for this process (not including labor for development) was in excess of $1,500.

Survey Results

A preliminary analysis of the Data received in the Lake Lure Recreation Survey yielded the following results:

Residential Status *(Question 1)*

Full Time Resident	33 respondents
Part Time Resident	29 respondents
Property Owner	36 respondents
Renter	0 respondents
No Response	*9*

How Long Have You Lived in Lake Lure? *(Question 2)*

Less than 1 Year	10 respondents
1 – 5 Years	27 respondents
6 – 10 Years	25 respondents
11 – 15 Years	5 respondents
Over 15 Years	21 respondents
No Response	*19*

Household Income for 2005? *(Question 3)*

Less than $25,000	1 respondents
$26, 000 to $50, 000	8 respondents
$51, 000 to $75, 000	6 respondents
$76, 000 to $100, 000	17 respondents
$101, 000 to $150, 000	8 respondents
Over $150, 000	21 respondents
No Response	*46*

Household Income Type *(Question 3a)*

Single Income	31 respondents
Two Income	38 respondents
Other	3 respondents
No Response	*35*

How would you describe your household? *(Question 4)*

Individual	8 respondents
Couple	54 respondents
Couple with children	38 respondents
Unrelated Adults	1 respondents
Single Parent	2 respondents

Other	4 respondents

Facility Usage *(Question 5)*

Morse Park	434
Tennis Courts	149
Basketball Courts	61
Walking Track	547
Skateboard Area	10
Playground	78
Picnic Shelters	84
Lake Lure Beach	54
Swimming	91
Water Park	50
Lake Lure Marina	551
Boat Launch	164
Boat Rentals	66
Municipal Golf Course	190
Lake Lure (lake use)	1508
Boardwalk	643

Acquire Property

Not at All Interested	21 respondents
Slightly Interested	14 respondents
Moderately Interested	24 respondents
Very Interested	16 respondents
Extremely Interested	18 respondents
No Response	*14*

Indoor Performing Arts Center

Not at All Interested	27 respondents
Slightly Interested	19 respondents
Moderately Interested	15 respondents
Very Interested	11 respondents
Extremely Interested	19 respondents
No Response	*15*

Outdoor Performing Arts Center

Not at All Interested	18 respondents
Slightly Interested	13 respondents
Moderately Interested	19 respondents
Very Interested	23 respondents
Extremely Interested	15 respondents
No Response	*9*

Multi-Purpose Recreational Facility

Not at All Interested	23 respondents

Slightly Interested	12 respondents
Moderately Interested	21 respondents
Very Interested	16 respondents
Extremely Interested	20 respondents
No Response	*14*

Are You Informed

Not Informed	30
Somewhat Informed	40
Informed	21
Well Informed	4
No Response	12

Are You Informed Comments:

- Not sure where to find out about events.
- This is the first communication of any kind.
- New property owner, not sure where to find information.
- We care about these things, but we just come to rest and play golf.
- Newsletter should be mailed to residents automatically.
- Need to email information, or post a website for upcoming events.
- Public communication is poor (need website, emails, etc.).
- Town newsletter should be more informative.
- Many activities are on the meadows that we are never informed of.
- I am not aware of how to obtain this information on an ongoing basis.
- I receive the newsletter only.
- I would like to see more information.
- How would we be informed?
- I am new to the area, not sure where to look for information.
- We have not been sent anything.
- I read the Town's newsletter online.
- There is no central source of information.
- I use both the Lake Lure news and the internet.
- I use local magazines, email, and the newsletter.
- The website is not updated and other publications are not available.
- Everyone is: this side of the lake or the other side, very political.

Survey Comments (All comments are included.)

Activities

- Would like to see weekly street dances come back
- Would like to see marshal arts taught for the youth in the area
- Would like to see adult tennis lessons, and an adult tennis league
- We need more hiking trails
- Would like to see bus tours to other area events for seniors

- Would like to see adult leagues for volleyball, basketball, and horseshoes for persons from 40 through 80.

Facilities

- We love the Park and Marina area
- We need an outdoor amphitheatre
- Would like to see a local history museum
- We need more docking space at the marina for boats to pull into

Morse Park

- Would like to see expansion of the Morse Park area
- Appreciate the resurfacing of the tennis courts
- Would like to see more tennis courts
- Morse Park needs better maintenance and upkeep. It also needs to be updated

General

- I do not own any property
- Please remove me from this mailing list, I am no longer a property owner
- The lake is too expensive and restricted for fun
- I am happy to see the development of the new state park
- Deceased in 1952
- We only own a lot, not ready to move there yet
- Do not live or own property in Lake Lure
- Lake Lure needs to spend any available funds on water/sewer
- I do not own any property
- The number one responsibility of a municipality is to provide basic services and infrastructure. The Town of Lake Lure has failed miserably in providing adequate water and sewer services to ALL areas of our Town. With all the new growth and State Park on the way, the Town better wake up and get our sewer, water and roads taken care of FIRST! Recreation??
- We need more restaurants that are fast and reasonably priced

Participation and Interest

Arts Activities

	Participated	No. of Times	Expressed Interest	Expressed Interest AND Did Not Participate	Percent Difference Interest
Attend Music	15	108	56	41	73%
Attend Theatre	10	28	42	32	76%
Antique Car Shows	24	41	30	6	20%
Attend Art Shows	38	83	59	21	36%
Photography	25	300	32	7	22%

Outdoor Arts/Crafts	37	106	49	12	24%
Art Lessons	3	7	15	12	80%
Music Lessons	3	19	12	9	75%
Dance Lessons	8	100	18	10	56%
		Sports Activities			
Attend Sports	5	22	31	26	84%
Football	2	6	21	19	90%
Golf	19	1087	39	20	51%
Baseball	1	50	16	15	94%
Soccer	0	0	12	12	100%
Softball	1	5	15	14	93%
Basketball	4	15	16	12	75%
Tennis	9	134	26	17	65%
Volleyball	2	9	18	16	89%
Adult Leagues	0	0	20	20	100%
		Fitness Activities			
Mountain Biking	11	31	26	15	58%
Bicycling	12	248	38	26	68%
Fitness Trail	23	283	53	30	57%
Rollerskate/blade	1	2	10	9	90%
Dance	9	128	22	13	59%
Gymnastics	1	3	5	4	80%
Rock Climbing	8	32	18	10	56%
Jog	17	168	27	10	37%
Walk	66	2431	77	11	14%
Weightlifting	11	295	24	13	54%
		Water Activities			
Canoeing	28	357	50	22	44%
Sailing	1	8	26	25	96%
Rowing	6	49	33	27	82%
Swimming in lake	49	1353	62	13	21%
Swimming in Pool	24	320	51	27	53%
Fishing	3	524	55	52	95%
Water Skiing/tubing	33	876	45	12	27%
River Tubing	8	27	32	24	75%
Pedal Boats	5	6	25	20	80%
Boater Safety Trng.	3	7	30	27	90%
Motorboats/Pontoon	54	1729	68	14	21%
		Leisure Activities			
	Participated	**No. of Times**	**Expressed Interest**	**Expressed Interest AND Did Not Participate**	**Percent Difference Interest**
Birdwatching	24	1862	35	11	31%
Lunch Outdoors	33	538	57	24	42%
Horseshoes	10	53	30	20	67%

Playground	16	79	26	10	38%
Mini-golf	27	140	41	14	34%
Frisbee	6	74	18	12	67%
Read Outdoors	38	1049	50	12	24%
Shuffleboard	1	5	18	17	94%
Exercising Pets	26	2035	31	5	16%
Horseback Riding	11	68	30	19	63%
Nature Walks	45	1075	63	18	29%
Archery	3	16	17	14	82%
Viewing Gardens	12	180	35	23	66%
Viewing Wildlife	26	1704	54	28	52%
Picnicking	22	176	55	33	60%
Gold/Gem Mining	13	59	29	16	55%
Walking Trails	36	627	64	28	44%
Nature Studies	7	80	39	32	82%
Bingo	6	21	13	7	54%
Cards	11	276	23	12	52%
Kite Flying	6	47	17	11	65%
	Senior Program Activities				
Field Trips	3	14	29	26	90%
Exercising	5	155	36	31	86%
Fishing	6	166	29	23	79%
Crafts	2	10	21	19	90%
Programs	1	4	19	18	95%
	Write-in Activities				
Shag Dancing	2	25	4	2	50%
Shag Lessons	1	5	1	0	0%
Ballroom Dancing	1	5	1	0	0%
Book Club	1	2	1	0	0%
Hunting	2	15	2	0	0%
Diving	1	50	1	0	0%
Bowling	1	5	1	0	0%
Laying in a Hammock	1	50	1	0	0%
Shag Contest	1	1	1	0	0%
Gardening	0	0	1	1	100%
Indoor Pool	0	0	1	1	100%
Indoor Sports Center	0	0	1	1	100%
Fishing Tour	0	0	1	1	100%
Wine Tasting	0	0	1	1	100%
Skeet Shoot	0	0	1	1	100%
Ski Jumping	0	0	1	1	100%
Slalom Course	0	0	1	1	100%
Hiking Trails	0	0	1	1	100%
Community Theatre	0	0	1	1	100%

Lectures	0	0	1	1	100%
Historic Pres.	0	0	1	1	100%

The top ten activities ranked by number of participants are:

1. Walking
2. Riding in a Motorboat or Pontoon Boat
3. Swimming in the Lake
4. Nature Walks
5. Attending Art Shows
6. Reading Outdoors
7. Outdoor Arts/Crafts
8. Walking Trails
9. Water Skiing/Tubing
10. Eating Lunch Outdoors

The top ten activities ranked by number of times participated in are:

1. Walking
2. Exercising Pets
3. Birdwatching
4. Riding in a Motorboat of Pontoon Boat
5. Viewing Wildlife
6. Swimming in the Lake
7. Playing Golf
8. Nature Walks
9. Reading Outdoors
10. Water Skiing/Tubing

Needs Assessment

In identifying the needs of Lake Lure for parks and recreation, we tried to look from different viewpoints, hoping that we would not miss anything that is obvious. We identified needs based on respondents of the citizen's survey, from interviews with Town staff, from the viewpoint of the planner facilitating the recreation plan, and discussion with the Parks and Recreation Board. The needs (in random order) are identified as follows:

- Funding
- Partners
- Better information and communication
- More personnel specifically designated for parks and recreation
- Strategically located parks
- Multi-Use Arts, and Recreation Center
- More walking activities
- More senior activities
- Improving Existing Lake Access
- Alternative Recreation Activities
- Park linkage
- Golf Course needs more play

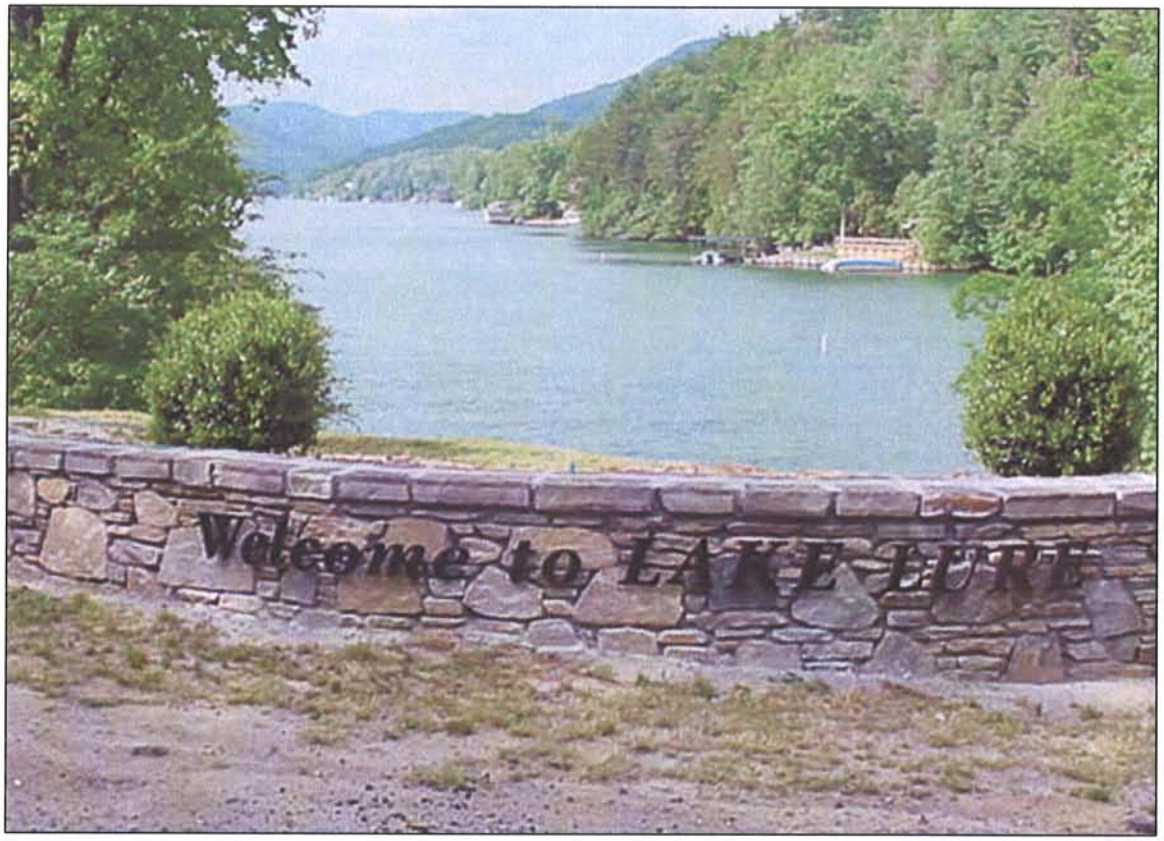
- More commitment to recreation

Section 3 Summary

Regarding the community survey, Lake Lure sampled approximately 50% of its total households. The Town of Lake Lure survey resulted in a response rate of 21% compared with the survey response rate of the other surveys (Rutherford County-10%, Rutherfordton-16%, and Forest City-11%), but we would have liked for the rate to have been closer to 25%. The US Census shows that the median age for the Town of Lake Lure is around 59. The average age of the respondents was around 65. The survey and needs assessment verifies that Lake Lure is different from most municipalities around the State of North Carolina in that the population dynamics are skewed towards the older age cohorts, and the types of recreation activities utilized had more to do with the Lake itself, rather than traditional types of recreational activities such as baseball, soccer, etc. We feel that we received good, random information from the surveys and interviews and discussions with the Parks and Recreation Board. This data and information will help formulate strategies in Section 4 of this Plan.

Section 4

Recommendations and Implementation



Recommendations and Implementation

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

Instrumental to implementation of the plan is the identification of adequate funding, at a time when balancing municipal budgets throughout the state has become increasingly difficult. The *North Carolina Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* identified inadequate funding for park facilities and recreation programs as a key issue needing to be addressed in the next five years if government is to maintain basic minimum services. According to the US Census Bureau, per capita funding for parks and recreation services throughout the State of North Carolina, including local government is 33% below the national average. Even though funding is currently low statewide, it does not appear to reflect the high value citizens' place on parks and recreation.

Implementing the plan will result in meeting the present and future needs for parks and recreation services, as well as possibly preserving conservation areas in Lake Lure. The Town of Lake Lure will have to continue to consider parks and recreation as an important part of its budget, and earmark funds to continue this important service.

In this section we will attempt to transform the identified needs from Section 3 into recommendations with some sort of implementation strategy. While we feel that all of the recommendations are important, we realize that some are more important than others, so as we identify each recommendation we will give it some type of prioritization.

Funding Sources (High Priority)
We have found that the key issue to the implementation of this plan involves the ability to be able to fund the recommendations. We recommend that the Town of Lake Lure utilize various means to plan for and fund these recommendations such as Capital Improvement Program, general tax revenues, partnerships, user fees, sponsorships, and various grant programs (such as Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, Community Development Block Grant, Clean Water Management Trust Fund, and NCDOT grants). It should be noted that where possible the Town should strive to make facilities and activities self supporting or self funding.

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

User Fees and Sponsorships-Practically all recreation departments whether active or passive researched for the Rutherford County Recreation Plan included the use of user fees and sponsorships. User fees are paid by the participant and help to offset the costs of whatever program the participant is participating in. Most municipalities charge a higher fee for participants from outside the municipal boundaries. Sponsorships are generally paid by an individual, business or industry and generally include the team name, uniforms and equipment to be used in team sports programs.

General Tax Revenues-The operation and maintenance of most parks and recreation departments are funded primarily by general tax revenues. Recreation is a public service, and funding should be scheduled along with other Town services. It is also important, that as other sources of recreation revenue increase, the Town should not decrease the amount of funds available from general tax revenues for recreational purposes. Ultimately, it is the decision of the governing body to distribute general tax revenues, but as budgets have been increasingly difficult to balance, recreation budgets seem to be the first cut.

Grant Programs-There are numerous grant programs that can be utilized for parks and recreation programs. Federal programs include the Land and Water Conservation Fund (which can be used for land acquisition and park development) and Community Development Block Grants (which along with housing and infrastructure may be used for recreation purposes). State programs include the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (which provides a dollar for dollar match up to $500,000 for the acquisition, development and rehabilitation of parks and recreation facilities), the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (which provides funding for acquisition of riparian property and greenways), and the North Carolina Department of Transportation which can provide enhancement funding for bikeways, sidewalks and other types of trails.

There are numerous other grant programs, foundations, and funding sources that could be utilized. It should also be noted that the Rutherford County Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan requested that Rutherford County assist its municipalities financially for providing parks and recreation facilities and programming for residents outside of corporate boundaries.

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

Partnerships can be formed with local public, quasi-public, or private entities. Opportunities for recreation in the Town of Lake Lure, may include partnerships with the following types of entities:

- Rutherford County Government

- Polk County Government
- Rutherford County Schools
- Other Municipalities
- User Groups
- Adopt a Park Program
- Adopt a Trail Program
- Rutherford Hospital or another medical provider (Health and Fitness)
- Private Sector (such as businesses, industry, developers, etc.)
- Churches
- Other Non-Profits (such as Boy Scouts, 4-H, Youth Empowerment, etc.)

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

- Liability issues that face both parties.
- Addressing how both parties will try to reach an equity position of 50/50 cost sharing during a specific time frame.
- Land use and management needs to be addressed so neither parties' environmental concerns are compromised.
- Joint capital cost development and how both parties need to be involved in the design component, equipment needs, and storage needs.
- It is important that each party share with the other what their mission statement is so there is a greater appreciation of what each party desires to achieve. The key is to get both parties to think on behalf of the overall community first, and their respective needs second.
- In the partnership agreement, each party needs to make a decision on how they will resolve conflicts with each other.
- The partnership agreement is a living document and needs to change in time based on the needs of the community. Facility usage and contribution philosophy will remain consistent in the agreement, but the conditions of the agreement may change.
- Contributions by each partner need to be tracked and shared with all parties while trying to achieve the cost sharing goal within the time frame agreed upon.
- If both parties jointly develop a facility or park, a capital enhancement fund needs to be established for ongoing maintenance and facility upgrades.
- Usage within facilities, pricing of activities, schedule of events, equipment, operational issues, tracking process of partner contributions, and review sessions need to be evaluated periodically by all entities involved in the partnership.

A potential opportunity for the Town of Lake Lure to establish a partnership would be for the acquisition and development of the Girl Scout property located off of Highway 9 for a regional recreation center. Potential partners would be Rutherford County/Polk, businesses, developers, concessionaires etc. An alternative opportunity for a partnership would be for a regional recreation center/library/senior center on the undeveloped portion of the Golf Course property along Island Creek Road.

Information and Communication (High Priority)
One of the issues identified in all of the surveys performed in Rutherford County (including Lake Lure), was that there are numerous people in each planning jurisdiction that do not know what is offered, who contacts are for various leagues, where facilities are located, and where parks are located. In the Rutherford County Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan it was recommended that a clearing house be created to disseminate this information. It was recommended that a part-time person be hired at the Tourism Development Authority to put together a contact list, and be able to put this information (by local forms of media) out on a monthly or quarterly basis. Lake Lure needs to identify a contact person to work with the County for information related to Lake Lure. Lake Lure could also create its own means of information sharing such as brochures, web site, signage, or newsletter (with frequent updates) that would ensure Lake Lure's citizens would know where, when and how for parks and recreation. The Town of Lake Lure website should contain updated information on parks and recreation facilities and programs.

Community Recreation Center (High Priority) - The Town of Lake Lure should actively pursue the development of recreational and athletic facilities on Town owned property off Island Creek Road to include playground and ball field facilities, restrooms, picnic areas, and an expansion of walking and hiking trails to connect with the existing trail system in Donald Ross Nature Trail Park. The Town has offered long-term leases of land on this property needed for both the construction of a K-12 public charter school as early as 2010/2011 and a YMCA recreational complex hopefully to follow as soon as possible thereafter which would complement each other, with the latter also providing a needed program of after-school care and activities. In the event that a YMCA recreational complex does not materialize, the Town should partner with other local governments and potentially use PARTF (NC Parks & Recreation Trust Fund) and other grants to build and operate an indoor Community Recreation Center on the Island Creek Road property that could also include under the same roof both a county branch library and senior center to support both the school and the predominant demographic group in the Town---its seniors. The advent of a charter school has the potential to dramatically change the demographics of the Town and the Town needs to provide adequate public park facilities to support such a change which will complement and support both the public charter school and a YMCA/Regional Recreation Center. The ball fields, for example, could support senior softball/baseball leagues (whether run by a future Parks and Recreation Department or by a YMCA), as well as supporting school athletic and recreational activities, and the public playground and nature trails could be used as well by the school children. The Mountains Branch Library on county owned land on Bills Creek Road is woefully undersized for the amount of use it receives, and the Town should consider

offering to Rutherford County government a portion of the Island Creek Road property in order to build a suitably sized library for the citizens of western Rutherford County, which would be more centrally located for the residents of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village and also support the nearby public charter school.

Strategically Located Parks and Facility Development (Medium Priority)-The Town of Lake Lure should consider complementing its current parks and facilities with new areas strategically located. Because of the geography and road access, it is a long drive to public recreational areas to some citizens of Lake Lure. If the Town considers adding new parks in the future it should consider areas such as the end of Boys Camp Road, Buffalo Shoals Road, or the Buffalo Creek Road corridors. These sites should be developed with all age groups in mind, and also with the possibility of linkage by sidewalks, trails, or greenways.

Facility Linkage (Medium Priority)-One item that both State and National Park people like to see (especially when applying for grant funding) is how park and recreation facilities are linked (**See Map 3**). This can be done by sidewalks, bikeways, greenways with trails, and rails to trails. Lake Lure has a shortage of pedestrian ways and trails, and it is not easy to get to most locations without driving. Lake Lure should consider expanding its walking areas, hiking trails, and trails along greenways to link current and future recreational areas.

Enhancement of Walking and Hiking Opportunities (High Priority)-National surveys, as well as the survey used to form the basis of this plan, have pointed out that walking (in many forms) is the number one recreational activity for all ages. Lake Lure should consider providing as many walking opportunities as possible in all areas of the Town. Walking opportunities can be provided by constructing walking trails, hiking trails, sidewalks, trails along greenways, as well as other types. **Map 4** identifies existing walking areas, and shows possibilities for extensions of these areas, or new areas. Some of the areas identified are:

- Funding and construction of a NCDOT Enhancement Project that would connect Rumbling Bald Resort to Apple Valley along Buffalo Creek Road.
- Funding and construction of the Town Centre Walkway (Phase 1-from Jack London Road to the boardwalk (under construction), Phase 2-from the ABC Store to the Post Office, and Phase 3-from Boys Camp Road to the Chimney Rock River Walk.

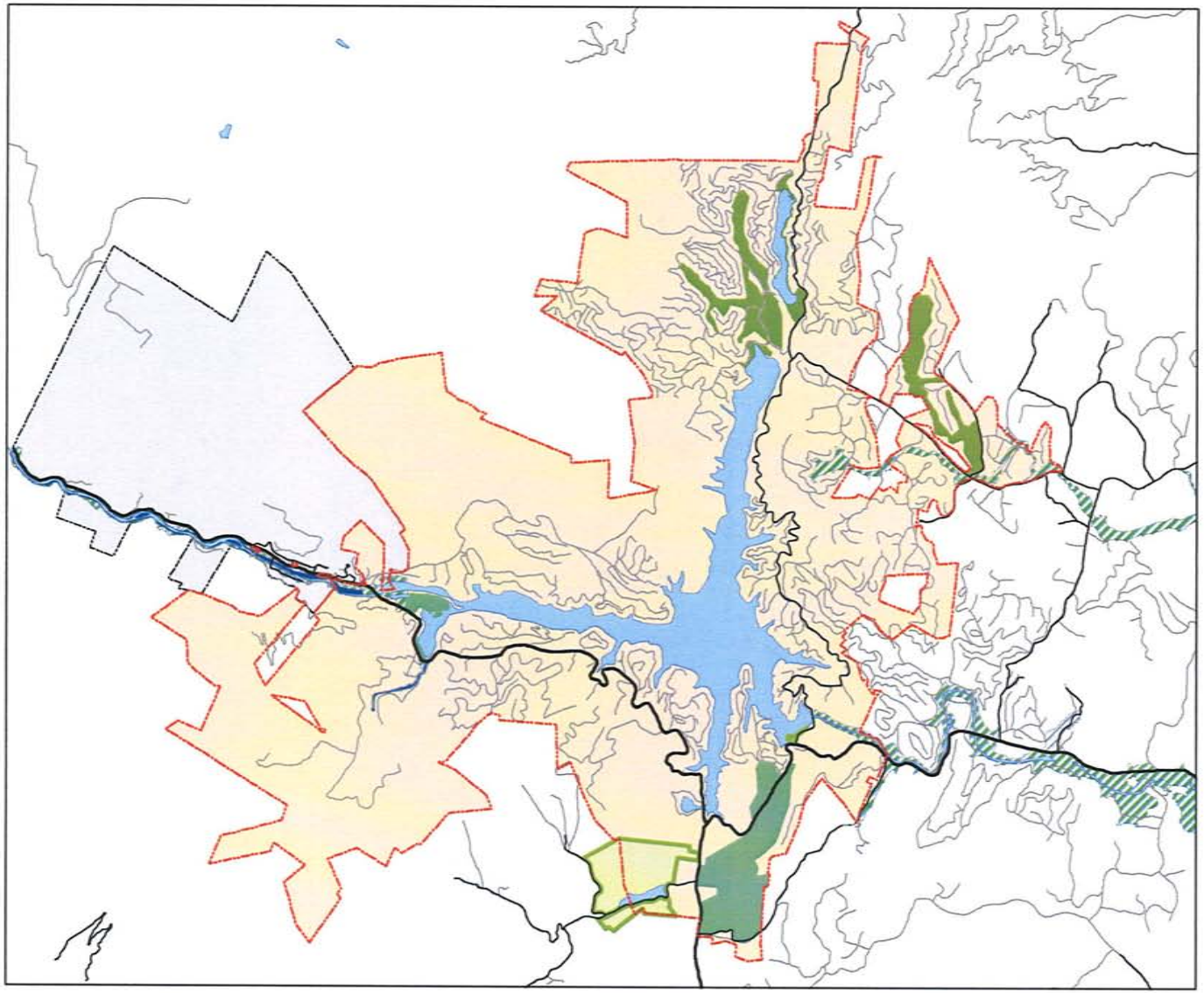
Funding for sidewalks on state roads could be accomplished by utilizing NCDOT Enhancement Grants or discretionary funding. Powell Bill funds could be utilized to construct sidewalks on Town streets. Land and Water Conservation Funds, Parks and Recreation Trust Funds, and Clean Water Management Funds could be utilized to purchase land and construct greenways.

A new initiative to create more challenging hiking trails in Lake Lure is underway which is intended to provide a 20+ mile hiking trail (called the Lake Lure Summits Trail) which would traverse the ridge lines and connect the high points around Lake Lure, and link up with trail systems being developed by Chimney Rock State Park and connect such

attractions as the World's Edge escarpment, Bottomless Pools, Donald Ross Nature Trail Park, lookout points on Cane Creek Mountain, Young's Mountain, Bald Mountain, and Shumont Mountain, and with numerous access points from Lake Lure Town Center, the Lake Lure Medical and Professional Park, Donald Ross Nature Trail Park, Rumbling Bald Resort, the rock climbing area below Bald Mountain, and Chimney Rock Village, et al. The planned trail would use as much as possible existing trails and logging roads. Since the land which this trail would traverse is either privately owned, state or Town owned, or land conservancy owned, the development of this Summits Trail will require the cooperation of all affected landowners for land easements and outdoor and hiking groups to develop and maintain the trail. The Town of Lake Lure should take the lead in promoting this challenging trail which has the potential to make Lake Lure not only a destination for lake related recreational activities, but also a destination for serious hikers. Additionally, the Lake Lure Parks and Recreation Board should take the initiative for a portion of the trail, such as that southerly portion connecting Bottomless Pools near the Town Center with Donald Ross Nature Trail Park and beyond to the Lake Lure Dam, and seek out other interested outdoor and hiking groups as well as Chimney Rock State Park to develop and maintain the rest of the trail system.

Senior Programming (High Priority)-Although Lake Lure should try and meet the needs of all its citizens, one age group it should try and enhance activities for are its senior citizens. Lake Lure is well known for the number of retirees that have located there as evidenced in the 2000 US Census (the average age for residents of Rutherford County is 38.3, while the average age for the residents in Lake Lure is 58.6). Another interesting statistic based upon the US Census is that of the permanent population, only 12% are below the age of 20, while 47% are over the age of 60. Programming and activities for seniors could include walking, hiking, field trips and tours, lake tours, home tours, art classes, senior softball league, golf, tennis, etc. Lake Lure could partner with the Rutherford County Senior Center to enhance senior programming. Town Government should be proactive in pursuing a joint effort with Rutherford (and possibly Polk County) County for a senior center to provide appropriate programs for western Rutherford and northern Polk County residents.

Alternative Programming and Activities (Medium Priority)-Lake Lure, because of its geography, water resources, and other natural resources, should investigate, plan for, and develop alternative types of outdoor recreation. The Broad River below Lake Lure is perfect for the development of a paddle trail (and by partnering with others could end all



MAP 3
EXISTING & POTENTIAL GREENWAYS (and Blueways)

Legend

- Potential Blueways
- Potential Greenway Areas

Map intended for planning purposes only. IPDC is not a licensed engineer or surveyor. Mapping information is a representation of various data sources and is not intended to portray an accurate land survey.

the way in Charleston, SC). Rumbling Bald Mountain is ideal for rock climbing. There are other areas ideal for hiking, mountain biking, and road biking. It should be noted that without a recreation department or recreation staff, the development of these outdoor activities likely will not occur without the help of volunteers or interested organizations. Volunteers and interested organizations will not be inclined to develop these types of recreation without resolving liability issues or active Public Works Department support.

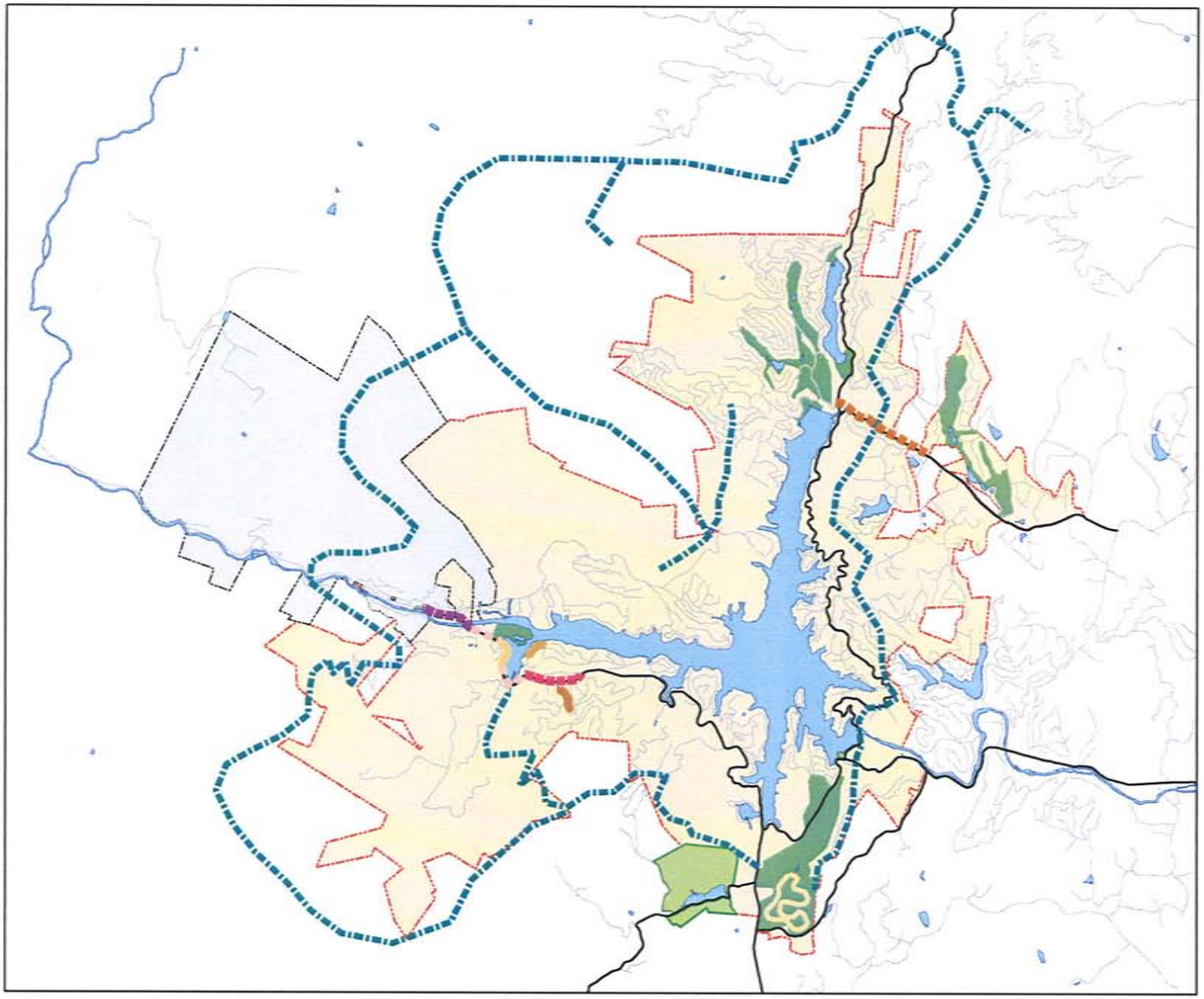
Standards for New Development (High Priority)-One of the ways that Lake Lure can ensure open space in the future is to require new developments to set aside land for open space, greenways, and recreational areas. The Lake Lure Subdivision Regulations would have to be amended after study and recommendations by the Community Development staff and the Planning and Zoning Board. Lake Lure should review what other resort areas with high growth are doing to manage this issue.

Site Specific Planning for Lake Lure's Parks and Recreation Facilities-Lake Lure should develop site specific master plans for all of its existing parks and recreation facilities, as well as proposed sites for future parks and recreation/cultural development. The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant Application describes a Park Master Plan as a long range plan for one park that contains a site analysis; a description of the community's recreational needs; property acquisition boundaries; and the proposed location of all capital improvements. (At a minimum, the Park Master Plan should contain a site analysis, recreational needs, program description, physical needs, cost projections, site plans and illustrations, and the master plan development should include public involvement.)

Personnel and Maintenance-Because Lake Lure is a small Town with limited personnel and financial resources, and because Lake Lure's parks and recreational opportunities are passive, the Town does not have a full time recreation department with staff available specifically for programming, coordination, and maintenance. The Town relies upon volunteers or non-profits for programming, and the Public Works Department for maintenance and upkeep of parks and recreational areas. The Public Works Department does an adequate job, but their responsibilities go far beyond parks and recreation. As the Town continues to grow, consideration will have to be given to the creation of a full time parks and recreation department with a programming director, and maintenance personnel.

Coordinate Efforts with Lake Advisory Board-In an effort to maintain the health, safety, and beauty of Lake Lure, any activities or programs offered upon, or impacting the Lake proper should be coordinated with the Lake Advisory Board. This may be accomplished by adding a member of the Lake Advisory Board to the Parks and Recreation Board.

Coordinate Efforts with Golf Course Committee-In an effort not to duplicate oversight of the Lake Lure Municipal Golf Course, the Lake Lure Parks and Recreation Board



MAP 4
EXISTING & POTENTIAL WALKING & HIKING AREAS

Legend

- Town Boardwalk
- Town Centre Walkway Phase 1
- Town Centre Walkway Phase 2
- Town Centre Walkway Phase 3
- Buffalo Creek Greenway
- Point of Rocks Trail
- Donald Ross Nature Trail Park
- Well Trail System
- Lake Lure Summit Trail

Map intended for planning purposes only. Prepared by Town of Lake Lure Staff from various data sources. This map representas an amendment to a previous Map 4 from this document. Amended to add the Lake Lure Summits Trail.

should coordinate with the Golf Course Committee. This may be accomplished by adding a member of the Golf Course Committee to the Parks and Recreation Board.

Section 4 Summary

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

The Town of Lake Lure needs to continue to make a positive commitment to parks and recreation. Parks and recreation funding is an easy mark for budget cuts, particularly when there is no active department to promote, or lobby for parks and recreation facilities and programming.